

Underused Thoroughfare Discovered in Moscow

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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While city authorities continue to examine solutions to the capital's traffic problems, journalists from Channel One have proposed using the Moscow River as a means of offloading crowded streets and reducing congestion.

Moscow officials say the existing transportation network is 25 to 30 years behind the real needs of the city.

It is estimated that the city needs an additional 350 to 400 kilometers of roadways, as the main road network is operating at full capacity and in parts is clearly overloaded. For the majority of residents — up to 90 percent — the average trip takes 65 minutes, which is 25 percent more than the accepted urban standard of 40 to 45 minutes.

The situation is aggravated by inefficient use of the existing road network, including unnecessarily long trips due to its poor organization, violation of traffic rules by drivers —

which leads to additional congestion — and an overall lack of major thoroughfares in the city.

Recently Channel One journalists suggested shifting passengers from ground transportation to the Moscow River. It is a broad, underutilized avenue running through the city center, the television journalists said.

They recognize, however, that this idea has several drawbacks. First is the seasonality of this form of transport. Free navigation on the Moscow River officially started Friday and is only possible for the next five months. Second, existing piers are mostly located far from public transportation transfer points. Also, the city does not have the necessary number of river craft to serve potential passenger traffic. And tickets are not likely to be cheap.

The Mayor's Office expects to attract not only federal and regional financing for its transportation improvement plans, but also private investment. Experts do not foresee high profits for river transport due to its seasonality, high fuel costs and rental charges for docks. The press service of the Capital Shipping Company declined to comment on the new idea.

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