

## Report: 44% of Maryland roads in disrepair

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Maryland's roads are congested, deteriorated and costing drivers thousands of dollars a year, according to a report released Tuesday by a nonprofit Washington, D.C., research firm.

The Road Information Program, or TRIP, estimates 44 percent of Maryland's major roadways are in disrepair, more than 25 percent of its bridges are structurally deficient or obsolete, and half its city streets are congested.

By consequence, TRIP said, Marylanders are paying an additional \$2,226 a year in travel costs.

The report, titled "Future Mobility in Maryland: Meeting the State's Needs for Safe and Efficient Mobility, comes as the state and federal lawmakers try to sort out their spending priorities for the years to come.

Particularly in Annapolis, an estimated budget shortfall of between \$1.3 billion and \$1.6 million could force the General Assembly to make some deep cuts to road spending. Gov. **Martin O'Malley** [proposed cutting \\$60 million from the state's transportation improvement funds](#) with the release of the state's 2012 budget Jan. 21.

"Maryland's deficient transportation system is hitting the state's drivers in the wallet at a time when they can ill afford it," TRIP Executive Director **Will Wilkins** said in a statement. "It is critical that Maryland adequately fund its transportation and that Congress produces a timely and adequately funded federal surface program."

TRIP singled out several planned road improvements the state has put on hold because of the recession, including improvements to the Interstate 95 Interchange at Interstate 495, widening sections of Interstates 70 and 695 and building a new bridge over Interstate 270 in Gaithersburg.

In a statement, Greater Baltimore Committee CEO **Donald C. Fry** said those kinds of projects are needed to encourage employers to move into Maryland or to expand here.

"There is a strong correlation between an efficient and effective transportation system and strong economic growth, job creation and quality of life," Fry said. Fry is among several members of a new State Transportation Alliance to Restore the Trust, an [alliance formed Jan. 25 to advocate for transportation funding measures](#). Among its top priorities is legislation that would prevent state lawmakers from taking money from the Transportation Trust Fund to plug other holes in the budget.

