

Stakeholders' Views of Good Movement in Central Ontario Real Solutions for Today's Communities

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ABSTRACT

Efficient goods movement, i.e., the transportation of goods by truck, rail, air, water and pipeline, is vital to a healthy, sustainable economy. However, many people view the movement of goods as a traffic or planning challenge: neighbourhood concerns about truck noise and vibration, vehicle spills that tie up highways for hours, intermodal rail yards that sterilize other land uses, and older port and industrial areas ripe for redevelopment. Although these challenges are real, a recent study in Central Ontario demonstrates that efficient goods movement can provide many opportunities to support transportation goals, and that these goals might not be achievable if goods movement is ignored. Examples include geometric improvements at key intersections to improve safety and operations for trucks and all users, investment in transit to free road space for trucks by diverting commuters from their autos, intermodal terminals that serve as the core of large, efficient concentrated employment nodes and multi-stakeholder forums that work together to resolve common problems.

The study's findings are pertinent to urban centres across the country, in part because goods movement is pervasive wherever there is industry and commerce but also because so little is done or known about goods movement in planning, traffic engineering and operations and site development. Moreover, the changing face of logistics, the multi-national / multi-branch nature of many Canadian industries and security issues at the US border mean that addressing truck issues in Moncton will impact what happens in Hamilton (and vice versa).

This paper describes the goods movement issues facing many urban centres in Canada, as exemplified by what carriers, governments and other stakeholders described in a recent study in Central Ontario.