

NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

No. 2022-P234

To Board of Directors

For: DECISION

Date 2022-01-20

Subject/Title

Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region

Summary

- This submission is for approval of the Plan (Appendix A), subsequent to the previous draft that was presented to the Board of Directors on November 19, 2021 and concurrently subject to extensive stakeholder and public engagement.
- The Plan provides a shared vision, objectives, and strategies for the interprovincial movement of people and goods in the National Capital Region through to 2050.
- It includes directions, strategies, and initiatives to help the region achieve common goals and objectives along with a monitoring framework for the short, medium and long terms.
- Over 3,000 respondents completed the online surveys and provided more than 6,700 comments during the two rounds of engagements in 2020 and 2021.
- Most respondents in the last consultation support the draft Plan. They agreed on key themes including the following which resulted in minor changes:
 - Strong desire for clear directions about future interprovincial infrastructure;
 - Robust support for interprovincial sustainable travel options;
 - Concerns about community quality of life and the need to find sustainable solutions to managing interprovincial truck traffic; and
 - Desire for more details about the Plan, including implementation specifics.

Risk Summary

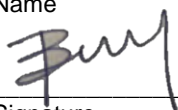
- Failure of all levels of government to continue to coordinate on interprovincial transportation planning and investments in the National Capital Region may negate the potential benefits of the Plan. This could be mitigated through sustained engagement with provincial, municipal and federal partners.

Recommendation

- That the Board of Directors approve the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region.

Submitted by:

Isabel Barrios, A/Vice-President, Capital Planning Branch
Name


Signature

1. Strategic Priorities

- 2021-2022 to 2025-26 Corporate Plan priorities:
 - Develop and communicate land use plans and provide timely and effective coordination of federal land use and design in the National Capital Region.
 - Provide leadership in achieving an environmentally sustainable and resilient National Capital Region and exemplary stewardship of federal lands and assets.
- Plan for Canada's Capital (2017-2067):
 - The National Capital Commission (NCC) will collaborate in the planning and delivery of future interprovincial crossings.
 - The NCC will support efforts toward seamless and continuous interprovincial transit services, consistent with the principles espoused by the 2013 Interprovincial Transit Strategy, including the adaptation of the Chief William Commanda (formerly Prince of Wales) rail bridge for transit and active mobility.
- Sustainable Development Strategy 2018-2023

2. Authority

- *National Capital Act*, Sections 10, 11.

3. Context

The NCC's mandate includes interprovincial transportation infrastructure and mobility planning, which are fundamental components for planning and building the National Capital Region. The Plan offers the following collective and inspiring vision:

By 2050, the transportation network to cross the Ottawa River will provide well-connected and sustainable travel options that contribute to a high quality of life and economic prosperity in the National Capital Region. The system of crossings will support equitable mobility and the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, while respecting the Region's natural environment and cultural heritage.

Developed in consultation with regional municipal, provincial and federal agencies, stakeholders and the public, the vision for the Strategic Plan sets a sustainable path to achieve common goals and objectives under five strategic pillars:

- One Region (Transportation Integration)
- Sustainable Use of Crossing Infrastructure
- Environment and Climate Change
- Economy
- Quality of Life

Through forecasting and back-casting, alternative scenarios were modelled and evaluated to explore alternative futures and trade-offs. Current trip origin-destination, pattern and purpose data are essential to avoiding uncertainties and for improving the

credibility of scenario planning. The update to the 2011 regional household origin-destination survey is envisioned for 2022-2023.

The results provided valuable information on how the multimodal interprovincial transportation system could perform from connectivity, mobility, resiliency, quality of life and sustainability perspectives. Measures were based on changes in transportation, land use, demographics, or other influencing factors such as work from home, climate change and technological innovations. The scenarios were tested against a baseline 2050 case and with the five pillars that support the common vision. The scenarios are in two broad categories: (1) making better use of existing crossings and (2) investing in interprovincial infrastructure.

Key findings for making better use of existing crossings:

- There are opportunities to optimize the people-carrying capacity of existing infrastructure.
- Where people choose to reside has implications on travel demand given current employment locations.
- Work from home levels will reduce commute demand only if coordinated so that not everyone travels to work on the same days.
- Interprovincial heavy truck movements would not significantly be reduced within the core area without the implementation of truck traffic restrictions or truck route network changes affecting the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and the King Edward-Rideau-Waller-Nicholas corridor.
- Banning or restricting all trucks from the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge without a new river crossing would result in the diversion of trucks to the Chaudière Crossing.

Key findings for investing in interprovincial infrastructure:

- A high capacity transit-only crossing in the core area would improve transit connectivity and increase people-moving capacity.
- A new interprovincial crossing in the east combined with municipal measures to prohibit heavy trucks from King Edward Avenue and the King Edward-Rideau-Walter-Nicholas corridor, such as a complete ban of heavy trucks or removal of the routes from the Ottawa truck route network will be most effective in the diversion of heavy trucks from the core area. A collaborative approach among the three levels of government is needed to reduce trucks from the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and associated Gatineau and Ottawa approaches.

The Plan provides a framework to monitor progress toward the vision and goals by measuring performance of accomplishing the proposed strategies. This enables informed decisions about how best to maintain, operate, and enhance the interprovincial transportation system.

The Plan also examines potential governance examples and practices for the coordination of planning and decision making among the agencies considering

autonomous authorities, relationships, degree of dependence, medium of exchange, means of conflict resolution and coordination. More detailed examination of governance models is required.

4. Analysis of Options

- N/A

5. Financial Details

- A budget of \$726,000 was needed to develop the Plan.

6. Opportunities and Expected Results

- The Plan delivers a visionary narrative of the benefits that coordinated interprovincial transport planning and strategies will offer the National Capital Region.
- The collaborative approach by the NCC and its partners enables interprovincial transport infrastructure to be integrated with broader regional planning policy.
- The Plan helps ensure that the planning and design of future interprovincial transport infrastructure and systems are integrated into more detailed plans for inter-modal and sustainable transportation.
- Cooperation among partners and public buy-in are essential to the successful delivery of interprovincial transport infrastructure and services.
- Continued partnership and collaboration are needed for development of monitoring tools to assess performance of the Plan's objectives and strategies.

7. Risks and Mitigation Measures

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Planned Response
Municipal, provincial, and federal partners do not view the Plan as a helpful blueprint.	Low	Major	Sustained engagement with provincial, municipal and federal partners for updating data and Plan implementation.

8. Consultations and Communications

- A Technical Team and a separate Steering Committee, both representing federal, provincial, and municipal agencies and the Société de transport de l'Outaouais (STO) were engaged throughout the development of the Plan.
- Two rounds of stakeholder and public engagement were conducted. The first round occurred in the fall of 2020 to help shape the Plan's vision, guiding principles and overall strategic directions. The second round of engagement occurred in

November 2021 to receive feedback on the draft final Plan. Over 3,000 respondents completed the online surveys and in total, provided more than 6,700 comments during the two rounds of engagements in 2020 and 2021.

- Most respondents in the last consultation support the draft Plan. They agreed on key themes including the following:
 - Strong desire for clear directions about future interprovincial infrastructure;
 - There is robust support for interprovincial sustainable travel options;
 - There are concerns about community quality of life and the need to find sustainable solutions to managing interprovincial truck traffic; and
 - There is a desire for more details about the Plan, including implementation specifics.

Changes to the final draft plan as a result for the recent consultation efforts include:

- New section about previous interprovincial transportation planning studies;
- New section about existing interprovincial bridges key facts;
- New information about potential additional measures that would be required to further reduce heavy truck movements through the core area beyond building a new crossing;
- Minor edits in various locations to provide more clarity; and
- New format and layout in keeping with NCC graphic quality and standards.

9. Next Steps

- Continued collaboration with agencies to implement the Plan, including:
 - Update travel and goods movement data;
 - Develop monitoring plan to evaluate how the Plan is performing;
 - Prioritize and move ahead with implementation of strategies;
 - Study alternative governance models; and
 - Update Plan once new data is available.

10. List of Appendices

Appendix A – Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region

Appendix B – Summary of Round Two Engagement

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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region

*A Strategic Plan for Interprovincial Crossings
and Sustainable Transportation
for the National Capital Region*

Draft Report | January 10, 2022



NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings
Plan for Canada's Capital Region

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A key component of interprovincial commuter travel is related to the federal policy for a 75% / 25% distribution of regional federal employees between Ottawa and Gatineau.

Executive Summary

The National Capital Commission (NCC) Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region: A Strategic Plan for Interprovincial Crossings and Sustainable Transportation for the National Capital Region (“The Strategic Plan”) sets out a vision for the interprovincial movement of people and goods in the National Capital Region today and towards 2050. It includes key directions, strategies and initiatives to help the region achieve common goals and objectives along with a monitoring framework to measure qualitative and quantitative monitoring indicators and targets over the short, medium and long terms. Its purpose is to inform interprovincial decisions in ways that are sustainable, equitable, and environmentally sensitive that work towards creating a more liveable and prosperous region.

The key findings of the analysis and the plan include:

People going to work and heavy truck movements represent the biggest challenges for interprovincial travel. The commuting peak is when congestion is heaviest; however, managing demand, either through shifting more people to transit, increasing shared space offices or increasing work-from-home, are impactful strategies. A key component of interprovincial commuter travel is related to the federal policy for a 75% / 25% distribution of regional federal employees between Ottawa and Gatineau. This distribution ratio is assumed to continue into the future for the purposes of this study. Meeting the challenge of reducing the volume and impact of heavy trucks in the core area will also require more than a new interprovincial crossing.

Increased congestion and travel times are inevitable with a growing population and downtown employment areas. It is important to recognize that accommodating growth in travel demand solely through building more vehicular lane will only lead to further congestion. Transit, walking and cycling would be more attractive if they provide more reliable, comfortable and time-competitive travel options.

Opportunities to enhance vehicular capacity are limited in the core area. However, analysis shows there is significant opportunity to increase the people-moving capacity of the existing crossings within the core through transportation initiatives. The planned transit projects are important to meet growth in travel demand. Analysis of the West Gatineau Tramway and the downtown transit loop shows that it can contribute significantly to meet the needs of interprovincial travel by increasing people moving capacity.



Analysis shows that diverting heavy trucks from the core area will require more than a new crossing, such as removing Rideau Street and King Edward Avenue from the truck route system, as proposed by the current City of Ottawa Transportation Master Plan.

Diverting heavy truck travel from the core area will require more than a new crossing. Efficient and well integrated interprovincial freight movement is essential to the economic vitality of the Capital region. A new interprovincial crossing combined with municipal measures to prohibit heavy trucks from the King Edward-Rideau-Waller-Nicholas corridor will be most effective in the diversion of heavy trucks from the core area. These are considerations to be examined by the new Sixth Interprovincial Crossing Office recently announced in the Federal Budget 2021.



The Vision for Interprovincial Transportation in 2050

The Strategic Plan Vision: By 2050, the transportation network to cross the Ottawa River will provide well-connected and sustainable travel options that contribute to a high quality of life and economic prosperity in the National Capital Region. The system of crossings will support equitable mobility and the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, while respecting the Region's natural environment and cultural heritage.

Developed in consultation with regional municipal, provincial and federal agencies, stakeholders and the public; the vision for the Strategic Plan sets a sustainable path to achieve common goals and objectives under five strategic pillars:

- One Region (Transportation Integration)
- Sustainable Use of Crossing Infrastructure
- Environment and Climate Change
- Economy; and,
- Quality of Life.

Testing Plan Directions

Based on existing and anticipated conditions, if current trends hold, the National Capital Region (NCR) will face significant transportation challenges in 2050 if no action is taken. As a part of the strategic planning process, several scenarios were prepared and tested to compare how different transportation initiatives and investments would impact travel patterns and behaviour in the NCR. These scenarios fell under two broad categories:

- 1. Making better use of existing crossings:** actions, including enhanced transit service, reconfiguration of existing crossings, and strong policies to manage interprovincial travel demand.
- 2. Investing in major infrastructure:** investments in new infrastructure to address 2050 transportation demands, such as new multi-modal crossings of the Ottawa River, a downtown traffic tunnel, or urban bypass routes.

The analysis of these two categories and respective scenarios showed that there are opportunities to make better use of existing crossings by managing current travel demand. Managing demand could include shifting trips to more sustainable modes and enhanced work-from-home and remote work-place strategies. These would provide opportunities to accommodate short-term growth while further studies take place on a new interprovincial crossing.

The system of crossings will support equitable mobility and the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, while respecting the Region's natural environment and cultural heritage.





Overall Plan Directions

Based upon the analysis of existing and future conditions and the testing of policy and infrastructure scenarios, five overall directions for the Strategic Plan are identified:

- 1. A Flexible Framework:** Flexible framework to guide interprovincial mobility
- 2. Better Data:** Updated data to ensure decisions are fact-based and reflect evolving conditions
- 3. Regional Collaboration:** Collaborative and coordinated interprovincial transportation planning and service delivery among the levels of government
- 4. Recovery Opportunities:** Leverage opportunities in post-pandemic recovery
- 5. Sustainability focus:** Prioritize sustainable mobility and climate resilience through targeted investments and optimization

These 5 directions were then applied to the pillars that the Strategic Plan is centered around:

- **Moving Together as One Region:** The National Capital Region includes several municipalities and two provinces. Meeting future interprovincial travel needs will require continued collaboration and shared decision making.
- **Encouraging Sustainable Mobility:** An important part of sustainable mobility is efficiently moving people and goods on the existing crossings. This involves offering comfortable and convenient transportation choices that are competitive with personal vehicles.
- **Protecting the Environment:** Transportation is a large source of greenhouse gas and other air pollutants; reducing these emissions, including overall automobile dependency, and implementing climate change resiliency into designs are large parts of achieving climate change goals.
- **Supporting Economic Prosperity:** The interprovincial crossings play a vital role for travel within the region and, more broadly, connecting the provincial and national highway networks.
- **Improving Quality of Life:** The transportation system plays an important part in maintaining and enhancing quality of life in the National Capital Region by providing reliable and safe travel options as well as managing negative externalities caused by transportation, including provision of accessible and reliable transit services and managing heavy truck movements.

As the National Capital Region continues to grow, a more formalized governance for regional and interprovincial transportation planning and investment could be beneficial to support enhanced collaboration, coordination, and cooperation.

The Strategic Framework

This Strategic Plan categorizes leading initiatives by the following three broad timelines that would phase the collective efforts toward achieving the shared vision:

- **Short-Term / Bold Starts (immediate to five-year horizon):** represents immediate strategies and quick wins that have a very strong potential to move towards achieving goals and objectives.
- **Medium-Term / Initiating Change (five to ten-year horizon):** represents strategies that can be taken in the near term that can play a greater role in shifting interprovincial travel behaviour.
- **Long-Term / Sustaining Progress (beyond ten years):** represents longer-term strategies where either implementation requires further study or where the action may be influenced by the performance of others pursued under bold starts or initiating change.

Governance

As the National Capital Region continues to grow, a more formalized governance for regional and interprovincial transportation planning and investment could be beneficial to support enhanced collaboration, coordination, and cooperation. The Strategic Plan does not recommend a model for governance for interprovincial travel or regional transportation in the National Capital Region. However, it does lay initial groundwork by establishing a common vision and objectives, assessing the general needs and gaps, continuing conversations between NCR agencies, and outlining potential governance models.

Monitoring Framework

Given that the Strategic Plan is intended to be a flexible living plan, systematic monitoring of progress towards the vision and goals is important for informing future updates. This Plan draws on existing approved multi-jurisdictional plans and documents, many of which include quantifiable objectives for similar broad goals. These have been integrated into the objectives of this Plan and will also inform the monitoring framework. Towards this effort, two quantitative approaches for monitoring have been developed as part of this Plan to be further reviewed and refined over time using the most up-to-date information.

- **Forecasting indicators:** these indicators were used to evaluate the 2050 scenarios during the Strategic Plan development process.
- **Monitoring indicators:** these indicators are intended to provide present-day snapshots of progress towards the vision and provide an indication of how implemented strategies are working.

The National Capital Commission (NCC) acknowledges that the National Capital Region, in which it carries out its mandate, is situated on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation. The NCC recognizes the important place that the Algonquin Nation has had in the past and will continue to have in the future of the Capital. The NCC values Indigenous heritage and knowledge and commits to continue working collaboratively with local Indigenous leaders and peoples to build a sustainable Capital Region.



1 Introduction

1.1 The Strategic Plan

The National Capital Commission (NCC)'s Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region: A Strategic Plan for Interprovincial Crossings and Sustainable Transportation for the National Capital Region (This "Strategic Plan") sets out a vision and strategies for the interprovincial movement of goods and people in phases towards 2050. The Strategic Plan supports the continued successes of the region while promoting the unique cultural, recreational and symbolic role of the National Capital Region (NCR).

The NCC has a mandate from the federal government to develop the Strategic Plan in collaboration with provincial and municipal governments, including:

- Ministry of Transportation of Ontario;
- Ministère des Transports du Québec;
- City of Ottawa, including OC Transpo;
- Ville de Gatineau; and,
- Société de transport de l'Outaouais (STO).

1.2 The National Capital Commission and National Capital Region

The National Capital Commission is a federal Crown corporation with a broad mandate to build a dynamic and inspiring capital that is a source of pride and unity for Canadians and a legacy for future generations. The NCC fulfills this mandate through its roles as the long-term planner of federal lands, principal steward of nationally significant public spaces, and creative partner for development and conservation.

The National Capital Region (NCR) is a rapidly growing area located on both sides of the Ottawa River. It includes the cities of Ottawa (Ontario) and Gatineau (Québec) and the surrounding rural municipalities. There are seven active interprovincial crossings between Ontario and Québec in the NCR: five bridges and two ferries. The region is set to grow significantly between now and 2050. The NCC has been mandated to prepare this plan that identifies strategies and supporting policies for the interprovincial movement of people and goods in ways that are sustainable, equitable, and that support a more liveable and prosperous region.

The National Capital Commission is a federal Crown corporation with a broad mandate to build a dynamic and inspiring capital that is a source of pride and unity for Canadians and a legacy for future generations.

1.3 The Process: How We Got Here

The Strategic Plan was developed in four phases, starting from spring 2020 and ending in fall 2021 (Exhibit 1).

Figure 1.1: The Strategic Plan Development Process

Phase 1 Assess Needs & Opportunities	Spring 2020	Identified existing plans and policies of local agencies and reviewed existing travel patterns and forecasts to identify needs and opportunities.
Phase 2 Establish Vision & Goals	Summer/ Fall 2020	Established a vision, supporting goals, and objectives to guide scenario development in Phase 3 and the final Strategic Plan development in Phase 4.
Phase 3 Develop & Evaluate Future Scenarios	Winter 2020/ Spring 2021	Developed and evaluated a series of conceptual scenarios to identify potential solutions to achieve the vision.
Phase 4 Develop the Strategic Plan	Summer/ Fall 2021	Identified a series of potential short and long-term strategies to achieve the vision and a monitoring framework to measure progress towards the vision

1.4 Timing of Upcoming Data

The Strategic Plan and its analyses used the most up-to-date data for population and employment forecasts and regional transportation travel data. These include origin-destination survey data from 2011 and commercial vehicle data from 2007. This data was adjusted based on known trends; however, recent impacts from the pandemic and the accelerating evolution in mobility will need to be better understood.

The Strategic Plan is a “living document” that will be updated as conditions evolve over time.

It is anticipated that the NCR-household Origin-Destination survey will be undertaken in fall 2022, with results available in 2023. This data will update the understanding of travel patterns, purposes, modes and travel demand forecasts. NCR municipalities are also investigating the possibility of updating trucking data through a commercial vehicle survey in the next few years. This survey would provide detailed origin-destination information for trucks moving through the NRC. Population and employment forecasts for Gatineau and Ottawa are also routinely updated as part of the ongoing planning process.

1.5 Relationship to Other Relevant Studies and Initiatives

There are several other relevant transportation studies and initiatives underway that are important to monitor as this Strategic Plan is updated in the future. These studies, initiatives, and plans include:

- Establishment of a new Sixth Interprovincial Crossing Office as per Federal Budget 2021;
- Establishment of a new NCC Transit Office as per Federal Budget 2021;
- Studies/plans by the STO related to the West Gatineau Tramway, including the final alignment;
- The Ottawa Transportation Master Plan Update;
- STO and OC Transpo transit service plans;
- The Alexandra Interprovincial Bridge replacement project;
- Any future studies related to a potential Interprovincial Downtown Transit Loop.

These studies will include recommendations, either infrastructure, policy, or both, that will influence, at least in part, the broader interprovincial transportation network, including interprovincial transportation patterns.

Updates to the Strategic Plan

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented change, with drastic impacts on health, economy, environment, and society.

The Strategic Plan draws on the currently available information to consider how the pandemic will affect cities in the future.

However, the National Capital Commission acknowledges that there is uncertainty about the long-term implications of the pandemic and a need for ongoing monitoring and integration of updated data.

Updates to regional travel data are expected to begin in late 2022, with results available in 2023. The Strategic Plan is intended to be reviewed and revised after these updates are complete.

The feedback from these various groups demonstrated strong support for the vision, goals, and objectives of the Strategic Plan. Key priorities, needs, and desires for these groups were also identified.

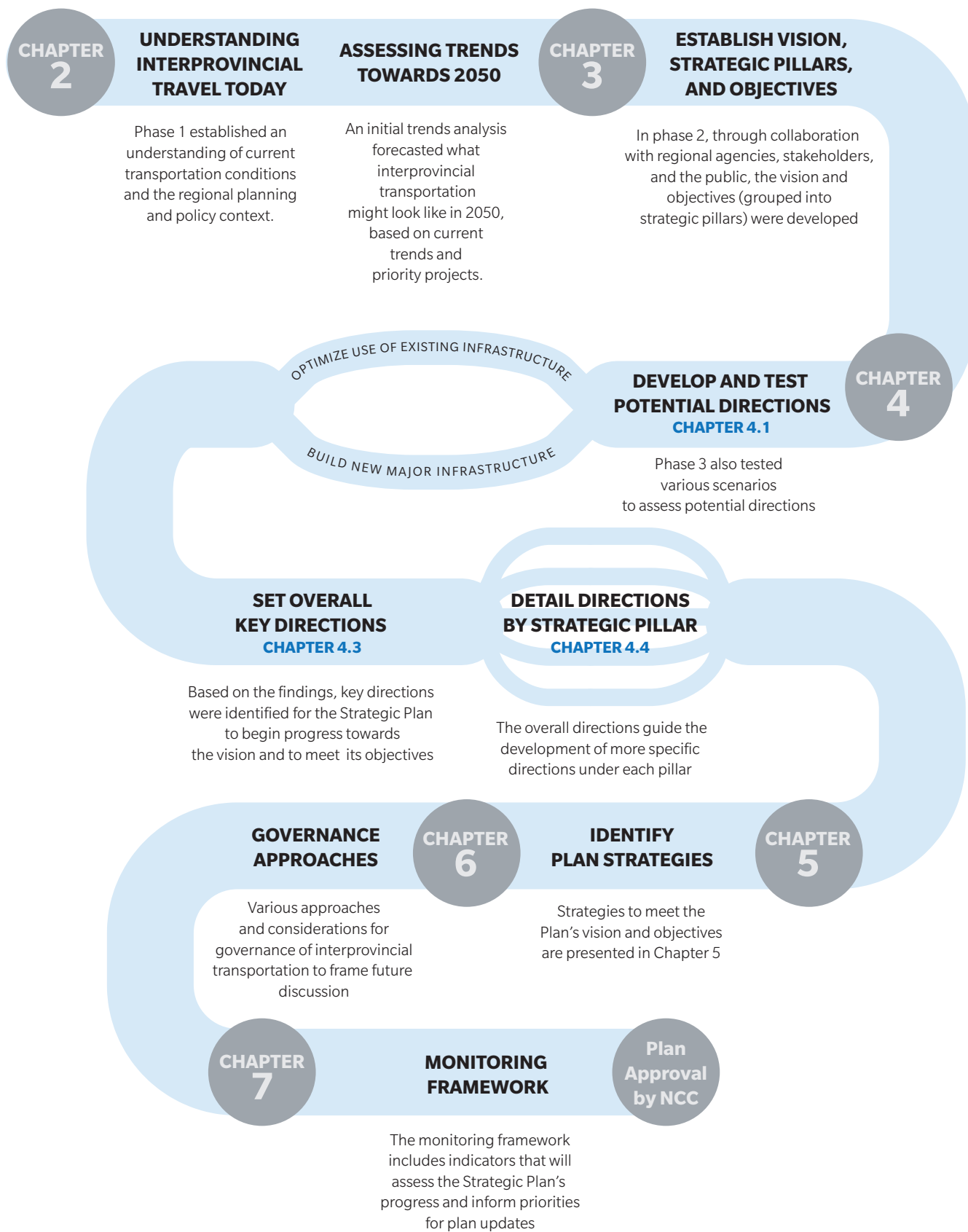
1.6 What We Heard

Consultation was an important part of the Strategic Plan. A range of engagement strategies were used to reach members of the public, associations and businesses, in addition to extensive consultation with other federal, provincial and municipal partners and regional transit operators in the NCR. The feedback from these various groups demonstrated strong support for the vision, goals, and objectives of the Strategic Plan. Key priorities, needs, and desires for these groups were also identified. These were then used to refocus the Strategic Plan to support local community needs.

Key issues identified include:

- The need to manage the impact of interprovincial truck traffic on neighbourhoods and communities;
- The need to protect the environment and reduce climate change impacts;
- The need to consider all modes, including sustainable modes and personal vehicles; and
- The need to look at interprovincial transportation as an integrated system that includes more than just the crossings.

1.7 How to read the Strategic Plan





2 National Capital Region: Today and Towards 2050

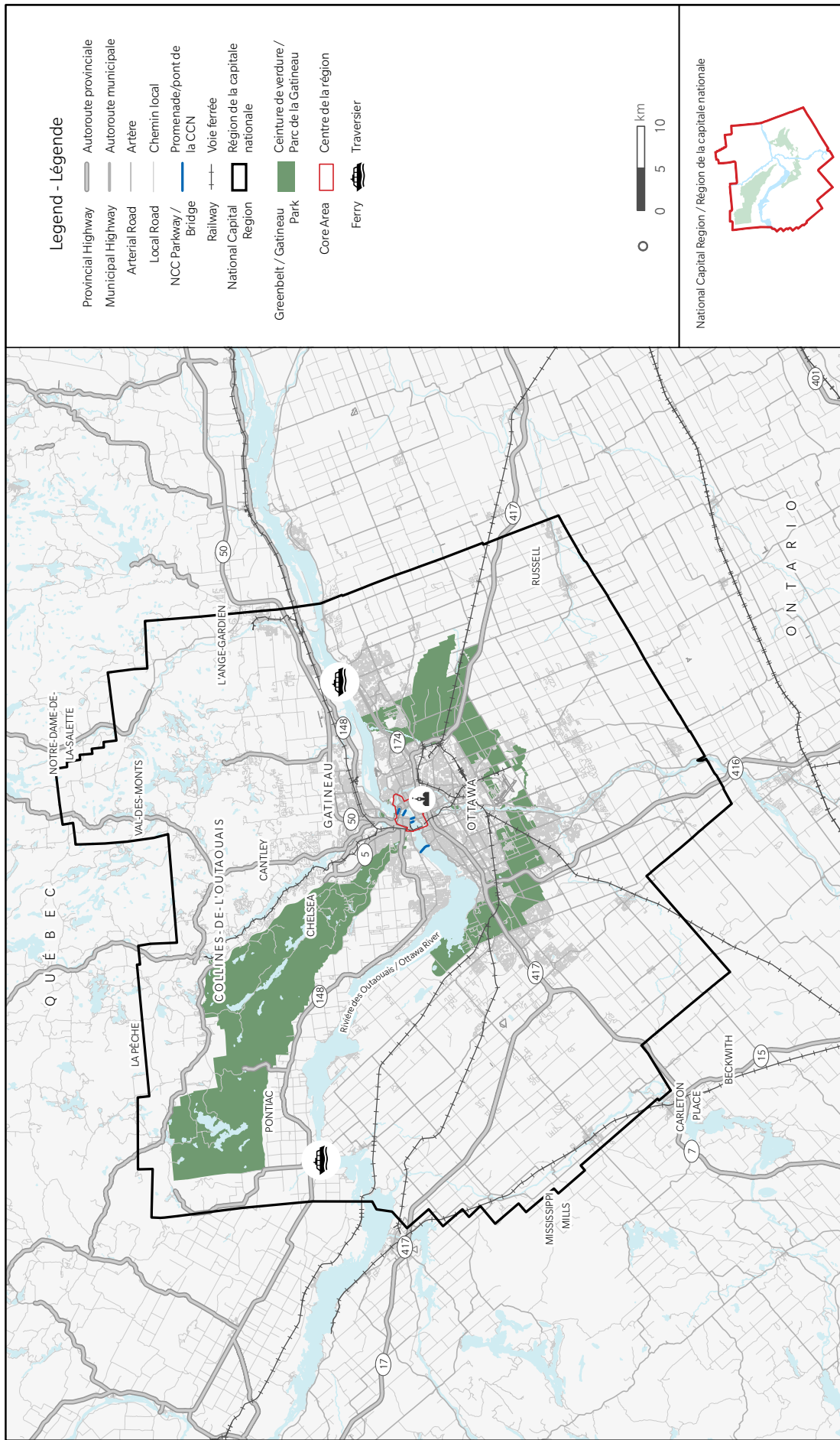
The National Capital Region is set to experience significant growth between now and 2050. More people and jobs in denser areas presents opportunities to be harnessed and demands to be managed.

2.1 National Capital Region Today

The National Capital Region (NCR) covers an area of 4,715 km². It straddles the Ottawa River and includes the cities of Ottawa (Ontario) and Gatineau (Québec), as well as surrounding rural municipalities. Provincial transportation is under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and the Ministère des transports du Québec (MTQ). In 2016, the NCR was home to approximately 1,260,000 people and 627,000 jobs. The interprovincial crossing system in the NCR includes two ferry crossings and five active bridges.

The two main transit agencies in the NCR are OC Transpo (Ottawa) and the Société de transport de l'Outaouais (STO, Gatineau). OC Transpo currently provides seven conventional transit routes that cross the interprovincial bridges, while the STO has over 30 routes. Rural transit services in the Outaouais are provided by Transcolline, while rural municipal transit services in the Ottawa area are provided by several providers including Leduc Bus Lines and 417 Bus Lines. Both Gatineau and Ottawa have downtown cores that are well served by rapid transit and both have plans to extend their respective rapid transit networks. While the two rapid transit networks do not currently physically connect across the Ottawa River, the STO has recently proposed a West Gatineau tramway to downtown Ottawa that includes improved connections. The NCR also includes a robust cycling network, particularly in the downtown core. This includes both shared and separated paths and reflects Ottawa and Gatineau's commitment to increasing the number of people who travel by cycling.

Figure 2.1: National Capital Region



LONG TERM INTEGRATED INTERPROVINCIAL CROSSINGS PLAN FOR CANADA'S CAPITAL REGION - A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR INTERPROVINCIAL CROSSINGS AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION FOR CANADA'S CAPITAL REGION

PLAN INTÉGRÉ À LONG TERME DES LIAISONS INTERPROVINCIALES POUR LA RÉGION DE LA CAPITALE DU CANADA - UN PLAN STRATÉGIQUE POUR LES LIAISONS INTERPROVINCIALES ET LE TRANSPORT DURABLE POUR LA RÉGION DE LA CAPITALE DU CANADA



2.2 Land Use Planning (Roles and Responsibilities)

The roles and responsibilities for land use planning throughout the NCR are complex due to the involvement of multiple levels of government - the Federal Government, and the Provincial and Municipal Governments. In addition, the NCC has a planning mandate established under the National Capital Act, which states that the NCC is responsible to:

“prepare plans for and assist in the development, conservation and improvement of the National Capital Region in order that the nature and character of the seat of the Government of Canada may be in accordance with its national significance.”

The National Capital Act authorizes the NCC to construct infrastructure, engage in joint projects with local municipalities and authorities, maintain property, preserve historic places, and conduct research related to planning in the NCR. The NCC’s planning framework requires all individuals and federal organizations to get NCC approval before undertaking projects on federal lands or in federal buildings in the NCR.

Overarching Foundational Documents

The Strategic Plan draws on a wide range of existing plans and documents at various government levels. This is to ensure that the Strategic Plan aligns with the goals, objectives, and policies of other plans and documents applicable to the NCR. These foundational documents include federal, provincial, and municipal plans that cover a range of topics, such as land use, zoning, urban design, heritage, Indigenous peoples, environment, and transportation among others. Key plans are listed below.

National Capital Commission

- *Plan for Canada’s Capital (2017-2067)* defines an overarching vision and strategic planning direction for the entire National Capital Region over a 50-year time horizon.
- *Capital Urban Lands Plan (2015)* is a land use plan. It provides detailed direction and guidance for the use and stewardship of urban federal lands.
- *NCC Sustainable Development Strategy (2018-2023)* defines the NCC’s role in creating a greener and more sustainable NCR that will thrive for future generations.



The National Capital Act authorizes the NCC to construct infrastructure, engage in joint projects with local municipalities and authorities, maintain property, preserve historic places, and conduct research related to planning in the NCR.

Plan for Canada's Capital (2017-2067) defines an overarching vision and strategic planning direction for the entire Capital Region over a 50-year time horizon.

Provincial Governments

- *Preserving and Protecting our Environment for Future Generations: A Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan* is intended to provide general guidance and principles to achieve a balance between meeting Canada's 2030 reduction targets under the Paris Agreement and economic prosperity.
- *Plan d'action 2013-2020 sur les changements climatiques* presents actions required in all the sectors of the economy to reach the objective of reducing Québec's greenhouse-gas-emissions to 20% below the 1990 GHG emissions levels by 2020.
- *Politique de mobilité durable du Gouvernement du Québec: transporter le Québec vers la modernité (2018)* includes sustainable mobility policies, actions and monitoring for the sustainable movement of people and goods to the year 2030.

Municipal Governments

- *City of Ottawa Official Plan (2003)* provides a vision for the future growth of the city and a policy framework to guide the city's physical development to the year 2031. The Official Plan is currently being updated.
- *Ville de Gatineau - Schéma d'aménagement et de développement révisé (2015)* provides a direction that reflects the planning orientations, priorities, and values of the Ville de Gatineau over the horizon 2016 to 2050.

It includes the action to work with regional partners to maintain freight transportation on the KERWN corridor in Ottawa in the event of a bridge being built in the eastern part of the region.

- *City of Ottawa Transportation Master Plan (2013)* has a strong focus on supporting active mobility and transit projects, recognizing the past imbalance in the funding of auto-centric projects. The Transportation Master Plan is currently being updated.

The current plan states that the City will remove Rideau Street and King Edward Avenue from the City's identified truck route system once a safe and efficient alternative is found.

Previous Interprovincial Transportation Planning and Related Studies

- *Strategic Transportation Initiative for Canada's Capital Region (2005)*: Outlined the mandate, strategies, and actions for the NCC's role in the planning and implementation of transportation infrastructure supporting the NCR.
- *Interprovincial Crossings Environmental Assessment Study Transportation Report Final (2013)*: The NCC, in partnership with the MTO and the MTQ and in cooperation with the two municipalities, initiated the Interprovincial Crossings Environmental Assessment Study in 2006. The multi-phased study examined "reasonable options to improve interprovincial transportation capacity across the Ottawa River to address long-term needs." The study was terminated in 2013 due to a lack of consensus among the study partners leading to the rejection of Kettle Island as the study's preferred corridor for a new interprovincial crossing.
- *Interprovincial Transit Strategy for Canada's Capital Region (2013)*: This was a collaborative effort between the City of Ottawa, the Ville de Gatineau, the STO, and the NCC. The strategy recommended policies and measures towards a seamless interprovincial transit system.
- *Downtown Ottawa (Truck) Tunnel Feasibility Study (2016)*: This feasibility study by the City of Ottawa was in response to the critical concerns regarding truck traffic between Highway 417 and the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge. The tunnel would provide a diversion route for heavy trucks from the surface road network.
- *STO - Étude complémentaire pour la réalisation d'un système de transport collectif structurant dans l'ouest de la ville de Gatineau (Additional study for a structuring public transit system in Gatineau's west end) (ongoing)*: This study by the STO analyzed the possibilities for improving transit in west Gatineau to support continued residential growth and to mitigate mobility challenges. In 2020, the study confirmed the need for a tram, utilizing the Portage Bridge to reach Ottawa.

This study by the STO analyzed the possibilities for improving transit in west Gatineau to support continued residential growth and to mitigate mobility challenges. In 2020, the study confirmed the need for a tram, utilizing the Portage Bridge to reach Ottawa.

The NCR is the centre of Federal Government activity, and this area has a higher number of public administration jobs than the national average. There are 153,000 public administration jobs, representing almost one-quarter of jobs for the entire area.

2.3 People and Jobs in the National Capital Region

The City of Ottawa (“Ottawa”) in Ontario as well as Ville de Gatineau (“Gatineau”) and Les Collines-de-l’Outaouais Regional County Municipality (“Les Collines-de-l’Outaouais”) in Québec are the three key municipalities in the NCR. The population in these three municipalities has increased 32% overall between 1996 and 2016 at an average annual growth rate of 1.4%.

On the Gatineau side, employment is mainly concentrated in the central Hull sector with some employment north on Autoroute 5 and east on Autoroute 50. On the Ottawa side, there is a strong concentration of employment downtown near the bridges (similar to Gatineau), but there are other hubs of employment, some adjacent to major transit stations, in the city. In 2011, average vehicle ownership rates were 1.3 vehicles per household in Ottawa, 1.4 in Gatineau and 2.0 in Les Collines-de-l’Outaouais. Higher levels of vehicle ownership are expected in rural areas given reduced transit alternatives.

In 2016, there were approximately 627,000 jobs in this area (including full-time, part-time, and work-at-home), and a total employed resident labour force of about 643,000. Ottawa is home to 81% of jobs in the NCR and has approximately 30,000 more jobs than resident workers. This surplus of jobs attracts workers to travel across the river from Gatineau and Les Collines-de-l’Outaouais, where the number of workers exceeds the number of jobs.

A wide range of industries is represented in the NCR. The NCR is the centre of Federal Government activity, and this area has a higher number of public administration jobs than the national average. There are 153,000 public administration jobs, representing almost one-quarter of jobs for the entire area. As a growing region, construction employment has many jobs, especially in the fastest-growing municipality of Les Collines-de-l’Outaouais. The NCR has a strong professional, scientific and technical services focus, most of which is located in Ottawa. The NCR has a reduced focus on manufacturing, primary industries, and wholesale trade compared to the rest of Canada. These types of industries rely heavily on the movement of goods and benefit greatly from strong inter-regional connectivity, which are both constrained in the NCR.

2.4 Existing Interprovincial Crossings

There are seven existing interprovincial crossings in the NCR: five bridges and two ferries.

Figure 2.2: The Interprovincial Bridges: Key Facts 1, 2

	Champlain Bridge	Chaudière Crossing	Portage Bridge	Alexandra Bridge	Macdonald-Cartier Bridge
Construction Date	1924-28	1919	1973	1898-1900	1963-65
Length	1.1 km		700 m	563 m	618 m
Ownership	NCC	PSPC	NCC	PSPC	PSPC
Structure Type	Concrete girder bridge	Steel truss bridge	Girder bridge	Steel truss cantilever bridge	Continuous steel box girder bridge
General Purpose Lanes	2	2	4	2	6
High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/ Transit Lanes	1 (central lane in peak travel direction)	-	2	-	-
Roadway Capacity (vehicles per hour)	1200 per direction +1200 HOV in peak direction	1600 per direction	2400 per direction	2000 per direction	4800 per direction
Transit Service	STO	OC Transpo	OC Transpo STO	none	STO
Walking and Cycling Infrastructure	Sidewalk - east side; Unidirectional painted bike lanes on paved road shoulders	Physically-separated sidewalk - east side; Unidirectional painted bike lanes on road shoulders	Sidewalks - both sides; Bidirectional physically-separated cycle track - east side	Wooden-plank pedestrian access added in 1950; now split into pedestrian path and directional cycle lanes	Physically-separated multi-use path - both sides
Daily Heavy Truck Volumes ³	Restricted	1200 daily Seasonal load restrictions	Restricted	Restricted	3050 Full load allowance
Daily Auto and Light Truck Volumes ³	44 000	15,783	23,743	17 300	72 800
AM Peak Hour Autos ⁴					
Toward Ontario	2400 vph ⁵	1550 vph	1900 vph	700 vph	4372 vph
Toward Québec	500 vph	750vph	1550 vph	550 vph	1577 vph

Notes:

1 There are also two ferry crossings at the eastern and western edges of the National Capital Region.

2 The Chief William Commanda Bridge (formerly the Prince of Wales Bridge) will be available for active transportation in 2022.

3 Source: 2019 City of Ottawa Screenline Traffic Counts; Miovision Nov 2021 Traffic Counts

4 Source: CIMA+: Étude d'impact et d'avant-projet pour un lien cyclable sur la rue Laurier à Gatineau, 2017

Figure 2.3: Existing Interprovincial Crossings



LONG TERM INTEGRATED INTERPROVINCIAL CROSSINGS PLAN FOR CANADA'S CAPITAL REGION - A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR INTERPROVINCIAL CROSSINGS AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION FOR CANADA'S CAPITAL REGION
 PLAN INTÉGRÉ À LONG TERME DES LIAISONS INTERPROVINCIALES POUR LA RÉGION DE LA CAPITALE DU CANADA - UN PLAN STRATÉGIQUE POUR LES LIAISONS INTERPROVINCIALES ET LE TRANSPORT DURABLE POUR LA RÉGION DE LA CAPITALE DU CANADA

2.5 How we travel today in the NCR

While traffic volumes on the five interprovincial bridges have largely been consistent between 1995 and 2017, the capacity of the crossings is approached or exceeded on all five crossings in the morning rush hour period. This results in significant traffic congestion and delays. The highest-volume crossing is the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge, with approximately 36% of interprovincial traffic volumes in the morning rush hour period. The lowest-volume crossing is the Alexandra Bridge, with approximately 10% of interprovincial traffic volumes in the morning rush hour period. The use of sustainable transportation modes has significantly increased. Between 1996 and 2011, the number of rush hour trips towards Ontario on transit more than doubled and by bicycle more than quadrupled. Despite this increase in sustainable travel modes, car travel remains the most common way of crossing the river.

Almost 70% of interprovincial trips in the morning rush hour are from Québec to Ontario, while approximately 60% of trips in the afternoon rush hour are from Ontario to Québec. This trend is most prominent on the Macdonald-Cartier and Champlain bridges, where there are approximately three times as many trips from Québec to Ontario in the morning rush hour compared to trips in the opposite direction. Automobiles, buses, and pedestrians all follow this travel pattern.

Interprovincial trips represent almost 10% of all travel in the NCR during the morning rush hour period with almost all of those trips (90%) being work-related. Approximately 30% of the interprovincial travelers in the morning rush hour period use public transit; which is about 10% higher than any of the surrounding municipalities during the same time period. Public transit is commonly used to access central employment areas during the morning rush hour period. These transit users on the Québec side are quite dispersed throughout Gatineau and Les Collines-de-l'Outaouais. There are also concentrations of employment around the bridges, and people come from throughout the NCR to reach these employment areas.

Freight transportation by road between the provinces is only permitted on the Macdonald-Cartier and Chaudière bridges. Full loads are permitted on the Macdonald-Cartier bridge, while only restricted loads are permitted on the Chaudière bridge. Neither bridge connects directly to the Ontario provincial highway system, so trucks must travel through neighbourhoods and the downtown area in Ottawa. This causes safety concerns and other negative impacts such as noise, vibration and increased congestion in these areas.

The use of sustainable transportation modes has significantly increased. Between 1996 and 2011, the number of rush hour trips towards Ontario on transit more than doubled and by bicycle more than quadrupled.

-

Over 51,000 trips are made every morning rush hour between Ottawa and Gatineau.

-

Interprovincial trips represent almost 10% of all travel in the NCR during the morning rush hour period with almost all those trips (90%) being work-related.



2.6 Key Interprovincial Transportation Issues

Six key interprovincial transportation issues facing the NCR today were identified based on an analysis of existing conditions and stakeholder engagement.

Congestion on crossings: Many vehicles cross the river during the morning rush-hour period, resulting in traffic congestion when vehicular capacity is reached. Numerous automobiles often only carry one person and occupy more road space per person than other sustainable transportation methods (such as public transit, carpools, and people walking or biking).

Indirect routes for trucks: Trucks do not have a direct connection from the Ontario highways to the bridge crossings and currently travel through Ottawa's downtown core and neighbourhoods near the bridges. In addition, households and businesses in Gatineau are largely served by distributors and warehouse located in Ottawa or elsewhere in Ontario, increasing the demand for interprovincial goods movement. This results in safety concerns and negative impacts such as noise and traffic congestion in the downtown core and local communities.

Population growth in Gatineau: Despite the population and employment trends for the NCR overall, in Gatineau the population is expected to grow faster than the number of jobs. As a result, many people need to commute across the river into Ottawa in the morning for work and return to Gatineau in the afternoon. This can result in significant travel delays on the crossings and highlights the need to accommodate growth in ways that ensure equity of access to employment opportunities.

Sustainable transportation limitations: While the downtown cores of both Ottawa and Gatineau are well serviced by public transit, suburb-to-suburb travel between the provinces can be challenging and inconvenient. Furthermore, while there are ongoing and planned improvements to the active mobility networks in both Ottawa and Gatineau, the networks on either side of the river are not well connected due to the reliance on existing crossings. This can make it challenging to efficiently travel between the provinces by cycling or walking.

Lack of space around the crossings: There is a lack of space at the entrances and exits to the existing crossings due to existing urban built form and important heritage, ecological and other considerations. Combined with the congestion on the crossings, this causes further travel delays for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. Enlargement of approach roads to existing bridges is therefore not feasible.

Regional governance and decision making: The cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, and provincial and federal agencies, often collaborate on interprovincial transportation studies and operations, particularly in the delivery of cross-river transit services. There remain opportunities to improve collaboration and coordination between these various agencies while respecting the responsibilities and policies of each organization.

Interprovincial travel between Ottawa and Gatineau is a critical part of the transportation network in the NCR that unifies the region, and the crossings currently face many challenges. The Strategic Plan is an important step to improve regional governance and decision making about interprovincial transportation.

2.7 Emerging Trends

There are numerous emerging trends that are impacting cities today. The COVID-19 pandemic, new technologies, and changing development patterns all impact how, when, and why people move. While the direct result of these trends is not yet clear, future transportation systems should be planned and designed with an understanding that these emerging trends may involve both risks and opportunities. Monitoring is required for transportation systems to adapt to changing travel patterns that are driven by these trends.

Work-from-home levels: The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an accelerated shift to remote working. However, the extent to which current work-from-home levels will remain in the long term is unclear. The study incorporated remote work levels based on the needs of various employers in the NCR and the most up-to-date information available at the time. However, these work patterns are likely to change and vary between industries in the future. Supporting higher levels of remote working is an opportunity to reduce commuting trips and promote sustainability. Increased flexibility in working hours resulting from these models can also help to manage travel demand.

E-Commerce: E-commerce has been growing in North America in recent years and experienced a significant increase during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many residents have discovered new home delivery services or increased their patronage of existing ones to shop for a wide range of products and services. If these trends continue there could be a sustained higher demand for these services well after the pandemic is over. In that situation, the interprovincial bridges would likely see more goods movement from heavy trucks making long-distance trips, as well as smaller delivery vans and cargo e-bikes making deliveries. Curbside management, is a key consideration as these vehicles will be making frequent stops for short periods of time.

Complete Community Policies: The City of Gatineau's and Ottawa's planning policies include direction towards complete communities, where people can live, work, and play within the same area. The current forecasts suggest that the population will outpace employment in Gatineau, with many people commuting from Gatineau to Ottawa for work. However, this may change as Gatineau's policies encourage economic growth and increases in local employment.

Trucks do not have a direct connection from the Ontario highways to the bridge crossings and currently travel through Ottawa's downtown core and neighbourhoods near the bridges.



Congestion Pricing: Congestion pricing is a tool that charges a fee on users in congested areas to incentivize other forms of transportation.

This can take a variety of forms, such as tolls or broader area-wide pricing strategies. This tool has the potential to encourage more efficient use of existing capacity and influence travel demand on the interprovincial crossings and could be considered in the future.

Automated Vehicles (AVs): Automated vehicles have the capability to perform driving tasks without a human operator. These vehicles fall on a spectrum regarding the degree of automation, but companies are researching and developing cars capable of higher levels of automation that would require significantly less human intervention. The timeline for widespread use of AVs is uncertain, with estimates varying widely. Once fully implemented, these vehicles may improve safety and capacity on crossings, since they can travel closely together without human error. However, congestion may increase since fully automated vehicles could entice more people to travel by car. Goods movement may also change with the adoption of more automated technology. Transit is an early opportunity for automation to improve quality of service and reliability; Ottawa's O-Train currently operates with automated train control.

Electrification: Many auto manufacturers have been heavily investing in their capacity to produce battery-powered, plug-in electric vehicles (EVs). As investments have increased and more government subsidies and grants have become available, EVs have become more commonplace on the streets of Ottawa and Gatineau. This has the potential to significantly reduce emissions but raises questions of how municipalities should effectively implement charging networks.

Transportation Connectivity: Vehicles and remote systems can communicate wirelessly in real-time. This enables fare payment systems between transit agencies to be integrated, real-time reporting of where vehicles are and how often they are used, dynamic prices for transportation infrastructure that can adjust based on how much the infrastructure is used, and connectivity between vehicles and other vehicles as well as infrastructure. This has the potential to improve transportation safety and efficiency given the increase in available real-time information. Many cities have started to implement supporting infrastructure on their transportation networks.

Shared Transportation: Shared transportation involves multiple people using the same transportation resource. This has already been widely commercialized through ride-hailing. Shared use of bikes, electric scooters, and other personal mobility vehicles is also growing. This may result in an increase in their use for short trips between the downtowns, or the use of shared transportation by local businesses for goods delivery. However, these shared transportation modes can be challenging to regulate, particularly between municipalities and provinces, and may increase conflicts between users on the curbs in busy downtown areas.

Shared transportation involves multiple people using the same transportation resource. This has already been widely commercialized through ride-hailing.

With input from NCR agencies on transportation priorities, the Strategic Plan explored what interprovincial travel could look like in 2050 based on current trends.

Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS): A growing opportunity emerges to offer mobility—the ability to travel from one place to another—as a service rather than selling vehicles or rides on individual modes of transportation. This is termed “Mobility as a Service”, or MaaS. MaaS offers travelers a single platform to manage trips across all modes. The vision is that a user will enter their starting point and desired destination, and a central platform would scan all modes of travel across public and private-sector services to plan the optimal route. Ticketing, trip booking, and payment processing would all be handled by the platform. MaaS has the potential to make it easier for residents to discover and use sustainable shared-ride options, however, it also may increase the use of single-passenger autonomous vehicles and congestion. Further challenges also exist related to data privacy between private mobility providers and governments and implementing a sustainable business model when aggregating multiple private mobility providers into a single platform.

2.8 Interprovincial Travel in the NCR in 2050

The population and employment in the National Capital Region are expected to grow by 40% and 60%, respectively, between 2016 and 2050. This could result in a 50% increase in the number of people travelling between the provinces.

With input from NCR agencies on transportation priorities, the Strategic Plan explored what interprovincial travel could look like in 2050 based on current trends.

Key questions included:

- How would travel needs change between today and 2050?
- How would transportation improvements currently planned, such as the West Gatineau Tramway, influence access to opportunities in the NCR?
- How would the current transportation challenges look in 2050 and what new challenges would arise?

It was important to forecast to the future to understand the gaps between where we are likely headed versus the vision and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Unknowns and Uncertainties

As with all long-term planning, there are many unknowns and uncertainties that can influence outcomes. The pandemic is highlighting how context and needs can rapidly shift. These are some of the key elements that can impact the Strategic Plan:

Extending Rush Hour Periods

As the number of people crossing the river is forecasted to grow, the rush hour periods may start earlier and end later. This extension of the rush hour periods is influenced by when commuters choose to travel and increasing flexibility in work schedules.

Long-term work-from-home levels

The Strategic Plan assumed an overall work-from-home level of 15% in 2050 based on current expectations. Shifts in this percentage would have a major impact on rush hour demand on interprovincial crossings.

Change in retail and goods movement

The acceleration of online shopping means more deliveries at all times of the day. How companies manage this increase in demand is uncertain.

Impact of induced demand

Induced demand is the concept of “build it and they will come” or “add vehicular capacity and they will come”. This can be negative, in the case of road infrastructure that may induce more driving and suburban sprawl, but can also be positive, with the provision of separated bike lanes to encourage cycling.

Changing investment priorities

The status and timing of projects reliant on multiple levels of government approvals and funding is subject to change, influencing the projected outcomes of the Strategic Plan

Rate of Economic growth

The Strategic Plan is based on population and employment projections based on most-likely scenarios of economic growth. How the pandemic and resulting economic recovery will influence development and travel patterns is not yet known.

The Strategic Plan assumed an overall work-from-home level of 15% in 2050 based on current expectations.

In 2050, rush hour transit use into Ottawa is expected to more than double, compared to 2011.

-

Morning rush hour congestion is expected to grow by approximately 50% between 2011 and 2050.

In Ottawa, jobs increase more than the population, while in Gatineau, population increases more than jobs. This results in a continued growth in the number of people travelling from Gatineau into Ottawa for work and overall increase in interprovincial travel by 50%. Coordination and integration between the agencies on both sides of the river has led to major transportation improvements, such as the proposed West Gatineau Tramway. These improvements help to facilitate travel connections across **one region** and help to provide equitable access to opportunities.

The transportation improvements assumed for 2050 include rapid transit investments that improve transit speed and reliability. This contributes towards a more **sustainable use of crossing infrastructure**, as the overall mode share for transit, walking and cycling is expected to increase by 10% compared to 2011. Morning rush-hour transit ridership towards Ottawa is expected to grow by 106% as a result of transit expansions and people taking transit to avoid congestion. This significantly increases the people-carrying capacity of the crossings.

This increase in the proportion of trips made by sustainable modes, in addition to adoption of zero-emission vehicles, has positive effects on the **environment and climate change** as greenhouse gas emissions are reduced.

Despite transit improvements and assumed increases in work-from-home levels, there will continue to be congestion and delays on the crossings, largely experienced by people in automobiles and trucks. Morning rush hour congestion is expected to grow by 53% between 2011 and 2050. Congestion-related delays have negative impacts on the **economy**, as spending time in traffic prevents people from contributing to the economy and increases the time it takes for goods to be transported. Better transit service and dedicated infrastructure would help reduce delays for people crossing the river.

Heavy truck traffic is also anticipated to continue and increase as the lack of direct connection between Ontario highways and the crossings remains. This negatively impacts health, safety, and **quality of life** as the trucks must travel through neighbourhoods and Ottawa's downtown core to reach the crossings. Heavy trucks also circulate in Gatineau's downtown core.

If current trends continue, the use of sustainable transportation modes will increase. However, the forecasted growth in population, employment, and cross-river trips means that many of the current issues facing the NCR, identified this Section, are anticipated to be exacerbated.

3 The Vision for Interprovincial Transportation in 2050

THE STRATEGIC PLAN VISION

By 2050, the transportation network to cross the Ottawa River will provide well-connected and sustainable travel options that contribute to a high quality of life and economic prosperity in the National Capital Region. The system of crossings will support equitable mobility and the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, while respecting the Region's natural environment and cultural heritage.

Developed in consultation with municipalities in the region, stakeholders, and the public, the vision for the Strategic Plan sets a sustainable path to achieve common goals and objectives under five strategic pillars:

- One Region (Transportation Integration)
- Sustainable Use of Crossing Infrastructure
- Environment and Climate Change
- Economy
- Quality of Life

Finding a balance and understanding the interactions between the pillars is one of the challenges of the Strategic Plan. Strategies that are highly beneficial to one pillar may come with negative consequences for another.

Finding balance and understanding the interactions between the pillars is one of the challenges of the Strategic Plan.

**Figure 3.1:
Strategic Pillars
and Objectives**

One Region (Transportation Integration)	Physical Integration	Organizational Integration	Symbolic Integration
	<p>Well-connected Ottawa and Gatineau downtowns that serve as multi-modal transportation hubs</p> <p>Land use and transportation crossing infrastructure supporting each other</p>	<p>Meaningful involvement of all levels of government in interprovincial transportation plans and coordination in standards, regulations, maintenance, and enforcement</p> <p>Meaningful opportunities to involve the Algonquin Anishinabeg</p>	<p>Context-appropriate design that preserves and enhances the character, unique cultural heritage, and crossings' symbolic role in the nation's capital</p>
Sustainable Use of Crossing Infrastructure	Moving People and Goods More Efficiently	Comfortable and Convenient Transportation Choices	
	<p>Increased sustainable and space-efficient mode use for cross-river trips</p> <p>Reduced auto use and overall demand for peak interprovincial trips</p>	<p>Improved mobility options are available for cross-river trips</p>	
Environment and Climate Change	Environmental Quality	Resilience	Protected Environment
	<p>Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants from transportation</p>	<p>Better withstand extreme weather disruptions associated with climate change</p>	<p>Reduce and then further mitigate disruption to natural areas, waterways, and parks along the river</p>
Economy	Prosperity and Competitiveness	Connecting Beyond the Region	Efficiency and Fiscal Responsibility
	<p>Reduced delay for people and goods crossing the river</p> <p>Supporting tourism in the National Capital Region</p>	<p>Reduced travel time to connect between provincial highway systems</p>	<p>Controlled spending and sustainable funding sources for crossing infrastructure, services, and maintenance</p>
Quality of Life	Balancing goods movement and a high quality of life	Safety and Security	Access to Opportunities and Nature
	<p>Improved community health and safety in the neighbourhoods adjacent to the crossings</p>	<p>Improved real and perceived traveler safety and comfort</p>	<p>Reduced travel time for cross-river trips mainly through decreased trip distance between place-of-work and place-of-residence trips</p> <p>Equitable access to efficient cross-river travel</p> <p>Increased access to the region's natural spaces</p>

4 Plan Direction

Based on the existing conditions and anticipated conditions if current trends hold, the NCR will face significant transportation challenges in 2050 if no action is taken. Additionally, there are gaps between this trend-based 2050 NCR and the desired 2050 NCR outlined in the vision, pillars, and objectives.

This chapter describes how the Strategic Plan addresses these challenges and fills these gaps. The key issues and opportunities were used to develop several scenarios that reflected different transportation initiatives and investments. These scenarios were used to set guiding directions for the overall Strategic Plan and recommend actions to meet the vision, pillars, and objectives.

4.1 Testing Potential Directions

As a part of the strategic planning process, several scenarios were prepared and tested to compare how different transportation initiatives and investments would impact travel patterns and behaviour in the NCR. The analysis was based on future 2050 demand and compares performance against the baseline conditions described earlier in Chapter 2.7.

These scenarios fell under two broad categories:

1. Making better use of existing crossings

This direction included scenarios that focus on bold actions, including enhanced transit service, reconfiguration of existing crossings, and strong policies to manage interprovincial travel demand.

Key questions that were tested in the scenarios under this category included:

- Can future interprovincial travel demand be accommodated without building new major infrastructure beyond what is currently planned?
- How does the location of work influence peak interprovincial travel patterns?
- What are the impacts of program-related initiatives, such as travel demand management measures and roadway reconfigurations?

As a part of the strategic planning process, several scenarios were prepared and tested to compare how different transportation initiatives and investments would impact travel patterns and behaviour in the NCR.

What did we test?

- The influence of work from home and remote office/ shared work places on travel demand
- The effects of locating places of work in different areas within the NCR
- Expanded travel demand management programs for major employers
- Policies that restricted heavy truck movement in the core area

What did we find?

- There are opportunities to optimize the people-carrying capacity of existing infrastructure.
 - Work from home levels will reduce commute demand, only if coordinated so that not everyone travels to work on the same days
 - Where people choose to reside has implications on travel demand given current employment locations
 - Interprovincial heavy truck movements would not significantly be reduced within the core area without the implementation of truck traffic restrictions or truck route network changes by Gatineau and Ottawa affecting the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and the KERWN corridor.
- * Banning or restricting all trucks from the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge without a new river crossing would result in the diversion of trucks to the Chaudière Crossing

2. Investing in major infrastructure

This direction included scenarios that pursue further investments to address 2050 transportation needs, such as new crossings of the Ottawa River or urban bypass routes.

Key questions that were tested in the scenarios under this category included:

- How does a new interprovincial crossing impact travel patterns in the region? How does the location of this crossing affect its performance?

What other measures may be required to reduce the volume and impacts of heavy trucks?

The analysis finds that new infrastructure alone will not solve the challenges created by heavy truck travel in the core area. The following are some non-infrastructure measures that can be explored:

- Expand truck restrictions, such as bans, which require collaboration with local municipalities to assess the availability of alternative routes and the resulting impacts on other communities and the economy.
- Reimagine goods movement logistics, such as the use of local distribution or consolidation centres where goods are transferred onto smaller vehicles at the periphery of an urban area. This would require collaboration with the goods movement industry.
- Integrate existing policies and plans, such as goods movement and truck route strategies being pursued by local municipalities.
- Encourage multi-modal goods movement, such as the use of cargo bikes for local deliveries, which is being explored by various companies in North America.
- It is important to note that the roles and responsibilities to implement these measures vary, requiring collaboration and coordination between the NCC, municipalities, industry partners, and others.

- Can a transit-only crossing in the core area accommodate growth in travel demand without needing to build new car and truck capacity?
- Does new interprovincial vehicular infrastructure divert sufficient heavy truck and through traffic to adequately address quality of life concerns in the King Edward-Rideau-Walter-Nicholas (KERWN) corridor?

What did we test?

- A new transit-only crossing in the core area to connect the West Gatineau Tramway into downtown Ottawa, instead of using existing lanes on the Portage Bridge
- Integrating the downtown transit loop with the West Gatineau Tramway, operating as LRT via a new transit-only crossing and the Alexandra Bridge
- The Ottawa traffic tunnel to connect the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge to Highway 417
- A new all-mode crossing in the east, west, or both

What did we find?

- A new transit-only crossing in the core area would improve transit connectivity and increase people-moving capacity where demand is greatest. Moving transit operations off the existing bridges would offer opportunities to enhance other modes of sustainable travel, such as high-occupancy vehicles or more protected space for walking and cycling.
- The analysis conducted through this study indicates that the traffic tunnel would reduce morning peak hour interprovincial heavy truck volumes in the King Edward-Rideau-Waller-Nicholas corridor by approximately 33% in 2050.

- An important consideration is that the traffic tunnel would not provide alternative routes for truck travel across the Ottawa River, further increasing the reliance of goods movement on the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge.
- The eastern all-mode crossing has a comparatively higher potential to divert truck traffic from the core area and KERWIN corridor than a western one.
- A new crossing would provide an opportunity to divert most interprovincial heavy trucks not destined for the core area, such as logging trucks. The effectiveness to divert through-trips and inter-regional trips will be dependent on the location of the crossing, more direct connectivity to the provincial highway networks, and travel time.
- Diverting heavy trucks from the core area will require more than a new crossing, such as removing Rideau Street and King Edward Avenue from the truck route system, as proposed by the current City of Ottawa Transportation Master Plan.



4.2 Summary of Key Findings

Interprovincial commute trips and heavy truck movement represent the biggest challenges for interprovincial travel

Trips to work create the most substantial rush hour for interprovincial travel demand. Population growth in Gatineau is resulting in the need for increased travel to job opportunities in Ottawa. While employment in downtown Ottawa and near transit stations is relatively easy to access by sustainable modes, there will remain jobs that are less accessible by transit, walking, and cycling.

Heavy truck movement will also grow as demand for goods movement increases in the region, particularly with an increase in online shopping. Shifting goods movement by large trucks and tractor trailers onto smaller vehicles, modifying truck movement and delivery times, and diverting those vehicles onto alternative routes are goals that will require more discussion with industry stakeholders.

Growing cities face mobility challenges, particularly when there are few alternatives to driving and high concentrations of employment are located in downtown areas. The focus needs to shift towards managing the network to optimize use of available space, provide alternatives, and improve reliability. There are unique opportunities within the context of the National Capital Region, including highly centralized employment in downtown Ottawa and Gatineau, where the Federal government can continue to play a role in influencing employee travel behaviour and encourage self-sufficient communities. In addition, where congestion occurs in constrained locations, such as on the interprovincial crossings, there is more potential for shifting to sustainable modes.

The heaviest demand for interprovincial crossing is within the core area of Ottawa and Gatineau, near the areas of the existing crossings. However, providing additional routes within this area to increase capacity and to improve redundancy is a challenge. This includes the environmental sensitivity and geography of the Ottawa River, the protection of the visual landscape of Canada's Parliament, and the built-up communities on both banks of the river.

The construction of the West Gatineau Tramway and the under-construction phase two of the Ottawa LRT will play a major role to accommodate the increase in travel demand by transit mode across the Ottawa River and the entire region. The higher-order transit projects also have the potential to influence land use, with greater transit-oriented mixed-use development and more people living and working adjacent to major transit stations.

Growing cities face mobility challenges, particularly when there are few alternatives to driving and high concentrations of employment are located in downtown areas.

-

Increased congestion and travel times are inevitable with a growing population and downtown employment areas

-

Opportunities to enhance the vehicular capacity of existing crossings are limited in the core area

-

The planned transit projects are important to meet growth in demand

Diverting heavy truck travel will require more than a new crossing

Heavy truck travel is concentrated in the downtowns and core area of the region, a combined effect of being the most direct route for both through traffic and the destinations of goods deliveries in the urban areas within the region. A new interprovincial crossing in the east combined with municipal measures to prohibit heavy trucks from the KERWN corridor will be most effective in the diversion of heavy trucks from the core area. Improved goods movement logistics and shifting of deliveries to smaller trucks and different times of day would also help to reduce impacts.

4.3 Overall Strategic Plan Directions

Based upon the analysis of existing and future conditions and the testing of policy and infrastructure scenarios, five overall directions were identified.

1. **A Flexible Framework:** Flexible framework to guide interprovincial mobility

Given the current environment of uncertainty, the Strategic Plan could provide a framework through the shared vision and objectives to help guide how interprovincial travel is managed into the long term in the National Capital Region.

This Strategic Plan will evolve and require regular updates given the evolution of travel demands and patterns, municipal land-use policies, and the evolving post-pandemic world of work.

2. **Better Data:** Update data to ensure decisions are fact-based and reflect changing realities

The key to updates and evolution of the Strategic Plan will be better data. Current data sources for travel demand in the region are outdated: regional origin-destination data is from 2011 and interprovincial origin-destination truck travel data is from 2007. There have been many changes to technology and mobility since these last updates – new mobility, smartphones and GPS, crowd sourced navigation, and automation were not as ubiquitous then as it is now. Planned updates will improve decision making and validate the Strategic Plan's findings and analysis.

3. **Regional Collaboration:** Collaborate and coordinate transportation across the region

Creating forums for regional transportation planning and analysis coordination, such as the TRANS committee, will help to build on current

cooperative planning practices and ensure more collaborative planning and delivery of interprovincial transportation services. Many of the existing initiatives to address interprovincial travel are reinforced and supported by the vision and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

4. Recovery Opportunities: Leverage opportunities in post-pandemic recovery

The pandemic has accelerated patterns that were already underway, such as remote work, off-site learning, and online shopping. There is a significant interest in continuing work-from-home by employers and workers and this will have implications on future transportation patterns and demand. Coordinating longer term plans to support more sustainable travel is a unique opportunity in the immediate term.

5. Sustainability focus: Prioritize sustainable mobility through targeted investments and optimization

The Strategic Plan focuses on sustainable directions for interprovincial travel. Immediate and near-term investments in higher-order transit, such as the West Gatineau Tramway and Ottawa Phase 2 LRT, could double the number of people travelling by transit from Gatineau to Ottawa in the morning peak period by 2050, compared to 2011. Combined with the shift to zero-emissions vehicles, greenhouse gas emissions for interprovincial travel can be reduced by 99% before 2050, compared to 2011.

4.4 Making Progress on the Strategic Pillars

The Strategic Plan is centered around the following five key pillars:

- One Region
- Sustainable Use of Crossing Infrastructure
- Environment and Climate Change
- Economy
- Quality of Life

While *section 4.3* outlines how the existing and future conditions and testing scenarios were used to develop five overall directions for the plan, *section 4.4* outlines how these five directions are applied to the pillars and used to inform the recommended actions in *chapter 5*.

The pandemic has accelerated patterns that were already underway, such as remote work, off-site learning, and online shopping.

Meeting future interprovincial travel needs will require continued collaboration and shared decision making.

Moving Together as One Region

The National Capital Region includes several municipalities and two provinces. This creates a planning and governance context that is unique within Canada, although the Strategic Plan shows that the vision and objectives for interprovincial travel are generally aligned between the NCC and its municipalities. Meeting future interprovincial travel needs will require continued collaboration and shared decision making.

Governance structures and decision-making

Chapter 6 explores potential considerations and approaches to transportation planning and service delivery on a regional scale. While the Strategic Plan does not recommend a specific approach or model, it lays out the vision and objectives that serve as a foundation for further discussion on governance approaches and structures and to guide future decision making.

In some existing examples globally, major investment in new infrastructure crossing jurisdictional boundaries provided the impetus to have further discussion on roles, responsibilities, and governance. Planned and potential investments in new interprovincial infrastructure will require agreements related to funding, construction, and operations. The role of the NCC is also evolving with the recent transfer of ownership of the existing crossings to the agency. The discussions of governance will need to continue and consider the sensitivity and fit within existing governance structures.

Coordination of planning between agencies

The existing TRANS Committee is an example of successful intergovernmental transportation data collection, modelling and forecasting collaboration and coordination in place in the National Capital Region. The committee and its members recognize the benefits of coordinating transportation data collection and analysis on a regional level.

Current initiatives presently being coordinated within the NCR include the update to the origin-destination household travel survey and the regional truck survey. The NCC is also an active stakeholder on major regional projects, such as the West Gatineau Tramway.

Service integration and seamless travel

Interprovincial transit service is well integrated between Gatineau and Ottawa, OC Transpo and STO operate services crossing the Ottawa River and fares are integrated, in terms of one agency's fare media being accepted on the other. STO operates very frequent service into downtown Ottawa via the Portage Bridge while OC Transpo operates frequent service over the Chaudière Crossing and peak period service over the Portage Bridge. Like with other modes of travel, the interprovincial transit services are concentrated in the core area using the existing crossings.

Continuing to support improved transit priority on the interprovincial crossings will play an important role for the agencies to deliver reliable and effective service. While the NCC does not play a specific role in the planning or delivery of transit service, it can support the advancement of higher-order transit projects.

Continuing to support improved transit priority on the interprovincial crossings will play an important role for the agencies to deliver reliable and effective service.

Analysis

Highlights:

- Existing planned transit projects are critical to encouraging more sustainable mobility.
- Complete communities supported by active transportation infrastructure make sustainable mobility more feasible for more trips.
- Lower cost initiatives to increase the people moving capacity of the crossings (including transportation demand management) improves sustainable mode share.

Encouraging Sustainable Mobility

Encouraging more sustainable mobility is critical to achieving the Strategic Plan's vision. An important part of sustainable mobility is efficiently moving people and goods on the existing crossings. This involves offering comfortable and convenient transportation choices that are competitive with personal vehicles.

Implement Planned Transit Projects

Gatineau and Ottawa have numerous planned and committed transit projects that are anticipated to be implemented between now and 2050. It is important for all agencies in the NCR to make continued progress on implementing these projects as they are essential to encouraging more sustainable mobility in the region – an important shared goal of all levels of government.

Key highlights include the Ottawa LRT Stage 2 Extension and the planned West Gatineau Tramway.

Strengthen Interprovincial Active Transportation Connections

Improving the interprovincial active transportation networks encourages the use of sustainable mobility. It will be important to upgrade bridge infrastructure where required and increase connectivity to make getting to and from the crossings easier. Both Ottawa and Gatineau plans already include important additions and upgrades to the network. Further, recently proposed changes to the Chief William Commanda Bridge will also provide important increased connectivity across the river and the broader transit and pathway network.

Expand Travel Demand Management Programs

Travel demand management programs aim to reduce the number of trips made, encourage less travel during the busiest times, and change destinations of trips so that fewer trips go to the busiest places at the busiest times. These actions help make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and can contribute to a more reliable and comfortable trip. The Strategic Plan aims to expand upon the robust and successful TDM programs of Ottawa, Gatineau, and the Federal government.

Move More People on the Crossings

Making better use of the current crossings by increasing their people moving capacity is an important part of managing and accommodating interprovincial transportation as the region grows. Reconfiguring the crossings in the short-term will be explored to make the most of the space and move more people. An important first step is to assess the existing transit-only and carpool lanes to identify potential measures to improve their effectiveness and opportunities for expansion. Other interim measures will also be identified as the Strategic Plan is implemented and updated.



Case Study

In 2019 the Federal Government introduced new flexible workplace alternatives for Government of Canada employees. The initial pilot program saw the introduction of five co-working spaces – shared workspaces located outside of the core area where government employees from participating departments can work. These alternate work locations enable many employees to have work space that is closer to home. Having work options closer to home has the potential to improve quality of life for employees by reducing the time spent travelling to work. Shorter trip distances and fewer trips into downtown can also help to reduce congestion/crowding on the overall transportation network.

Analysis Highlights:

- Anticipated future electric vehicle uptake will substantially reduce transportation-related GHG emissions.
- New infrastructure increases system resilience to extreme weather by providing alternative routes when weather-related damage occurs.
- New all-mode crossings may encourage more people to drive more and encourage further car-dependent growth. This would have energy and emissions implications.

Protecting the Environment / Acting on Climate Change

Protecting the environment and acting on climate change are integral components of fostering a healthy, vibrant, and liveable Capital Region. Transportation is a large source of greenhouse gas and other air pollutants; reducing these emissions is a large part of achieving broader federal, provincial, and municipal climate change goals. The Federal Government is committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 through the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act. In addition to reducing emissions, it is also important to minimize the environmental impacts of new infrastructure and implement climate change resiliency into design. Acting on climate change is a collective effort that requires the collaboration of all jurisdiction. The Strategic Plan focuses on reducing emissions through interprovincial transportation measures.

Encourage electric vehicle use

Electric vehicles are an important part of reducing transportation related GHG emissions and achieving overall GHG reduction targets. The NCC will work to set targets for zero-emission interprovincial trips and take corresponding steps to encourage zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) for interprovincial trips. Ottawa and Gatineau are already encouraging ZEV uptake. Encouraging more ZEVs must happen in parallel with reducing personal vehicle use no matter the technology. While ZEVs aid in reducing emissions, managing transportation demand and fostering a liveable Capital Region still requires more trips by transit and active transportation.

Support net zero transit vehicles

While diesel buses carry many people efficiently, with fewer emissions than the same number of people travelling by car, they are still sources of pollution. Both Ottawa and Gatineau are pursuing zero-emission bus fleets, which are being supported by funding from the Government of Canada. These will contribute to reducing GHG emissions from interprovincial travel. Advancing the West Gatineau Tramway will also help reduce bus travel across the river.

Integrate climate change-resiliency into design

It is also important to incorporate climate change-resiliency into design, in addition to taking steps to reduce emissions. Weather and climate change considerations include many different measures such as incorporating weather protection for walking and cycling infrastructure and designing infrastructure to reduce maintenance needs. The NCC will continue to incorporate best practices in climate resilient design in all its projects.

Supporting Economic Prosperity

Transportation plays an important role in supporting economic growth and prosperity. The interprovincial crossings play a vital role for travel within the region and, more broadly, connecting the provincial and national highway networks.

Global changes and evolution in goods movement logistics and technology has created shifts in the freight transportation needs in the National Capital Region. Although working from home may reduce some of the demand for travel, growth in on-line purchasing has increased delivery truck traffic throughout the region. Congestion and delay are projected to increase by 2050 on the interprovincial crossings.

Major new infrastructure is shown to have limited added benefit from a delay perspective; however, it would have the advantage of offering a route for goods movement outside the core area.

Create capacity for more employment and economic activity in both downtowns

Connecting the two downtowns by leveraging available capacity and investing in higher-order transit will create opportunities for more population, employment, and activity in the core area. This would also boost tourism potential, supporting sustainable travel between cultural and other attractions on both sides of the Ottawa River.

Frequent, reliable higher-order transit travel between the two downtowns would reduce reliance on auto travel between Federal office locations and create opportunities for more employment to locate centrally within the region.

Develop a better understanding of truck travel in region

The current origin-destination data as it relates to interprovincial goods movement is from 2007. There have been major shifts in freight and retailing since then. The most influential is the explosive growth in online retailing and home deliveries, including more reliance on local warehousing and logistics. There are also changes in the size and composition of trucks, such as the use of multiple-unit trailers, and the continued growth of rail-based freight transport.

Improving the understanding of current truck demands, origins, and destinations will help validate analysis around heavy truck movement on the interprovincial crossings and to support the implementation of future goods movement strategies, policies, and infrastructure. It is with this goal in mind that the new commercial vehicle model developed by the TRANS Committee will make it possible to gain a good understanding of the movements of trucks and to better assess the associated impacts.

Analysis Highlights:

- A new interprovincial crossing combined with municipal measures to prohibit heavy trucks from the KERWN corridor will be effective in the diversion of heavy trucks from the core area.
- A collaborative approach among the three levels of government is needed to reduce trucks from the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and associated Gatineau and Ottawa approaches.
- Congestion and delay are projected to increase by 2050 on the interprovincial crossings. Major new infrastructure is shown to have limited added benefit from a delay perspective; however, it would have the advantage of offering a route for goods movement outside the core area.
- Under all scenarios, delay is expected to increase for autos. Strong demand measures or new infrastructure have similar potential to limit the increase.

Analysis Highlights:

- Strategic policy-based restrictions are also important for managing truck traffic, including time-of-day restrictions and permitting for on-street loading.
- More dedicated space for sustainable modes improves travel time reliability and makes sustainable modes more attractive.

Integrate new retail/goods movement trends

The pandemic has accelerated changes in retailing patterns that began over the past decade. Online shopping is more prevalent and has expanded beyond general merchandise and now includes day-to-day necessities such as groceries. Compared to in-person shopping, where there is a greater potential for fewer trips with larger purchases, low-cost or free same-day delivery has encouraged more frequent small online purchases, which results in a higher number of trips by delivery vehicles on roads. New distribution centres and pick-up points have started to change travel and delivery patterns

Integrating these changes into the understanding of goods movement and the retail economy will be important as the Strategic Plan evolves. This is not a unique challenge to the NCR; exploring and implementing best practices from other cities, such as neighbourhood pick-up points, urban consolidation centres, and deliveries by alternate modes all have potential to reduce demand.

Improving Quality of Life

The National Capital Region with its abundant access to green space, excellent services, and rich cultural opportunities provides an excellent quality of life for residents. The transportation system plays an important part in maintaining and enhancing quality of life in the Capital Region. Transportation contributes to quality of life by providing reliable and safe travel options as well as managing negative externalities caused by transportation, including managing issues created by heavy trucks while still supporting the Region's economy.

Reduce heavy truck infiltration and impacts

Trucks are essential to the National Capital Region's economic well-being, but truck traffic must be managed to support quality of life. In the NCR, interprovincial truck traffic currently uses downtown streets, primarily in Ottawa, to connect between the Quebec and Ontario provincial highway networks. This has negative noise, pollution, and safety impacts on surrounding neighbourhoods. A new interprovincial crossing combined with municipal measures to prohibit heavy trucks from the KERWN corridor will reduce heavy truck infiltration and impacts in this busy area.

Integrate Vision Zero policies

Providing safe multi-modal travel options is a critical part of both quality of life and encouraging more active transportation for interprovincial trips. It is important to have infrastructure that promotes safety and comfort for people of all ages and abilities. When people feel safe and comfortable, they are more likely to use active transportation. Managing risks posed by heavy trucks is important for furthering the safety of all road users.

Vision Zero is the broad philosophy that fatalities and serious injuries on the road network are preventable and the goal should be zero traffic related fatalities and injuries. The NCC will integrate Vision Zero policies into its planning processes and explore measures, such as truck safety initiatives, pedestrian and cycling safety reviews and associated improvements, and updated roadway geometric designs, to enhance the safety of all road users.

Foster more reliable commutes

Having consistent and predictable travel times improves quality of life by enabling people to know how long it will take to get to a destination at a given time of day. Improving travel time predictability, allows people and businesses to plan their activities with a reduced risk of being late or needing to leave early to account for potential delays. This focus on managing congestion, rather than reducing congestion, is about avoiding unpredictable delays, particularly related to sustainable modes. The NCC will work with municipalities to develop measures to foster more reliable interprovincial travel times such as updating incident response plans to better respond to incidents that cause delay, coordinating construction projects to manage the impacts on all modes, expanding transit priority measures, and improving real-time traveller information for all modes to enable people to choose alternate routes in case of unforeseen delays.



5 The Strategic Framework

The Strategic Plan sets out the overall direction for interprovincial transportation in the National Capital Region and strategies to achieve the collective vision and objectives of the NCC and its partners. The testing of the potential directions, as outlined in Chapter 4, shows that current trends and already planned initiatives can have a significant influence.

This Strategic Plan offers the opportunity for the parties to take a greater collaborative approach to prioritize potential strategies, focusing on those that have the best potential to shift the trajectory towards the plan's sustainability vision.

Three following timelines are proposed to frame delivery of the shared vision that creates a transportation system over the next 30 years:

- **Short-Term / Bold Starts (immediate to five-year horizon):** this represents the immediate timeline for strategies and quick wins that have a very strong potential to move towards achieving goals and objectives. In the current context of a post-pandemic recovery, examples of these strategies include post-pandemic workplace planning, leveraging changes in behaviour such as remote work and learning, and being shovel ready for pandemic recovery stimulus investment.
- **Medium-Term / Initiating Change (five to ten-year horizon):** this represents the timeline for strategies that can be taken in the near term that can play a greater role in shifting interprovincial travel behaviour. These strategies should have a high rate of return on investment with a prioritization on measures that reflect the sustainable vision, such as optimization of existing crossings and investment in transit and active transportation. They can also include strategies that enable longer-term decision-making or capital investment.
- **Long-Term / Sustaining Progress (beyond ten years):** this represents the longer-term timeline where either implementation requires further study or where the strategy may be influenced by the performance of other alternative demand management measures or optimizations are pursued under bold starts or initiating change.

Section 5.1 summarizes the initiatives under each of the three timelines. This is intended to serve as a guide for continued progress towards the vision and is subject to change based on further study, available resources, capital funding priorities, and policy changes.

5.1 Strategies

	One Region	Sustainable	Environment	Economic	Quality of Life
Short Term (1 of 2)					
Governance & Policy					
Complete an interprovincial transportation governance review	•			•	
Work with partners to complete updates to regional travel data, including the origin-destination survey and the commercial vehicle survey	•				
Establish the PSPC Sixth Crossing Project Office with the support of the NCC	•			•	•
Set mandate and roles for the NCC Transit Project Office	•				
Continue commitment to the Ottawa-Gatineau Federal employment ratio of 75:25.					
Active Transportation					
Implement the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan	•	•	•		•
Examine the feasibility of adding the crossings as part of the Weekend Bike Day open streets events during the summer of 2022	•	•	•		•
Expansion of “park-and-cycle” initiatives along key interprovincial cycling routes		•	•		•
Transportation Demand Management					
Conduct post-pandemic assessment of work-from-home practices as part of overall updates to regional transportation data		•		•	
Encourage carpool programs for federal employees and increase preferential parking for carpooling at Federal work places		•			
Continue and expand programs to encourage sustainable transportation at Federal workplaces, such as employer-subsidized transit passes		•			

5.1 Strategies

	One Region	Sustainable	Environment	Economic	Quality of Life
Short Term (2 of 2)					
Environment and Climate Change					
Integrate best practices for climate-resilient infrastructure as part of rehabilitation programs of existing crossings			•		
Adopt zero-emissions fleet strategies for NCC and Federal vehicles			•		
Expand provision of electric vehicle charging stations at Federal workplaces and facilities			•		
Goods Movement					
Embark on a joint regional truck route and goods movement study	•			•	
Establish a regional goods movement forum with the goods movement industry to link industry stakeholders to decision-making on interprovincial travel	•			•	
Regularly review and assess the impact and suitability of existing and potential truck restrictions on core area routes				•	•
Wayfinding & Safety					
Review and explore opportunities to improve interprovincial traveller information, such as dynamic signage	•				•
Review and update response programs and procedures to reduce impact of incidents					•
Medium Term (1 of 3)					
Governance & Policy					
Integrate vision and objectives of the Strategic Plan into relevant local and regional documents	•				

5.1 Strategies

	One Region	Sustainable	Environment	Economic	Quality of Life
Medium Term (2 of 3)					
Explore opportunities for integrated regional traffic management, such as integration of crossings operations in a centralized traffic operations centre	•				•
Continue coordination between construction projects on interprovincial crossings and connecting municipal roadways	•				•
Transit					
Identify needs and opportunities to further improve the integration of the interprovincial transit system and service	•	•	•	•	•
Active Transportation					
Conduct a connectivity analysis to ensure the continuity and integration of pedestrian and cycling networks with the interprovincial crossings	•	•			
Explore the feasibility of coordinated interprovincial micro-mobility sharing programs (i.e. e-scooters, bike sharing, etc.)	•	•			
Regularly conduct pedestrian and cycling safety audits for interprovincial crossings and adjacent routes to identify improvements		•			•
Transportation Demand Management					
Expand Federal Government Co-Working Space Initiative		•		•	•
To encourage the use of zero-emissions vehicles, consider allowing green-plated vehicles access to high-occupancy vehicle lanes on the crossings			•		
Explore ways to encourage transition to low-carbon/smaller vehicles for goods movement			•	•	

5.1 Strategies

	One Region	Sustainable	Environment	Economic	Quality of Life
Medium Term (3 of 3)					
Trucks					
Explore the utilization of urban consolidation centres (UCCs) to reduce truck movements as part of a regional goods movement strategy				•	•
Long Term					
Transit					
Continue the development of the interprovincial transit loop to support strengthened connectivity within the core area	•	•		•	
Trucks					
Assess the feasibility of integrating interprovincial heavy truck movements as part of any emergent curbside management programs		•		•	•

6 Governance

The National Capital Region contains a unique governance context that includes a large metropolitan area with several bodies influencing transportation policy, planning and service delivery:

- The Federal Government, including the National Capital Commission
- The Provincial Governments of Ontario and Québec, including the respective Ministries responsible for transportation
- The Municipal Governments of Gatineau and Ottawa, including OC Transpo
- The Société de transport de l'Outaouais (STO), the local transit agency providing service in Gatineau.

Whereas there is ongoing collaboration on issues of regional importance and the delivery of services, such as through the TRANS committee and integrated interprovincial transit services between Gatineau and Ottawa, there is a need for mechanisms to ensure that the initiatives of this Plan are pursued in a collaborative and coordinated fashion. In this regard, there are many steps towards implementing any such changes, which are beyond the responsibility and authority of any single agency.

The TRANS Committee: A Foundation for Further Regional Collaboration

The TRANS Committee is a joint technical committee on transportation, created in 1979 as a subcommittee of the former Joint Administrative Committee for Planning and Transportation (JACPAT). While the JACPAT ceased its activities in the mid-1990s, TRANS continues as a successful and effective forum for communication and coordination of technical efforts linked to transportation data collection, modeling, coordination of special studies in the NCR.

TRANS is unique in Canada in its multilateral partnership and participation of the federal, provincial, and municipal levels of government on transportation data collection, modelling, forecasting.

The administration of TRANS is managed by the City of Ottawa and co-funded by partner agencies through a continuing and renewable agreement that recognizes the legitimate mandate, functions and annual financing of TRANS.



In the context of the National Capital Region, a new governance forum for more collaborative interprovincial transportation planning and investment would provide opportunities to further expand collaboration and coordination while potentially taking a greater role in the planning, construction, and delivery of infrastructure and services critical to interprovincial connectivity.

6.1 Potential Benefits of Regional Governance

As the region continues to grow, more formalized governance for regional and interprovincial travel could be beneficial to provide a forum for continued collaboration, coordination, and cooperation. Partners within the NCR recognize the importance and necessity of having a joint regional perspective on transportation planning activities, as the movement of people and goods cannot be separated along municipal or provincial boundaries.

The implementation of regional governance structures for transportation is common in larger urban centres around the world to overcome challenges such as the coordinated delivery of capital projects and services that cross jurisdictional boundaries, the improvement of traveller journeys on the regional network, and coordination of regional transportation with other policies such as land use. Typically, these governance structures are most beneficial where transportation needs and contexts are complex. In Canada, regional transportation governance structures are in place in most large cities, including Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, and Montreal.

In the context of the National Capital Region, a new governance forum for more collaborative interprovincial transportation planning and investment would provide opportunities to further expand collaboration and coordination while potentially taking a greater role in the planning, construction, and delivery of infrastructure and services critical to interprovincial connectivity. There are unique challenges in the NCR that do not exist elsewhere, primarily the unique involvement of the federal government in transportation planning owing to the region encompassing two provinces. This warrants further study and discussion to create a “Made in the NCR” solution. There are also opportunities and unique successes to build upon, such as the project confirmed in the Gatineau tramway study, proposed by the STO and which will be funded by the governments of Canada and Quebec, and which will also serve the downtown Ottawa. Existing governance structures, such as the NCC Board, whose members include the mayors of Ottawa and Gatineau, can also provide precedents.

In 2021, the Federal Government provided a mandate to the National Capital Commission to establish a Transit Office. The primary purpose of this office is for the NCC to play a role in facilitating the planning and development of an integrated interprovincial transit system, primarily in response to the proposed West Gatineau Tramway project which will cross the river between Gatineau and Ottawa. In addition, the Transit Office could also help advance the proposed downtown transit loop, along Confederation Boulevard which crosses interprovincial boundaries. These two projects present an opportunity to initiate further discussions around governance of interprovincial transportation and regional mobility.

6.2 Regional Governance and the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan does not recommend a model for governance for interprovincial travel or regional transportation in the National Capital Region. However, it does lay initial groundwork by establishing a common vision and objectives, assessing the general needs and gaps, and continuing conversations between NCR agencies.

6.3 Principles of Regional Transportation Governance for Interprovincial Travel in the NCR

Through the development of the Strategic Plan, several principles emerge for interprovincial transportation governance in the NCR. These are not prerequisites for a future model; however, they should be considered when exploring and assessing the most suitable approach.

These principles include:

- Establishing a common vision and providing a forum for ongoing collaboration, coordination, and cooperation
- Defining clear roles and responsibilities for the delivery of capital projects, maintenance of infrastructure, and service delivery
- Ensuring that decision-making on local levels is consistent with regional goals and objectives
- Recognizing that:
 - ▶ land use and transportation are inextricably linked, but local planning responsibilities, lie with municipalities with unique local contexts as it relates to needs, policies, and priorities
 - ▶ efficient interprovincial travel requires planning beyond the crossings of the Ottawa River and needs to include municipal and provincial connections
 - ▶ seamless travel means that jurisdictional boundaries are invisible to the traveller and planning should prioritize the experience of journeys and mobility

Through the development of the Strategic Plan, several principles emerge for interprovincial transportation governance in the NCR.



6.4 Potential Governance Models

There are three key roles that can be fulfilled by a regional governance body:

- Transportation planning coordination and collaboration
- Delivery of capital projects
- Ongoing service delivery, operations, and maintenance

The level of involvement by a regional agency varies by local context, such as pre-existing governance structures, the level of need for such an agency, funding and revenue generation options and political will and priorities. The following approaches and levels of involvement can include:

- 1. Coordination-only** – the role of the regional body is to serve primarily as a forum for coordination and collaboration between member agencies. This could be in the form of standing or steering committees, coordination tables, or through a memorandum of understanding. The goal of coordination could be to set regional priorities and could also result in the development of a regional plan. In most cases, detailed planning, construction, and service delivery is left to the respective agencies. This is currently happening to a degree within the National Capital Region through the TRANS committee and other interprovincial transportation data collection exercises, travel demand models, and studies.
- 2. Coordination and Construction** – the role of the regional body is primarily to coordinate the planning and delivery of new capital projects, with operations primarily left to the respective local agencies. The extent of this role is typically defined by the level of investment; the primary funding agency of new capital projects would have an interest in retaining ownership, particularly where costs can be amortized over the life of the infrastructure.
- 3. Targeted Full Responsibility** – the role of the regional body is to take responsibility of transportation of regional significance. Examples include the identification of a regional network of roads, transit, and active transportation with the regional body assuming primary responsibility for planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operations. This is similar to the role of regional municipalities, such as York Region and Durham Region in Ontario.
- 4. Full responsibility** – the role of the regional body would be to have full responsibility for transportation. This would require substantial effort to transfer these responsibilities to a regional body and potential responsiveness to local issues.

6.5 Governance Model Case Studies

<p>WMATA (Greater Washington, DC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established in 1967 as part of approval/ implementation of regional rail system to serve the national capital. Authority is a result of agreement between Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Coordinates planning and operations of regional transit Operates all transit service in jurisdiction, including the transit fare card and service coordination Federal government only funds capital costs. Operating subsidy for WMATA is shared by local jurisdictions, based on a formula that considers population, ridership, and number of stations. Governance through a board of directors with representatives from three jurisdictions and federal government. 	<p>Metrolinx (Greater Toronto, ON)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An agency of the Province of Ontario, Metrolinx was established in 2006 to coordinate regional transportation planning in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). Metrolinx is also responsible for the operations of GO Transit, UP Express, and PRESTO. Metrolinx is governed by a Board of Directors. Priorities are set largely through the Ministry of Transportation and provincial cabinet. Leads planning and delivery of regional rapid transit projects. Expansion of LRT and subway will grow Metrolinx’s operational mandate – while new lines will be owned by Metrolinx, operations will be contracted through private partnerships or in Toronto’s case, TTC. Develops the Regional Transportation Plan in collaboration with municipalities, which supports the Province’s Growth Plan for the GTHA. Metrolinx has a statutory influence on municipal policy through Planning Policy Statements and Transportation Planning Policy Statements. Municipal Official Plans and Transportation Master Plans are mandated to conform to the RTP.
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ARTM (Autorité régionale de transport métropolitain) (Greater Montreal, QC)

- Established in 2017 to serve as a plan, coordinate, finance, and promote public transport services in the Greater Montreal area.
- Develops the strategic plan for public transportation, including coordination of the regional origin-destination surveys
- Establishes a regional fare system and other regional standards to improve travel, such as regional wayfinding
- Centralized funding agency to support capital and operational budgets
- Governed by a board of directors that include 15 members; 10 members are independent members, not associated with any of the area municipalities and appointed by either the Government of Québec or the Montreal Metropolitan Community municipalities. 5 remaining members are the mayors of the cities in the Montreal area.

TransLink (Greater Vancouver, BC)

- Established in 1999 to plan and manage the regional transportation system. Operating subsidiaries for all transit in the Lower Mainland (bus, rail, ferries).
- Develops regional transportation strategy and sub-regional transportation strategies
- Defines a regional major road network where TransLink contributes to the upkeep and maintenance; collaborates on the planning. Ownership remains with respective municipalities. Cost shares on improvement projects for all modes that are consistent with the vision and RTP.
- Owns and maintains five bridges (a fraction of all the bridges in the GVA)
- Governed by a Board of Directors (day-to-day business) and the Mayors' Council (approves transportation plans and strategies)

7 Monitoring Framework

Given that the Strategic Plan is intended to be a flexible living plan, systematic monitoring of progress towards the vision and goals is important for informing future updates. Monitoring will enable a better understanding of emerging travel trends and aid in selecting the most appropriate measures to further the vision as the Strategic Plan is implemented. Monitoring is also essential to help guide planning and investment decisions and track the need for any changes to the Plan indicators and metrics that help define success.

This Section proposes a monitoring framework to track progress. Some indicators use current data sets that are planned to be updated in the coming years, including the regional household origin-destination survey, a commercial vehicle survey, and population and employment forecasts. Some indicators use data that is already available including the Census, traffic counts, transit ridership numbers, and fare card data. Other indicators may require collecting new data.

The proposed monitoring indicators are shown in Exhibit 7.1 organized by Strategic Plan pillar. The table includes two types of indicators:

- **Forecasting indicators:** these indicators were used to evaluate the 2050 scenarios during the Strategic Plan development process. These should be updated as more recent data become available. Monitoring how forecasts change is important because as the region develops, future transportation patterns, upon which the Strategic Plan is built, will change.
- **Monitoring indicators:** these indicators are intended to provide snapshots of progress towards the vision and provide an indication of how implemented strategies are working.

The table includes the Strategic Plan objectives presented in Chapter 3. Indicators were chosen that best measure the objectives, while acknowledging that there cannot always be a perfect match. Furthermore, some of the indicators will require additional refinement and discussion with NCR agencies to facilitate data collection.

Another important part of the monitoring framework is the emergence of new data sources and incorporating them into the monitoring framework as they become available. The increasing use of smartphone data and data from New Mobility providers presents an opportunity for a richer understanding of transportation patterns if appropriate privacy protections are in place.

Another important part of the monitoring framework is the emergence of new data sources and incorporating them into the monitoring framework as they become available.

As the Strategic Plan is updated, additional targets can be developed using the most up-to-date information to develop targets that are bold yet achievable based on the Plan's strategies.

7.1 Targets in Existing Policies and Plans

This Plan draws on existing approved multi-jurisdictional plans and documents, many of which include targets that set quantifiable objectives for similar broad goals. These targets have been integrated into the objectives of the Plan and will also inform the monitoring framework. As the Strategic Plan is updated, additional targets can be developed using the most up-to-date information to develop targets that are bold yet achievable based on the Plan's strategies.

The following existing approved municipal and federal targets are among the most significant in the existing plans. Achieving these targets would represent substantial progress towards achieving the Strategic Plan's vision.

- **Increase sustainable mode share:** Gatineau and Ottawa have city-wide targets for increasing the proportion of all trips made by carpool, transit, cycling, and walking to 54% by 2031 and 50% by 2046, respectively. There are further opportunities to increase sustainable mode shares throughout the NCR.
- **Reduce total interprovincial auto trips:** Gatineau and Ottawa have targets of reducing auto trips by 11% between 2011 and 2031 and reducing auto mode share by 4% between 2011 and 2031, respectively. This requires measures to increase mobility options, including for interprovincial travel.
- **Achieve net-zero emissions for interprovincial travel:** The Federal Government is committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The Strategic Plan assumes an uptake of electric vehicles, although a greater uptake could be achieved through policies such as implementing public rapid charging stations and subsidies for purchasing net-zero technologies.

Figure 7.1: Monitoring Plan Indicators

Pillar 1: One Region (Transportation Integration) Connectivity of the constituent communities through a coordinated NCR wide transportation network and a coordinated approach to planning and designing the network.		
Objectives	Monitoring Indicators	Data Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-connected Ottawa and Gatineau downtowns that serve as multi-modal transportation hubs Land use and transportation crossing infrastructure supporting each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates to municipal transportation plan and Official Plans that reflect the Strategic Plan Major interprovincial origins and destinations pairs accessible by rapid transit Average trip length between home and work Specialized transit service integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative review of municipal plans TRANS model TRANS model STO/OC Transpo
Pillar 2: Sustainable Use of Crossing Infrastructure Space-efficient use of existing (and potential future) crossing infrastructure		
Objectives	Forecasting Indicators	Data Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased sustainable and space-efficient mode use for cross-river trips Reduced auto use and overall demand for peak interprovincial trips Improved mobility options are available for cross-river trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volumes and mode shares of cross-river trips across all crossings (a.m. peak period 6:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m., each direction) Average interprovincial auto occupancy Auto vehicle kilometres travelled for interprovincial trips Average auto and transit travel time in minutes for interprovincial trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TRANS model

Monitoring Indicators		Data Source
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of large employers with a transportation demand management plan • Cost of maintenance per person kilometre • Change in designed people moving capacity of crossings • Daily traffic volumes for all modes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer survey • Capital plans • Analysis of crossings • Traffic counts
Pillar 3: Environment and Climate Change Minimizing adverse environmental impacts and mitigating and adapting to climate change		
Objectives	Forecasting Indicators	Data Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants from transportation • Better withstand extreme weather disruptions associated with climate change • Reduced disruption to natural areas, waterways, and parks along the river 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GHG emission levels per person-km (CO2 equivalent grams from auto and transit) • Annual total emissions (CO2 equivalent kilo tonnes from auto, commercial vehicles, and transit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRANS model
Monitoring Indicators		Data Source
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of interprovincial trips made using electric vehicles • Percent of transit fleets that are zero-emission vehicles • Pollution levels in the vicinity of each crossing • Percent of interprovincial goods moved on zero-emission vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household survey • OC Transpo/STO • Pollution sensors • Commercial vehicle survey

Pillar 4: Economy

Efficient interprovincial travel of people and goods to enhance the NCR's economic wellbeing

Objectives	Forecasting Indicators	Data Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced delay for people and goods crossing the river• Reduced travel time to connect between provincial highway systems• Controlled spending and sustainable funding sources for crossing infrastructure, services, and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total hours of delay on interprovincial crossings• Volume-to-capacity ratios on all river crossings and selected roads approaching the crossings (a.m. peak hour)• Average travel time in minutes for vehicles between the provincial highway networks on crossings that allow heavy trucks (a.m. peak hour)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TRANS model
Monitoring Indicators		Data Source
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percent of interprovincial goods movement traffic destined for Ottawa-Gatineau• Value of goods crossing the interprovincial bridges• Proportion of truck trips in peak versus off-peak hours• Interprovincial truck travel time reliability• Interprovincial passenger travel time reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercial vehicle survey• Commercial vehicle survey• Commercial vehicle survey/traffic counts• GPS Data• Smartphone data

Pillar 5: Quality of Life

Facilitate access to opportunities for all and reduce the adverse impacts of travel on adjoining communities, especially those caused by heavy goods vehicle traffic.

Objectives	Forecasting Indicators	Data Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved community health and safety in the neighbourhoods adjacent to the crossings Improved real and perceived traveler safety and comfort Reduced travel time for cross-river trips Equitable access to efficient cross-river travel Increased access to the region's natural spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy truck vehicle-kilometers-travelled on non-highway and non-major arterial links in the vicinity of each crossing Average a.m. peak hour auto travel time in minutes for interprovincial trips Average a.m. peak hour transit travel time in minutes for interprovincial trips Average a.m. peak hour auto and transit travel times in minutes for interprovincial trips originating in low income traffic zones Heavy truck vehicle-kilometers-travelled on the King Edward Avenue, Rideau Street, Waller Street and Nicholas Street between Macdonald Cartier Bridge and Hwy 417 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TRANS model GPS Data Commercial vehicle survey
	Monitoring Indicators	Data Source
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit Level-of-Service on interprovincial travel routes Collisions on interprovincial crossings and select approach roads Sustainable connections to major destinations (e.g. Gatineau Park) Quality of travel experience by all modes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OC Transpo/STO City of Gatineau, City of Ottawa, PSPC, NCC Mapping analysis Multi-modal Level-of-Service Analysis of interprovincial bridges

Acknowledgements

The *Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region* represents nearly two years of research, analysis, planning and consultation with the public, as well as with many government agencies and stakeholder groups in the National Capital Region. Our thanks to everyone who contributed to the project. We would also like to thank the many members of the public and external groups who participated in various working meetings, provided feedback or participated in public consultation workshops to develop and improve this plan.

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NCC Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region

PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT
NOVEMBER 9 TO 24, 2021

Canada

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I. Project description

A. Background

The National Capital Commission (NCC) is leading the development of the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan in collaboration with its provincial and municipal partners. This Plan will recommend the best way to manage travel across the Ottawa River, from now to 2050.

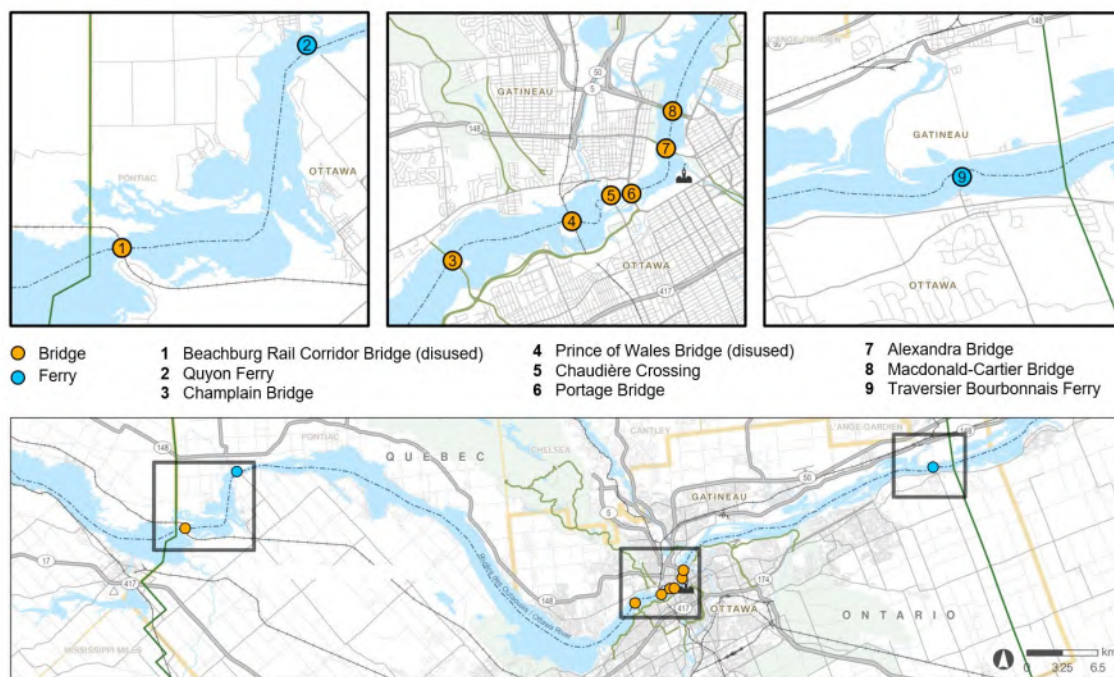
This Plan is particularly important now as more and more people and goods are expected to cross back and forth between Ottawa and Gatineau. Finding solutions for how people and goods travel more easily and efficiently across the Ottawa River is critical to the long-term wellbeing of Canada's National Capital Region (NCR) - environmentally, socially, and economically.

The Plan is one of a series of NCC and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) initiatives that are working towards the continued safety and function of the interprovincial crossings in the National Capital Region.

Context

There are currently nine interprovincial crossings in the NCR including seven bridges and two ferries. The maps below (Exhibit 1) show the location of these crossings.

Exhibit 1: Maps of interprovincial bridges and ferries in Canada's Capital Region



Most interprovincial travel is made using the five vehicular bridges in the urban area. These are the Champlain Bridge, Chaudière Crossing, Portage Bridge, Alexandra Bridge and Macdonald-Cartier Bridge. Two other bridges — the Chief William Commanda Bridge near the Region’s core area and the Beachburg Rail Corridor Bridge in the west — are not in use. The two ferry crossings are located at the Region’s eastern and western edges.

The NCR, which consists mainly of the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, between which the Ottawa River flows, and the Municipalité régionale de comté (MRC) des Collines-de-l’Outaouais, is an integrated hub of economic, social and tourism activity. It is also one of the most populous metropolitan regions in Canada.

Many of the five interprovincial vehicular bridges are at or beyond their designed car-carrying capacity, leading to peak period congestion and delays. The population of the Ottawa-Gatineau area is expected to grow by one-fifth (19%, or approximately 300,000 people), with corresponding increasing demand for interprovincial travel.

Past studies have shown that in just ten years’ time, by 2031, the existing interprovincial vehicular bridges will have exceeded their designed capacity.

B. Plan objectives

This Plan sets a blueprint for collaborating with partnering agencies to establish a shared long-term vision and strategies for the interprovincial transport of people and goods in the Region to 2050. The Plan treats the interprovincial crossings as a part of a “complete system” and will support the Region’s continued prosperity and quality of life, and satisfy the environmental, economic and social needs of communities and businesses.

The objectives of the Plan are to:

- Improve the movement of people and goods on the existing interprovincial bridges.
- Assess how planned modifications to some of the bridges will influence future interprovincial travel demands and patterns.
- Recommend innovative solutions to meet future travel needs, focusing on sustainable and low-carbon solutions.
- Recommend strategies that can reduce interprovincial heavy truck traffic through the central area.
- Account for emerging remote work trends and emerging technological innovations that can affect how people travel.
- Recommend a workable governance framework for interprovincial transportation planning that is more collaborative and responsive.

C. Planning process

The 2019 federal budget directed that the NCC develop the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan in collaboration with both provincial and municipal governments. This collaboration included meetings with the project Core Team and Steering Committee, including an academic advisory committee, in each phase of the planning process to provide planning updates and seek input and direction on the Strategic Plan. The development of the Plan was conducted in the following four phases.

Phase 1: Needs and Opportunities	Spring 2020	Reviewed existing plans/policies and reviewed travel patterns and forecasts
Phase 2: Establish Vision and Goals	Summer / Fall 2020	Established vision, supporting goals, and objectives
Phase 3: Develop and Evaluate Future Scenarios	Winter 2020 / Spring 2021	Developed and evaluated conceptual scenarios to identify potential solutions
Phase 4: Develop the Strategic Plan	Fall/Winter 2021	Identified a series of potential strategies to achieve the vision

II. Public consultation process

A. Overview

a. Consultation objective

This summary report documents what we heard from the second of two rounds of public and stakeholder engagements. The first round was completed in November 2020. The purpose of this second round of consultation was to provide members of the public and stakeholders the opportunity to review the draft Strategic Plan and provide comments through a brief online questionnaire, in addition to stakeholder workshops.

b. Date and time

The questionnaire was available in English and French on the NCC's website from November 9 to November 24, 2021.

Two stakeholder workshops were held, one in English and one in French, on November 16 and November 18, 2021 respectively from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

B. Consultation procedure and tools

a. Online consultation

The online consultation was hosted on the NCC study website in both English and French. The questionnaire included the following questions:

- Do you agree with the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan?
- What do you like about the plan?
- What do you think could be improved in the plan?

As an alternative to the online survey, members of the public were invited to provide comments via phone to the NCC's Help Line and email to the NCC.

b. Stakeholder workshops

Two virtual stakeholder workshops, one in English and one in French, were held on November 16 and November 18, 2021 respectively from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Each workshop included a presentation on the draft Strategic Plan and discussion. Each workshop had the following format.

- Introductions and opening remarks
- Overview of the draft Strategic Plan including:
 - Plan development process
 - Future interprovincial travel needs
 - Strategic Plan vision
 - Transportation trends
 - Potential directions
 - Key findings
 - Overall Strategic Plan directions
 - Strategic framework
 - Monitoring plan
 - Governance
- Questions and discussion
- Next steps

C. Invitation and promotion

An email invitation for the online consultation was sent using Public Affairs distribution lists, which include the following types of stakeholders:

- Interest groups, user groups and heritage groups;
- Business, industry and transportation associations;
- Residents' associations; and
- Members of the general public registered to receive public engagement notices.

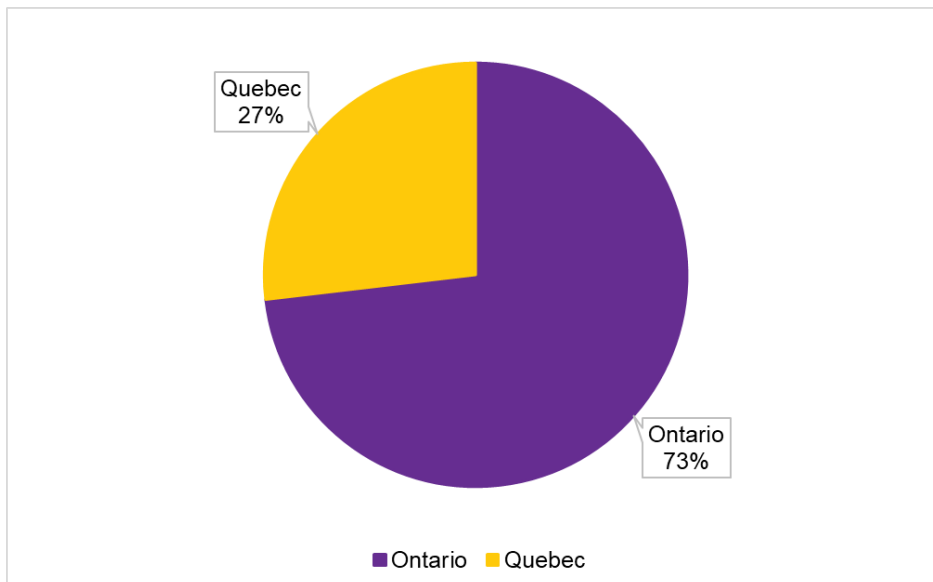
Messages were also posted on the NCC's social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter), soliciting the participation of all interested members of the public. A paid digital advertising campaign was also launched on these same platforms throughout the duration of the survey.

D. Participants

a. Online consultation

There were over 4,689 responses to at least one questionnaire question and 1,371 fully complete questionnaires.

Of the 1,400 participants who provided location information 73% reported being residents of Ontario, while 27% reported being residents of Quebec.



b. Stakeholder workshops

A total of 67 organizations were invited to participate in the workshops. Six participants attended the workshops representing the following organizations:

- Ottawa-Gatineau Hotel Association;
- Federation of Citizens Associations of Ottawa;
- Transport Action Canada;
- Manor Park Community Association;
- Action Sandy Hill; and
- Action Vélo Outaouais.

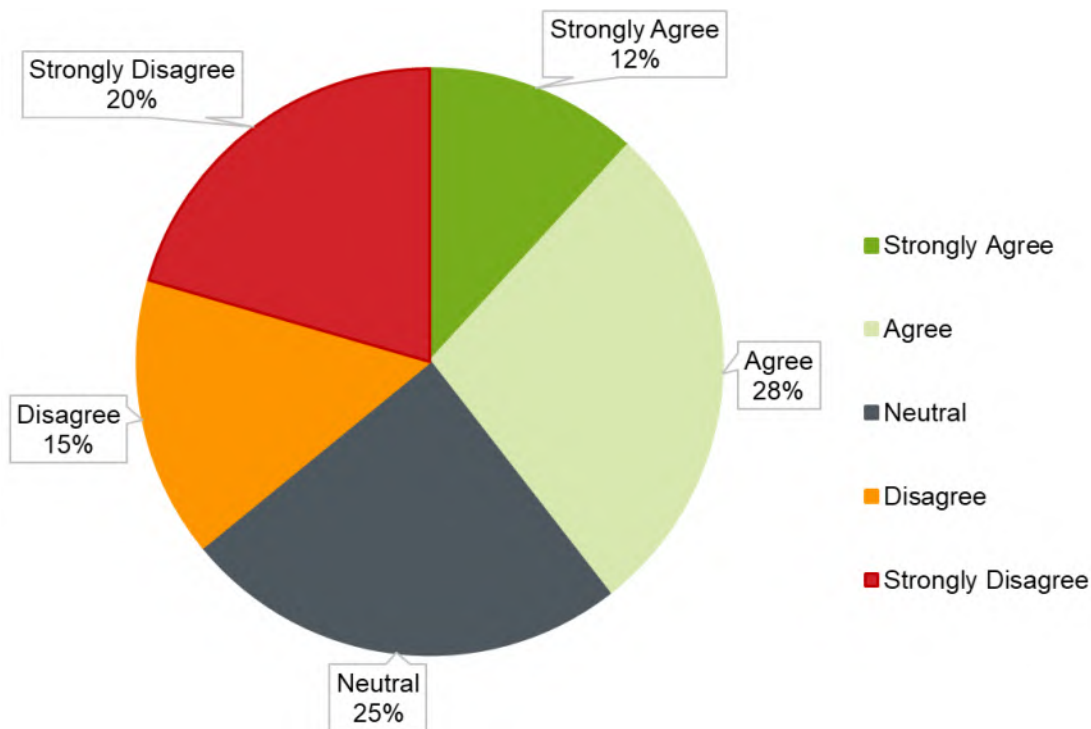
In addition to stakeholder feedback received during the meetings, an additional written submission was received from the New Edinburgh Community Association.

III. Public consultation highlights

This section provides an overview of the key themes from the online questionnaire.

Participants were asked, “Do you agree with the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan.” Of the 1,585 participants who responded to this question:

- 40% indicated support for the Strategic Plan;
- 35% indicated disagreement with the Strategic Plan; and
- 25% indicated a neutral opinion.



The key themes from the questions asking participants what they liked about the Strategic Plan and what could be improved are summarized below.

- **New Infrastructure** - Strong desire for clear directions about future interprovincial infrastructure.
- **Support for sustainability** - Robust support for interprovincial sustainable travel options.
- **Neighbourhood Impacts** - concerns about community quality of life and the need to find sustainable solutions to managing interprovincial truck traffic.

- **More details** - There is a desire for more details about the Plan, including implementation specifics.

IV. Analysis of results

A. Online consultation

The following section provides an overview of the comments received as part of the online consultation.

What do you like about the plan?

Some highlights from those who answered the question include an appreciation of the existence of a plan and a direction for moving forward. Many participants noted a desire to improve interprovincial travel. Multiple responses were shared in appreciation of the emphasis placed on environmental concerns and sustainability. Some shared that they believed the plan was a detailed and serious attempt to address the most pressing issues regarding interprovincial crossings. Some applauded the overall vision and framework. Respondents expressed that they enjoyed the focus on active transportation. Further appreciation was expressed for how the plan intends to optimize existing infrastructure. The building of a 6th bridge was quite a popular idea, and many appreciated the recognition on the part of the NCC that a new bridge would not solve all the concerns regarding transportation. The focus on the need to address traffic was also valued, specifically highlighting the approach to addressing truck traffic in the downtown area. The collaborative spirit of the plan across the government and between the provinces was common appreciative comment.

What could be improved in the plan?

On the subject of what could be improved, a reoccurring comment was the thought that the plan was too vague and failed to provide current specific recommendations. Some did not agree with demolishing the Alexandra Bridge or building a bridge on Kettle Island. On the topic of the construction of bridges, some advocated for fewer bridges while others wanted the opposite. Some participants proposed considering building a tunnel rather than a bridge. Others believed investing in an interprovincial transit loop was the best way forward. Some shared their concern about the timeline and wanted the NCC to move faster on this project. Some participants noted that they did not believe that the plan took post-pandemic travel into serious consideration, as such they believed that planning should wait until after pandemic conditions have settled in order to accurately assess what future conditions would look like. Some participants wanted the plan to maximize its commitment against climate change and go beyond what has been outlined. On the composition of the plan itself respondents noted that they wanted the PDF document to be shorter and searchable in a reader.

Is there anything else you would like to share with us about the Long-term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan?

While most respondents said no, 42% replied with yes and shared some additional thoughts. Here similar comments were expressed with the previous question on what respondents felt could be improved about the plan. The most common reoccurring theme was the desire for immediate action. As well as the hope that the NCC will work with local businesses, residents and truckers in the execution of this plan. In the implementation of the plan, some noted their hope that a focus will be placed on short and medium-term goals. They also wanted increased transparency in public consultations and desired deeper consultation where the public could be more involved. Finally, a passionate desire to preserve the Alexandra Bridge was repeatedly mentioned by participants.

B. Stakeholder workshops

Feedback from the two stakeholder workshops generally aligned with the key themes from the online questionnaire. The key themes are summarized below.

- **More background information:** participants requested more background information on the existing crossings and key interprovincial travel trends. Participants also suggested that the Strategic Plan should include references to previous studies.
- **Support for sustainability:** participants were supportive of providing more sustainable travel options, including transit, active transportation, and shared mobility.
- **Consider impacts on neighbourhoods:** participants expressed concern about impacts to community quality of life caused by heavy trucks and the need to find sustainable solutions to managing interprovincial truck traffic. Participants also suggested that planned development be accounted for when findings solutions to managing interprovincial truck traffic.
- **Need for updated data:** participants emphasized the importance of collecting up-to-date and reliable data, with a focus on understanding post-COVID travel patterns.

V. Integration of results

The feedback received as part of this engagement round informed several changes to the Strategic Plan. Changes to the Plan include:

- Additional information on previous interprovincial transportation planning studies;
- Additional information on the existing interprovincial bridges including vehicle volumes;
- New information about potential measures that would be required to further reduce heavy truck movements in the central area beyond building new crossings; and
- Minor edits throughout the document to provide additional clarity.

As the Strategic Plan is a living document, comments received during this round of engagement will also be considered during future Plan updates.

VI. Next steps

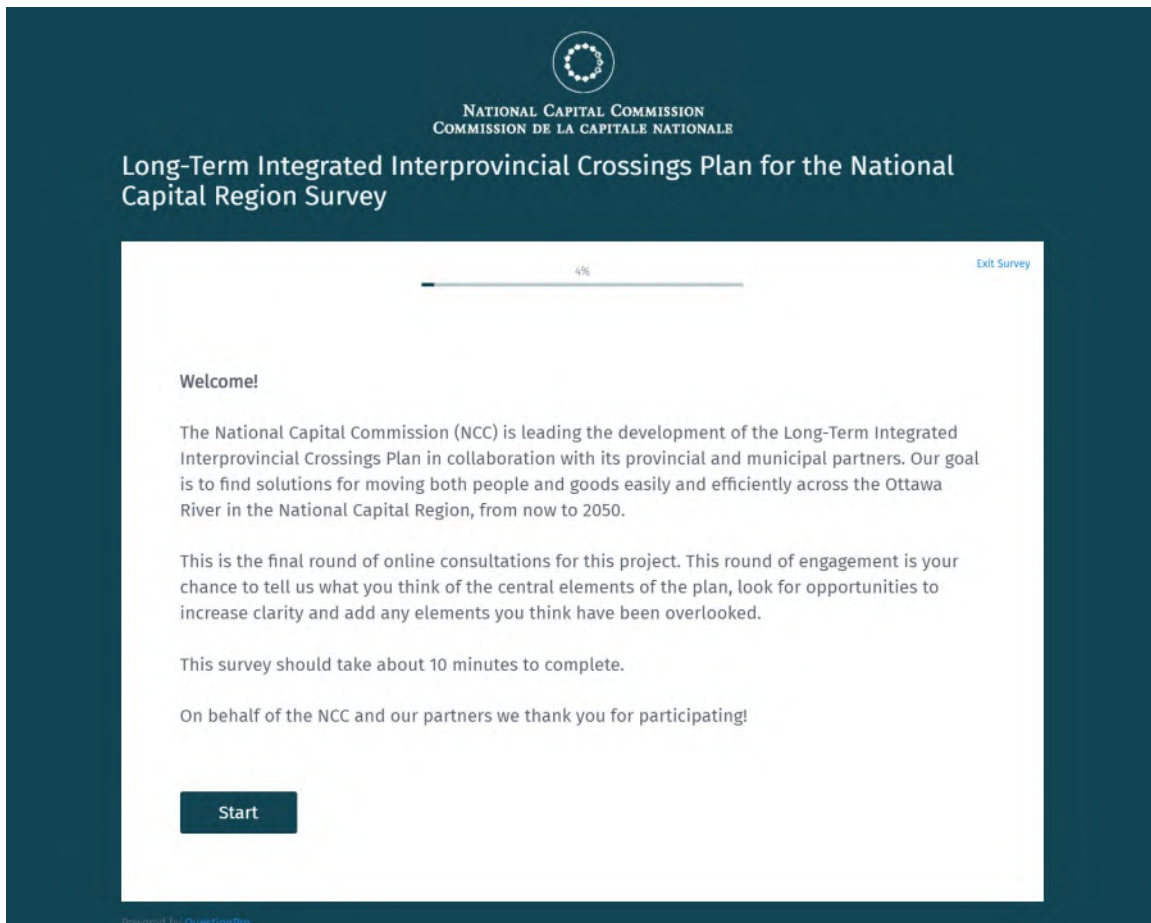
The next steps in the Plan development process are as follows:

- Update the Plan based on feedback (December 2021);
- NCC Board approval (January 2022);
- Implementation and monitoring (2022+); and
- Update the Plan after the Origin-Destination data refresh (2023+).

Appendix 1: Online survey

1. Do you agree with the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. What do you like about the plan?
3. What do you think could be improved in the plan?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share with us about the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan

The full survey is provided below.



The screenshot displays the survey's introductory page. At the top, the National Capital Commission logo is centered above the text "NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION" and "COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE". Below this, the survey title "Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey" is prominently displayed. A progress bar indicates 4% completion, with an "Exit Survey" link in the top right corner. The main content area begins with a "Welcome!" heading, followed by a paragraph explaining the NCC's role in developing the plan and its goal of finding solutions for moving people and goods across the Ottawa River by 2050. It then states that this is the final round of online consultations and encourages participants to provide feedback on the central elements of the plan. A note mentions the survey should take about 10 minutes. A final thank-you message is provided on behalf of the NCC and its partners. A dark blue "Start" button is positioned at the bottom of the text area. The footer of the survey interface reads "Powered by QuestionPro".

Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

4%

[Exit Survey](#)

Welcome!

The National Capital Commission (NCC) is leading the development of the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan in collaboration with its provincial and municipal partners. Our goal is to find solutions for moving both people and goods easily and efficiently across the Ottawa River in the National Capital Region, from now to 2050.

This is the final round of online consultations for this project. This round of engagement is your chance to tell us what you think of the central elements of the plan, look for opportunities to increase clarity and add any elements you think have been overlooked.

This survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

On behalf of the NCC and our partners we thank you for participating!

Start

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COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

13%

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About the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan

The NCC is leading the development of the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan in collaboration with its provincial and municipal partners. The objectives of this collaboration are as follows:

- Find solutions for how people and goods can travel safely, more efficiently and sustainably across the Ottawa River from now until the year 2050.
- Plan for the long-term environmental, social and economic well-being of the National Capital Region.

The development of the plan is now almost complete, and Phase 4 is currently underway. During this phase the short, medium and longer-term strategies for interprovincial movement will be listed, the draft plan will be finalized, and the plan will be presented to the public and stakeholders for additional feedback.



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8%

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Privacy Notice Statement

The collection and use of your personal information in this questionnaire is in accordance with the *Privacy Act*, and authorized under the *National Capital Act*. We will use your responses for the following purposes: to inform the development of the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan and to better understand the reach of the NCC's public engagement initiatives. Information relating to "Outreach Activities" is described in Personal information Bank PSU 938. The information is protected in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy Act*. Your personal information will not be shared. Under the *Privacy Act*, you have the right to access your personal information, request corrections if you believe that some personal information is erroneous or incomplete and add a notation to the information at issue. If you wish to access your personal information contained in Personal Information Banks PSU 938, you should communicate with the Chief, Access to Information and Privacy, by telephone at 613-239-5678, extension 5788, or via the following email address: atip-aiprp@ncc-ccn.ca.



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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

17%

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Overview

We encourage you to review the [draft plan here](#) to help guide your input on the plan.

Once you have read the draft plan, we would like to know what you think. The following questions are your opportunity to reflect on the information you have reviewed and provide your input on the plan. Please consider the **vision, plan direction, strategic framework, governance, and monitoring framework** in your responses.

Your responses will help inform the final draft of the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan as the project moves forward.



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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

34%

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Questions

Do you agree with the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What do you like about the plan?

What do you think could be improved in the plan?



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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

43%

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Final Thoughts

Is there anything else you would like to share with us about the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

56%

[Exit Survey](#)

About You!

Please tell us a bit more about yourself. This information will be used to help us gain a better understanding of **who** we are engaging with and **what** views participants hold.

Have you participated in a previous consultation about developing the Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossing Plan?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Are you a resident of the National Capital Region?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No



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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

60%

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Which side of the river do you live on?

- ☐ South (Ontario side)
- ☐ North (Quebec side)



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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

82%

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What is your age?

-- Select --



With which of the following gender identities do you identify?

-- Select --



Do you identify as a member of a visible minority?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Prefer not to say

Do you identify as Indigenous — that is, First Nations, Metis or Inuit?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Prefer not to say

According to the *Accessible Canada Act*, disability means “any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment —or a functional limitation—whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.”

Do you identify as a person with a disability?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Prefer not to say



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Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan for the National Capital Region Survey

100%

[Exit Survey](#)

Give Us Your Feedback!

Before you go, please take this opportunity to give us some feedback on the survey. Your feedback is valuable to us as we are continually seeking to improve and find new ways to meaningfully engage with the public.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The information in this survey was accessible (e.g. language, readability, font size, and so on).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The information was sufficient and clear, allowing me to fully participate in the consultation process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that my feedback will be considered in the planning and decision-making process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Were there any unforeseen problems with the survey?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you have any additional comments on the survey?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No



Finish

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Appendix 2: Written submissions



December 2, 2021

New Edinburgh Community Alliance

Response to public consultation:

National Capital Commission Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan

New Edinburgh Community Alliance (NECA) is pleased to provide its response via email with respect to the recent online survey on the interprovincial crossings strategic plan.

We are providing this response via email since the online survey did not provide sufficient room for our comments. Although the online survey closed on November 24, 2021, we would appreciate your taking our comments into consideration when compiling the “what we heard” report.

If we recall correctly from reading the online survey, there were three key questions along these lines:

A. What do we like about the report?

B. What do not like about the report and needs improvement?

C. What is our feedback on this survey?

A. What do we like about the report?

The findings in the report clearly state that **heavy truck movements represent one of two of the biggest challenges for interprovincial travel** (page v). That point is well worth noting in the context of whether the National Capital Region (NCR) truly needs another interprovincial crossing. It is clear from this report that

another crossing is not absolutely necessary since there are many other options to address the issues, as cited in the report.

The strategic plan directions that are about **better data, sustainability focus and regional collaboration** (page vii) are appropriate and important in our view.

The strategic plan's focus on **protecting the environment and improving quality of life** (page viii) is also critical and we support it.

The concerns about commuter traffic should be considered through the lens of impacts of remote-work on future commuter travel, as the report implies. There is significant uncertainty and a lack of robust data to confidently forecast the impacts of remote-work arrangements on commuter traffic trends into the future in the NCR. This is not the basis for good decision-making where impacts will be felt by communities for decades to come.

B. What do we not like about the report and needs improvement?

NECA recommends the following improvements to the plan:

- Be mindful of the impact on communities of considering another interprovincial crossing – especially the impact of trucks and the loss of greenspace.
- Focus on the option to update existing bridges that are currently unused (e.g. Chief William Commanda Bridge)
- Focus on light rail transit (LRT) and active transportation on any and all existing bridges
- Consider the role of “ring roads” to divert traffic from the city core
- Be clear and detailed about a tunnel as an alternative.¹ In particular, note the potential for this option to divert an estimated 65 per cent of truck traffic from King Edward Avenue (according to a previous study cited by the City of Ottawa) or at least 33% according to this plan, as compared to the minimal 15 per cent diversion that is estimated via a proposed sixth bridge.

The strategic plan **lacks specific goals** and it **lacks an overall vision for transportation challenges of the region**.

¹ <https://ottawa.ca/en/parking-roads-and-travel/transportation-planning/completed-projects/downtown-ottawa-truck-tunnel#overview-downtown-ottawa-truck-tunnel>. The tunnel's location is described as follows: “The study finds that the preferred alignment would be between the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and Highway 417 at Vanier and Riverside via a cross-town route under Lowertown and Sandy Hill. The 3.4-kilometre tunnel would be four lanes wide, with two lanes in each direction, and would be used by both cars and trucks.”

NECA would recommend that **diverting truck traffic from the core (without shifting its impact to another community)** and **protecting the environment** be cited as the primary goals of the plan, in response to the feedback during the previous consultations (page 6) and the summary of findings in this plan.

The statement in the plan that “diverting heavy truck travel from the core areas will require more than a new crossing” is highly pertinent to whether to consider an additional crossing. Yet the plan does not set an objective of addressing that issue fully, rather than focusing on how to proceed with an interprovincial crossing.

A new bridge would divert only 15 per cent of truck traffic away from the downtown core by 2050, as cited in the plan and note above.

However, a downtown tunnel would divert 33% of truck traffic, which is the more than double the estimate for a new bridge (page 27). The tunnel presents a more valuable option to explore for that reason.

An interprovincial crossing should not be explored if it does not seriously address the truck traffic in the core. The report and its strategic directions are lacking in ambition. They are defeatist in tone and disheartening for all those in the communities that are currently affected, and/or will be affected should a crossing be established.

C. What is our feedback on this survey?

The online survey as part of the public consultation was not an inclusive way to canvas citizens’ input on the draft strategic plan for a number of reasons:

1. The **consultation period was brief**, lasting just 15 days from November 9 to 24. For community organizations it was a highly limited time period to gather input and draft their responses.
2. The **online survey format was highly restrictive**, offering only 260 characters of space for answers to the two main questions. For members of a community, such limited space was **not conducive to providing their informed perspectives** in response to the 60-page document.

For those reasons, we respectfully request again that you take this response into consideration as you compile your report on the online survey.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cindy Parkanyi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Cindy Parkanyi
President, New Edinburgh Community Alliance



Nov 2, 2020

Sustainable Solutions - Solutions durables

www.ssd-ottawa.ca

National Capital Commission – Interprovincial Crossings Study Team

Re: Study Phase 2 Comments

Introduction:

Sustainable Solutions – Solutions durables (SSD) has been focused since 2008 on interprovincial transportation and in particular on solutions to the long-standing and difficult matter of heavy interprovincial trucks in Ottawa's downtown. In doing so, we provide a source of information, education, and outreach to communities, engage in advocacy with elected officials and comment on studies related to interprovincial transportation. We are composed of members from a wide geographical area who became acquainted through our participation in the NCC-led 2008-2013 study process to select a preferred corridor for a new interprovincial crossing in the National Capital Region. We became convinced as that process unfolded that a new crossing was not the right solution to the problem of up to 2000 interprovincial trucks transiting through Ottawa's downtown streets on a daily basis, a solution which moreover would create harmful impacts on additional well-established residential communities on both sides of the river.

The Ottawa Downtown Truck Problem:

The truck problem in Ottawa's downtown was created when the Macdonald-Cartier bridge was constructed in 1965. In the 55 years since then, the problem has grown to 2600 trucks per day (1700 of which are non-local)¹, and the majority of which are large tractor trailers. During the peak truck traffic periods in the mid-morning and mid-afternoon a truck rolls down King Edward, Rideau, and Waller streets approximately every 20 seconds. In addition, there are up to 25,000 cars per day transiting through Ottawa's downtown streets directly between the bridge and Highway 417.² This traffic burden

¹ Truck and Car volume data from the 2016 Tunnel Feasibility Study, Parsons Engineering

² Additional heavy trucks also traverse Ottawa's downtown between Hwy 417 and the Chaudière Bridge via Booth and Preston streets.

has resulted in severe safety and environmental degradation to adjoining residential communities and has led to considerable challenges in the development and renewal of Ottawa's core historical downtown areas. We submit that this situation is one of the most severe of its kind in the whole country. It is also not fitting for the downtown of a G7 capital.

Interprovincial Crossings Study (the 'Study') Comments:

We participated in the online consultations process but we would like to provide further comment by way of this letter. In particular, we would like to highlight three broad areas.

1. Maintaining adequate priority on the Ottawa downtown interprovincial truck problem.

It is our view that the resolution of the issue of the interprovincial transportation of goods must be one of the main considerations in the Study. Previous studies have shown that potential initiatives that provide the best connectivity/capacity solutions for the movement of people do not provide a particularly good solution to the movement of goods, and vice versa. This Study needs to be clearer about this challenge and clearly indicate the extent to which any proposed alternative addresses these two fundamentally different issues.

2. Consideration of access routes to existing (and any proposed) crossings.

The Study needs to confer equal or greater importance to the impact of interprovincial cars and trucks on existing residential communities as it does to peak period congestion on the crossings. A comprehensive interprovincial transportation plan thus must take into consideration the access routes to existing interprovincial bridges, their challenges, and opportunities to improve them. This should extend as well to the impact of access routes to any proposed new crossings. In particular we note the lack of adequate connectivity between Highways 417 and 5/50 and look to the Study to address this issue. The suitability of and potential improvements to access routes should be reflected in the range of potential scenarios that are tabled and evaluated in later stages of the Study.

3. Recognition of the unique environmental situation in the National Capital Region (the “NCR”).

In the NCR, most of the shoreline on both sides of the Ottawa River is undeveloped natural environment (some of it of high ecological importance and protected from development) with significant recreational use. Furthermore, the Province of Quebec is currently planning on developing the largest wildlife preserve in the province between McLaurin Bay and the Plaisance National Park. There are more than 31 animals classified as threatened, vulnerable or likely to become so living in the wetlands along the river.

Adding any major new transportation artery through this area will significantly and permanently alter the natural environment. This sets the bar higher than might otherwise be the case, for instance if there were significant existing industrial sites on the river shore through which a new transportation artery could be routed. The negative impact on the natural and recreational environment must be considered for any new interprovincial transportation artery. Any proposal for such a new artery must be demonstrated to have greater benefits than costs (including environmental costs) to be carried forward.

Attached as an appendix to this letter is our detailed point by point feedback on the proposed Guiding Principles and Evaluation Criteria that were made public by the NCC at the Stakeholders’ Meeting.

Conclusion

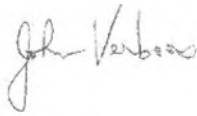
In the National Capital Region, we have a unique opportunity before us. Finally, we are embarking on a study to take a comprehensive view of solving interprovincial transportation problems rather than focusing narrowly on where to locate a new bridge, i.e. predetermining that a new bridge offers the most appropriate solution. It is critical that this study takes a comprehensive approach to the interprovincial transportation challenges in the NCR.

We also urge the NCC and its study partners to build on the lessons learned, to recognize the failure in the past to achieve a consensus on the need for, and possible location of, a sixth interprovincial bridge. Would the result of a narrowly focused approach be any different this time?

We will be sharing this letter with our elected representatives at all three levels of government keeping them informed of our perspective and activities. SSD would like to thank the NCC for providing the opportunity to comment. We can be reached at info@ssd-ottawa.ca

Sustainable Solutions – Solutions durables.

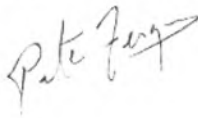
www.ssd-ottawa.ca



John Verbaas
Sandy Hill



Louis Caron
Orléans



Peter Ferguson
Lowertown



John Forsey
Manor Park

Appendix: Detailed Feedback to Existing Conditions, Vision & Guiding Principles, and Evaluation Criteria

1. Sixth Interprovincial Bridge Crossing – Study Refresh

In addition to the 2009-2013 Sixth Crossing Study there has also been the 2016 Tunnel Feasibility Study conducted by Parsons (funded by the City of Ottawa and Province of Ontario) to provide a superior access between Highway 417 and the Macdonald-Cartier bridge. Such a tunnel was determined to be feasible. The current Study must take into consideration the findings of that 2016 Study and include consideration of such a tunnel.

2. Existing Conditions

- a. **Near capacity at peak periods:** The Study notes that existing crossings are near capacity at peak periods. Although this may be true, this does not establish the need for a new crossing. In most cases, major travel routes in metro areas having a population more than one million are at capacity at peak periods. Most metro areas react to this situation by focusing on transit solutions, since construction of additional capacity for private automobiles has been demonstrated not to provide a long-term solution.
- b. **Capacity of Macdonald-Cartier bridge:** the material states that the M-C bridge has a V-C ratio of near 1. It is our understanding a 3-lane free-flow artery (without intersection constraints) has a capacity of upwards of 6000 vph. With the M-C bridge current peak

volume of 4400 vph, a case can be made that there is still considerable unused capacity on the M-C bridge. Frequent traffic slowdowns in the PM peak on the M-C bridge are not due to congestion on the bridge itself but are in fact due to congestion on the east-bound Highway 50 that results in bottlenecks that queue back onto the bridge. Initiatives are possible on both the Gatineau and Ottawa sides of the Macdonald-Cartier bridge that could make meaningful improvements to the volume of traffic it could carry. Thus, an existing condition is that the M-C Bridge (and several other of the existing bridges) are in fact volume constrained by the approaches to and from the bridge and these approaches need to be an important part of the analysis that is to be performed.

- c. **Lack of data re. traffic trends:** Given that most major arteries in large metro areas are at capacity during peak periods a much more useful analysis of existing conditions would be a trend analysis of congestion levels. What is the historical level of congestion (delays) experienced and what are the year over year changes in these congestion levels? It should be noted that for several decades now various crossings studies have forecasted serious worsening congestion. It is not at all clear that this has been happening in the NCR and no data has been provided to substantiate any claims of worsening congestion. It is also important to understand how the congestion trends are changing individually for each crossing.
- d. **Truck traffic levels:** separate reporting should be provided for truck traffic levels. To put on the same chart (as has been done thus far) the truck volumes as auto volumes is to fail to adequately treat the impact of truck traffic. In contrast, showing truck volumes by time of day on its own chart would reveal the volume at the Macdonald-Cartier bridge (and its Ottawa approaches) is close to 200 trucks (2/3 of which are tractor trailers) per hour during peak periods, which is a truck approximately every 20 seconds. This existing condition needs to be clearer in the study.
- e. **Congestion vs Neighbourhood Impacts:** It should be recognized that 2/3 of the region's population generally does not experience an issue with interprovincial travel congestion. In fact, for a large proportion of the National Capital Region's population the largest issue is the negative impact of interprovincial cut-through traffic and trucks in their neighbourhoods, which seriously impacts their health, safety and evolution as complete communities. Despite this fact, lessening impacts on local communities is not listed in the "Needs and Opportunities" section, but it should be.
- f. **Impact of Covid-19.** The documentation indicates that this will be considered in later stages of the plan. However, the plan is proposed to be complete by mid-2021 and it is extremely unlikely that the long-term effects of Covid-19 on peak period transportation patterns will be clear before the end of this Study.

3. Vision Statement

- a. **'safe and sustainable'.** Given that any major road-based infrastructure carries with it inevitable negative impacts on adjacent communities, the vision statement needs to make reference to the importance of minimizing those negative impacts. The vision statement should better capture the importance of balancing the desire for more connectiv-

ity/capacity with the desire to minimize the impact on the communities that are being affected by the approaches to interprovincial crossings (existing or proposed).

- b. **“well-connected”**. It is important that the term ‘well-connected’ should encompass the connections to/from crossings as well as the number and location of crossings themselves. Already many of the existing bridges are constrained not by the bridges themselves but by the approaches to the bridges. The scope of the study needs to include the approaches to existing and proposed crossings.

4. Guiding Principles

- a. **Network hierarchy**: Missing from the guiding principles is any recognition that a transportation network has a hierarchy of types of roadways (local, arterial, freeway). Currently one of the main problems with the existing interprovincial network is the lack of such hierarchy (at least on the Ottawa side). Two freeways on the Gatineau side connect and funnel traffic to a bridge but that is then routed into Ottawa onto arterial streets. Ottawa’s downtown streets are clogged with non-local traffic. How does any proposed interprovincial transportation plan intend to provide connectivity such that non-local traffic can be routed away from communities? Thus, a guiding principle for scenario development is to create a consistent hierarchy in the system by considering better connectivity between the 5/50 and 417.
- b. **Requirement for strong demonstration of need**: The creation of major new transportation arteries usually leads to negative externalities on adjacent communities. For this reason, a guiding principle should be that major new transportation networks should have a high hurdle to clear in terms of benefit-cost evaluations.
- c. **High value on natural environment**: The National Capital Region is a particularly strong example of the situation where a compelling case (high hurdle to clear) is required. The NCR is unique in that most of the shoreline on both sides of the Ottawa River are green space and undeveloped with high recreational usage and/or ecological value. Impacting this status quo should require very compelling evidence of need and benefit to cost ratios.
- d. **Goods movement vs people movement**: A guiding principle could be one that recognizes that there are many ways to facilitate the movement of more people across the river (or reduce the peak demand for people to move across the river) whereas there are much more limited options for facilitating improved goods movement without negatively impacting communities. This should be given more recognition in the guiding principles.
- e. **A guiding principle should be that non-local heavy truck traffic should not be funneled through residential communities**

5. Evaluation Criteria

- a. In the evaluation criteria table the notion of improving quality of life in the communities impacted by interprovincial transportation networks gets only a passing reference in the very last of all of the listed evaluation criteria. In contrast, easier mobility features in almost all of the rest (8-9 criteria). The impacts on communities deserve a fair weighting in the evaluation process. An imperative to not negatively impact neighbourhoods with

non-local heavy truck traffic must be included in the evaluation criteria. It is not sufficient to simply imply it as one of several elements that could be generally covered by a phrase such as "community cohesion and health and safety are improved"

- b. Protection and celebration of the Region's nature. Although this gets a reference under one of the pillars of the guiding principles, in the Evaluation Criteria column there is no criterion listed which would take into account impacts on this natural environment. One should be added.
- c. One of the evaluation criteria is that "community unity, health, safety are improved". A more specific criterion should be added that makes reference to enabling communities to achieve the goals envisaged for them in their respective cities' official plans, e.g. to attract intensification and to become 15 minute neighbourhoods, and that the majority of trips are made by sustainable modes.
- d. Choosing Sustainable Modes: This wording should be strengthened to "people increasingly choose sustainable modes"

Truck traffic. There is an evaluation criterion that states: "Transit trips across the river are faster and more reliable". This is crisp and can be evaluated. Similarly, under "Quality of Life" there should be an evaluation criterion such as "Through trucks are removed from local neighbourhoods". Potential scenarios need to be evaluated against their performance in addressing this.



December 17, 2021

Marc Seaman
Chair, Board of Directors
National Capital Commission
Ste. 202, 40 Elgin St.
Ottawa ON K1P 1C7

Dear Mr. Seaman:

Re. NCC Interprovincial Crossing Study

I am writing on behalf of the Federation of Citizens Associations (FCA), which represents 73 community groups in the City of Ottawa. Last month representatives of the FCA participated in a stakeholders meeting conducted by the IBI Group, the consultant for the NCC's Interprovincial Crossing Study, on the findings of that study. Unfortunately the public comment period regarding this study closed at the end of November – we are writing to you as we understand the NCC Board of Directors will be considering the NCC Interprovincial Crossing Study at its January 2022 meeting, and we wish to express our concerns regarding this study.

We understand that the NCC has been given a mandate from the Federal Government to examine the possibility of a sixth river crossing in the National Capital Region, and can understand the factors leading up to this initiative. However, we are concerned about the use of traffic data used by the IBI Group in assessing the need for a sixth interprovincial crossing, particularly as it is based on 2011 data that pre-dates the COVID pandemic. As you can imagine, the pandemic in Ottawa has had major impacts on work patterns, as most Federal Government employees (and others) work from home, and consequently on traffic patterns in the National Capital Region. We believe it would be an error to rely on the pre-pandemic traffic data in considering the possibility of a sixth interprovincial crossing, and would recommend that decisions in this regard be postponed until the TRANS Committee (of which the NCC is a member) Origin-Destination traffic study scheduled for the fall of 2022 is completed. That Origin-Destination study (a significant input to the City of Ottawa's Transportation Master Plan, among others) should be able to provide a better picture of the interprovincial travel needs in the National Capital Region.

Our other concern relates to the issue of truck travel in the National Capital Region. As you may be aware, the bulk of interprovincial truck traffic in the National Capital Region goes through Ottawa's downtown in order to access the McDonald-Cartier Interprovincial Bridge. This has long been identified as a hazardous route, resulting in numerous (and well-documented) collisions and deaths along this route over the years.

We were disappointed in the NCC Interprovincial Crossing Study lack of substantial solutions to deal with this long-standing problem. We would urge that, in proceeding to any next steps in this interprovincial crossing study process, the NCC ensure that adequate resources be devoted to examining and developing substantial solutions to interprovincial truck traffic in the National Capital Region that would protect citizens from cut-through truck traffic, whether it be in Ottawa's downtown or elsewhere. We see no virtue in simply transferring the problem from one neighbourhood to another.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns regarding the NCC Interprovincial Crossing Study.

Yours truly,



Alex Cullen
President, FCA

Cc Members of the Board of Directors, NCC
 Tobi Nussbaum, CEO, NCC