

This trend, discussed in the Nov. 12 NYMTC [post](#), shows the folly of relying on tolls as a revenue source.

[http://www.nydailynews.com/money/2008/11/12/2008-11-12\\_incredible\\_shrinking\\_demand\\_for\\_mta\\_brid-2.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/money/2008/11/12/2008-11-12_incredible_shrinking_demand_for_mta_brid-2.html)

**DAILY NEWS** | Money

## **Incredible shrinking demand for MTA bridges and tunnels**

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Sabo/News

The Brooklyn Bridge, as seen from Manhattan.

The number of drivers using [MTA](#) bridges and tunnels has fallen for 12 straight months, another troubling threat to the agency's bottom line, officials said Wednesday.

"I can't say I remember anything like that," MTA Bridges and Tunnels Acting President David Moretti said.

The latest statistics show drivers took 25 million trips over bridges and through tunnels last month, down 1.3 million - or 4.8% - from October 2007.

Much of the 12-month slide can be attributed to high gas prices. But last month's downturn may be the result of commuters no longer having jobs to go to in [Manhattan](#), officials said. Traffic at the MTA's four Manhattan crossings was down on average about 7% from September to October, even though gas prices had fallen, [Moretti](#) said.

"It would be the high-paid guys and gals who would rather drive [to work] than ride the train," [MTA Chairman Dale Hemmerdinger](#) said. "My goodness."

Even though drivers are taking fewer trips, overall revenues are still up this year because tolls were raised in March. Officials are closely monitoring the numbers, [Moretti](#) said.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels is a big source of funds for the mass transit network of buses, subways and commuter trains, providing more than \$700 million in surplus funds annually.