



Ontario's move to implement HOT lanes a step in right direction

TORONTO (July 22, 2015) – **The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO)** supports the announcement made today by the Ontario government that tolls could be coming to HOV lanes. It's a good way to curb traffic congestion and finance infrastructure.

These lanes would still be used by transit and emergency vehicles, as well as by carpoolers for free. But single-passenger vehicles would be able to use them for a fee. Therefore, these lanes are both HOV (high-occupancy vehicle) and HOT (high-occupancy toll).

With the expansion of HOV lanes during Toronto's Pan Am and Parapan Am Games, RCCAO views this year as a good time to add toll lanes for several reasons:

- Combined HOV/HOT lanes will lead to better utilization of the expanded HOV network;
- The addition of HOT lanes will encourage a certain percentage of drivers to use public transit or carpool;
- Paying to use these lanes gives drivers one more option to commute and frees up space in the other lanes;
- Traffic congestion plagues the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, costing the GTHA economy about \$11 billion;
- HOT lanes would create a revenue stream, albeit a relatively small one, to help the government meet its target of paying \$130 billion in desperately needed infrastructure over the next 10 years.

A report released by Harry Kitchen, professor emeritus at Trent University, last week advocated for a transition to road pricing.

"This would reduce the total distance driven, taking drivers off the road more quickly," Kitchen says. "Also, greenhouse gas emission costs would be curbed because less fuel would be burned."

Andy Manahan, executive director of RCCAO, says accountability is needed in the process of creating HOT lanes, and that any revenues generated have to be dedicated to transportation improvements.

"We look forward to working with the government to determine the most effective implementation of HOT lanes."

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