



# The Eastern Bridge in the National Capital Region

*Executive Summary  
of the Regional Transportation  
Context and Technical Studies*

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Public Services and  
Procurement Canada

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# Introduction

In 2024, the Government of Canada reiterated its commitment to building an additional multimodal bridge in the eastern part of the National Capital Region. This initiated the next phase of planning, design and studies on the Montée Païement-Aviation Parkway corridor. As the project moves forward, its design will take the future regional transportation network into consideration and will use information gathered in past corridor studies to refine concepts and identify potential benefits, impacts and mitigation measures.

The purpose of the current document is to provide an overview of the most relevant planning studies and highlight how this information can be applied to the Eastern Bridge project. The detailed studies can be found online or requested from the project team, led by Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and supported by the National Capital Commission (NCC).

Although Indigenous communities, stakeholders and the public have provided input on the project in the past, further engagement on the new bridge will take place as part of the impact assessment process and design development process.

## Context

The National Capital Region covers an area of 4,715 km<sup>2</sup> and includes the cities of Ottawa (Ontario) and Gatineau (Quebec), as well as surrounding rural municipalities. The interprovincial crossing system in the National Capital Region includes five federally owned bridges and one owned by the City of Ottawa; the latter currently serves active mobility and is open only during the summer and shoulder seasons.

Previous studies and evaluations on Eastern Bridge corridor alternatives have primarily focused on the three alternatives shown in Figure 1: Montée Païement-Aviation Parkway (**Corridor 5**), Lorrain Boulevard-Ottawa Road 174 (Corridor 6) and Gatineau Airport-Ottawa Road 174 (Corridor 7).





Figure 1 – Existing interprovincial bridges and previously studied Eastern Bridge corridor alternatives

## Regional interprovincial planning

The Long-Term Integrated Interprovincial Crossings Plan (LTIICP), which was completed in 2022, outlines a vision and supporting strategies for the interprovincial transport of people and goods in the National Capital Region by 2050. Developed in consultation with stakeholders, the public and the region’s municipal, provincial and federal departments and agencies, the LTIICP considered existing infrastructure and potential new projects to support anticipated regional growth.

The LTIICP states that 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.

One of the LTIICP’s first initiatives is to update regional data to better understand post-pandemic travel and interprovincial private and commercial travel trends. The LTIICP is currently undergoing a technical update to account for this new data and updated growth projections that were developed in 2023 with regional partners. The vision and strategic directions remain unchanged for the updated plan and they continue to set a sustainable path to achieve its goals and objectives.

Based on anticipated conditions in 2050, the LTIICP indicates that interprovincial travel will continue to grow and apply increased pressure on the transportation network. Interprovincial commute trips and heavy truck movements are identified as the biggest challenges.

Two of the policy and infrastructure scenarios developed in the LTIICP to address these challenges include the Eastern Bridge project.

## The Eastern Bridge project

The Government of Canada committed in 2024 to build an additional multimodal bridge in the National Capital Region, the Eastern Bridge project will be developed to support the LTIICP's vision for the National Capital Region's future transportation network. Specifically, the new crossing will support all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit, heavy trucks and personal vehicles. Furthermore, the project will increase total interprovincial transportation capacity in the National Capital Region to support anticipated population growth and its associated growth in travel demand. This new regional capacity will allow existing crossings in the core to be enhanced for sustainable and higher-capacity travel where demand is highest. The project's planning directions will also be established through the Eastern Bridge planning and design principles being developed in 2025.

## Corridor studies

Over the past 20 years, multiple technical studies have been undertaken to identify a location for a crossing that best responds to the project's broad objectives while maximizing benefits and minimizing impacts. The analysis generated a range of technical reports that will be used as design concepts are refined and potential benefits and impacts are identified.

## Studies overview

In 2006, a funding partnership and steering committee was created by the NCC, Ontario's Ministry of Transportation and Quebec's Ministère des Transports (currently named Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable). The partnership, in collaboration with the City of Ottawa and Ville de Gatineau, began an environmental assessment in 2006 to study potential interprovincial crossing alternatives and their associated approach corridors.

This first phase, which was completed in 2009, identified project objectives to improve transportation, and socio-economic benefits, while minimizing impacts. The assessment also evaluated 10 potential crossing locations from the eastern to the western limits of the region. Three Eastern Bridge corridors, shown in Figure 1, were identified as having the highest potential and were carried forward for more detailed assessments.

The second phase of the project, which was completed in 2013, focused on the same three locations and included detailed assessments and evaluations of the corridors from a number of environmental, design and transportation perspectives. Although the technical analysis and evaluation reports were completed, the partnership and steering committee elected to end the project before completing the Environmental Assessment Report.

In Budget 2019, the federal government announced that it would address the need for an additional National Capital Region crossing by refreshing the previous technical and environmental studies on the three previously retained corridors, and by developing the [LTIICP](#). Building on studies undertaken between 2006 and 2013, refreshed technical and environmental studies were completed and a summary report<sup>1</sup> was published online in June 2020.

In 2023–2024 the project team initiated another targeted refresh of existing studies on potential corridors for an additional crossing between Ottawa and Gatineau. This latest refresh focused on updating select information to align with requirements under the *Impact Assessment Act* and replacing outdated, pre-pandemic information, including personal and commercial travel data. While the final documentation for this study is expected in 2025, the key findings are still aligned with previous work.

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1 WSP "Summary Report - Sixth Interprovincial Bridge Crossing Study Refresh," 2020.



## Summary and next steps

Multiple technical studies have been undertaken over the past 20 years and were considered in evaluations of corridor options, all four of which (2009, 2013, 2020 and 2024) ranked the Montée Paiement-Aviation Parkway corridor as the preferred technical option. In 2024, the Government of Canada authorized further studies for a new interprovincial bridge on this corridor. Moving forward, information from past studies will be used along with new information to refine the design concepts and identify potential benefits and impacts. Project updates and next steps are summarized on PSPC's and the NCC's project websites. Upcoming opportunities for engagement will also be identified on these websites.





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