

Why Highways Are So Important

by: News Canada (NC)—Transportation is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of all Canadians. Much of Canada's domestic and international freight is hauled on Canada's 24,400-kilometre National Highway System, the backbone of Canadian trade. In fact, the Canadian transportation system carries more than \$1 trillion worth of goods every year. If our transportation system isn't running smoothly, it affects our quality of life — from how much time we spend commuting, to what is available on store shelves and how much it costs. While every province and territory is responsible for highway safety by enforcing laws and maintaining highway infrastructure, Transport Canada is investing \$600 million under the Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP) to improve Canada's highways over five years. It's working with the provinces and territories to identify those parts of the national highway system that — because of growing traffic and increased trade — need immediate attention. In addition, SHIP includes \$100 million to fund initiatives to better integrate our national transportation system. This includes funding to deploy intelligent transportation systems across Canada to improve things such as traffic and cargo flow, traveller information, toll collecting and public transit, and resources to improve traffic flows at border crossings. Improving the efficiency of border crossings is important to Canada's economic development. For example, the Lacolle-Champlain border crossing forms the most important trade corridor between Quebec and New York State. More than \$15 billion worth of exported goods travel through this border crossing annually, with a daily volume of more than 2,000 trucks. A SHIP project is now underway that will improve the flow of people and goods at this vital crossing, as well as enhance safety and security. Similar projects are in place at border crossings in Windsor, Ontario, and in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. The Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP) supports trade, tourism and investment in Canada; sustains strategic investments in all parts of the country to reflect regional needs; makes the Canadian highway transportation system more reliable, efficient, and technologically advanced; and improves the quality of life of Canadians by promoting safer and more environmentally sustainable transportation. For more information on SHIP, and Government of Canada highway improvement programs in your area, visit <http://www.tc.gc.ca>. - News Canada

About the Author

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