

GTHA traffic gridlock leads to \$44.7B per year in lost productivity: Report

DCN-JOC News Services December 10, 2024

TORONTO — A new report commissioned by the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) and the Ontario Road Builders' Association (ORBA) finds traffic gridlock in the GTHA negatively impacts the region by \$44.7 billion per year due to lost economic productivity.

It also leads to 88,000 fewer jobs and the reduction of commuter's quality of life due to stress, health issues and time lost.

Without increased infrastructure investment, congestion could surge up by 59 per cent over the next 20 years, the study warns.

Titled the Impact of Congestion in the GTHA and Ontario: Economic and Social Risks, the study was conducted by the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis.

Provincewide, it reveals the overall impact of congestion was estimated at \$56.4 billion in 2024 and cost Ontario's economy \$12.8 billion annually, with 112,000 fewer jobs "due to stifling job growth and reducing productivity."

There is also the quality-of-life impacts, the report notes, due to stress, health and time lost, which is valued at \$43.6 billion.

"On average, transportation costs for Ontario households are 23 per cent higher than food expenditure, making transportation costs the second-largest household expense in Ontario," it reads.

As a result of the report's findings, the RCCAO and ORBA are calling on all three levels of government to implement the following recommendations:

- Increase investment in core public infrastructure, such as roads, bridges and transit, to mitigate gridlock, which could cost Ontario up to \$145 billion and 558,000 jobs by 2044.
- Continue collaborating with industries to encourage innovative solutions for congestion.
- Explore ways to expedite the tendering and construction of major transit and transportation projects, such as the Ontario Line, Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass, the Morriston Bypass and Highway 69 twinning.

“The report’s findings likely come as no surprise to everyday people and workers in Ontario who spend hours on their daily commute instead of quality time with their loved ones,” said Walid Abou-Hamde, chief executive officer of ORBA, in a statement. “While we welcome and support the Ontario government’s historic commitments to building and modernizing the province’s roads, bridges and transit, we call on all levels of government to take immediate action by significantly increasing infrastructure spending and getting projects to market faster across all regions of the province.”

The associations are hopeful this report will fill policymakers in on needed data.

“Traffic congestion is strangling our economy and making daily life harder for millions of Ontarians,” added Nadia Todorova, executive director of RCCAO. “Beyond the billions of dollars lost each year, congestion underscores an urgent need for continued critical infrastructure investment. Without a sustained commitment to improve our infrastructure, Ontario’s economic growth and residents’ quality of life will continue to be at risk.”

Read the full report [here](#).