Greater Sudbury’s Notre Dame, Panache Lake among Ontario's worst roads - Take our poll

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After one of the worst pothole seasons in recent memory, it comes as no surprise to Greater Sudbury drivers that two roads in the city are among the worst in Ontario, according to the 2026 CAA Worst Roads Campaign.

Notre Dame Avenue is third on the list, while Panache Lake Road is seventh, said the annual report, which was released Thursday.

Barton Street East in Hamilton was voted the worst road in Ontario, while Hurontario Street in Mississauga came second.

Regionally, Greater Sudbury had the distinction of having the five worst roads in northeastern Ontario. Besides Notre Dame and Panache, College Street, The Kingsway and Regent Street made the list. The Northern region also includes the districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Nipissing and Parry Sound District and more.

“People across Ontario have spoken,” Nadia Todorova, the executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, said in a release. “The CAA Worst Roads campaign gives voice to residents who experience firsthand the impact that deteriorating roads and aging infrastructure have on our lives daily.

“The results underscore the importance of sustained investment in state-of-good-repair infrastructure. Safe, reliable roads are essential to how people move, work, and connect with their communities. With municipal elections taking place this autumn, aspiring civic leaders should be prepared to offer meaningful solutions to address these ongoing infrastructure challenges.”

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario served as a technical partner for the Canadian Automobile Association and its 2026 CAA Worst Roads advocacy campaign.

“The CAA Worst Roads Campaign gives Ontarians the opportunity to be heard and reflects the feedback of thousands who want to see better maintenance of roads in their community,” the release said. “With municipal elections taking place later this year, now

is the time for civic leaders to present a long-term solution to renew critical infrastructure in their communities …

“Public awareness and education play a vital role in helping municipal and provincial governments understand residents’ priorities and identify where roadway improvements are most needed. This knowledge is crucial to supporting a prosperous, safe, and sustainable future for all Ontarians.”

The CAA determines Ontario’s worst roads through an annual public voting campaign. After the voting period closes, CAA compiles the provincial and regional top-10 lists. The provincial results are then audited and verified by a technical partner, in this case, the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario

Ontario’s Top 10 Worst Roads for 2026:

1. Barton Street East, Hamilton.

2. Hurontario Street, Mississauga.

3. Notre Dame Avenue, Greater Sudbury

4. Sider Road, Fort Erie

5. Steeles Avenue East, Toronto

6. Sheppard Avenue West, Toronto

7. Panache Lake Road, Greater Sudbury

8. Bathurst Street, Toronto

9. Unwin Avenue, Toronto

10. 6th Line, Innisfil

The complete results of this year’s CAA Worst Roads Campaign, including regional results, can be viewed at caaworstroads.com.

More about Notre Dame and Panache

According to the City of Greater Sudbury, Notre Dame Avenue is a major nine-km north-south arterial corridor and scenic bike route running from Downtown Sudbury through the Flour Mill neighbourhood up to the Lasalle Boulevard intersection.

Panache Lake Road (Municipal Road 10) is a rural, two-lane arterial route extending south from Municipal Road 55 in Whitefish. It serves as the main mainland access corridor to Lake Panache. Panache is notorious among locals for its rough, pothole-plagued asphalt and severe need of rehabilitation. It has frequently been voted as one

of the absolute worst roads in Northern Ontario by the Canadian Automobile Association due to chronic degradation.

The city's road budget

The City of Greater Sudbury's 2026 approved roads budget is highlighted by an $82 million road plan, which includes an initial $73 million allocated for road construction and maintenance, plus an extra $20 million dedicated to expanded Municipal Road 35 rehabilitation and city-wide asphalt patching.

How to report a local road hazard

If you encounter dangerous potholes, cracked pavement, or broken signs, you can report them directly to the City of Greater Sudbury using these methods:

– Online portal: File a report 24/7 on the Greater Sudbury 311 Customer Service Portal.

– Live chat: Speak to an agent via the 311 portal Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

– Phone: Call 311 locally (or 705-671-2489 if calling from outside the area).

What you need to provide

The city requires the specific street name, the nearest municipal address or intersection, and the specific lane where the hazard is located.

How to file a claim against the city

To file a vehicle damage claim against the City of Greater Sudbury, you must act quickly, as Ontario's Municipal Act enforces a strict 10-day deadline from the date of the incident. Simply calling 311 to report the pothole does not count as filing a claim.

Step 1: Collect evidence immediately

Before leaving the scene or shortly after, gather thorough documentation to support your case:

– Photos: Take clear pictures of the specific pothole, the wider area/street location, and the exact damage caused to your vehicle.

– Location details: Note the closest street address, intersection, and which specific lane you were driving in.

– Invoices: Keep all towing receipts, mechanic diagnostic reports, and repair invoices.

Step 2: Contact your insurance representative

Under Ontario’s no-fault automobile insurance rules, your first step should be reporting the damage to your own insurance provider. Your policy may cover the repair costs outright. If your insurer believes the municipality failed to maintain the road standard, they may pursue the city for compensation on your behalf.

Step 3: Submit the official claim form

To seek direct compensation from the city, you must fill out the online form within the 10-day window:

– Go directly to the official Greater Sudbury Claim Submission Portal.

– Input the date, exact location, 311 report reference number (if you have one), and details of the vehicle damage.

– Attach your photos, repair quotes, or receipts.

How claims are evaluated

All submitted claims are managed by an independent insurance adjuster, not by city staff. The city is only found legally liable if the adjuster determines it failed to meet provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards. For instance, if a pothole was previously reported and the city failed to repair it within the legally required timeframe (usually 24 to 48 hours, depending on the class of road), they may be held liable.

A decision from the independent adjuster typically takes up to 60 days to complete.

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