

Fare recovery ratios tell the story

But even more impressive is the fare recovery ratios experienced by Canadian cities - the true measure of the efficiency of any system. Indeed, they are a constant source of wonder for American and foreign transit planners and operators, who have been known to shake their heads in disbelief!

But the figures tell the story.

Toronto, with its fully integrated system, reported 71% in 1984, carrying 418 million revenue passengers in a population area of just over 2 million.

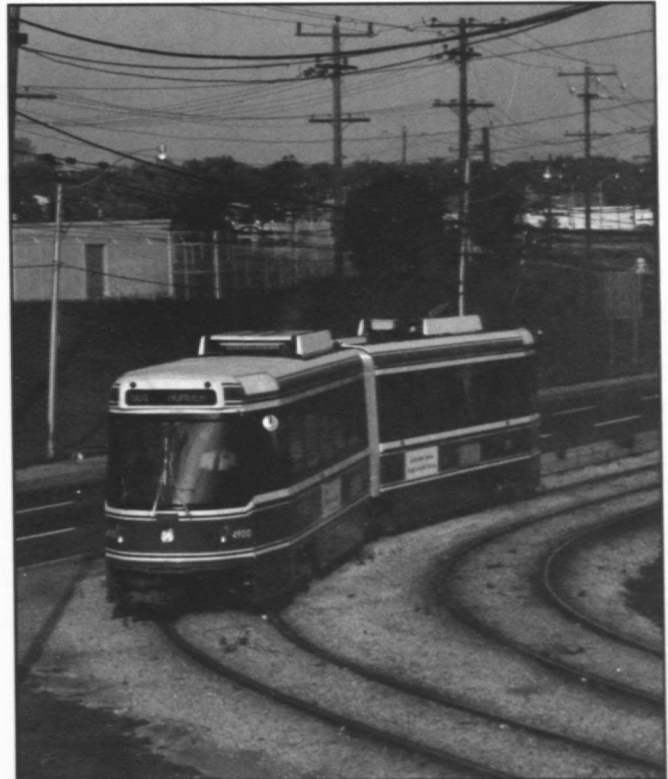
Ottawa-Carleton, with its all-bus system and a population of 506,000, reported 59% for 87 million passengers carried.

Montreal, with 1.8 million population and one of the most beautiful subways in the world, reported 44% for almost 400 million revenue passengers.

By comparison, multi-modal systems in the United States averaged a 41% fare recovery ration in 1984, with bus systems coming in at an average of 27.64% according to the American Public Transit Association (APTA).

The message is clear. Transit systems are expensive and encompass a broad range of considerations. But there is one simple truism: you only get out if you are prepared to put in.

Another extremely significant lesson that can be learned from the Canadian experience is that wherever there is an effective, efficient transit system, there is a strong regional government with the courage and political will to make it work!



Above ground in Toronto



And underground in Montreal's Métro