

# New interprovincial bridge in Ottawa's east end could open by 2034

By Josh Pringle

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The federal government is looking to build a new interprovincial bridge crossing Kettle Island in the Ottawa River in Ottawa's east end.

The federal government hopes to open a new interprovincial bridge in Ottawa's east end in the next seven to nine years, as it revives plans for the new Kettle Island Bridge over the Ottawa River.

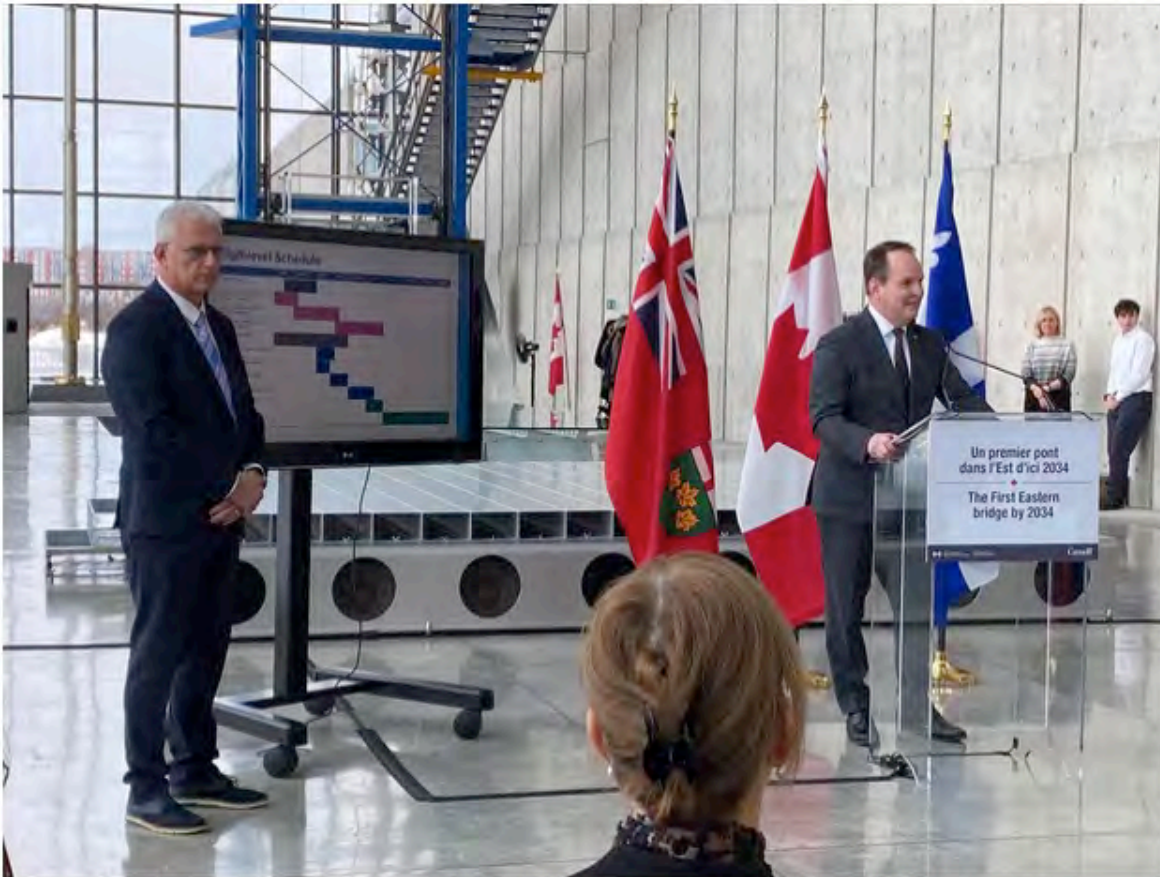
The [fall economic statement](#) renewed the government's commitment to the 'Eastern Bridge' project, launching the next phase of planning for the first interprovincial bridge in Ottawa's east end.

On Thursday, Labour Minister and Gatineau MP Steve MacKinnon announced the government and the National Capital Commission are proceeding with the pre-planning work for the new interprovincial bridge, with the goal of having the crossing built between 2032 and 2034.

"Today, we are giving the City of Ottawa and the NCC the tools to solve what is a real shame in a G7 capital," MacKinnon said Thursday.

"We have 3,500 tractor-trailers going throughout our downtowns every single day. That, my friends, is a major blight on our region. It hinders business, it hinders people who are going downtown to work, who are going downtown for entertainment. These are things that will be solved with a new, additional crossing in this region."

The proposed bridge would cross Kettle Island in the Ottawa River to connect the Aviation Parkway in Ottawa and Montée Paiement in Gatineau.



Labour Minister and Gatineau MP Steve MacKinnon announced the federal government is moving ahead with plans to build a new interprovincial bridge in Ottawa's east end. (Kimberley Fowler/CTV News Ottawa)

MacKinnon acknowledges that not everyone will be on board the plans for a new bridge in Ottawa's east end.

"This bridge will not be without controversy; no infrastructure project is," MacKinnon said.

"There will be people who think it shouldn't go here, or it should go there. What we need to reassure people is that it will solve many, many, many more problems than it will create. It will be done with the greatest possible sensitivity to regions, to neighborhoods and it will have an incredibly positive impact on the economy of this region.

"It will take trucks out of the downtowns of Hull and of Ottawa."

The next steps in the pre-planning work include an impact study, the design of the new bridge, the preliminary preparation of the site, and the development of a procurement strategy.

The federal government says because the project will be built on existing roads, "the Montée Paiement–Aviation Parkway Corridor has the smallest link footprint, and offers a faster planning schedule and better proximity to existing commercial properties on both sides of the Ottawa River."

The government estimates a new bridge in the eastern end could reduce the 13,000 heavy trucks that pass through downtown Ottawa and Gatineau each week.

Rideau-Vanier Coun. Stephanie Plante, Sylvie Bigras of the Lowertown Community Association and Betsy Schuurman of Action Sandy Hill released a joint statement, applauding the government's move to build a new bridge.

"This investment is a vital first step in improving the movement of vehicles between Ottawa and Gatineau," the statement says. "By sharing the load of heavy truck traffic across more bridges, we will significantly improve the quality of life for those of us living along the King Edward/Downtown Ottawa truck corridor. This investment marks progress toward a solution."

Mayor Mark Sutcliffe has said a sixth interprovincial bridge is not a priority for Ottawa.

"I've never asked for another bridge," Sutcliffe said Dec. 17, adding Ottawa would like new funding for transit.

A 2013 National Capital Commission (NCC) study into ideal corridors for the proposed crossing looked at Kettle Island, Lower Duck Island, and McLaurin Bay as options. The Kettle Island option, also known as "Corridor 5", was the technically preferred option.

The report was shelved for six years following public backlash and the Ontario government refusing to back the plan. In 2019, the federal government asked the NCC to refresh existing studies and develop a long-term integrated interprovincial crossing plan.

There are currently five interprovincial bridges connecting Ottawa and Gatineau over the Ottawa River: the Alexandra Bridge, Chaudiere Crossing, Macdonald-Cartier Bridge, Champlain Bridge and Portage Bridge. The NCC and Public Works and Procurement Canada are proceeding with plans [to replace the Alexandra Bridge](#).

The government says public consultations will be held on the plans for the new interprovincial bridge in the east end.

With files from CTV News Ottawa's Ted Raymond