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Report: City's bad roads cost $2,226 per driver

Congested and deteriorated roads are costing the typical Baltimore driver $2,226 a year in maintenance, wasted fuel and time and safety-related charges, according to a study released today by a national transportation advocacy group.

TRIP, the Washington-based advocate for infrastructure investments said bad roads are costing Maryland drivers an estimated $7 billion a year.

The group's message is that the United States, and Maryland in particular, need to step up their infrastructure investments to meet the travel demands of a growing population. The group is calling on Congress to take prompt action on a new six-year federal transportation reauthorization bill before the current program expires March 4.

TRIP said that drivers in the Washington Metro area faced higher overall costs -- an average of $2,296 -- than those in Baltimore. But it found that Baltimore's drivers are absorbing more costs in the form of extra vehicle maintenance because of substandard roads in the region -- $603 versus $462 in the Washington area. However, drivers in the Washington area were estimated to face much higher costs from that region's notorious congestion.

The report said many needed transportation projects can't move forward because of a lack of funding, including the Red Line and Purple Line light rail projects in Baltimore and suburban Washington, a wider bridge on the western end of the Capital Beltway and widening of parts of Interstate 70 and the Baltimore Beltway.