

# traffic congestion in new york city essay sample



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## Traffic Congestion in New York City

Over the past decade, the streets, highways, tunnels and bridges of New York City and the surrounding metropolitan region have become increasingly clogged with traffic. In recent years, business leaders have become increasingly concerned about the traffic congestion in Manhattan and the region. The regional public transit and commuter rail system cannot provide everyone with a reasonable alternative to car travel. As a result, traffic congestion has become a real threat to future economic growth in New York City.

Traffic congestion affects the cost of doing business and cost of living in the entire region. It has been estimated that business costs, lost productivity and lost revenue have contributed to over 50, 000 jobs being lost every year in the New York Metropolitan Region. The greatest net losses in regional economic output are concentrated in Manhattan, New Jersey and Long Island.

The key industries of New York City are professional services, media and financial services. The operation of these industries tends to generate constant travel demands. Mobility is highly prized and as a result, these sectors contribute to high number of vehicles in the roads. New York is particularly dependent on trucks for delivery of goods and services. Within Manhattan, trucks are responsible for less than 10 percents of the daily travel, however, this equates to over 40, 000 trucks entering the area on weekdays. Therefore, it is a major contributor to the traffic problem.

The primary generator of congestion is the area of Manhattan between 60th Street and Battery, This is where Downtown business and Midtown are located. Communities across the city and the region suffer from through-traffic that is moving toward or away from this super-charged centre of commerce, tourism and dense residential activity. Every weekdays, around 3.6 million people travel into Manhattan south of 60 Street, a third of them in vehicles. Only half are commuters going to work.

The current public transit system is insufficient in terms of accessibility, quality and capacity. Even though the subway system of New York City is considered one of the world's best mass-transit systems, it has not been significantly expanded since the 1940s. Almost a million people still drive into Manhattan every day. Of all vehicles entering this business district, 40 per cent have single occupants and this number continues to grow. Midtown and Lower Manhattan contain more than one-third of the office jobs in the entire region.

### Solution

Congestion continues to worsen although government is making improvements in mass transit, traffic management and parking regulation. The historical response to heavy traffic was the building of new highways and increasing road capacity. There is no longer an option since there is no room in the tri-state region to build additional roads.

The way to manage congestion must come in the form of reducing the number of vehicles travelling in the city. The strongest positive effects of traffic reduction and improvements in speed would occur in downtown

Brooklyn, Long Island City, around the Williamsburg Bridge, 125th Street and the South Bronx. All these areas currently have a high level of congestion caused by primarily by through traffic to Manhattan. However, the problem remains of how to reduce the number of vehicles. The city is entirely dependent on trucks, hence limitation on the schedule or number of truck trips would cause a serious negative consequences for Manhattan. A number of public transport projects have been planned to reduce commuter traffic. These include Trans-Hudson Express commuter rail tunnel, No. 7 subway line extension to Far West Side and expanded ferry services.

Another way to improve congestion that is being considered is congestion charging. Congestion charges is a system of surcharging users of a transport network in periods of peak demand to reduce traffic congestion. City such as London and Singapore have introduced congestion-pricing zones. Therefore, people required to decide whether to drive or take public transport, based on the size of the charge and by how much they value their time.

Traffic congestion has caused a huge impact on household level. Lack of family time or communication is one of the causes. Families are more disconnected due to traffic congestion. People who work spend too much time on the road and by the time they reach home, their children have probably gone to sleep or they might not even have time to have dinner together. And also people who live in houses that are located adjacent to a major highway would be affected by noise pollution, this problem can cause people to move away from the area. Noise pollution can cause decrease work efficiency, people may feel discomfort and distracted, thus cannot

concentrate on work or study. Noises by congestion can make nervous system disorder and mental disturbance.

For community level, delays is one of the biggest problems. During the morning commute there is additional stress because delays caused by traffic can make people late for work. And at the end of the day, the afternoon rush hour is again a frustrating time because workday is done and people want to get home to relax, and traffic is preventing it. Delays may result in late arrival for employment, meetings and education, resulting in lost business, disciplinary action or other personal losses. Congestion also causes drivers to be frustrated and stressed, which encourage road rage and reduced health.

Road rage is aggressive or angry behaviour by a driver of an automobile. Such behaviour might include rude gestures, verbal insults, deliberately driving in an unsafe or threatening manner. Hence, road rage increases car accident on the roads. Emergency Vehicles are also affected because of traffic congestion. An ambulance or fire truck and the emergency vehicle is unable to respond in an appropriate amount of time because of congestion, it can be a danger to people or people's property. Congestion also affects both mental and physical health problem. A research study found that, for each additional hour in a car, there is a 6 per cent increase in the likelihood of obesity. These impacts are from a long commute alone and do not include the health impacts, such as fatigue, digestion difficulties, pains and increased heart rate, associated with stress brought on by traffic congestion. Another research highlights that traffic congestion impairs health, psychological adjustment, work performance and overall satisfaction with

life. Traffic congestion has also been found to disturb mood, frustration tolerance and work absences.

For city-wide level, global warming is one of the major problems. The stopping and starting in traffic jams burns fuel at a greater rate than smooth rate of travel on the open highway. This increase in fuel consumption costs commuters additional money for fuel and it also contributes to the amount of emissions released by vehicles. These emissions cause air pollution and are related to global warming.