

Views from Toronto: Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the fabric that binds great cities together. This was a frequent theme repeated throughout the Leadership Study Mission to Toronto recently conducted by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce.



Morinec

Most people never give a thought to how clean water gets into their homes or how waste is disposed of safely to keep our water supplies healthy. The transportation system is our most visible infra-

structure component and probably the most controversial.

To attract new businesses and support the economy of Middle Tennessee, the transportation system is constantly being challenged to provide more capacity. People who suggest a ban on new roads are losing sight of the fact that those roads allow groceries and other products to reach local stores and businesses. The real issue is that the transportation system needs options. You wouldn't think of using a semi-trailer truck to commute to an office job because of the size of the vehicle, its operating cost and the difficulty in parking it.

An efficient mass transit system could be the right vehicle to move many of us to work and support other routine trips. In great cities like Toronto, the mass transit system connects the neighborhoods to business centers, shopping, restaurants, entertainment and recreation venues. A modern, safe and efficient transit system is a tremendous aid to visitors and tourists that are unfamiliar with the city and don't want to be restricted to the expense of renting a car to be able to get around. As more people choose the transit option, cars are removed from the highway and capacity of the existing roadway system is improved.

Nashville is a great city in many ways and needs to invest in its transit system to be able to compete with cities like Denver, Charlotte and San Antonio for clean businesses with high paying jobs that can help sustain our economy. That investment won't happen without a dedicated funding source. We need to support the efforts of the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee, the Mayor's Caucus and concerned citizens to bring this need to reality.

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