

## 1983, ANALYSIS OF TRAVEL ACROSS THE OTTAWA RIVER

### Summary:

Presently, five bridges serve vehicular traffic between the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (RMOC) and the Communauté Régionale de L'Outaouais (CRO), across the Ottawa River. Several surveys have been undertaken in recent years in an attempt to obtain information concerning interprovincial travel across this screenline. Using these data sources, the objectives of this report are to produce a profile of existing (1981) and future (1991 and 2001) traffic, and identify data source suitability and shortcomings.

The primary modes of travel across the Ottawa River, with which this study was concerned, include auto (passenger cars and taxis) and transit (provided by both the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Transit Commission - OC Transpo and the Commission de Transport de la Communauté Régionale de l'Outaouais - CTCRO). A zone system made up of six geographical areas was retained in order to illustrate trip exchanges across the Ottawa River. Using projected land use data, population and employment growth rates were applied to the existing trip profile to determine future interprovincial travel profiles. Modal split was estimated based on high and low transit use scenarios for both 1991 and 2001, which resulted in auto vehicle traffic estimates in each case.

The major findings of the study include:

- for 1981 traffic volumes, capacity appears to be adequate at all locations to handle PM peak hour traffic, with the highest volume/capacity ratio being 0.76 (Portage Bridge - northbound to CRO).

- in future years (1991 and 2001), capacity will be adequate to handle travel demand unless low levels of transit ridership becomes predominant. In such cases, capacity may possibly be exceeded by demand, particularly in the West (Champlain Bridge - northbound to CRO). However, if new bridges are built, they will alleviate the situation.

- forecasts of interprovincial transit ridership (both directions) range from 9000 to 10000 in 1991 during the PM peak hour and 12300 to 15700 during PM peak hour in 2001. By direction, the heaviest projected volume is estimated at 8300, for northbound passengers in 2001, under the high transit scenario.

- the estimated number of urban buses in revenue service crossing the Ottawa River - during the PM peak hour ranges 275 to 300 in 1991 and 375 to 475 in 2001.

concerning future data collection projects, complete coverage of the study area must be ensured, together with adequate sample sizes and data quality. Consistency between data sources should also be maintained.

Although the results of this study present ranges of values rather than single projections of travel, they should nevertheless be reviewed with some reservations. Possible sources of error occur mainly due to the numerous assumptions which were required in order to ensure compatibility of the various data sources and to satisfactorily reflect present day travel characteristics. Notwithstanding these comments on the quality of data sources, it does not appear imminent that major capital infrastructure investment is needed immediately. However, prior to any such major capital investment, the effect of the assumptions made in this study on travel across the Ottawa River screenlines should be determined through additional surveys, which should be based on proven and reliable techniques.