



2005 Origin-Destination Survey **BACKGROUND**

Understanding today's travel patterns is a critical step in meeting tomorrow's transportation needs. Planners need to know where people travel to in the course of a day, as well as why, when, and how they get there. That's what the Origin-Destination Survey is all about.

Conducted every 10 years in the National Capital Region, this comprehensive travel survey is as fundamental to transportation planning as the Census is to demography.

The 2005 survey will take place over a 10-week period this fall, from September 19 to November 25. It will collect information from an area that encompasses the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, plus a portion of the Municipalité régionale de comté des Collines de l'Outaouais.

In total, 25,000 households will form the survey sample. That's approximately 60,000 people, or five per cent of the population in the National Capital Region. Ten-minute telephone interviews will be conducted with respondents in randomly selected households, all of whom will have been previously notified by mail.

The survey's primary focus is on residents' trip patterns and travel choices. Participants will be asked questions about all trips they made the previous day, by any mode. That means walking, cycling, driving—even rollerblading—would all be relevant, as long as the trip had an origin, a destination, and a purpose. Walking around the block or other trips classified as exercise will be excluded.

Survey questions will be asked about every member of the household (11 years and older), not just the person answering the phone. Some statistical questions (i.e., age, gender, number of people in the household, type of dwelling, number of vehicles, etc.) will also be asked.

Confidentiality is guaranteed, and the data, which will be used exclusively for transportation planning, will be secure. Information from one household is combined with other responses, and is collected in such a way that no personal information can be traced back to a specific household.

A shared undertaking by all three levels of government, the survey is a project of the TRANS Committee, a joint transportation planning group in the National Capital Region. Its members include the City of Ottawa, Ville de Gatineau, the Société de transport de l'Outaouais, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario, the ministère des Transports du Québec and the National Capital Commission. The \$1 million survey costs are being shared by the six member agencies.

Similar surveys were in 1977, 1986 and 1995. The TRANS Committee has been co-ordinating efforts between the major transportation planning agencies of the National Capital Region for the last 25 years.

Information gathered from origin-destination surveys is essential to transportation planners in the region. Transportation master plans, environmental assessments, major transportation network improvements, transportation policies, assessing the impact of major developments—these are just a few examples where origin-destination data are used.

R.A. Malatest and Associates Ltd., one of Canada's largest independent research and evaluation firms, is conducting the survey. Expert analysis of the data will be provided by iTRANS Consulting, a professional consulting firm specializing in transportation planning.