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GRAND JUNCTION MOTORISTS LOSE NEARLY \$1,500 PER YEAR ON ROADS THAT ARE ROUGH, CONGESTED & LACK SOME SAFETY FEATURES - \$7.1 BILLION STATEWIDE. LACK OF FUNDING WILL LEAD TO FURTHER DETERIORATION, INCREASED CONGESTION AND HIGHER COSTS TO MOTORISTS

Eds.: The report includes regional pavement conditions, congestion levels, highway safety data, and cost breakdowns for the Colorado Springs, Denver, Northern Colorado, Grand Junction and Pueblo areas. Info-graphics for each area and statewide can be downloaded [here](#).

Grand Junction, CO– Roads and bridges that are deteriorated, congested or lack some desirable safety features cost Colorado motorists a total of \$7.1 billion statewide annually - \$1,489 per driver in the Grand Junction area - due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes and congestion-related delays. Increased investment in transportation improvements at the local, state and federal levels could relieve traffic congestion, improve road, bridge and transit conditions, boost safety, and support long-term economic growth in Colorado, according to a new report released today by [TRIP](#), a Washington, DC based national transportation research organization.

The TRIP report, [“Colorado Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State’s Need for Safe, Smooth and Efficient Mobility,”](#) finds that throughout Colorado, two-fifths of major locally and state-maintained roads are in poor or mediocre condition and six percent of locally and state-maintained bridges are structurally deficient. The report also finds that Colorado’s major urban roads are becoming increasingly congested, causing significant delays and choking commuting and commerce.

Driving on roads in the Grand Junction area costs the average driver \$1,489 per year in the form of extra vehicle operating costs (VOC) as a result of driving on roads in need of repair, lost time and fuel due to congestion-related delays, and the costs of traffic crashes in which roadway features likely were a contributing factor. The TRIP report calculates the cost to motorists of insufficient roads in the Colorado Springs, Denver, Northern Colorado, Grand Junction and Pueblo areas. A breakdown of the costs per motorist in each area, along with a statewide total, is below.

Location	VOC	Safety	Congestion	TOTAL
Colorado Springs	\$ 702	\$ 388	\$ 850	\$ 1,940
Denver	\$ 739	\$ 377	\$ 1,190	\$ 2,306
Northern Colorado	\$ 547	\$ 728	\$ 405	\$ 1,680
Grand Junction	\$ 611	\$ 649	\$ 229	\$ 1,489
Pueblo	\$ 822	\$ 474	\$ 270	\$ 1,566
Colorado - Statewide	\$1.9 Billion	\$2.1 Billion	\$3.1 Billion	\$7.1 Billion

The TRIP report finds that 53 percent of major locally and state-maintained roads in the Grand Junction area are in poor or mediocre condition, costing the average motorist an additional \$611 each year in extra vehicle operating costs, including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear.

“The deep and growing challenges we face from an underfunded, aging transportation system have a major economic impact throughout the Western Slope,” said Christian Reece, executive director of [Club 20](#), a nonpartisan advocacy coalition for Western Colorado. “Congested and deteriorating roads and bridges not only hit families and small businesses hard, they are a major strain on our vital tourism economy. And yet our competitors in Utah have a strong commitment to investing in their transportation system. The TRIP report is a wake-up call to all of us about the dire state of transportation in Colorado.”

Traffic congestion in the Grand Junction area causes 11 annual hours of delay for the average motorist and costs the average driver \$229 each year in lost time and wasted fuel.

Six percent of Colorado’s bridges are structurally deficient, with significant deterioration to the bridge deck, supports or other major components. In the Grand Junction area, three percent (nine of 311) of bridges are structurally deficient.

“At AAA, we are strong advocates for building and maintaining a modern, safe system of roads and bridges throughout Colorado,” said J. Skyler McKinley, Director of Public Relations & Government Affairs for [AAA Colorado](#). “The TRIP report shows the immense cost of poorly maintained roads in terms of injuries in accidents, lives lost, repair costs and lost time at work. Colorado needs a robust and reliable transportation funding system that can help improve our roads and prevent traffic crashes across our state.”

Traffic crashes in Colorado claimed the lives of 2,595 people between 2012 and 2016. Colorado’s overall traffic fatality rate of 1.17 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel is on par with the national average of 1.18. The fatality rate on Colorado’s non-interstate rural roads is more than double that on all other roads in the state (1.97 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel vs. 0.96). In the Grand Junction area, on average, 19 people were killed in traffic crashes each year from 2014 to 2016. The financial impact of traffic crashes costs each Grand Junction driver an average of \$649 annually.

The efficiency and condition of Colorado’s transportation system, particularly its highways, is critical to the health of the state’s economy. Annually, \$323 billion in goods are shipped to and from sites in Colorado, mostly by trucks, relying heavily on the state’s network of roads and bridges. Increasingly, companies are looking at the quality of a region’s transportation system when deciding where to re-locate or expand. Regions with congested or poorly maintained roads may see businesses relocate to areas with a smoother, more efficient and more modern transportation system. The design, construction and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in Colorado supports 77,308 full-time jobs across all sectors of the state economy.

“Driving on deficient Colorado roads comes with a \$7.1 billion price tag for the state’s motorists,” said Will Wilkins, TRIP’s executive director. “Adequate funding for the state’s transportation system would allow for smoother roads, more efficient mobility, enhanced safety, and economic growth opportunities while saving Colorado’s drivers time and money.”