

The Star-Ledger

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2019

Big rigs are hauling \$643B worth of stuff in N.J., and more trucks are coming

By [Larry Higgs | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

If you think you're seeing more trucks on the road, it's not your imagination. And more are coming, meaning that work needs to be done on highways and other infrastructure to keep up with the demand.

[A report by TRIP](#) predicted that the value of freight moved by trucks in New Jersey will increase by 93% between 2016 to 2045, the 13th highest increase in the nation. Measured in weight of cargo moved, that would be a 54% increase for the same time period.

[TRIP is a private, non-profit organization](#) that researches, evaluates and distributes data about surface transportation issues and promotes investment in infrastructure. The report used Federal Highway Administration Freight data.

New Jersey ranked among the top 10 to 20 states in several trucking categories, according to TRIP. It also has [the worst commercial truck bottleneck in the nation](#), on I-95 at Route 4 in Fort Lee by the George Washington Bridge.

The report said New Jersey's total freight system moved approximately \$905 billion worth of freight in 2016, \$643 billion of that is shipped by truck, the eighth highest rate in the nation. By cargo weight, New Jersey was thirteenth highest in the nation at 360 billion tons moved by truck in 2016.

What's causing the demand? One reason is the "Amazon effect," said Rocky Moretti, TRIP spokesman. If you bought something online recently, it was delivered by truck.

"Consumers and businesses demand faster movement of goods," he said. "Demand for freight shipment has increased nationally, due to population growth, and (the) just-in-time delivery format, manufacturing and warehousing."

[The Port of New York and New Jersey has had record-breaking growth](#) in cargo shipment, which made it the second busiest port in the nation this year, according to Port Authority of New York and New Jersey statistics. Better intermodal infrastructure is also needed to move those shipping containers from ships to rail, Moretti said.

"We are seeing huge increases in volume at maritime ports. We need the (transportation) network and capacity so goods can move without tying up communities," he said.

What are some solutions for handling the coming wave of cargo and trucks?

Highways and intermodal facilities between ports and railroads have to be brought into a state-of-good repair and expanded as needed, Moretti said.

"New Jersey is having some of the fastest anticipated growth. The challenge is making improvements to the transportation infrastructure," he said. "A lot of work needs to be done."

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