

Highway 401 tunnel a ‘visionary plan’ to relieve gridlock in GTA

By [Robin MacLennan, Editor, Ontario Construction News](#) - September 27, 2024

The Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association (OSWCA) is supporting Doug Ford and the government of Ontario’s decision to provide relief for commuters in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) with the launch of a technical evaluation for the proposed transportation tunnel expressway under Highway 401.

“Today’s announcement is a part of the Ford Government’s ambitious plan to build Ontario,” said Patrick McManus, executive director of the OSWCA. “The proposed transportation tunnel expressway under Highway 401 will create thousands of good paying jobs and will help get people and goods moving faster across the busiest transportation corridor in North America.”

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) is also on board, calling the tunnel proposal an innovative approach to transportation infrastructure.

“Congestion in our region isn’t just a nuisance—it’s a crisis impacting businesses, people’s daily lives, and their health and well being,” said Nadia Todorova, Executive Director of RCCAO. “Other jurisdictions regularly use tunneling technology to address similar challenges.

“This expressway proposal shows that Ontario is ready to be proactive and innovative in finding solutions that benefit everyone.”

RCCAO will support the government throughout the feasibility study, bringing the expertise and technical knowledge of its members to the table.

“We will collaborate with the government to ensure this project is executed efficiently and achieves its intended goals,” Todorova said. “RCCAO has long advocated for infrastructure solutions that address the needs of today while anticipating the challenges of tomorrow.”

The GTHA loses about \$11 billion annually due to gridlock.

While supporting the exploration of a transportation tunnel under Highway 401, a model that has shown to be successful in other jurisdictions, construction industry leaders are warning that investments to rehabilitate and expand much-needed water and wastewater infrastructure are also critical to account for the rapid population growth in the GTHA.

“For decades, we have neglected building the critical transportation and highway infrastructure needed to address Ontario’s growing population,” said Stephanie Bellotto, manager of government relations. “We are pleased to see that the Ford Government has a bold vision for tackling traffic congestion, which is already costing the GTHA \$11 billion per year in lost economic opportunity and is continuing to deliver on critical infrastructure projects such as Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass.”