

Stuck in Traffic - Roadblocks to Business

By: **Sandra Dueck, Policy Analyst, Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce**

Oh Canada! Your varying geographic elements are a great source of pride and yet, they also create a great challenge when it comes to getting our products to market.

A new report by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, titled *Stuck in Traffic for 10,000 Years: Canadian Problems that Infrastructure Investment Can Solve* digs into the various ways we move products on roads, rail, pipeline, and online and offers a series of ideas to remove roadblocks to business competitiveness.

The report highlights that lack of proper transportation infrastructure is a major barrier to Canada's access to market and to its competitiveness, leading to lost opportunities and wasted time for both Canadian companies and residents.

"Congested transportation systems – and the loss of time and productivity that comes with them – have become a reality for tens of thousands of businesses and their employees," said Perrin Beatty, CEO and President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Seven problem areas are identified in the report, including:

- **Road Congestion in Large Cities**

Gridlock is an everyday reality that has economic and environmental costs including increasing greenhouse gas emissions, lowers employee productivity, increases time to move goods and provide

services to customers and lowers quality of life.

This gridlock doesn't just happen in the usual places but reaches into our trading area with Oshawa drivers experiencing an additional 2.3 million hours of travel time a year compared to free-flow traffic. It will be interesting to see the impact of a completed 407 on GTA traffic patterns.

- **Facilitating trade along the Asia-Pacific Gateway and corridor**

This gateway is an entry and exit point for 20% of Canadian goods moving to and from the Asia-Pacific corridor. The federal government needs to facilitate trade opportunities by ensuring strategic investments, improving supply chain data collection and increasing federal leadership around policy and regulatory barriers to keep the multi-modal corridor running on all cylinders and benefiting all Canadians.

- **Improving digital access and infrastructure**

Canadians not only move products by road, rail and air, but also through digital infrastructure. The report highlights the need for increased public infrastructure investments in rural and remote connectivity, update tax incentives for private investments in telecommunications infrastructure, and ensure Canadian companies can benefit from opportunities presented by 5G. By 2020, internet usage forecasts predict a 240% increase in business internet traffic and a 500% increase in business mobile traffic.

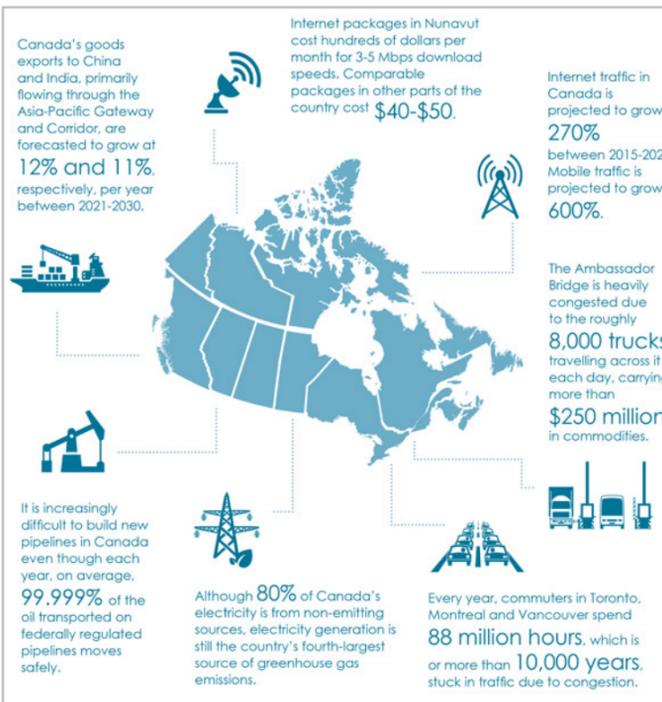
We've seen significant investment in the Peterborough area through EORN and the Bell Fibe investment.

- **Maximizing potential in Canada's North**

Identifying infrastructure needs, ensuring the greatest economic and social impacts and using the proposed infrastructure bank will help unlock new opportunities in the North.

- **Enhancing the Ontario-Quebec trade corridor**

Just as the Asia-Pacific Corridor is important in the west, the Ontario-Quebec trade corridor is a lifeline for the central part of the country, including Peterborough. There is a call in the report to improve border



Infographic: Canadian Chamber of Commerce Report

infrastructure, complete construction on the Gordie Howe bridge and reinvigorate a coordinated approach to developing the Continental Trade Corridor.

The proposed High-Frequency Rail (HFR) project by VIA Rail also has a role in improving this corridor, in that it can spread the need for passenger travel on two lines and during the evening hours freight could be accommodate along the proposed route from Toronto through Peterborough to Ottawa and Montreal. The Peterborough Chamber of Commerce is a strong supporter of the HFR plan.

- **Getting Canadian oil and gas to markets**

This is a crucial piece of pie for Canada because delays in the regulatory process are limiting the private sectors ability to build pipeline infrastructure to move Canada's oil and gas. The reality is that there is no existing eastward route for Canadian to service other Canadians. The current export pipelines run north-south and with "the US preparing to reduce taxes, regulatory burden and environmental standards on the American energy industry, it's more important than ever for the federal government to create the conditions for energy projects in Canada to succeed."

For Peterborough there is a crucial connection, as GE holds the contract to build the large motors for the Energy East pipeline. It's a contract that would bring 250 jobs to the plant.

- **Green electrification and transmission**

Three good ideas under this category heading include, supporting interprovincial grid connectivity where it makes sense, ensuring that any shift to more renewable electricity protects consumers, businesses and overall reliability and providing capital investments to help remote communities transition away from diesel power.

"Inconsistent public investment in our transportation systems is a hindrance to small and large businesses alike with real environmental and economic costs. Canadians in the country's largest cities are collectively losing over 10,000 years sitting in their cars every year, time that could be much better spent," Mr. Beatty said. "As MPs tour Canada this summer making infrastructure announcements, we need to ask, 'are these investments being spent in the right places?'" he concluded.

Read the full report: peterboroughchamber.ca/blog

Chamber of Commerce sends written submission on Bill 148



The Peterborough Chamber of Commerce has sent in a written submission to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs on Bill 148.

Since the announcement of the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, many of our Chamber members have expressed concerns about the pace at which this legislation is being implemented and the impact on the economic growth of Peterborough and the province.

"Under the proposed Bill 148, this group of constituents is facing a dramatic increase in staffing costs over the next 18 months," says Stuart Harrison, President & CEO, Peterborough Chamber of Commerce. "These costs are not alone related to the proposed minimum wage increase and have caused businesses to consider the impact and how they will stay afloat."

We took the concerns of our local employers and have submitted them to the provincial government along with a list of recommendations that our Peterborough business community put forward.

"The recommendations stem from conversations and a roundtable the Peterborough Chamber held with 24 businesses from all sectors of the Peterborough economy," adds Harrison. "They focus on the need for more time to adapt, as well as, providing sector-specific relief, and considering other ways to achieve the desired outcome."

We thank our member businesses for providing their comments and adding their voice to this conversation. As the cover letter to the report states, "employers and employees have to band together to make the economy work."

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A second location for local retailer and celebration of three decades in business

Lockside Trading Company a three-time National Award winning retailer, family run since 1987, is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year!

Lockside would also like to announce that they are opening a

LOCKSIDE Trading Company
1987 2017

Young's Point & Haliburton

second location at 183 Highland Street in downtown Haliburton.

Stop in for their grand opening July 29th and say hi to Sam and Jessica. Who will be running the Haliburton store. Both are designers by trade and longtime friends of the Lockside Trading Company.

More: lockside.com

Enjoy lunch on the lake

Lloyd Graham of Pedal 'n' Paddle welcomed Moe Grant as a partner and introduced pontoon boat tours, lunch on the lake, and other new services.

More: peterboroughpedalnpaddle.com

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