

## Ending traffic congestion would boost DFW economy by \$17 billion, report says



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North Texas would benefit from a huge economic boost by alleviating traffic congestion, the free-market Reason Foundation says in a **national report released this week**.

The study focused on 11 metro areas, calculating the extra productivity from better movement of people and goods around the regions. Overall, it says:

Most major cities will find that wise infrastructure investments that eliminate gridlock and produce free-flowing road conditions will more than pay for themselves by boosting the region's economy, and thus tax revenues.

The study shows that reducing congestion and increasing travel speeds enough to improve access by 10 percent to key employment, retail, education and population centers increases regional production of goods and services by 1 percent. While seemingly small in percentage terms, this leads to tens of billions of dollars for a region's employers and workers due to productivity and efficiency benefits.

Excerpt from an **individual report on our area**:

The Reason Foundation report examines the impact that population growth and longer commute times will have on five areas across Dallas-Fort Worth by 2030: downtown, the University of Texas at Dallas, North East Mall, Duncanville, and Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

Of those locations, the Reason study says the biggest economic gains would come from eliminating severe congestion around universities like UT-Dallas, which could add \$46 billion a year to the regional economy and over \$3 billion in annual tax revenues.

I'm surprised that Duncanville was singled out in the study. **Local congestion maps** don't include SW Dallas County as a high-problem area. But, as you can see, everywhere will become a huge a problem area if congestion needs aren't addressed.

DFW is a natural place to single out for study, owing to our poor showing in congestion indexes. The **Texas Transportation Institute's annual mobility study** ranked Dallas **miserably in many indexes**.

The TTI report **addresses the cost of congestion in different ways**, like the hours wasted in rush hour traffic (53 hours in Dallas, 6th worst in nation) and extra gallons of gasoline burned (36 gallons, 8th worst).

The traffic forecasting outfit **INRIX has its own scorecard** that put D-FW at fourth worst earlier this year.