THE STATE OF TRANSPORTATION IN CANADA

Safely Moving People and the Economy

An immense transportation system is necessary to link all corners of a country the size of Canada. In 1999, there were some thirty million people living in Canada. We are a largely urban country. Almost 80 percent of the population lives in centres of one thousand or more people. Roughly two-thirds of Canadians live in centres of at least 100 000 people. Population concentration is greatest in our three largest metropolitan areas: Vancouver on the Pacific coast and Montreal and the Toronto–Niagara region in central Canada. A significant portion of our population is within 120 kilometres of our biggest trading partner, the United States. Like other countries, Canada is experiencing changes in its transportation needs and patterns due to trade liberalization, economic and population growth, the Internet, and advances in telecommunications and e-commerce.
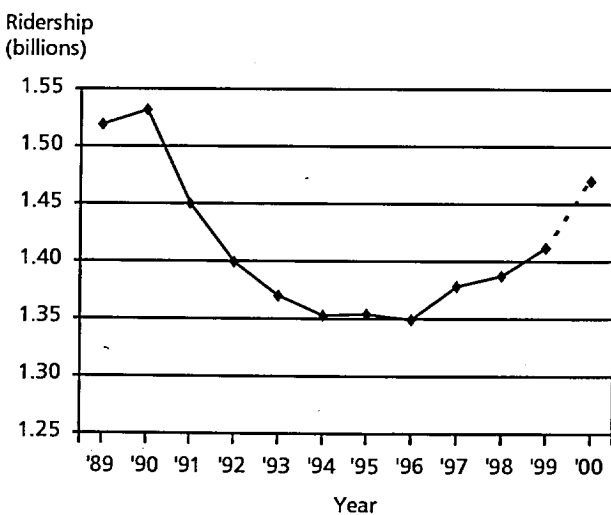
Getting to work in large urban areas is a challenge for many Canadians. Three out of four Canadians drive their own vehicles to work. Public transit is used most heavily in large centres. While usage declined in the early 1990s, the popularity of public transit has risen since 1996, with a major surge in ridership in 1999 and 2000. In particular, rail commuter services in the Toronto, Vancouver, and
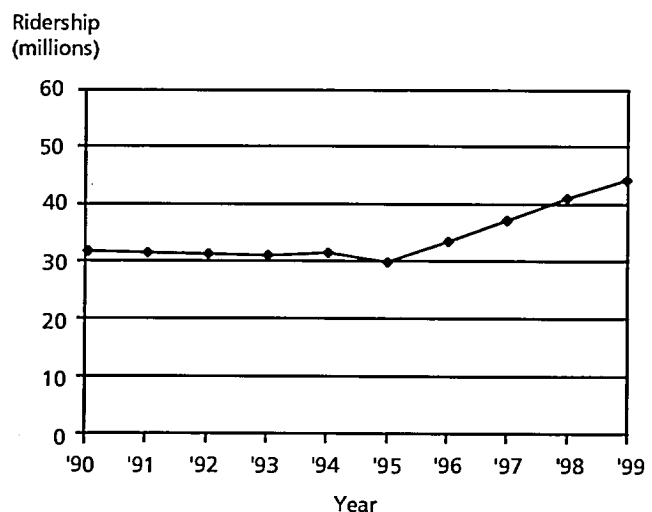
Transportation Infrastructure

In Canada, there are

- *1 800 aerodromes/airports*
- *28 000 registered aircraft*
- *50 000 kilometres of railway track*
- *3 260 rail locomotives,*
  112 000 freight cars, and
  430 passenger cars
- *300 marine ports*
- *2 170 commercial marine vessels*
- *900 000 kilometres of road*
- *11 600 urban transit buses*
- *2 500 urban passenger rail vehicles*
- *375 000 heavy-duty trucks*
- *17 million cars and light trucks*
- *16 000 service stations*
- *20 million licensed drivers*

Annual ridership—Canadian transit systems.

Source: Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA).

Rail commuter ridership.

Source: GO Transit, TransLink, and VIA Rail.