

Long term planning for transport in Ottawa

Ottawa has built its international reputation for having high rates of public transport usage, walking and cycling over four decades -- and the Canadian capital is now planning to build on that success with further progress over the next four.

This long term planning has been a key to its success, which began when the city's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) paved the way for others throughout the world. In fact, it inspired that of Curitiba, in Brazil, which is often cited as the prototype.

Even before the BRT was built in the 1970s, however, Ottawa made a more fundamental political decision: to abandon plans for an urban freeway, and go 'transit first'. In the 10 years after the BRT began, per capita transit usage doubled.

Within another generation Ottawa might be equally well known for [its light railway](#) (LRT) system, because the city has decided that the BRT has reached capacity and is unsuitable for the downtown area. (For some interesting discussion of the options, try the [Transport Politic](#) website.)

The LRT plan gained [federal government approval](#) in July 2012, despite continuing controversies about the [environmental impact](#) on some city neighbourhoods and the fact that its development cost estimate -- already \$2.1 billion, some six times more than extending the BRT would cost -- keeps [creeping upwards](#).

In any case, however, Ottawa's success up to now has not been built on any one transport solution, but on the way its planning has combined a range of measures within its long-term strategic vision.

With the city expected to expand by 50 per cent to a population of 1.14 million by 2031, in 2008 the city council adopted a [Transportation Masterplan](#). The plan identified a vision about "how Ottawa's transportation system can support the

qualitypublictransport

is a partnership between the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and Public World, with the support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Its purpose is to build the capacity of urban transport unions to campaign for quality services and build alliances with passengers and other civil society organisations to promote sustainable transport systems.

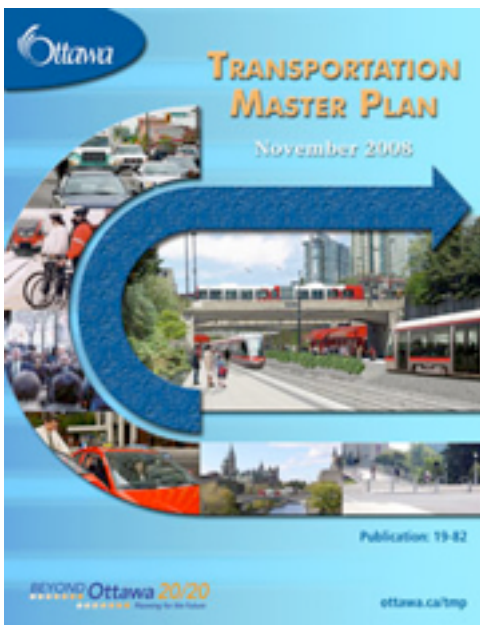
That means services that enable everyone to travel safely, comfortably and quickly, and employ enough securely employed, properly trained and fairly rewarded transport workers to achieve that.

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community's social, environmental and economic sustainability, and how it should be managed to ensure accountability and responsiveness to residents and taxpayers". It went on to identify "eight strategic directions that are essential to achieving this vision", headed:

- Creating supportive land use
- Managing transportation demand
- the transportation system
- Enhancing safety and security
- Protecting the environment
- Managing and maintaining assets
- Funding implementation
- Measuring performance



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ITF

49-60 Borough Road

London, SE1 1DR

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a global union federation linking 690 unions representing over 4.5 million transport workers in 153 countries.

www.itfglobal.org

Public World

34b York Way

London N1 9AB

Public World is a social enterprise working internationally to promote equitable and sustainable economic and social development through workplace and civic participation.

www.publicworld.org