

## Pillar 5 Shift How People Travel



**77.7% of people took transit or hybrid trips to the 2025 Pride Parade – up from 66.4% in 2023.**



**We work with major employers to encourage transit, cycling, carpooling, and flexible work hours.**



**59.4 km of new bike lanes were added over the last three years. More coming in 2026.**



**Bike Share rides grew by 10% in 2025 with 373K unique riders – a 40% increase over 2024.**



**Fewer cars on the road means less congestion for everyone – including drivers.**

# It's no secret: bike lanes are part of the solution



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## Ford government's own research warned that removing Toronto bike lanes may not ease congestion, may make roads less safe

The government was warned that its plan to remove bike lanes may not get traffic moving as advertised, documents show.

Updated March 18, 2025 at 3:16 p.m. | March 12, 2025 | 3 min read



Toronto

## Ontario aware bike lane removals may not reduce congestion, could make people less safe: internal documents

Engineering report done for the province says collisions for all road users could increase by 54%



Lane Harrison · CBC News · Posted: Mar 12, 2025 2:28 PM EDT | Last Updated: March 13



New internal documents reveal that Ford's government is aware of many of the risks associated with removing bike lanes in Toronto. As CBC's Lane Harrison explains, the report shows the move may not have an impact on congestion and could increase collisions for everyone who uses roads.

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## Removing bike lanes will likely worsen gridlock, lead to more collisions: government documents

Engineering report prepared for the province estimates Queen's Park's plan to remove Toronto bike lanes could increase collisions by 54 per cent

Aidan Chamandy and Jack Hauen  
Mar 11, 2025 4:53 PM  
Updated Mar 11, 2025 5:03 PM



## Overall Proposal Considerations and Risks

1398

Consideration	Rationale
Alignment with Other Provincial Initiatives	Lack of alignment with other provincial initiatives such as Transit-Oriented Communities, First Mile-Last Mile, Cargo E-Bikes, E-Scooter, safe active transportation (Provincial Planning Statement, GGH Transportation Plan), existing provincial funding for active transportation infrastructure (e.g., the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program), and support to local businesses (economic development).
Congestion and Road capacity impacts	<p>Requiring provincial approval of municipal proposals to install infrastructure may not have the desired goal of reducing congestion. In the absence of dedicated cycling infrastructure, cyclists will likely continue to use key routes in affected municipalities.</p> <p>Cycling has been shown to have a positive impact on congestion in North American cities. The Canadian Automobile Association recommends the use of cycling infrastructure as a congestion management measure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycling lanes, once implemented, can have an overall longer-term positive effect on traffic by increasing active transportation mode share and reducing demand on vehicle lanes. A Study of New York City found that bike lanes increase the probability of riding a bike by 10%.</li> <li>• Cycling lanes (which can move 10 times more people than a traffic lane) can provide a safe and convenient way to service an increasing number of trips while realizing a positive impact on congestion. Research shows that adding a protected bike lane reduces collisions and injuries by 30-50%.</li> </ul> <p>Curbside patio infrastructure e.g. Café T.O.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A study of CafeTO's impacts on mobility showed the peak increase to travel times to be 3%.</li> <li>• The total number of travelers did not change after the installation of cafes; however, a 10% decrease in the volume of cars was observed that shifted to pedestrian and bike modes.</li> </ul>

## Overall Proposal Considerations and Risks

1396

Consideration	Rationale
Scope and impacts	<p>The Province would need to determine the scope of application, for example, based on a population threshold. Depending on scope, there may be a significant number of applications, and the Minister would own the impacts of decisions.</p> <p>The scope could be prescribed in subsequent regulation (e.g. through a regulation that lists the applicable municipalities or a class of municipalities).</p> <p>If details are prescribed through regulation, decision would be needed re: Minister reg vs LGIC reg.</p>
Consistent Policy Application	Municipalities subject to the initiative would need to demonstrate that new and existing bike lanes would not have a substantive negative impact on vehicular congestion or cause other negative impacts with the removal of a traffic lane.
Inter-governmental Relationship	<p>High risk of negative impact to intergovernmental relationship with municipalities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of municipalities criticizing the Province for encroaching on municipal decision-making authority</li> <li>• Risk of jeopardizing progress made through the Toronto-Ontario and Ottawa- Ontario New Deals</li> <li>• Risk of public criticism if province seen as slowing down approvals, denying infrastructure implementation or directing the removal of existing cycling infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Economic	Risk of negative impacts on local businesses (e.g., less foot traffic). Evidence shows that bike lanes have a positive economic impact on local retail businesses.
Stakeholders and Consultation	Expected substantial negative stakeholder reaction (e.g., BIAs, cycling advocates, municipalities, bike rental operators), with some stakeholders neutral to positive (e.g., drivers advocacy groups). Consideration could be given to including a public consultation component on proposals under consideration.
Financial Impacts	Municipalities are likely to ask the province for funding to cover costs incurred in conducting analysis, gathering data, and administration required to submit proposals to the province, as some municipalities may find these costs burdensome.

## What – Making driving easier and more convenient

### Proposed Actions & Summary

#### Framework for bike lanes that require removal of a traffic lane

Enable provincial approval authority for the installation of new bike lanes on municipal roads, where the removal of an existing vehicle lane is required.

- Municipalities would be required to seek provincial approval to allow for new bike lane construction, if specified criteria are met.

Enable provincial authority to require municipalities to submit information about existing bike lanes on municipal roads, where the removal of an existing vehicle lane took place.

- Municipalities would be compelled to collect and provide information about existing bike lanes on a set/periodic basis.

Implementation approach, including scope (e.g., large municipalities and/or road class), review/approval criteria, required timelines for municipal submissions, and service standards for ministry decision-rendering is being developed. MTO would lead and coordinate the acceptance, review and decision-rendering on municipal submissions. The Minister would communicate the decision/review findings to municipalities.

### Key Considerations

#### Benefits:

- Would provide an additional tool for the province to prioritize vehicular traffic-flow on high-traffic routes in large municipalities.

#### Risks:

- Likely to be negatively received by municipalities, biking community and environment advocates, and seen as encroaching on municipal decision-making authority. **The proposal may also run counter to provincial initiatives and may not reduce congestion.**
- An increase in resources/FTEs would be required to review exemption submissions.
- **For more information see "risks" section.**

## Solicitor-Client Privilege

#### Other Considerations:

- The requirement for provincial approval is proposed to be in effect April 1, 2025, and is proposed to exclude any bike lanes where a contracting process for construction has already commenced.
- Given the construction season timing, and existing municipal plans/budgets for bike lane installation, it is not anticipated that an influx of new bike lanes will be constructed before April 2025.
- Requires consultation with MMAH and municipalities as it directly impacts application of municipal powers.
- Consultation with targeted municipalities is recommended to define implementation scope (e.g., number of expected bike lanes that would seek exemption), implementation approach (e.g., by population size or road capacity), and for input on criteria.
- MTO is further exploring data regarding bike lane use during winter months in relation to congestion; no data has been located. However, several municipalities have a commitment to maintain, at a minimum, a subset of bike lanes clear for year-round use.
- MTO does not currently have access to municipal cycling and local traffic data and, as such, would not be able to independently verify these elements of municipal submissions to the Province.
- If approved, MTO would report back on effectiveness of the initiative in 2027-28.

#### Submission Requirements

Submissions could be required to provide two types of information; required information would be consistent for both new and existing bike lanes and may include:

- 1) General rationale and considerations such as cycling demand (including seasonal demand), transit access, trip generators and connectivity, economic benefits, consistency to other municipal policy or actions plans.
- 2) Quantifiable impacts
  - a. Impacts to safety, including impacts to various road users (including drivers, pedestrians and cyclists), and to emergency response times;
  - b. Impacts to existing motor vehicle volumes.
  - c. Bike lane construction considerations - impacts to traffic disruption in proximity to project construction such as diversion routes, coordination with other construction projects and safety considerations for all users such as temporary, protected pedestrian access.

## Overall Issues/Risks

Issues/risks with a high risk level have been summarized below.

Risk Description: Reputational and Operational	Risk Level	Mitigation Strategy
<b>Making Life Easier: Making Driving Easier and More Convenient</b>		
<p><b>Framework for bike lanes that require removal of a traffic lane</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to be negatively received by municipalities, biking community and environment advocates.</li> <li>• The Province may be seen as encroaching on municipal decision-making authority; risk of jeopardizing progress made through the Toronto and Ottawa New Deals.</li> <li>• Risk of criticism if province is seen as slowing down approvals or denying bike lane implementation.</li> <li>• If municipalities do not have the required data on existing bike lanes, municipalities would likely seek the province to reimburse the costs of gathering the data.</li> <li>• Significant implementation risks to establish new ministry review process.</li> <li>• The Province would be seen as owning local decisions, including approval or denial of new bike lanes.</li> <li>• MTO does not currently have access to municipal cycling and local traffic data and, as such, would not be able to independently verify these elements of municipal submissions to the Province.</li> <li>• This initiative may run counter to other provincial initiatives (such as Transit Oriented Communities, Provincial Policy Statement, GGH Transportation Plan, First Mile / Last Mile, Cargo E-Bikes, E-Scooter, and safe active transportation and support to local business).</li> <li>• This initiative may not reduce congestion, as most research (e.g., Vancouver, New York, Washington) suggests reducing road capacity by introducing bike lanes can encourage biking and discourage car use, alleviating congestion (e.g. Congestion Solutions: Investments in Active Transportation by the CAA and the Journal of Urban Mobility (2024)).</li> </ul>	<b>High</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTO will post the approach on the ERO when the bill is introduced.</li> <li>• During the ERO period, MTO will consult with targeted groups, including large municipalities, for stakeholder reaction and to leverage municipal expertise in identifying implementation criteria details.</li> <li>• ERO comments will be reviewed and MTO will consider whether changes to the Bill should be recommended.</li> </ul>

# Engineering report - January 10, 2025:



Induced demand is a concept widely accepted, and repeatedly proven, in the transportation industry. It suggests that while congestion will temporarily improve on roads where capacity is increased, congestion will return as more drivers are attracted to the expanded facilities. This concept holds especially true on roads in dense urban areas, where latent traffic demand will rapidly exhaust added capacity. The removal of bike lanes may also result in people currently cycling deciding to instead drive, which would accelerate the return of traffic congestion. Drivers who started taking alternate routes in response to the installation of the bike lanes might also be attracted back following the removal of the bike lanes. This concept, while not proven in the context of bike lane removal, is widely known in traffic engineering<sup>3</sup>.

In addition, the effect of adding a traffic lane may give the appearance of congestion reduction over a short distance – shorter queue lengths at intersections, may be realized. However, over a longer corridor, the benefits of an additional traffic lane could be negated due to other bottlenecks in constrained sections (e.g., on-street parking, transit stops, bridges, underpasses), and delays incurred at intersections. It is often the case that a significant proportion of the delays experienced on a trip are incurred at signalized intersections. Without corridor-wide retiming of traffic signals and rebalancing of prioritization at the intersections of major streets (e.g., north-south versus east-west), the net result of bike lane removals could simply be more vehicles queued along already congested streets without significant reductions in travel times.

# We're not keeping up



**59.4 km of new bike lanes were added over the last three years.**  
More coming in 2026.

2025-2027 Cycling Network Plan **targeted 100 km of new bike lanes over 3 years**

Cycle Toronto specifically called for **150 km over 3 years**