

Ontario deserves kudos for automated vehicles move but more needs to be done

VAUGHAN, ONT. (CNW: Nov. 29, 2016) – The Ontario government should be congratulated for initiating a pilot project to test automated vehicles, but a lot more must be done if the province is to keep up with other leading jurisdictions around the world, says the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO).

Most importantly, RCCAO applauds the partnership that the Ministry of Transportation has undertaken with the University of Waterloo, Erwin Hymer Group and BlackBerry QNX to test the new AV technology.

“This pilot will be helpful for testing new technology embedded in vehicles. But Ontario needs to focus more on deployment,” says transportation consultant Bern Grush, author of the RCCAO-commissioned report [“Ontario Must Prepare for Vehicle Automation.”](#) “While Ontario looks to become a leading jurisdiction of innovation, the province needs to participate in projects that apply vehicle automation to first/last kilometre transportation solutions. The matter of testing fundamental or applied technology is an industry issue that requires standards and certification rather than intimate government involvement.”

Grush’s report notes that there are two forms of AVs coming to Ontario roads: 1. semi-automated (self-driving) vehicles, which will be privately owned and make driving safer; and 2. fully automated (driverless), including robo-taxis and robo-shuttles operated by government or private businesses. At first, GTHA traffic congestion will be worse but, over time, each shared AV can replace four or more regular vehicles, mitigating parking and road congestion.

Andy Manahan, executive director of RCCAO, says the government’s announcement comes at a time when more people are becoming aware of AVs.

“We’re proud of the report that Bern Grush has prepared for our key stakeholders in government and industry as we thought it was important to investigate the possible implications of AVs,” Manahan says. “Today was a good step for Ontario. The report, however, recommends that many more pilot projects be conducted with robo-shuttles that have just become available for limited public applications.”

WHO IS GRUSH?

Grush is a systems engineer and an automated vehicle strategist with transportation consultants Grush Niles Strategic (Toronto and Seattle). He writes the blogs [EndOfDriving.org](#) and [Grushhour.com](#).



WHAT IS RCCAO?

This labour-management construction alliance has advocated for infrastructure investment for 11 years, commissioning 41 independent, solutions-based reports to help inform decision-makers.

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