

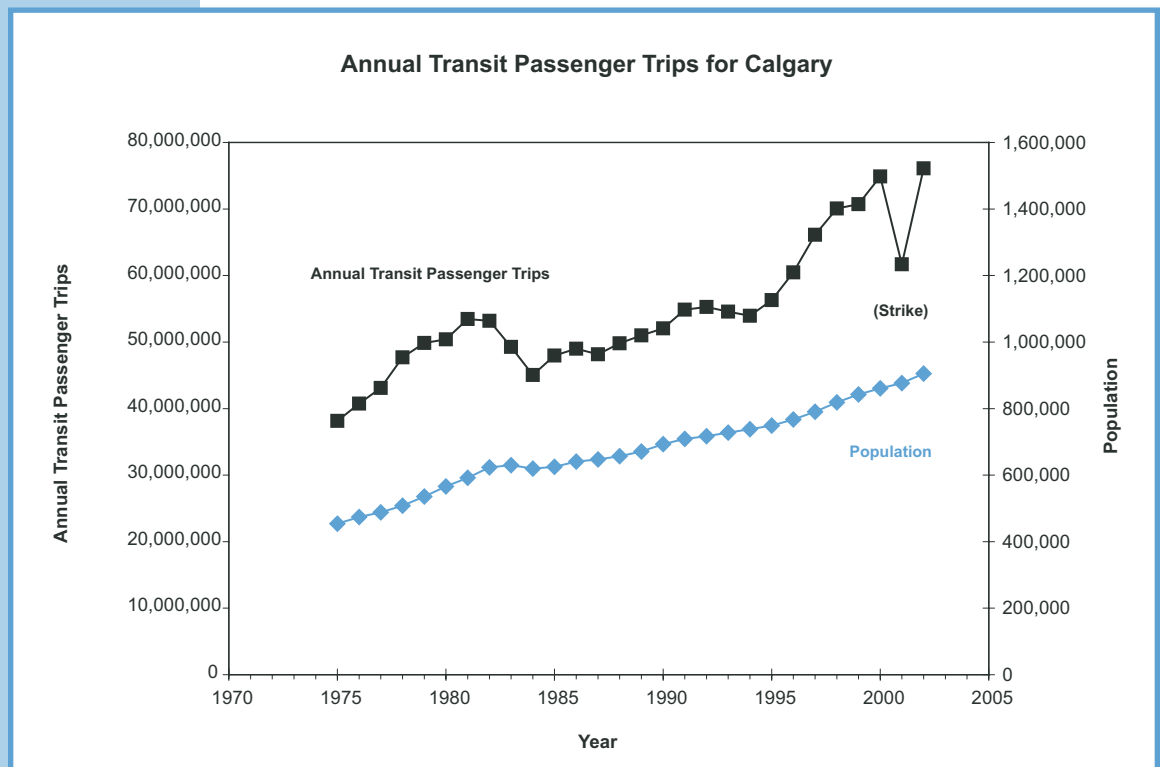


TRENDS IN CALGARY TRANSIT RIDERSHIP AND SERVICE LEVELS 1975 TO 2002

Calgary Transit is a crucial component of Calgary's transportation system. This Mobility Monitor looks at the changes in annual transit passenger trips and the transit vehicle hours of service provided.

KEY FINDING

Annual transit passenger trip growth on Calgary Transit matched population growth between 1975 and 2002.



- Annual transit passenger trips in Calgary grew rapidly between 1975 and 1982. Between 1982 and 1984 there was a sharp decrease, reflecting both an economic slowdown and a reduction in transit vehicle hours of nearly 15%.
- Annual transit passenger trips recovered in 1985 and grew slowly until 1992. From 1992 to 1994 the annual transit passenger trips dropped slightly, again reflecting an economic slowdown.
- From 1994 to 2002 annual transit trips grew by 41%, while population grew by 23%. In 2001 a 49-day transit strike caused a drop in annual transit passenger trips. In 2002 the loss was recovered and there was some growth from 2000.

The *Mobility Monitor* is produced by the Transportation Data Team to make the information the Team has gathered more accessible and to help the public become better informed. The Transportation Data Team is responsible for collecting information on travel for use in planning and operating the city's roads, transit, and pathways.

KEY FINDING

Between 1994 and 2000 annual transit passenger trips on Calgary Transit increased by 39%, while the population increased by 17%.

Trends in Transit Statistics

Year	Annual Passenger Trips	Population	Annual Transit Passenger Trips per Capita	Transit Vehicle Hours	Transit Vehicle Hours per Capita	Annual Transit Passenger Trips per Transit Vehicle Hour
1990	52,065,400	692,885	75	1,266,021	1.83	41
1994	53,959,600	738,184	73	1,333,318	1.81	41
2000	74,884,100	860,749	87	1,713,803	1.99	44
2002	76,112,100	904,987	84	1,881,728	2.08	40

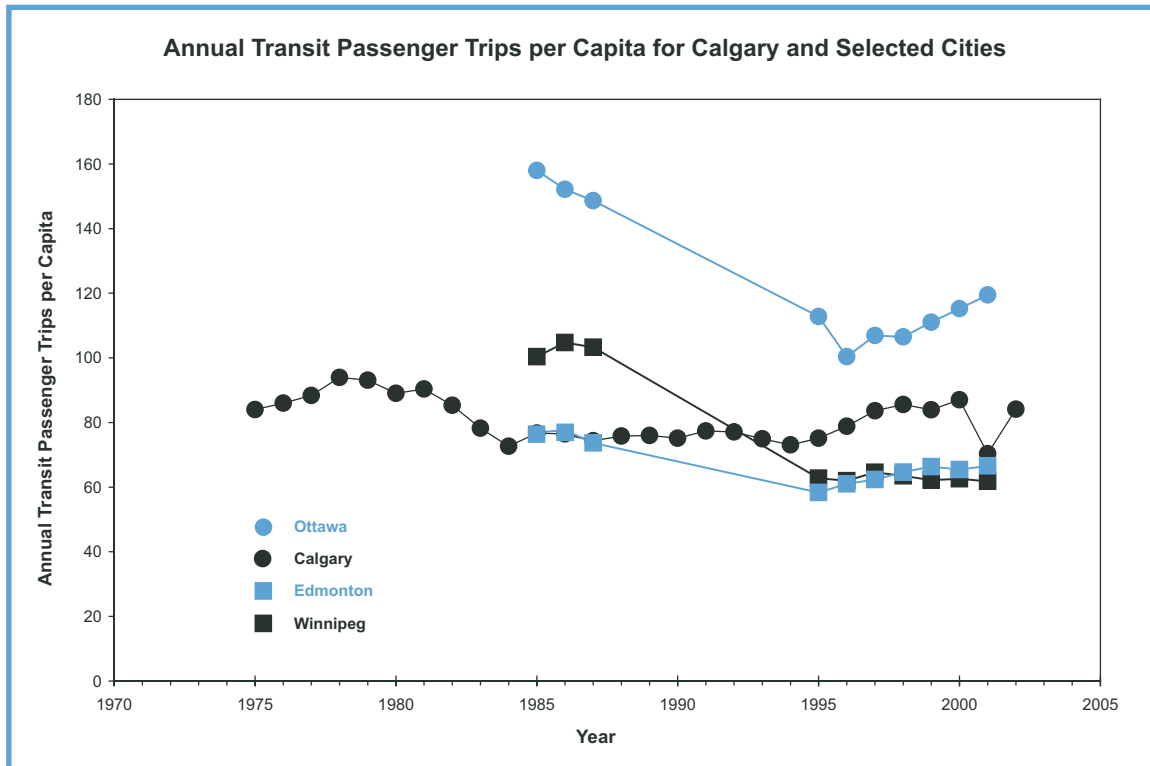
- Annual transit passenger trips on Calgary Transit grew by 24 million from 1990 to 2002, an increase of 46%. During the same period the population grew by 31%. The average annual transit passenger trips per capita grew by 12%.
- Transit vehicle hours is a measure of the level of service being provided by Calgary Transit. Transit vehicle hours increased by 49% between 1990 and 2002. This was higher than the growth in population, and slightly higher than the growth in annual transit passenger trips.
- From 2000 to 2002 transit vehicle hours increased by 10%. This was a higher increase than either annual transit passenger trips or the population. The increase in vehicle hours was made to meet the needs of new communities, and to increase capacity on existing routes.
- Annual transit passenger trips per transit vehicle hour is used to measure efficiency of the transit system. A higher value is good because it means higher efficiency and effectiveness, but a value that is too high means crowded transit vehicles, which can discourage people from using transit.
- In 1990 and 1994 there were about 41 trips per vehicle hour, but this increased to 44 in 2000, after a period of high growth in transit ridership. This dropped to 40 in 2002, reflecting both the impact of the transit strike in 2001 and increased service levels in 2002.
- In 2000 Winnipeg had 32 passenger trips per hour, Edmonton had 28 passengers trips per hour and Vancouver had 32 passenger trips per hour. Ottawa in 2000 had 51 passenger trips per hour. This reflects a 23% decrease in transit service between 1999 and 2000. In 1999 Ottawa had 37 passenger trips per hour.

Sources of Information

This *Mobility Monitor* was prepared in collaboration with the Transit Planning Division of Calgary Transit. Ridership figures are derived from accounting records such as number of cash or ticket fares paid and previous experience in the number of trips made by pass purchasers. These figures are confirmed by actual counts done on all routes by the Transit Studies section of the Service Design Division of Calgary Transit. Service Design also provides the number of service hours put out by Calgary Transit. Information for other cities was obtained from publications of the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA).

KEY FINDING

Annual transit passenger trips per capita in Calgary grew from 73 trips in 1994 to 84 trips in 1997. Ridership has remained at about 85 passenger trips per capita since then, with the exception of 2001 when ridership was lower because of the strike.



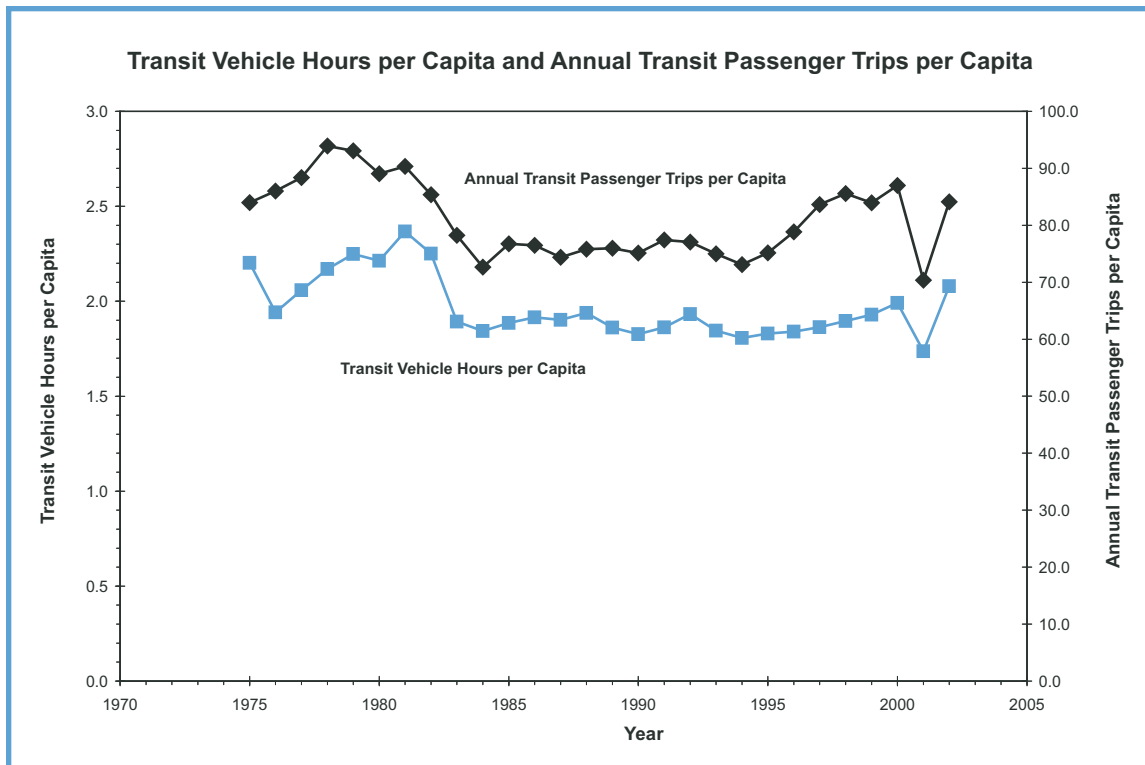
- Since 1975 Calgary has had between 75 and 90 annual passenger trips per capita.
- Between 1985 and 1995 Calgary had about 76 annual transit passenger trips per capita each year. This grew to an average of 85 annual transit passenger trips per capita for the period 1997 to 2002. The year 2001 is an exception to this pattern because of the 49-day transit strike.
- Edmonton and Winnipeg have had similar numbers for annual transit passenger trips, but both currently have fewer annual transit passenger trips per capita than Calgary. Ottawa has had more annual transit passenger trips per capita.

What are Annual Transit Passenger Trips?

Annual transit passenger trips is a measure of transit use. The Canadian Urban Transit Association defines passenger trips as one-way trips from origin to destination. Passengers whose trips involve transfers from one vehicle to another are counted only once.

KEY FINDING

Transit ridership is closely linked to the level of service provided. In years when Calgary Transit increased service at a rate greater than the increase in population, significant ridership gains have occurred.



- The level of service on a per capita basis declined dramatically in 1983. Calgary Transit has been increasing the level of service significantly since 1994.
- Compared to similar sized cities, Calgary Transit provides a low level of service on a per capita basis. Winnipeg, Edmonton and Ottawa all provide more transit vehicle hours per capita than Calgary.
- The Calgary Transportation Plan set a target level of service of 2.5 transit vehicle hours per capita by the time the city reaches a population of 1.25 million. Calgary Transit has been successfully moving towards this target by increasing the level of service at a rate faster than population growth since 1994. By 2002 Calgary Transit had reached 2.08 transit vehicle hours per capita.

How Accurate and Reliable is this Data?

How concerned should you be by the potential for error in the data presented in *The Mobility Monitor*? Traffic on a road can vary by 10% or more from one day to the next. Estimates of transit passenger trips and transit vehicle hours come from accounting records, which provide more reliable information.

Even so, a change from one year to the next may be due to some random event, such as the weather, accidents or illness. This is why it is wise to look at trends, since changes that are consistent over a long period of time are more likely to be real, and not just the result of random events.