

Congestion costs Ontario \$56B annually, report finds

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A new report commissioned by the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) and the Ontario Road Builders' Association (ORBA) takes aim at the societal cost of traffic congestion across the province.

The study, [*Impact of Congestion in the GTHA and Ontario: Economic and Social Risks*](#), which was conducted by the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis (CANCEA), reveals congestion consequences cost Ontario \$56.4 billion in 2024.

While the report authors consider the impacts of congestion across Ontario, they pay special attention to the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), where they call the issue “a crisis impacting Ontario’s economy and the well-being of residents”.

Specifically, researchers found that traffic gridlock in the GTHA negatively impacts the region by \$44.7 billion per year due to lost economic productivity, 88,000 fewer jobs and the reduction of commuter’s quality of life due to stress, health issues and time lost.

The study warns that without increased infrastructure investment, congestion could surge up by 59% over the next 20 years, and take an even-greater toll on industries, workers, and households.

“Traffic congestion is strangling our economy and making daily life harder for millions of Ontarians,” said RCCAO Executive Director Nadia Todorova. “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.”

“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 ORBA Executive Director Walid Abou-Hamde. “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.”

In light of the report’s findings, RCCAO and ORBA are calling on all three levels of government to prioritize infrastructure expansion by implementing three recommendations.

The first is to increase investment in core public infrastructure—such as roads, bridges, and transit—to mitigate the significant economic and social risks of gridlock, which could cost Ontario up to \$145 billion and 558,000 jobs by 2044.

The second is to continue collaborating with industries to encourage innovative solutions for congestion, benefiting businesses, commuters, and families. While the third is to explore ways to expedite the tendering and construction of major transformative transit and transportation projects, such as the Ontario Line, Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass, the Morriston Bypass, and Highway 69 twinning.

The associations say they are ready to work with all levels of government and industry partners to address these challenges and mitigate congestion's impact on Ontario's economy and quality of life.