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# Report finds DFW drivers lose \$1,543 per year to bad roads

Dallas Business Journal by Matt Joyce, Staff Writer

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A new study of Texas roadways finds that deficient roads cost Dallas-Fort Worth area drivers \$1,543 per year.

The study released Tuesday by TRIP, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit group that promotes road infrastructure, attributed the costs to vehicle repairs resulting from bad roads, lost time and fuel due to congestion delays, and the cost of crashes caused by roadway features.

Statewide, drivers lose about \$23.2 billion per year because of deficient roadways, according to the report.

Houston was the worst at \$1,891 per driver. DFW was second worst, followed by San Antonio and then Austin.

"Texas motorists cannot afford to pay the price for an inadequate transportation system, and the state cannot afford missed economic opportunities due to congested and deteriorated roads," said [Lawrence Olsen](#), executive vice president of Texas Good Roads, a group that pushes for road funding at the Texas Legislature.

While drivers might notice several annoying road construction projects across the region, funding is in decline for future projects to keep up with maintenance and a growing population, transportation officials said.

Road construction funding provided by the federal stimulus is mostly used up. Also, two major state bond funding programs — approved by voters in the 2000s — are drying up

and debt service on those bonds is approaching \$1 billion per year, said [Rider Scott](#), executive director of the Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition.

A recent report commissioned by the Texas Legislature found that maintenance of the state's roadway infrastructure costs about \$10 billion per year, said [Frank Moretti](#), director of policy and research for TRIP.

"But as our report points out, by the end of next year, average funding here in Texas is going to drop to approximately \$2.6 billion," he said. "So really the state is moving in the direction of investing only a quarter of the amount that's needed to maintain it's roads, bridges and highways."

More funding could mean higher gas taxes or vehicle fees, or paying tolls, officials said.

When asked why businesses would want to pay more taxes or fees to support road construction, transportation officials said it comes down to return on investment.

"It's just a smart business decision," said [Vic Suhm](#), executive director of the **Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition**.

"The cost of transporting their product and providing customer service, getting their employees to and from work, not being able to attract employees because commute times are so long — those things have real a cost to businesses," Suhm said. "If you reduce those costs by paying a little more in fees or taxes, your return on investment is like 6 to 1."

Matt covers transportation, energy, government and economic development.