



NIAGARA TRANSIT COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

NTC 6-2025

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

3:00 p.m.

Council Chamber - In Person and Electronic Meeting

Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON

To view live stream meeting proceedings visit:
niagararegion.ca/government/council

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8. OTHER BUSINESS

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. by electronic participation only.

10. ADJOURNMENT

**NIAGARA TRANSIT COMMISSION
MINUTES**

NTC 5-2025

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

**Council Chamber - In Person and Electronic Meeting
Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON**

Board Members: D. Dodge (St. Catharines)*, R. Freake (Grimsby)*, A. Longo (Thorold)*, M. Mavridis (Niagara-on-the-Lake)*, J. Morocco (Niagara Falls), W. Olson (Pelham), JD Pachereva (Lincoln), C. Ratzlaff (St. Catharines)*, W. Redekop (Vice Chair) (Fort Erie), M. Siscoe (Board Chair) (St. Catharines), L. Van Vliet (Welland)

Absent/Regrets: E. Beauregard (Port Colborne), B. Grant (Wainfleet), W. Reilly (West Lincoln); Ex-officio Member: R. Tripp (Chief Administrative Officer, Niagara Region)

Staff: A. Arbour, Director, Transit Operations, D. Gibbs, Regional Solicitor/Director, Legal & Court Services, B. Griffin, Manager, Financial Strategy & Performance, J. Hambleton, Chief of Staff, T. Luey, Director, Corporate Services, F. Meffe, Director, Human Resources, S. Muhic, Program Financial Specialist, A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, D. Snow, Program Financial Analyst, J. Spratt, Legislative Coordinator, C. Stout, General Manager, Niagara Transit Commission, H. Talbot, Consultant, Corporate Services, A. Thomson, Legal Counsel, L. Tracey, Communications Consultant, E. Zahra, Director, Customer Experience

* indicates participants who attended the meeting electronically, all others participated in person

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Siscoe called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Board Chair Siscoe read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Moved by W. Olson
Seconded by L. Van Vliet

That Agenda NTC 5-2025 **BE ADOPTED.**

Carried

4. **DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

5. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

5.1 **Niagara Transit Commission Minutes NTC 4-2025**

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Moved by JD Pachereva
Seconded by D. Dodge

That Minutes NTC 4-2025, being the Open and Closed Session minutes of the Niagara Transit Commission meeting held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, **BE ADOPTED.**

Carried

6. **PRESENTATIONS**

6.1 **Niagara Transit Master Plan - 10-Year Investment and Growth Strategy**

Yuval Grinspun, Project Manager, Dennis Fletcher, Consultant, and Ben Goodge, Transit Planner, Left Turn Right Turn, provided information respecting Niagara Transit Master Plan - 10-Year Investment and Growth Strategy. Topics of the presentation included:

- Why this Plan?
- What is the 2035 Plan?
- Reimagining Transit in Niagara
- Services for Different Needs
- Service Integration and Outcomes
- Regional Routes and Local Networks
- 2035 Strategic Increase in Service
- 2035 Supporting Elements
- 2035 Fleet and Garage
- 2035 Passenger Hubs
- Implementation Summary

- Stage 1 (2026-2027)
- Stage 2 (2028-2030)
- Stage 3 (2031-2035)
- Financial Plan
- Transformational Change

Moved by J. Morocco
Seconded by W. Olson

That the Niagara Transit Master Plan - 10-Year Investment and Growth Strategy presentation **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried

Moved by J. Morocco
Seconded by W. Olson

That the Niagara Transit Master Plan - 10 Year Investment and Growth Strategy **BE APPROVED** in principle.

Carried

Member Information Request(s):

Provide the contingency amount included in the overall proposed cost.
Member Dodge.

7. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

7.1 NTC 15-2025

Award of 2025-T-60 NTC – Supply & Delivery of Para Transit Vehicles

Moved by JD Pachereva
Seconded by R. Freake

That Report NTC 15-2025, dated June 17, 2025, respecting Award of 2025-T-60 NTC – Supply & Delivery of Para Transit Vehicles, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations **BE APPROVED**:

1. That Contract 2025-T-60 Niagara Transit Commission (NTC) - Supply and Delivery of Para Transit Vehicles **BE AWARDED** at a total of \$3,563,342 (including 13% HST) to Girardin Ontario Inc., for the purchase of twenty (20) 8-metre Specialized Transit Vehicles as follows:

- a) For the purchase of 16 vehicles approved within 2023-2025 capital projects at the price of \$2,850,674 (including 13% HST) and;
 - b) For the purchase of an additional 4 vehicles at the price of \$712,668 (including 13% HST) of which can be accommodated within the previously approved capital budgets.
2. That Staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to execute the award of the request for Tender (RFT) and any required documents related thereto in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal and Court Services.

Carried

7.2 NTC 16-2025

Niagara Transit Commission - Niagara Region Shared Services Agreement

Moved by A. Longo
Seconded by R. Freake

That Report NTC 16-2025, dated June 17, 2025, respecting Niagara Transit Commission - Niagara Region Shared Services Agreement, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the Niagara Transit Commission (NTC) Board **APPROVE** the entry into a Shared Services Agreement with The Regional Municipality of Niagara (Niagara Region) for the provision of shared services on a cost recovery basis; and
2. That the Niagara Transit Commission Board **AUTHORIZE** the General Manager to execute the agreement with The Regional Municipality of Niagara as approved.

Carried

Board Member Request(s):

Provide a presentation on the Asset Management level of service calculation. Member Olson.

7.3 NTC 17-2025

Niagara Transit Commission Establishing By-Law Amendment – Adopted Policies

Moved by JD Pachereva
Seconded by W. Olson

That Report NTC 17-2025, dated June 17, 2025, respecting Niagara Transit Commission Establishing By-Law Amendment – Adopted Policies, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the request to Niagara Regional Council to amend Schedule A and Section 6.1 (n) of the Niagara Transit Commission Establishing By-Law (Bill 2022-38 A By-Law to Establish the Niagara Transit Commission as a Municipal Service Board) **BE APPROVED**; and
2. That staff **BE DIRECTED** to work with the Regional Clerk to bring this amendment to the next available meeting of Niagara Regional Council for approval by Regional Council.

Carried

8. **CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

Correspondence Item NTC-C 21-2025 was considered separately.

Moved by W. Olson
Seconded by JD Pachereva

That the following items **BE RECEIVED** for information:

NTC-C 19-2025
Niagara Transit Master Plan - 10 Year Investment and Growth Strategy

NTC-C 22-2025
Memo from Niagara Region - 2026 Budget Update

NTC-C 23-2025
Motion from the City of Niagara Falls - Specialized Transit

Carried

8.2 NTC-C 21-2025

Motion from the City of Niagara Falls - Expansion of Transit Service to the Area of Stanley Avenue and Portage Road

Moved by J. Morocco

Seconded by JD Pachereva

That Correspondence Item NTC-C 21-2025, dated June 13, 2025, respecting Motion from the City of Niagara Falls - Expansion of Transit Service to the Area of Stanley Avenue and Portage Road, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

9. **OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

10. **CLOSED SESSION**

The Board did not resolve into closed session.

11. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION**

The Board did not resolve into closed session.

12. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 26, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Regional Headquarters.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Mat Siscoe
Chair, Niagara Transit Commission

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk

Subject: 2025 Purchase Approval for 10 New 40' Conventional Buses
Report to: Niagara Transit Commission Board
Report date: **Tuesday, August 26, 2025**

Recommendations

1. That the Niagara Transit Commission Board (NTC) **APPROVE** the co-operative procurement totaling \$12,768,877 (inclusive of 13% HST) for the purchase of 10 new 40' Conventional Transit Vehicles to New Flyer Industries under the Metrolinx Transfer Procurement Initiative (TPI) Cooperative Purchase Governance Agreement;
2. That a capital budget adjustment in the amount of \$2,467,995 gross and \$0 net **BE APPROVED** for the purchase of 10 new 40' Conventional Buses and this increase and **BE FUNDED** as follows:
 - Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) - \$1,809,781
 - Provincial Gas Tax (PGT) funding - \$658,214;
3. That the General Manager **BE AUTHORIZED** to execute the necessary documents, in a form satisfactory to the Director, Legal and Court Services, to complete the acquisition of the conventional vehicles; and
4. That this report **BE FORWARDED** to Regional Council for information at the Regional Council meeting being held on August 28, 2025.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Board to acquire 10 new 40' Conventional Transit vehicles from New Flyer Industries through the Metrolinx TPI Agreement and to approve a gross capital budget increase funded through external ICIP and PGT.
- This acquisition is compliant with the Niagara Region's procurement By-law No. 02-2016, as amended, specifically section 22 Co-operative Purchasing, as approved through report NTC 21-2022 schedule B, whereby all co-operative purchases greater than \$1 million require Board approval.

-
- To date, \$9,355,797 was approved in the 2025 Capital budget for the purchase of 10 conventional buses funded through ICIP and PGT. The additional \$2,467,995 increase will also be externally funded through ICIP and PGT resulting in no levy or reserve impact.
 - Per the Budget Control By-Law 2022-80 as amended, Board approval is required for gross budget adjustments funded by external sources greater than \$1,000,000.
 - The original term for the Multi-Year Governance Agreement for Joint Transit Procurements Facilitated by Metrolinx ended March 31, 2024 but Metrolinx elected to exercise its option to extend the Term for another five years now ending March 31, 2029.
 - New Flyer Industries is the current designated Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) for 12-metre conventional buses under the Metrolinx Agreement.

Financial Considerations

In accordance with the updated price list received through the Metrolinx agreement, the current base cost per vehicle, including additional required specifications, is \$1,045,345 (inclusive of non-recoverable HST). Additional bus costs of approximately \$325,000 (inclusive of non-recoverable HST) per vehicle need to be added to this base bus cost in order for these buses to be ready for service. These costs include specific ITS equipment, fareboxes, inspection, branding, CAD/AVL and Metrolinx participation fees.

New Flyer has advised of potential tariff impacts to bus prices and is currently negotiating with Metrolinx to establish a process for determining how these additional costs shall be applied. Tariff costs shall not be confirmed at the time an order is made but rather when parts are ordered prior to the bus entering the line. New Flyer is estimating Tariffs could range from 3-15% of the cost. For this order, Tariff costs have been estimated at 10% of the bus cost for a total of \$1,045,345 for 10 vehicles. Estimates have been made at the middle of the range provided by New Flyer as current tariffs on similar projects are around 3-5%. Should any increases to this cost be required, a further report will be brought to the board at that time.

The previous OEM was Nova Bus Inc. but now New Flyer Industries is the OEM for the 40' conventional buses. Based on New Flyers base bus cost pricing, the base price has increased 27% over the 2024 Nova Bus purchases. The estimates used to create the 2025 Capital budget did not capture a 27% increase in base bus costs or potential tariffs. Niagara Transit needs to replace the full 10 conventional vehicles due to the age of the fleet and incremental service required. The total 2025 approved capital project is

\$9,355,797 (inclusive of non-recoverable HST). This project is externally funded through the Federal and Provincial ICIP and PGT. A capital budget adjustment in the amount of \$2,467,995 is required in order to cover these additional costs. NTC has a 10-year bus replacement project with ICIP and is able to allocate additional funding in the current year to fund the budget adjustment at 73.33%. There is PGT available to fund the difference resulting in no requirement to transfer from reserves or impact to the levy.

Table 1: Summary of Capital Project and required budget adjustment (including non-recoverable HST):

Description	Council Approved Budget	Budget Increase	Revised Budget
Purchase Cost of 10 Buses-New Flyer	9,030,797	1,422,650	10,453,477
Estimated Tarriff Costs-New Flyer	0	1,045,345	1,045,345
Other Costs *	325,000	0	325,000
TOTAL Project Costs	9,355,797	2,467,995	11,823,792
ICIP Funding	(6,860,606)	(1,809,781)	(8,670,687)
PGT Funding	(2,495,191)	(658,214)	(3,153,405)
TOTAL Project Funding	(9,355,797)	(2,467,995)	(11,823,792)
Variance	\$0	\$0	\$0

* Includes ITS, inspection, branding, metrolinx administration fee, etc.

Analysis

The acquisition of conventional transit vehicles is critical for maintaining service continuity, enhancing fleet modernization, and achieving cost efficiency. The existing fleet is inadequate to meet this demand effectively. Currently, the average age of the conventional fleet is 8 years. A conventional bus has a useful life of 12 years. The conventional bus fleet is constantly in for service as a result of repairs required due to breakdowns. Ensuring that the NTC can continue providing reliable and timely services is essential for meeting the needs of customers. Additionally, modernizing the fleet by incorporating newer, more reliable vehicles will enhance the overall efficiency and sustainability of transit operations. The Metrolinx TPI Cooperative Purchase

Governance Agreement facilitates this process by allowing for significant cost savings and procurement efficiencies through bulk purchasing and standardized procedures.

The original term for the Multi-Year Governance Agreement for Joint Transit Procurements Facilitated by Metrolinx ended March 31, 2024 but Metrolinx elected to exercise its option to extend the Term for another five years now ending March 31, 2029. On January 29, 2024, the agreement with the new OEM, New Flyer Industries, for Conventional Diesel bus purchases began which changed from the previous OEM, Nova Bus Inc. The expected date to receive these 10 vehicles is Q1 2027.

The addition of these new vehicles will continue to allow Niagara Transit to significantly improve service delivery by enhancing our ability to deliver timely and reliable services. Replacing vehicles that are past their life expectancy will minimize delays and cancellations due to vehicle breakdowns, directly impacting customer satisfaction. Modern vehicles equipped with the latest amenities and accessibility features will cater to the needs of all passengers, including those with disabilities, thereby improving the overall customer experience. Moreover, modern vehicles typically require less maintenance and are more fuel-efficient, leading to lower operational costs and a smaller environmental footprint.

Alternatives Reviewed

The Board could opt out of the TPI agreement with Metrolinx and undergo a separate formal procurement for conventional vehicles. This option is not recommended as it could result in further delays to delivery, negatively impacting NTC's service reliability. In addition, the cost per vehicle may prove to be greater than that of the cooperative purchase price.

Relationship to Niagara Transit Commission Strategic Priorities

Employee Success: By integrating newer vehicles into the fleet, transit operators and maintenance staff will experience reduced downtime and less frequent mechanical issues. This translates to a more predictable and stable work environment. The introduction of advanced vehicle technologies provides opportunities for employees to receive training and

certification on the latest systems, enhancing their skill set and career development prospects.

- Service Excellence:** The acquisition of new vehicles helps to maintain and potentially exceed current service levels. This reduces the incidence of service interruptions due to mechanical failures, ensuring a more dependable service for customers. New vehicles are typically more fuel-efficient and require less maintenance, translating to more efficient operations and better use of resources.
- Safety:** Ensuring the vehicles are up to date with the latest safety standards means that both drivers and passengers are protected against potential hazards, promoting a secure transit environment.
- Affordability:** By purchasing through the Metrolinx TPI Cooperative Purchase Governance Agreement, NTC can benefit from economies of scale, achieving lower per-unit costs than would be possible through independent procurement. Efficient procurement and funding strategies, such as the ensure that the NTC maximizes its financial resources without compromising service quality.
- Customer Focus:** Modern vehicles offer a more comfortable ride with better seating, climate control, and reduced noise levels, contributing to a more pleasant travel experience for passengers. By maintaining a reliable and modern fleet, the NTC can more effectively respond to customer needs and feedback, adapting services to better serve the community.

Other Pertinent Reports

- NTC C 10-2024 Transit Procurement Initiative - Metrolinx Cooperative Purchase Agreement



Prepared by:

Brad Charters
Director
Fleet Maintenance



Submitted by:

Carla Stout, DPA
General Manager
Niagara Transit

This report was reviewed by Stephanie Muhic, Senior Program Financial Specialist and Anneli Thomson, Legal Counsel.

Appendices

N/A

Subject: Niagara Transit Letter of Support to CUTA for Bill C-395
Report to: Niagara Transit Commission
Report date: **Tuesday, August 26, 2025**

Recommendations

1. That the Niagara Transit Commission (NTC) Board **APPROVE** the letter of support from Niagara Transit, the Office of the NTC Chair, and ATU Local 846 for Bill C-395, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Public Transit Workers);
2. That staff be **DIRECTED** to provide the letter to the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA); and
3. That staff be **AUTHORIZED** to provide support, in coordination with the Chair's office, regarding Bill C-395 in the future.

Key Facts

- CUTA has recently approached federal Members of Parliament to sponsor, as a private members bill, Bill C-395, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Public Transit Workers).
- The bill would amend the criminal code to strengthen penalties for assaults on transit workers and expand the current definition of transit operators to include all transit employees.
- In recent years, incidents of violence and harassment against front-line transit workers have escalated across Canada.
- Niagara Transit workers have been subject to such incidents, which have not only a physical and mental impacts on those directly affected, but on all Niagara Transit front-line workers.
- This letter would support CUTA in their efforts to find a sponsor for Private Members Bill C-395 and

Financial Considerations

There are no financial impacts as a result of this report.

Analysis

The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) is currently approaching federal Members of Parliament to sponsor Bill C-395, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Public Transit Workers).

The bill would strengthen penalties for assaults on transit workers and expand the current definition of transit operators to include all transit employees. Wording of the bill reads as follows:

His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

R.S., c. C-46

Criminal Code

1 Section 269.01 of the *Criminal Code* is replaced by the following:

Aggravating circumstance — assault against a public transit worker

269.01 (1) When a court imposes a sentence for an offence referred to in paragraph 264.1(1)(a) or any of sections 266 to 269, it shall consider as an aggravating circumstance the fact that the victim of the offence was, at the time of the commission of the offence, a public transit worker engaged in the performance of their duty.

Definition of *public transit*

(2) In this section, ***public transit*** means a passenger transportation service provided to the public — including paratransit and school bus services — using a vehicle such as a bus, train, subway, tram, ferry or licensed taxi cab.

—

Incidents of violence and harassment on transit systems have escalated in recent years affecting both riders and the front-line workers who serve them. These challenges are compounded by broader societal pressures, including homelessness, substance use, and mental health issues, which increasingly play out in public transit environments. The consequences of this have been felt in Niagara. Niagara Transit workers have been exposed to difficult and sometimes dangerous situations.

This letter and future support for Bill C-395 is an opportunity to demonstrate leadership on a growing public safety concern and deliver meaningful benefits to front-line workers and transit riders in Niagara.

[Bill C-395, An Act To Amend the Criminal Code \(Public Transit Workers\)](https://www.parl.ca/documentviewer/en/44-1/bill/C-395/first-reading)
(<https://www.parl.ca/documentviewer/en/44-1/bill/C-395/first-reading>)

Alternatives Reviewed

The Niagara Transit Commission Board could choose not to support Bill C-395.


Relationship to Niagara Transit Commission Strategic Priorities

Safety

Support for Bill C-395 is a proactive response to supporting a safe working environment for public transit workers in Niagara. It represents a united approach by the Board, Union, and staff to ensuring incidents against workers are treated as seriously as possible in criminal proceedings.

Other Pertinent Reports

None



Prepared by:
Jordan Hambleton
Chief of Staff



Submitted by:
Carla Stout, DPA
General Manager

Appendices

Appendix 1 Niagara Transit - Letter of Support to CUTA for Bill C-395

August 20, 2025

Dave Reage, Chair
Marco D'Angelo, President & CEO

Canadian Urban Transit Association
Suite 1401, 55 York St.
Toronto, Ontario
M5J 1R7

RE: Bill C-395, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Public Transit Workers)

Dear Mr. Reage and Mr. D'Angelo,

The Niagara Transit Commission and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 846 are writing to you in support of Bill C-395, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Public Transit Workers). Thank you for your advocacy on this issue and work bringing this bill forward.

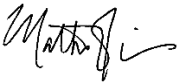
Transit workers are essential to providing transit services across Canada. Our dedicated Niagara Transit operators, terminal staff, customer service workers and others are dedicated to providing a reliable and safe experience for thousands of residents who rely on transit every day. They deserve to feel safe and protected while engaged in the performance of their duties.

In recent years, incidents of violence and harassment against front-line transit workers have escalated and no transit agency, including Niagara Transit, has been spared. Transit workers are often vulnerable to these types of incidents and when one worker is subject to violence, it is felt by all. These incidents leave not only physical trauma but mental trauma as well and push dedicated workers away from our industry and the positive impacts they have on their community.

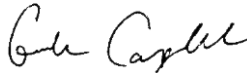
We are asking for you to continue your advocacy and use this letter of support to demonstrate the Niagara Transit Commission and ATU 846's solidarity on this serious

issue to our federal government partners. Together we should do all we can to ensure the safety of our workers and protect transit in our communities.

Sincerely,



Mat Siscoe
Chair, Niagara Transit
Commission



Gord Campbell
President
ATU Local 846



Carla Stout
General Manager
Niagara Transit

Subject: Niagara Transit-Regional Municipality of Niagara Seniors Services
Memorandum of Understanding (Long-Term Care Home Evacuations)

Report to: Niagara Transit Commission

Report date: **Tuesday, August 26, 2025**

Recommendations

1. That the Niagara Transit Commission Board **APPROVE** the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Niagara Transit and The Regional Municipality of Niagara Senior's Services Department regarding the evacuation of residents of the Niagara Region's long-term care (LTC) homes; and
2. That staff be **DIRECTED** to finalize and implement the MOU and corresponding procedures, effective immediately.

Key Facts

- The Niagara Region's Senior Services department is legislatively required to have an evacuation plan in case of emergency for all residents of their LTC homes as stipulated in the Fixing Long-Term Care Act and Ontario Regulation 246/22.
- Regional staff have approached Niagara Transit to establish an MOU for Niagara Transit to provide backup to their current evacuation provider to ensure that in the event of a larger scale evacuation requirement they will have the required vehicles to facilitate.
- Niagara Transit is best placed to provide this supportive service as a Regional partner. Toronto, Peel Region, Halton Region, and Hamilton utilize their local municipal transit operators to provide emergency transportation in evacuation scenarios as part of their emergency plans.
- As per the MOU (Appendix 1), Niagara Transit will be the secondary evacuation provider. The Senior Services department will continue to maintain their primary service provider, Switzer Carty.
- Following all evacuation incidents, staff will prepare a report for the Board. The report will provide an overview of the incident, services provided by Niagara Transit and any financial and service impacts incurred as a result.

Financial Considerations

Financial costs will be monitored and reviewed for each potential evacuation incident. Given that emergency evacuation timelines are typically short, it is most likely that buses and operators currently in service would be utilized rather than activating those out of service. This would impact service but should limit financial impact to lost fare revenues and other small incurrences. If the request comes at a time buses are not in service, the incremental costs relating to operators, fuel and maintenance would be reviewed and funded by the Senior Services department of the Region, resulting in no special levy impact. As part of the procedural plan, staff will work together to ensure all costs are minimized. A report will be prepared for the Board to inform them of any incidents, services provided by Niagara Transit and any financial and service impacts.

Analysis

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will establish a mutual understanding between Niagara Transit (NT) and Seniors Services to support the provision of transportation services by NT in the event of an emergency evacuation or relocation involving one or more of the Region's long-term care (LTC) homes. Niagara Transit will be the secondary provider to Switzer Carty who will continue to be the primary provider.

Niagara Region operates seven municipal long-term care homes, located at:

1. Linhaven – 403 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, ON
2. Meadows of Dorchester – 6623 Kalar Road, Niagara Falls, ON
3. Gilmore Lodge – 60 King Street, Fort Erie, ON
4. Northland Pointe – 2 Fielden Avenue, Port Colborne, ON
5. Rapelje Lodge – 277 Plymouth Road, Welland, ON
6. Woodlands of Sunset – 920 Pelham Street, Welland, ON
7. Deer Park Villa and Suites – 150 Central Avenue, Grimsby, ON

Through the MOU, Niagara Transit will provide vehicles and operators to assist with the evacuation of residents from the above LTC homes in emergency situations. Situations such as fire, flood, structural failure, extended power outage, environmental emergencies, etc, could necessitate evacuations.

Given that requests for this service would be for emergency situations, likely requiring an immediate response, temporary service disruptions during normal service hours would be expected. Operations staff would work to ensure disruptions were kept to a minimum and normal service resumed as soon as possible.

It is possible that requests would be made outside of normal service hours. Staff will work with Senior's Services staff to develop an internal procedure to activate the required service in that event.

Roles and Responsibilities

Niagara Transit will:

- Respond to transportation requests from Seniors Services or designated incident commander, subject to vehicle and staffing availability.
- Provide operators and vehicles as able, prioritizing accessible units when required.
- Ensure coordination with the Region's Emergency Operations Centre (if activated).

Seniors Services will:

- Maintain an up-to-date emergency transportation request protocol.
- Provide staff supervision during all transports; NT will not provide medical supervision.
- Ensure receiving facilities or destinations are ready to accept residents.
- Communicate requests clearly and provide estimated number of residents, equipment, and timelines.
- Incremental costs relating to operators, fuel and maintenance would be reviewed and funded by the Senior Services department.

For reference:

[Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/21f39) (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/21f39>)

[O. Reg. 246/22](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r22246) (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r22246>)

Alternatives Reviewed

The Niagara Transit Commission could choose not to provide evacuation transportation services to the Regional Municipality of Niagara's (RMON) LTC homes, but this would likely result in higher costs to the Region overall and a less reliable emergency transportation plan.

Relationship to Niagara Transit Commission Strategic Priorities

Service Excellence

Partnering with Senior's Services to provide emergency transportation for LTC homes is a proactive response to a community need. It ensures that regional government is prepared in the event of an emergency situation.

Safety

Providing emergency transportation ensures Niagara Transit and RMON are doing our utmost to ensure the safety of some of our most vulnerable residents.

Customer Focus

This MOU creates a community partnership that maximizes the use of Regional services and ensures good value for taxpayers.

Other Pertinent Reports

n/a



Prepared by:
Jordan Hambleton
Chief of Staff



Submitted by:
Carla Stout, DPA
General Manager

This report was prepared in consultation with Adam Arbour, Director, Transit Operations and Paolo Varias, Director, RMON Seniors Services.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft MOU-Emergency Transportation

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between
Niagara Transit (NT)

And
Regional Municipality of Niagara – Seniors Services

Effective Date:

1. Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a mutual understanding between Niagara Transit (NT) and Seniors Services to support the provision of transportation services by NT in the event of an emergency evacuation or relocation involving one or more of the Region's long-term care (LTC) homes. Niagara Transit will serve as the secondary provider. The Region of Niagara will maintain Switzer Carty as the primary emergency evacuation provider.

2. Background

Under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, LTC homes are required to maintain an emergency plan that includes arrangements for the safe evacuation and transportation of residents. This MOU supports the Region's compliance with legislative requirements and ensures coordination during emergencies.

Niagara Region operates seven municipal long-term care homes, located at:

1. Linhaven – 403 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, ON
2. Meadows of Dorchester – 6623 Kalar Road, Niagara Falls, ON
3. Gilmore Lodge – 60 King Street, Fort Erie, ON
4. Northland Pointe – 2 Fielden Avenue, Port Colborne, ON
5. Rapelje Lodge – 277 Plymouth Road, Welland, ON
6. Woodlands of Sunset – 920 Pelham Street, Welland, ON
7. Deer Park Villa and Suites – 150 Central Avenue, Grimsby, ON

3. Scope of Services

- NT agrees to make reasonable efforts to provide accessible transportation (e.g., buses with wheelchair lifts) for emergency evacuation or relocation of LTC residents, when requested by Seniors Services.
- Transportation services will be limited to emergency situations only, including but not limited to:
 - Fire, flood, structural failure
 - Extended power outage
 - Environmental emergencies (e.g., extreme weather)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Niagara Transit will:

- Respond to transportation requests from Seniors Services or designated incident commander, subject to vehicle and staffing availability.
- Provide operators and vehicles as able, prioritizing accessible units when required.
- Ensure coordination with the Region's Emergency Operations Centre (if activated).

Seniors Services will:

- Maintain an up-to-date emergency transportation request protocol.
- Provide staff supervision during all transports; NT will not provide medical supervision.
- Ensure receiving facilities or destinations are ready to accept residents.
- Communicate requests clearly and provide estimated number of residents, equipment, and timelines.
- Incremental costs relating to operators, fuel and maintenance would be reviewed and funded by the Senior Services department.

5. Review

- This MOU takes effect on the date signed.

- It may be amended at any time by mutual written consent.

Signatories

For Niagara Transit

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

For Niagara Region Seniors Services

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Subject: Q2 2025 Financial Results and Variance Analysis

Report to: Niagara Transit Commission Board

Report date: **Tuesday, August 26, 2025**

Recommendations

1. That the June 30, 2025, Q2 Financial Results and Variance Analysis of the Niagara Transit Commission (NTC), as detailed in Appendix 1 of this Report, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the year-to-date operating results and forecasted operating variances to year-end as of June 30, 2025.
- Quarterly financial results are provided as of June, September and December each year and include forecasted operating results in accordance with the Financial Reporting and Forecasting Policy.
- The NTC is projecting an overall operating surplus of \$267 thousand at year-end as the surplus revenue is adequate to fund the expenditure deficit as outlined in Appendix 2.
- Forecasts have been prepared using assumptions and estimates based on information available at the time of writing the quarterly financial update. All financial implications quantified in this report include estimates up to December 31, 2025, unless otherwise noted. Estimates in this report are fluid and changing and as a result, the forecasts contain inherent risks and actual results may differ.

Financial Considerations

As reflected in Appendix 1, the NTC is operating at a year-to-date operating surplus of \$2.2 million with a forecasted surplus at the end of the year of \$267 thousand. The 2025 budget was prepared using best estimates based on the actual January to June 2024 spend. NTC continues to review the variances and how the budget was allocated by object of expenditure line and adjust future budgets based on historical trends.

Quarterly updates reflect a fulsome review and analysis of the unaudited results and corresponding forecasts prepared by staff to account for timing of expenses and any changes in operations. The forecasted estimates included in the report are fluid and changing, and as a result contain inherent risks and actual results may differ.

This quarterly report will be included as part of the Niagara Region Q2 2025 Financial update. (<https://niagararegion.ca/government/budget/past-budgets/default.aspx>).

Analysis

The forecasted surplus of \$267 thousand is primarily the result of the following favourable variances:

- Higher than anticipated fare revenue of \$1.76 million due to increased ridership excluding UPASS.
- Lower than budgeted fuel costs of \$2.8 million due the removal of the carbon tax effective April 1, 2025, less fuel used by the City of Niagara Falls and Metrolinx as well as the actual average rate per litre of approximately \$1.23 (inclusive of non-recoverable HST) being less than the budgeted rate per litre of \$1.54 (inclusive of non-recoverable HST).
- Favourable variance in allocations of administrative costs (referred to as indirect allocations) of \$232 thousand due to less than anticipated self-insurance claims and lower than budgeted legal premium.

These favourable variances are offset by the following unfavourable variances:

- Not recognizing budgeted Provincial Gas Tax Revenues of \$1.3 million as NTC is in a forecasted surplus position. The unrecognized Provincial Gas Tax will be available for future capital and/or operating use.
- Higher than budgeted vehicle supply parts and repairs and maintenance due to the aging fleet and delay in receiving new buses of \$1.1 million.
- Less than budgeted fuel reimbursement from the City of Niagara Falls and Metrolinx of \$1.0 million.
- Less than budgeted revenues from the Niagara College UPASS agreement beginning September 1, 2025 and the 2024/2025 year-end reconciliation due to a decline in enrollment of \$516 thousand.
- Increased labour related costs due to higher than budgeted benefit and overtime costs of \$744 thousand.

Full analysis and explanation of the year-to-date actual and forecasted variances can be found in Appendix 2 to this report.

Alternatives Reviewed

Forecasts for the year are provided using the best information and estimates based on circumstances known at the time of the financial update.

Relationship to Niagara Transit Commission Strategic Priorities

Service Excellence: The quarterly update provides the Board with updated budget to actual variance analysis which is in alignment with the Service Excellence strategic priority.

Other Pertinent Reports

- [NTC 28-2024 2025 Operating Budget and Special Levy Requisition](https://pub-ntc.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=411)
(<https://pub-ntc.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=411>)



Prepared by:
Tim Luey, CPA
Deputy General Manager
Planning and Performance



Submitted by:
Carla Stout, DPA
General Manager

This report was prepared in consultation with Stephanie Muhic, Senior Program Financial Specialist, and reviewed by Renee Muzzell, Manager, Program Financial Support.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Niagara Transit Commission - Statement of Operations
Appendix 2	Variance Analysis

Niagara Transit Commission Statement of Operations (in thousands of dollars)

	Year to Date Budget	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget vs Actual Variance Amount	Year to Date Budget vs Actual Variance Percentage	Annual Budget	Annual Forecast	Annual Budget vs Forecast Variance Amount	Annual Budget vs Forecast Variance Percentage
Labour Related Costs	\$23,375	\$23,705	-\$330	-1.4%	\$47,207	\$47,951	-\$744	-1.6%
Administrative	\$2,333	\$1,219	\$1,114	47.8%	\$4,134	\$4,049	\$85	2.1%
Operational & Supply	\$4,001	\$3,805	\$196	4.9%	\$7,940	\$8,062	-\$122	-1.5%
Occupancy & Infrastructure	\$741	\$791	-\$50	-6.7%	\$1,429	\$1,395	\$34	2.4%
Equipment, Vehicles, Technology	\$8,085	\$7,198	\$887	11.0%	\$15,865	\$14,191	\$1,674	10.6%
Partnership, Rebate, Exemption	\$0	\$1	-\$1	0.0%	\$1	\$1	-\$1	-188.5%
Financial Expenditures	\$0	\$7	-\$7	0.0%	\$129	\$136	-\$7	-5.1%
Total Expenses	\$38,535	\$36,726	\$1,809	4.7%	\$76,705	\$75,785	\$920	1.2%
Taxation	-\$28,618	-\$28,634	\$16	0.1%	-\$63,530	-\$63,546	\$16	0.0%
Federal & Provincial Grants	-\$426	-\$263	-\$163	-38.2%	-\$511	-\$469	-\$42	-8.3%
By-Law Charges & Sales	-\$9,779	-\$11,085	\$1,306	13.3%	-\$19,697	-\$21,233	\$1,536	7.8%
Other Revenue	-\$2,038	-\$963	-\$1,074	-52.7%	-\$4,242	-\$1,847	-\$2,395	-56.5%
Total Revenues	-\$40,860	-\$40,945	\$84	0.2%	-\$87,980	-\$87,096	-\$885	-1.0%
Intercompany Charges	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Total Intercompany Charges	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Net Expenditure (Revenue) Before Transfers & Indirect Allocations	-\$2,325	-\$4,219	\$1,894	81.4%	-\$11,276	-\$11,310	\$35	0.0%
Transfers From Funds	-\$909	-\$909	\$0	0.0%	-\$1,556	-\$1,556	\$0	0.0%
Transfers To Funds	\$2,167	\$2,167	\$0	0.0%	\$4,333	\$4,333	\$0	0.0%
Total Transfers	\$1,258	\$1,258	\$0	0.0%	\$2,778	\$2,778	\$0	0.0%
Net Expenditure (Revenue) Before Indirect Allocations	-\$1,067	-\$2,961	\$1,894	-177.4%	-\$8,498	-\$8,533	\$35	-0.4%
Indirect Allocations & Debt	\$3,560	\$3,232	\$329	9.2%	\$8,498	\$8,266	\$232	2.7%
Total Indirect Allocations & Debt	\$3,560	\$3,232	\$329	9.2%	\$8,498	\$8,266	\$232	2.7%
Net Expenditure (Revenue) After Transfers & Indirect Allocations	\$2,493	\$271	\$2,222	89.1%	\$0	-\$267	\$267	0.0%

Appendix 2 - Variance Analysis

What does Niagara Transit Commission do?

Niagara Transit is responsible for the operation, management, and maintenance of Niagara's comprehensive regional transit system. The Niagara Transit Commission (NTC) has the sole responsibility for transit operations within the Niagara Region.

Variance Analysis (in thousands of dollars)

The NTC is operating at year-to-date surplus after indirect allocations of \$2,222 with a forecasted surplus of \$267 due to the following factors:

Labour Related Costs – The unfavourable year-to-date and forecasted variances of \$330 and \$744 are due to greater than budgeted actual benefits for unionized staff and higher than budgeted overtime in fleet maintenance. The forecast also includes a year-end payment for the expected deficit in benefits identified by the provider.

Administrative – The favourable year-to-date variance of \$1,114 is attributable to the budget timing and spend related to consulting and advertising and branding projects which are expected to be incurred by the end of the year.

Operational & Supply – The favourable year-to-date variance of \$196 is due to the timing of uniform and license renewals which is spent in the fall. These costs will be spent by the end of the year. There is an unfavourable forecasted variance of \$122 due to slightly higher than budgeted specialized service costs.

Equipment, Vehicles, Technology - The favourable year-to-date and forecasted variances of \$887 and \$1,674 are mainly attributable to the removal of the carbon tax on fuel and to the actual average cost per litre. The favourable forecasted variance related to the removal of Carbon tax and the fuel contract costs being less than the budgeted cost per litre is \$1,773. In addition, the forecasted fuel usage by the City of Niagara Falls and Metrolinx is less than budgeted by \$1,030 which is offset in less than budgeted revenues below in "other Revenue". The forecasted favourable variance is offset by incremental vehicle supply parts and repairs and maintenance due to the aging fleet and delay in receiving new buses of \$1,099.

Federal & Provincial Grants – The unfavourable year-to-date variance of \$163 relates to the timing of spend and corresponding matching of revenues related to the administrative costs of an Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program ICIP-NIR-07 relating to the MasterPlan.

By-Law Charges & Sales – The favourable year-to-date and forecasted variances of \$1,306 and \$1,536 are mainly due to higher than anticipated fare revenue. There is a forecasted favourable variance of \$1,760 in fare revenues due to increased ridership excluding UPASS ridership. There is also a forecasted favourable variance related to providing summer service with Brock University of \$213. This is offset by the reduction relating to the year-end reconciliation of the UPASS agreement with Niagara College of \$102 and the reduction to the new contract beginning September 1, 2025 of \$416.

Other Revenue – The unfavourable year-to-date and forecasted variances of \$1,074 and \$2,395 are mainly due to the strategy to not recognize the budgeted Provincial Gas Tax revenue of \$1,315 as NTC is in a forecasted surplus position. The unrecognized Provincial Gas Tax will be available for future Capital and/or Operating use. In addition, there is less than budgeted fuel reimbursement revenue from the City of Niagara Falls and Metrolinx totaling \$1,030 resulting in decreased fuel costs within 'Equipment, Vehicles, Technology' as noted above.

Indirect Allocations – The favourable year-to-date and forecasted variances of \$329 and \$232 are mainly due to less than expected costs related to insurance premiums and self-insurance claims.

MEMORANDUM

NTC-C 24-2025

Subject: Secondary Student Access to Transit at No Cost

Date: Tuesday, August 26, 2025

To: Niagara Transit Commission Board

From: Brad Griffin, Manager of Financial Strategy and Performance

At the May 20, 2025 Niagara Transit Commission Board Meeting, the Commission's Chair requested that staff investigate the feasibility of providing secondary students access to transit at no cost and to also consider providing access to co-op secondary students at no cost.

As part of the review process, staff conducted a jurisdictional scan of transit agencies across Ontario to better understand how other municipalities approach fare concessions for high school-aged students. The scan focused in particular on Kingston, Burlington, and Guelph—three municipalities that have implemented targeted initiatives to improve youth access to transit. Staff reviewed program details such as eligibility criteria, hours of free access, and evaluation metrics. These case studies offered valuable insight into the different strategies used to increase ridership among secondary students, reduce transportation barriers, and promote long-term transit use. Scanning these and other jurisdictions also supported the ability to respond to information requests and provide relevant context for potential local policy development. Staff broke down the analysis into separate sections to be able to differentiate between access to co-op, full access and alternatives explored.

Full Access for High School Students at No Cost

As part of the evaluation of potential fare policy changes, staff have assessed the operational implications of offering free transit fares to high school students in Niagara. While the initiative aligns with broader objectives of improving youth mobility, promoting lifelong transit use, and advancing equitable access, the current timing raises several operational and financial concerns—particularly in terms of system capacity and funding sustainability.

On conventional transit, the most immediate impact would occur during peak periods—specifically around school start and dismissal times—which already represent the highest ridership times of day. Offering free fares could drive additional demand during these periods, potentially requiring more transit operators, an expansion of the vehicle fleet, and increased frequency to prevent overcrowding. The cost of these enhancements is currently unknown and would depend on the scale of student uptake, which could vary widely by school and municipality.

It is also critical to emphasize it is preferred that any future youth transit initiatives not interfere with or duplicate existing school board transportation services. The goal is not to replace school bus networks, but to improve mobility outside their traditional parameters. Should service expansion be considered during school bell times in the future, staff recommend engaging in discussions with the school boards to understand funding.

Many municipalities that have explored free youth transit have done so through carefully phased pilot programs or targeting smaller segments of the high school student population. These pilots are often limited by grade level, time of day, or geographic area. Cities such as Kingston, London, Burlington, Barrie, and Guelph initially launched targeted initiatives—such as free evening or weekend travel, or partnerships with select schools—to evaluate demand and service impacts before considering broader implementation.

Among these, Kingston stands out as the only municipality to have fully expanded to system-wide free transit for all high school students. Starting in 2012, Kingston introduced the program in stages over a five-year period, gradually increasing eligibility as positive outcomes were observed and as operational and financial feasibility allowed. The incremental approach enabled the city to manage demand, monitor ridership trends, and maintain service quality throughout the expansion. It's worth noting that Kingston introduced express services and increased service frequency after implementing free transit for high school students. While not all of these changes were driven by student demand, it was certainly a contributing factor—and the overall service investment was substantial.

Other communities remain in earlier or more limited phases of implementation, using pilot results to inform future decisions. This measured strategy reflects a broader best practice: beginning with manageable scopes and scaling up based on performance, funding availability, and system capacity.

In Niagara's case, communities served primarily by microtransit (on-demand and specialized) would face greater challenges. During the second quarter of 2025, the microtransit system experienced significant capacity constraints, resulting in over 11,000 trip denials—representing approximately 17% of total requested trips. These services are sensitive to fluctuations in demand due to limited vehicles and operators. A recent example from a specialized zone that experienced increased post-secondary ridership demonstrated how quickly capacity can be overwhelmed, leading to delays and reduced service availability for other transit-dependent populations, such as individuals with disabilities and seniors.

Beyond operational concerns, the financial impact of implementing a fare-free high school program is considerable. The total estimated cost is approximately \$975,000 annually, including both direct fare revenue loss and reductions to the Provincial Gas Tax (PGT) funding, which is tied to reporting ridership of the number of paying riders. Of this amount, \$50,000 is associated with microtransit, and the remaining \$925,000 is related to conventional local and regional services.

The centralized call center for Specialty Services is already operating at or near capacity, handling 57,000 calls year-to-date with a 16% call abandonment rate—highlighting a critical need for more dispatch and booking support. The proposed fare-free transit access for high school students is expected to significantly increase booking volume, especially from students and caregivers seeking trip scheduling and real-time assistance. Without additional FTEs to manage dispatch and booking functions, service quality will decline, risking longer wait times, higher abandonment rates, and reduced access for existing transit users.

While the benefits of youth engagement with transit are clear, particularly in building long-term ridership and removing financial barriers, staff do not recommend implementing full system-wide free transit access for high school students at this time. Instead, staff recommend considering a smaller-scale pilot or revisiting the concept during a broader service and fare strategy review. This would allow for further exploration of funding options, capacity enhancements, and strategic partnerships with school boards to design a program that is both impactful and sustainable.

Access for Co-op Secondary Students No Cost

In parallel with the review of a full fare-free high school program, staff also examined the potential of offering free transit to secondary students participating in co-operative education (co-op) placements. This initiative is narrower in scope and could serve as a focused pilot, though it still presents operational challenges, particularly within microtransit zones.

On the conventional transit system, the addition of co-op students is expected to have a manageable impact. These students represent a smaller and more dispersed group, and while their travel generally aligns with peak hours, the system currently has sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional ridership without the need for immediate service expansion. That said, the financial impact remains notable, with an estimated cost of \$165,000 annually stemming from lost fare revenue and reduced PGT funding.

More complex challenges emerge in communities that rely on microtransit and specialized services. Co-op placements require students to reach specific destinations at specific times, and the flexible, shared nature of on-demand transit may not reliably meet these needs. This raises concerns about the system's ability to provide timely and dependable transportation for students participating in structured learning opportunities.

Moreover, increased ridership from co-op students could strain already limited microtransit resources, potentially reducing service availability for other priority users such as seniors and individuals with disabilities. Addressing these concerns may require additional vehicles, expanded service hours, or changes to scheduling algorithms—all of which would increase operational costs. The estimated financial impact for microtransit services is approximately \$100,000 annually, resulting in a total projected cost of \$265,000 for the co-op program. The financial impact does not factor in any potential service increases to accommodate increased demand beyond capacity.

Similar to the full fare-free access model, the co-op student option would also place additional strain on specialized dispatch and booking agents, which are already operating near capacity. To effectively support the structured and time-sensitive booking needs of co-op students—particularly during peak school transition periods—additional full-time equivalent (FTE) staff member would be required. This added capacity would help manage increased inquiries, ensure timely trip coordination, and maintain service quality for both new and existing users.

While the intent to improve access to educational opportunities is commendable, staff remain cautious about proceeding at this time. Given the pressures on microtransit systems and the potential for unintended consequences on service reliability, staff do not recommend implementing free transit for co-op students currently. As with broader fare initiatives, this option may be better suited for exploration through targeted pilots or future service planning reviews.

Alternatives Reviewed

Free Transit for High School Students on Evenings and Weekends

A potential future initiative could involve offering free transit to high school students during evenings and weekends. While similar programs in Guelph and Burlington provide useful models for design and implementation, local capacity constraints—particularly within microtransit and specialized services—must be addressed before moving forward.

The proposed pilot would provide free transit to high school students after 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends and statutory holidays. This would enhance access to jobs, activities, and services while promoting long-term transit use and equity. It should be noted that regional specialized and conventional routes and services do not run on Sundays and holidays at this time and that local service hours in the evening (Monday to Saturday) are still inconsistent from city to city.

This initiative would complement, not replace, existing student transportation. It would apply only outside of school and extracurricular hours, leaving current school bus operations unaffected.

To participate, students would register and receive a designated transit card or pass. This system would support fare validation, encourage responsible use, and help manage behaviour concerns through increased accountability.

The concept relies on existing off-peak transit capacity. However, microtransit and specialized services currently face limitations, even during off-peak hours. Rising demand from youth riders could quickly exceed constrained capacity, leading to unserved trips and reduced reliability. As such, the program should only be considered once microtransit and specialized services are adequately resourced and capacity constraints are reduced.

The initiative is estimated to cost approximately \$500,000 annually, primarily due to lost fare revenue and reduced Provincial Gas Tax funding tied to paying ridership. This estimate does not include potential costs associated with service expansion to meet increased demand.

Similar to the full access and co-op student models, the evening and weekend service option would place additional pressure on specialized booking and dispatch staff, who are already operating near capacity. To handle the expected rise in call and booking volumes, more full-time equivalent (FTE) staff will be needed to support these critical functions. This added capacity is vital to ensure timely trip coordination, maintain service responsiveness, and deliver a consistent customer experience.

If pursued in a future budget cycle, the pilot would include ongoing monitoring of ridership, registration, and operational impacts. A comprehensive evaluation would inform decisions on permanent implementation, adjustments, or discontinuation.

Offering free evening and weekend transit to high school students has the potential to improve youth mobility and foster equitable access to community resources. However, due to current service limitations, particularly in microtransit and in still inequitable hours of service across local and regional conventional routes, it is recommended that this initiative be considered in a future budget once capacity challenges are addressed and services are properly resourced.

Passes are available for purchase

Passes are available for purchase by schools or other partner organizations. Each school can distribute passes based on their co-op program needs and the availability of transit services to support student travel to and from placements.

Other Pertinent Reports

- NTC 21-2024- Expansion of Transit Benefit Pass Eligibility
- NTC 7- 2025- Transit Benefit Pass Update
- NTC 22-2024- Harmonization of Fares

Respectfully submitted and signed by



Brad Griffin, CPA, CA
Manager of Financial Strategy and Performance

MEMORANDUM

NTC-C 25-2025

Subject: Information on Free Transit for Seniors

Date: Tuesday, August 26, 2025

To: Niagara Transit Commission Board

From: Brad Griffin, Manager of Financial Strategy and Performance

The purpose of this memo is to provide information related to a request from The City of Niagara Falls. The City of Niagara Falls's Council, through a motion, requested the Niagara Transit Commission to investigate the feasibility of providing significantly discounted fares for seniors at their Council meeting of July 29, 2025.

As part of the fare harmonization initiative launched on July 1, 2025, staff previously conducted a jurisdictional scan of peer transit agencies across Southern Ontario to compare senior fare discounts. This scan has since been updated to reflect any changes to discount programs and to evaluate the feasibility of offering free transit fares for seniors. The update aligns with the request for information regarding free transit for high school students, as outlined in report NTC-C 24-2025. Additionally, the review includes an assessment of fare options within the Niagara Transit system, in response to a request from the City of Niagara Falls.

It should be noted that the City of Niagara Falls put forward a motion in 2024 for the Niagara Transit Commission to establish a discounted senior fare that is competitive with others in the Golden Horseshoe. Further to that request and through the fare harmonization that just became effective July 1, 2025, a Senior 31 Day pass and 10-ride pass was priced at a 45% discount and 31% discount respectfully, which is consistent with peers across the Greater Golden Horseshoe. In addition to this, a Transit Benefit Pass was established for low-income individuals and families with savings of 50% when compared to an Adult pass, which also applies to seniors, if they meet the criteria.

These significant discounts represent savings of up to 50% and are designed to support affordability for older adults while maintaining a balanced and sustainable fare system. The current structure allows seniors frequent and affordable access to transit services without eliminating the revenue and reporting structures required to continue to qualify these trips for provincial funding.

Current Fares (July 1, 2025)

- A 31-day pass for seniors is priced at \$55, compared to \$100 for adults.
- A 10-ride pass for seniors costs \$20, while the equivalent adult fare is \$31.
- In addition, a 31 Day Transit Benefit Pass is available for \$50 for individuals who meet income-based eligibility criteria.

The updated jurisdictional review confirms that most transit systems in Southern Ontario offer discounted fares for seniors rather than free fare programs. These discounts are often embedded into long-standing fare structures and reflect a balance between supporting affordability for seniors and maintaining sustainable transit funding models.

Capacity Considerations

One of the primary concerns related to the implementation of a free or further discounted fare policy for seniors is the potential impact on service capacity—particularly within microtransit-served areas and on all specialized transit services. These services are already operating under significant pressure during high-demand periods and are more sensitive to fluctuations in ridership due to their limited vehicle availability, operating funding and on-demand nature.

Introducing free fares or further discounts for seniors may lead to a measurable increase in demand, especially among those who rely more heavily on accessible, door-to-door transit options. Without corresponding investments in adding service hours, this could result in an increase in existing service delays or increased trip denials.

While fixed-route services may have some capacity to absorb modest increases in ridership, ongoing monitoring would be necessary to ensure service quality is not compromised. Any increase in senior ridership, especially on the demand-responsive services—should be closely evaluated in relation to current service levels and resource availability.

Financial Impact

Implementing free fares for seniors would have an estimated annual cost of \$650,000 for the first year. This figure includes both the loss of fare revenue (\$555,000) and the reduction in Provincial Gas Tax (PGT) funding (\$95,000), as PGT allocations are directly tied to paying ridership.

In addition to this estimate, any required increases in microtransit or specialized service levels to accommodate increased senior ridership have not been costed, as there is currently insufficient data available to reliably project service demand impacts. These services operate under constrained capacity and would require further investment to maintain service quality when demand grows.

There would also be additional administrative costs associated with:

- Distributing and managing free senior passes
- Handling increased booking volumes on microtransit and specialized services
- Verifying and managing eligibility

These costs, while secondary to lost revenue, could still be material—particularly if pass programs require manual verification or customer service support to administer.

This financial impact would need to be addressed either through additional municipal investment or by identifying other offsetting funding sources. Absent that, there is a risk of service reductions or delayed investments elsewhere in the transit system.

Summary

The current fare structure already provides substantial financial relief to seniors and is in line with peer systems in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Transitioning to a free fare or further discounted model for seniors would introduce significant financial and operational pressures. The most notable impacts would be felt in microtransit and specialized services, which are already under-resourced and capacity-constrained.

The estimated annual cost for offering free fares of \$650,000—reflecting both fare revenue loss and potential decreased eligibility for Provincial Gas Tax funding—represents a substantial budgetary consideration. Additional service costs could increase this figure further but cannot be reliably estimated at this time. Staff recommend maintaining the current senior fare structure that was arrived at through the fare harmonization process effective July 1, 2025 while continuing to monitor ridership trends and service capacity, particularly within demand-responsive services.

Other Pertinent Reports

- NTC 21-2024- Expansion of Transit Benefit Pass Eligibility
- NTC 7- 2025- Transit Benefit Pass Update
- NTC 22-2024- Harmonization of Fares

Respectfully submitted and signed by



Brad Griffin, CPA, CA
Manager of Financial Strategy and Performance

MEMORANDUM

NTC-C 26-2025

Subject: Q2 2025 Charter Summary
Date: August 26, 2025
To: Niagara Transit Commission
From: Adam Arbour, Director Transit Operations

The purpose of this memo is to provide a quarterly update to the Board regarding Charter requests and budget status in accordance with report NTC 3-2025 Amendment to Policy 002-NTC – Niagara Transit Commission Charter Policy (Charters and Free Transit Community Requests).

Between April and June 2025, the Commission accommodated charter requests from five organizations including Notre Dame College School, Kiwanis of Eastern Canada & the Caribbean, Niagara Parasport Games, Society for Commercial Archeology, and the Niagara Regional Native Centre. Three charters were completed for organizations using the established fee waiver program. The charter for the Niagara Regional Native Centre was approved without a board report due to meeting the requirements as set out in NTC-3-2025, as it didn't exceed the cost threshold to require an individual board report. Consideration was given to anticipated and current fee waivers. The balance for the fee waiver program sits at \$68,128.90.

Table 1: Summary of Q2 2025 Charter Waivers

Date	Customer	Fee	Fee Waived	Waiver Report	Agency Paid for Charter
22-May-25	Notre Dame College School	\$694.40			X
30-May-25	Kiwanis of Eastern Canada & the Caribbean	\$1,550.00	\$1,550.00	NTC 4-2025	
30-May-25	Niagara Parasport Games (3-days)	11,773.80	\$11,773.80	NTC 14-2025	

19-Jun-25	Niagara Regional Native Centre	\$1,026.10	\$1,026.10	NTC-3-2025	
19-Jun-25	Society for Commercial Archeology	\$1,378.43			X
Q2	TOTAL	\$15,044.30	\$14,349.90		

A summary of the status of the Fee Waiver Program for 2025, at the time of report creation is provided in Table 2 to advise the Board of funds committed and requests anticipated to date:

Table 2: 2025 Charter Fee Waiver Status Summary

Status	Customer	Charter Fee Waived	Report
COMPLETED	Kiwanis	\$1,550.00	NTC 4-2025
COMPLETED	Parasport Games (3-days)	\$11,773.80	NTC 14-2025
COMPLETED	Niagara Regional Native Centre	\$1,026.10	NTC-3-2025
ANTICIPATED	Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold - Niagara Wine Festival Parade (annual event)	\$1,007.50	
ANTICIPATED	Project S.H.A.R.E. - Travelling Tapas (annual event)	\$4,650.00	
ANTICIPATED	Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold - Fill the Bus (annual event)	\$1,860.00	
ANTICIPATED	Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 24 - Veteran's Remembrance Day Bus	\$393.70	
ANTICIPATED	Project S.H.A.R.E. - Stuff the Bus	\$7,362.50	
ANTICIPATED	Open Arms Mission - Christmas Brunch	\$852.50	
BOOKED	Thorold Activities Group - LIT Event	\$658.75	

niagara transit commission

BOOKED	Thorold Activities Group - LIT Event	\$736.25	
	TOTAL	\$31,871.10	

For the Board's information, Charter Fee Waiver remaining funds (inclusive of the currently anticipated fee waivers for 2025) total **\$68,128.90**

Respectfully submitted and signed by



Adam Arbour
Director, Transit Operations

MEMORANDUM

NTC-C 27-2025

Subject: Q2 2025 Commingled Transit Statistics

Date: August 26, 2025

To: Niagara Transit Commission

From: Emma Braniff, Supervisor, Specialty Services

This memorandum provides an update on the performance and progress of Niagara Transit Customer Experience (CX) Department's comingled specialty service for Q2 2025. Building on the outcomes and observations reported in Q1, this update highlights ridership trends, operational insights, and service developments specific to the second quarter of 2025. CX staff, supported by statistical analysis from Heather Talbot, Consultant, Corporate Services, continue to assess system performance in collaboration with Voyago, the contracted service provider.

The current contract outlined a 20% ridership growth target over the life of the agreement, using 2023 data as a baseline. Early results indicated positive momentum in both specialized and microtransit services. As the service progresses through its second year, continued monitoring and operational adjustments remain essential to achieving long-term growth targets. Niagara Transit remains committed to ensuring service availability, accessibility, and efficiency, aligned with the NTC's mission to deliver AODA-compliant (Accessibility for Ontarians, with Disabilities Act), barrier-free, accessible, and reliable transportation while upholding our core values of service excellence, customer focus, equity, and affordability.

During Q2 2025, the comingled service provided a total of 65,171 trips. This represents a 3% increase compared to the 2023 baseline data, though a 12.7% decrease relative to the same period in 2024. In comparison to Q1 2025, which realized a total of 70,856 trips, Q2 serviced approximately 435 fewer trips per week on average. While seasonality may be a factor, the presence of user trip denials suggests the demand exists.

Specialized transit ridership totaled 11,039 trips, representing a 4% increase over the RFP baseline and a 19.4% decrease compared to Q2 2024. However, due to the comingled integrated service, registered specialized customers were able to book 2,581 local Microtransit trips reflecting an increase in accessibility. Microtransit accounted for 51,551 trips, excluding the 2,581 provided to registered specialized transit users,

combined there were a total of 54,132 Microtransit trips booked which represents a 2% increase over the RFP data and an 11% reduction compared to Q2 2024. In comparison to Q1 2025, which realized a 9.3% growth over the RFP data, Q2 only realized a 2% growth over the RFP data.

The following table provides a summary of total ridership by service type, with comparisons to RFP baseline data and the 2024 comparator:

	2023 Q2 VIA, Regional Limousine, BTS/FAST	2024 Q2 VIA, Regional Limousine, BTS/FAST	2025 Q2 Voyago	% Change 2025 vs RFP Data	% Change 2025 vs 2024	Q2 Forecast – Year 2Contract 20% Growth
Micro	52,841	60,972	51,551	2%*	-11.2%	
+ Registered Specialized User on Micro*	NA	NA	2,581			
Specialized	10,639	13,698	11,039	4%*	-19.4%*	
Total Ridership	63,481	74,670	65,171	3%	-12.7%	76,177

* Growth percentages are based on Micro trips plus Registered Specialized users booking Microtransit trips

Ridership patterns varied across municipalities. Fort Erie recorded the highest trip volume of 24,406, followed by Niagara-on-the-Lake with 12,212. Compared to Q2 2024, trips to St. Catharines increased to 4,250 from 3,864, Wainfleet experienced a notable increase from 15 to 213 trips in Q2 2025. Port Colborne recorded a decrease from 7,592 trips in Q2 2024 to 3,976 trips in the current quarter which is a 6% increase over Q1 2025 ridership and will continue to be monitored.

April – June Ridership by Service Type and Municipality	Micro Service	Registered Specialized User Local Micro Trip	Specialized Service	Total 2025 Q2	Total 2024 Q2
Fort Erie	21,496	1,054	1,856	24,406	26,382
Grimsby	5,631	320	304	6,255	7,632

Lincoln	5,213	286	357	5,856	6,437
Niagara Falls	155	0	1,970	2,125	2,289
Niagara-on-the-Lake	11,743	182	287	12,212	14,352
Pelham	787	399	272	1,458	1,572
Port Colborne	3,209	335	432	3,976	7,592
St. Catharines	1,844	1	2,405	4,250	3,864
Thorold		0	1,187	1,187	1,730
Wainfleet	106	4	103	213	15
Welland	728	0	1,754	2,482	2,364
West Lincoln	639	0	76	715	368
DART Transfer Points		0	36	36	73
Grand Total	51,551	2,581	11,039	65,171	74,670

The significant increase in registered specialized customers utilizing microtransit services is a clear indicator that the commingled service delivery model is functioning as intended. The model was designed to enable all customers access to transit, providing more flexible and responsive mobility options without compromising the standards mandated under the AODA, where applicable. The noted increase in these trips, compared to the RFP baseline, confirms that this integration is actively bridging service gaps, especially in areas where local specialized service and fixed-routes transit are not currently available.

By leveraging microtransit, specialized customers are benefiting from a more immediate and geographically broad access to transit, reducing dependence on a dedicated fleet. This enhances system efficiency by optimizing vehicle use and balancing demand across service streams; contributing to service equity, cost containment, and operational sustainability.

Based on hourly customer trip denials, there are insufficient vehicles on the road to meet the current demand throughout the day. A total of 11,450 denials were recorded between April and June, 2025, which if serviced would increase ridership by 17%. Hourly analysis shows that denials steadily increase from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., decline through the early evening, and rise again after 8:00 p.m. This pattern highlights capacity constraints during both daytime peaks and late evening periods. As we enter the second year of the commingled contract, service planning was to include capacity for 20% growth, which would surpass the substantial ridership growth seen in the first

half of 2024. As outlined in the RFP, proponents were required to provide information on the number of vehicles necessary to accommodate current ridership levels, and a plan to support up to 20% ridership growth over the life of the contract. This growth should support a reduction in trip denials as service adjustments and additional resources are implemented. It should be noted that as capacity increases, increased availability should stimulate additional demand; thus reducing the overall number of trip denials.

Additionally, on-time performance (OTP) has improved quarter over quarter. Pickup OTP increased to 92.2% from 89.5%, while drop-off OTP improved to 93.2% from 91.2% from the previous quarter. This improvement reflects positively on service delivery and reliability; providing a better experience for customers. While the increase may be influenced by lower overall trip volumes, it nevertheless demonstrates the system's ability to maintain and enhance service standards amid operational pressures.

On May 12, 2025, Niagara Transit launched the new multimodal feature that provides seamless connection between Micro and fixed route services. This allows customers to travel efficiently, improves connectivity and simplifies the trip booking process for customers within a single platform; enhancing the overall transit experience in Niagara. In the 6 weeks following implementation, 77 multimodal trips were successfully completed. These represent trips that would previously have resulted in failed searches. The introduction of this feature supports a more connected and accessible transit network and is expected to contribute positively to overall service performance.

Certain municipalities, such as St. Catharines and Wainfleet, demonstrated ridership growth and improved access, reinforcing the model's responsiveness to community-specific needs. At the same time, the observed hourly denial trends continue to provide actionable insights for vehicle scheduling and capacity planning. By aligning vehicle deployment more closely with peak demand periods and expanding the fleet, Niagara Transit aims to alleviate constraints and better meet service demand across the region. This dual focus on targeted municipal growth and system-wide operational adjustments ensures that service delivery continues to evolve in a balanced and data-informed manner.

The commingled service continues to demonstrate stability following the initial year of transition and consolidation. With continued monitoring, capacity adjustments, and operational refinements, the system remains well positioned to advance toward the growth targets outlined in the contract while improving accessibility and mobility across the Niagara region.

In the coming quarter, Niagara Transit will continue to work closely with Voyago to address capacity constraints and improve service availability. A key focus will be on supporting the service provider in advancing service capacity and operational strategies to align with the contractual target of 20% ridership growth. Efforts will also include refining vehicle deployment strategies to better respond to peak demand periods, enhancing trip coordination, and promoting the multimodal feature to increase utilization. Additionally, ongoing monitoring of trip denials and customer feedback will guide adjustments to service delivery to ensure that accessibility standards and operational objectives are consistently met.

As noted in the Q1 report, the Niagara Transit CX department continues to concentrate efforts on enhancing service awareness in areas undergoing route adjustments, refining vehicle deployment to respond to peak accessibility demand, and strengthening trip sharing protocols to increase network efficiency. Ongoing training and recognition programs for front-line staff will reinforce our commitment to Employee Success while directly improving the customer experience over the second half of the year and will be reported on in the Q4 2025 report.

To further advance service development, Niagara Transit issued a new RFP on July 4, 2025. This RFP introduces an enhanced service delivery model designed to strengthen legislated requirements for availability of specialized service within the AODA. The model aims to expand specialized services to allow all registered users to move freely within their community, and to expand service for all users to reduce trip denials. The new procurement process reflects ongoing efforts to align service planning with evolving ridership patterns, community needs, and operational efficiencies identified through the performance of the commingled model.

In summary, Q2 2025 results reflect a service that continues to evolve in response to regional transit needs. With more than 65,000 trips delivered this quarter, the system remains well-positioned to achieve the contract's 20% growth target as capacity and service improvements continue to be implemented. The commingled model has proven effective in integrating specialized customers into the total service network contributing to service flexibility, efficiency, and improved access across the region. Niagara Transit remains committed to delivering an AODA-compliant, barrier-free, increasingly responsive, and financially sustainable transit system for the Niagara region, with a continued focus on growth, accessibility, and customer experience.

Respectfully submitted and signed by



Emma Braniff,
Supervisor, Specialty Services

Appendices

Appendix 1 2025 Q2 Micro Dashboard – For Board and LAMs

Overall NT+ Service Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

Number of Passengers

89,414

Number of Trips

79,887

Number of Accessible Trips

12,988

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

928

Average Direct Distance (km)

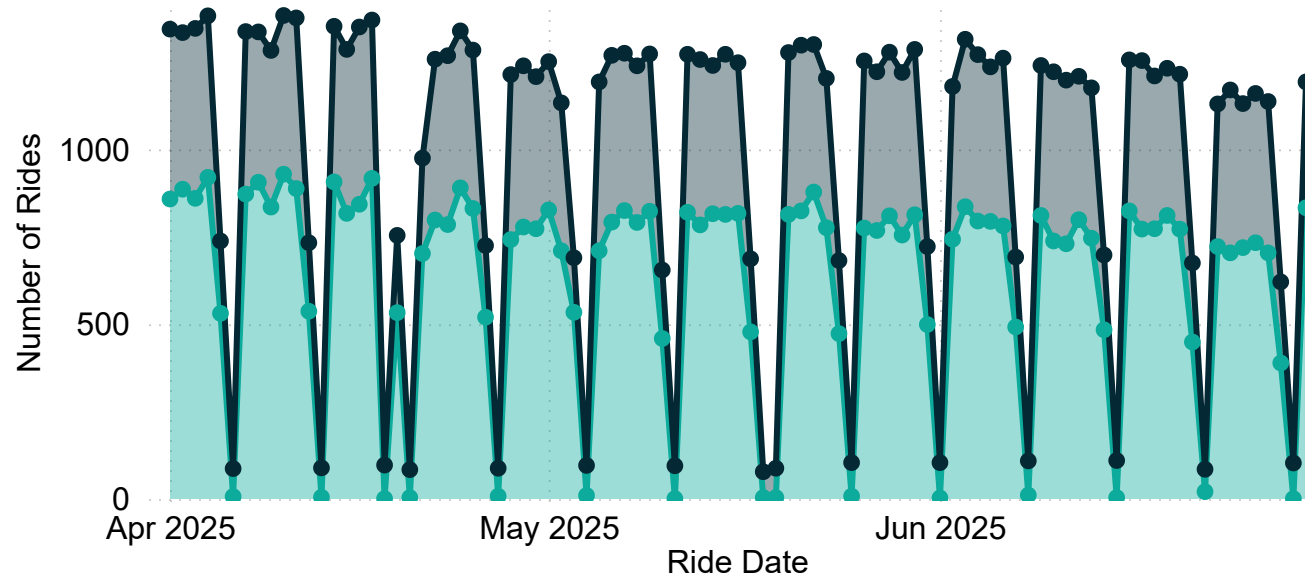
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Average Time On-Board (min)

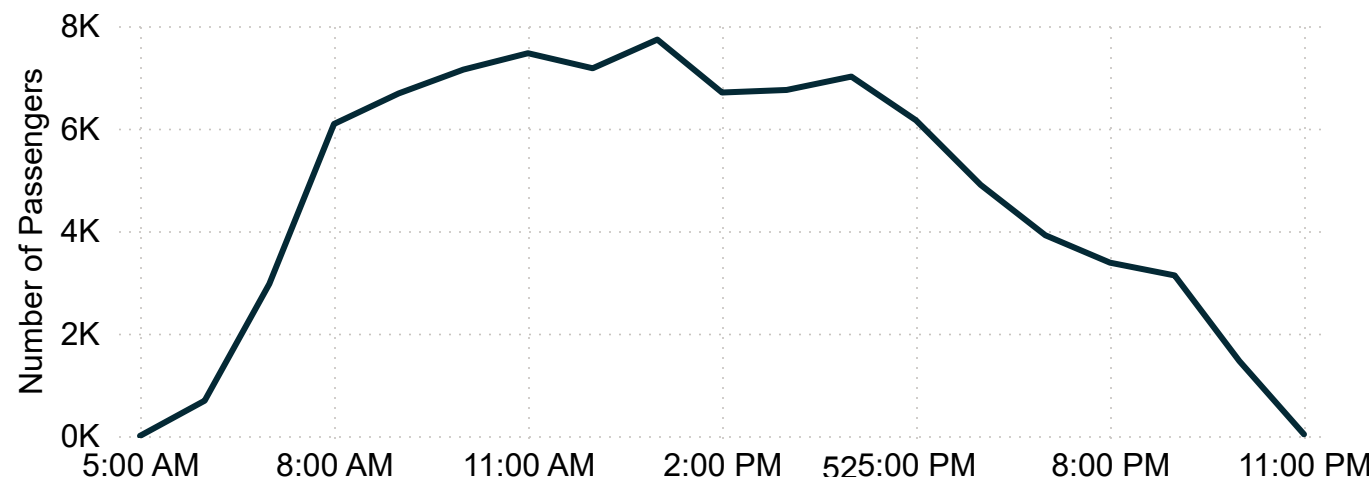
17.97

Daily Ridership

● Micro ● Specialized



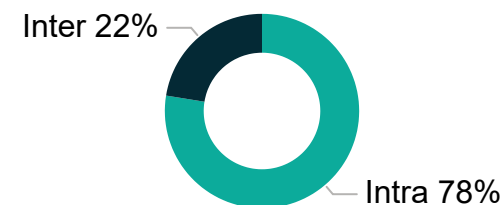
Peak Hours



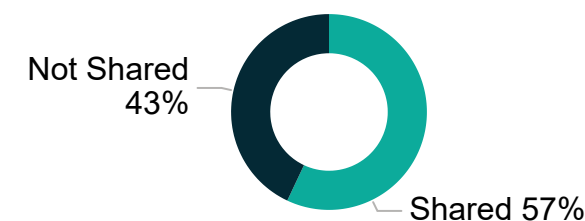
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	3081	13874	16955
App	29510	29501	59011
Subscription		3921	3921
Total	32591	47296	79887

Overall NT+ In-House Service Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

Number of Passengers

21,237

Number of Trips

18,023

Number of Accessible Trips

7,304

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

68

Average Direct Distance (km)

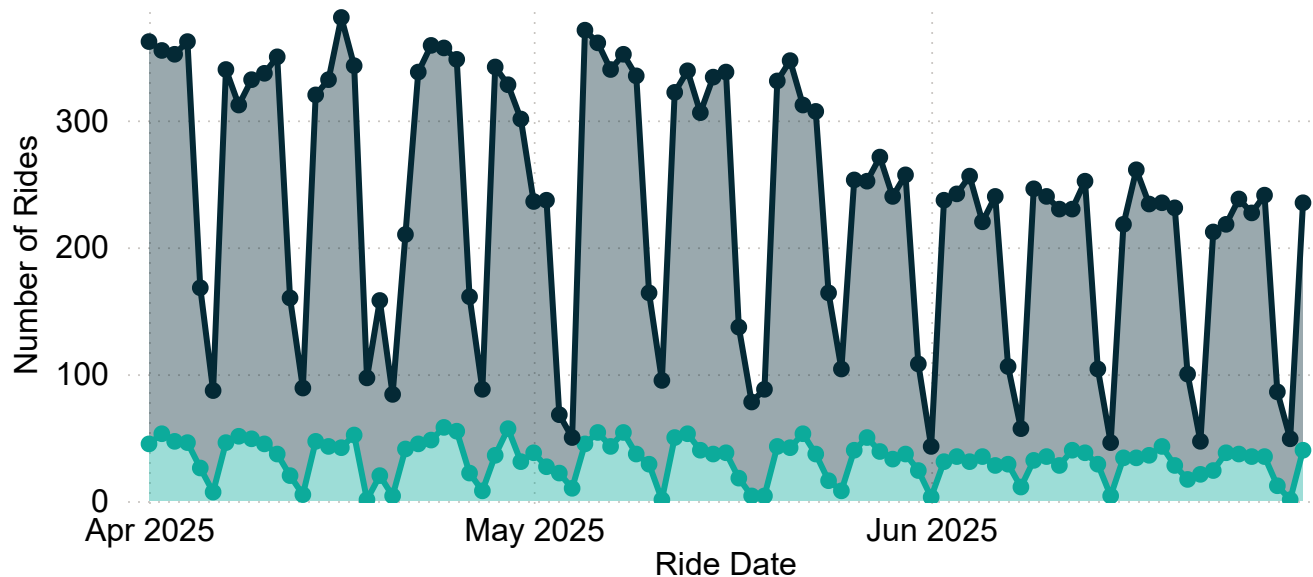
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Average Time On-Board (min)

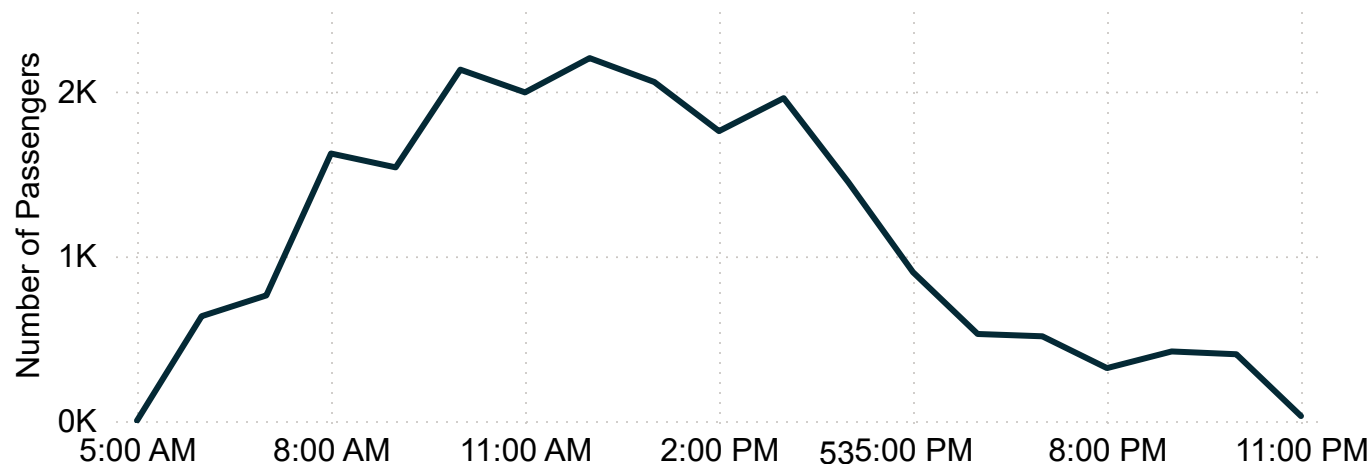
17.67

Daily Ridership

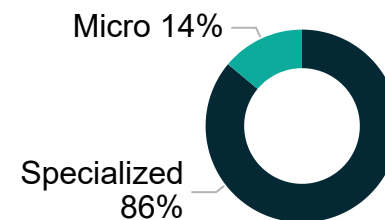
● Micro ● Specialized



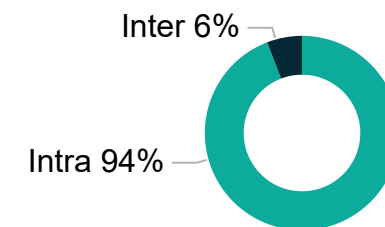
Peak Hours



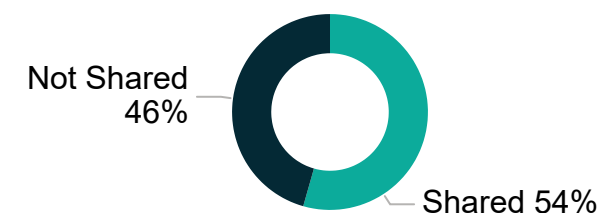
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	1005	7719	8724
App	2596	6138	8734
Subscription		565	565
Total	3601	14422	18023

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Niagara Falls

Number of Passengers

3,816

Number of Trips

3,311

Number of Accessible Trips

1,180

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

(Blank)

Average Direct Distance (km)

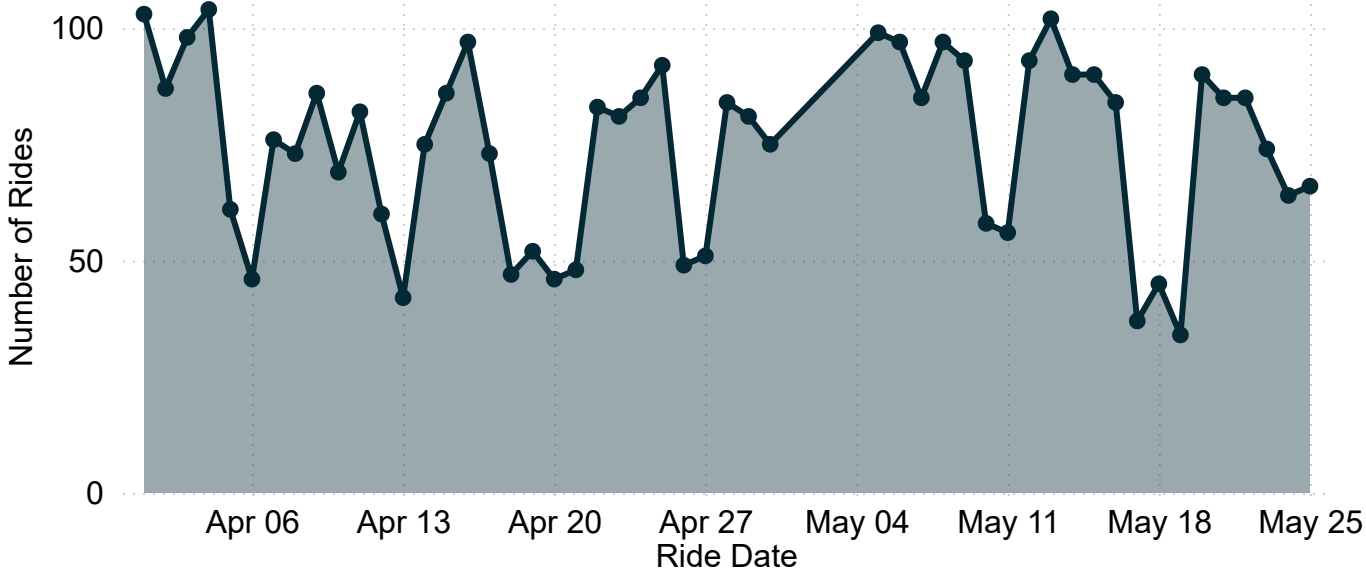
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Average Time On-Board (min)

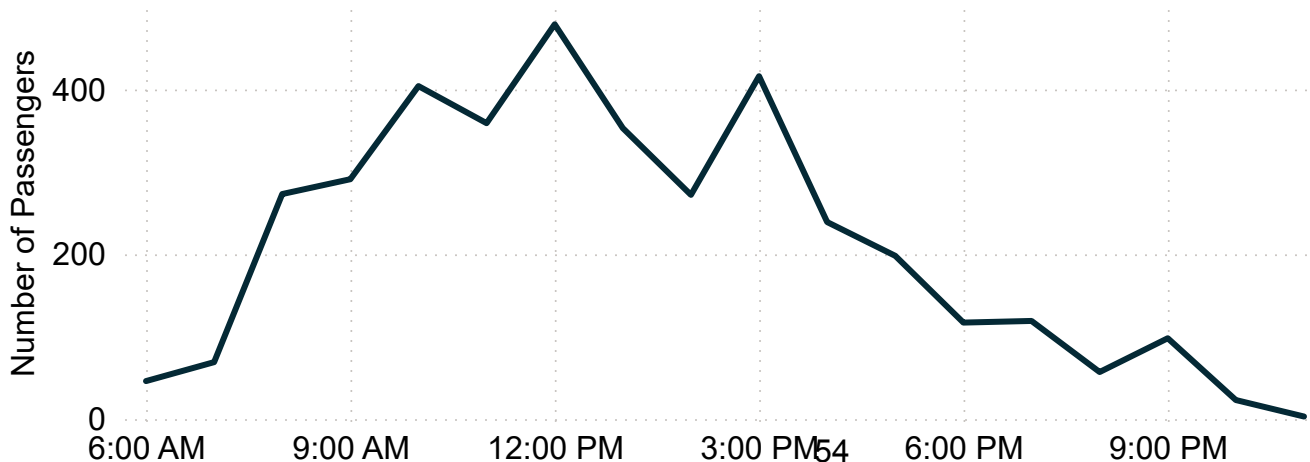
17.65

Daily Ridership

● Specialized



Peak Hours



Service Type

Specialized 100%



Trip Type

Intra 100%



Trip Utilization

Not Shared 49%

Shared 51%



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	281	1534	1815
App	344	587	931
Subscription		565	565
Total	625	2686	3311

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - St. Catharines

Number of Passengers

9,640

Number of Trips

7,795

Number of Accessible Trips

3,515

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

3

Average Direct Distance (km)

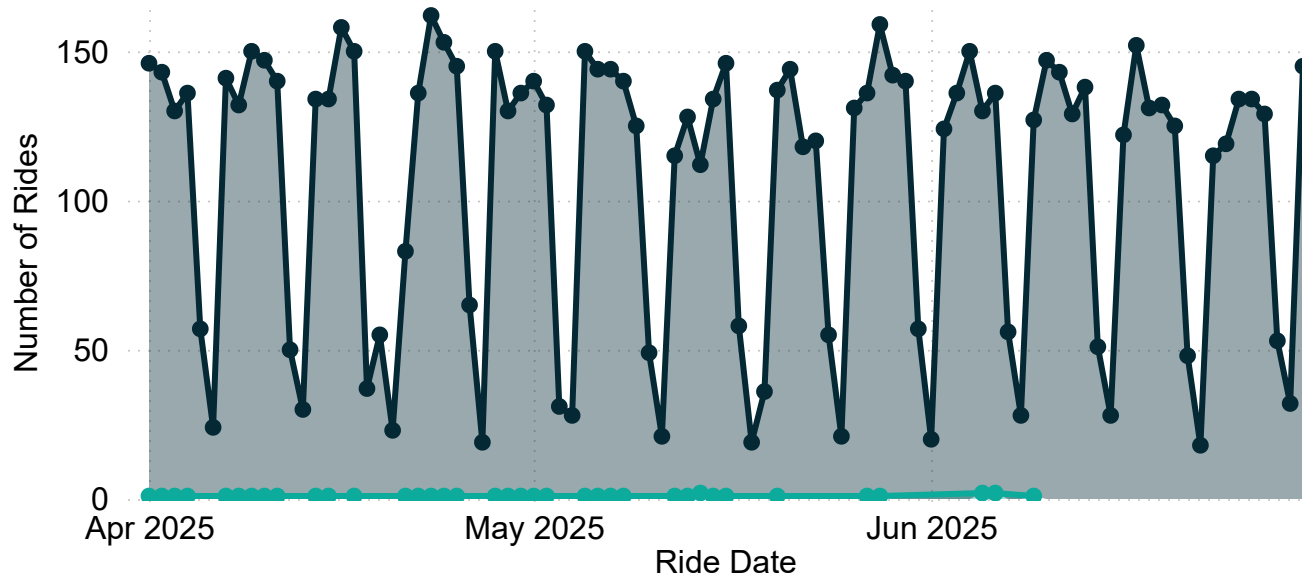
5.10

Average Time On-Board (min)

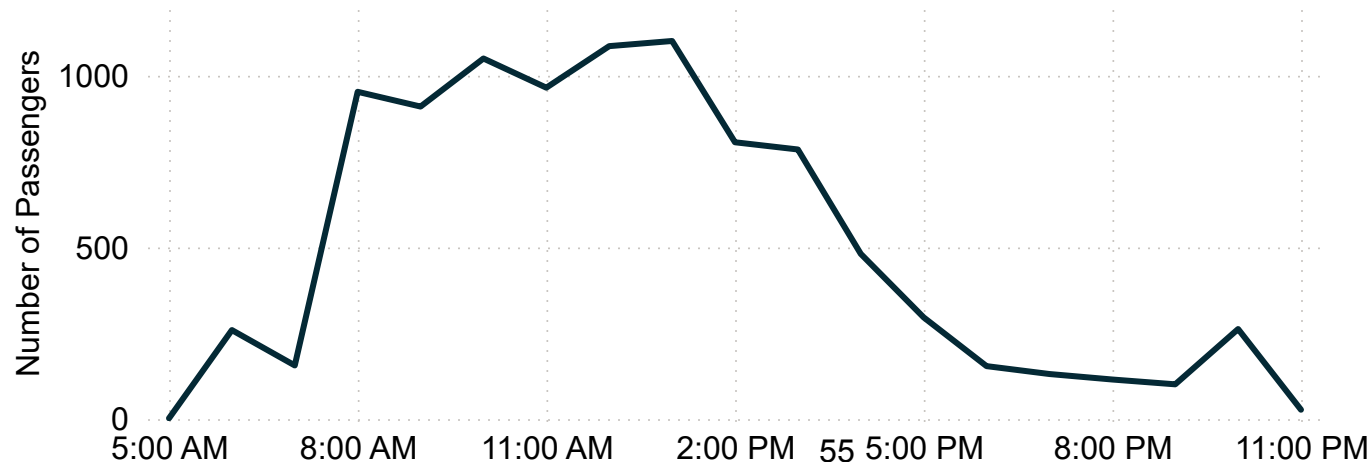
18.77

Daily Ridership

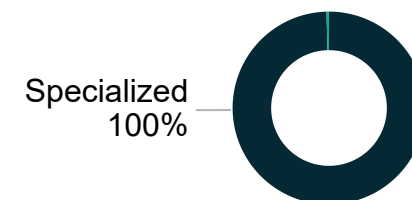
● Micro ● Specialized



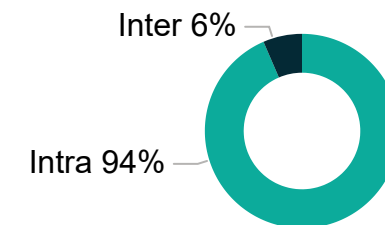
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	444	3555	3999
App	554	3242	3796
Total	998	6797	7795

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Thorold

Number of Passengers

649

Number of Trips

599

Number of Accessible Trips

399

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

(Blank)

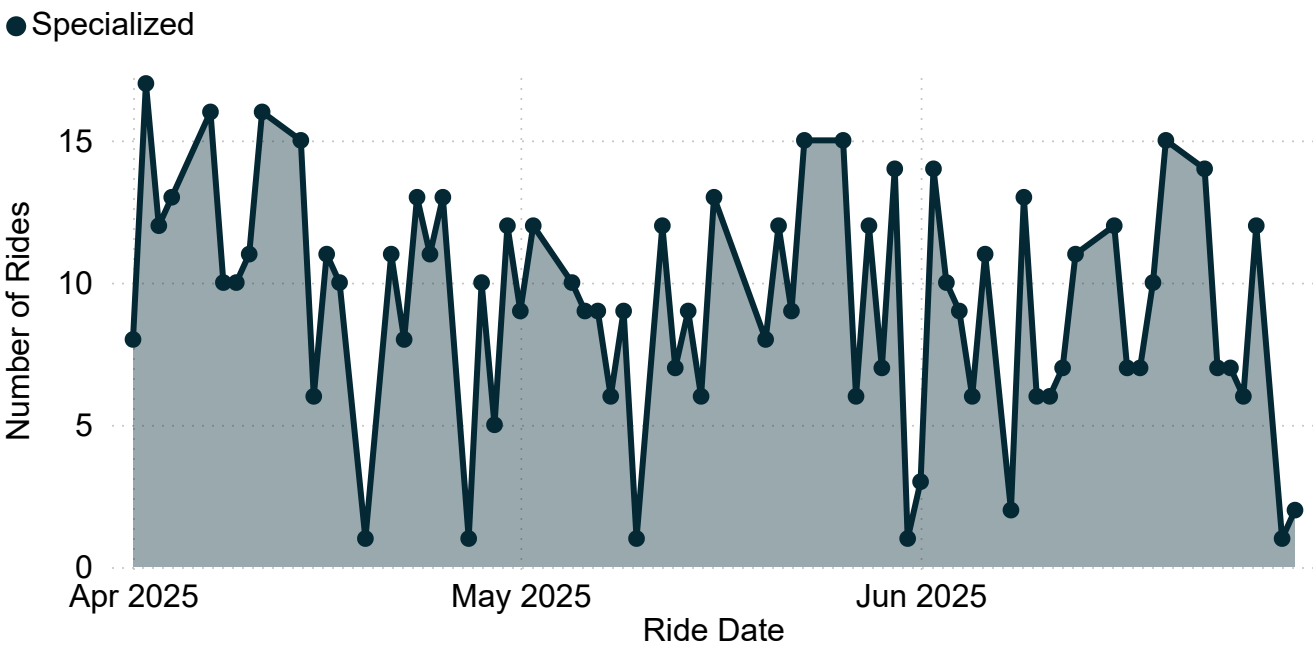
Average Direct Distance (km)

8.06

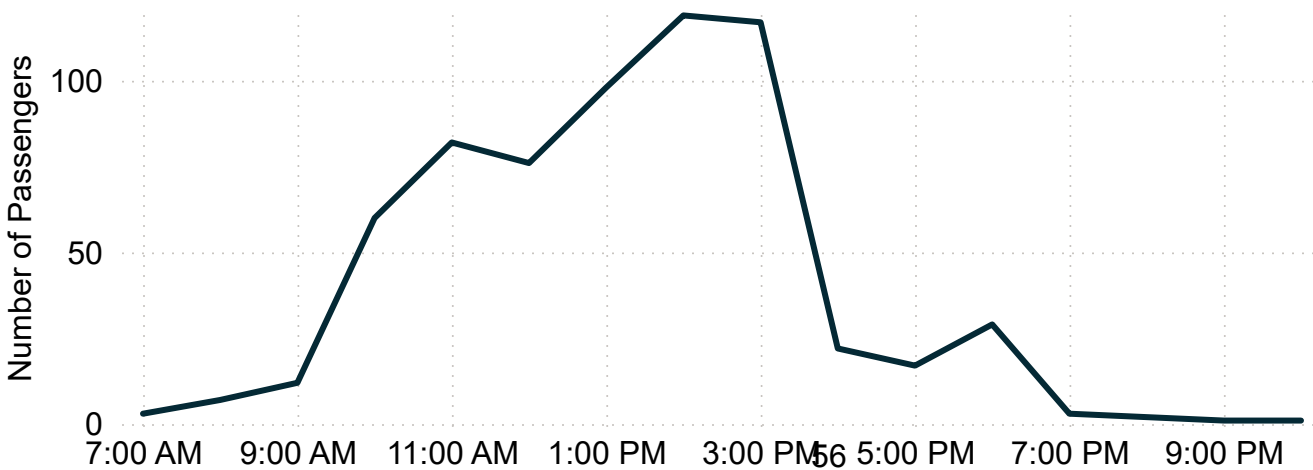
Average Time On-Board (min)

22.29

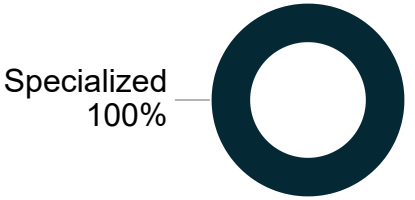
Daily Ridership



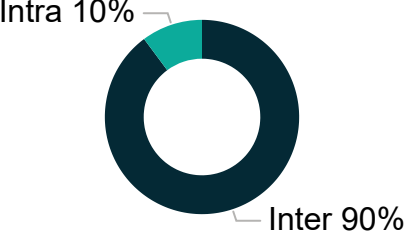
Peak Hours



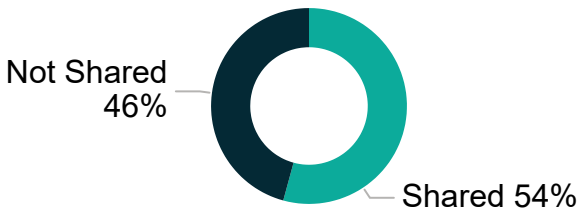
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	18	178	196
App	37	366	403
Total	55	544	599

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Welland

Number of Passengers

7,116

Number of Trips

6,309

Number of Accessible
Trips

2,206

Number of Micro Trips with
an Accessibility Device

65

Average Direct Distance
(km)

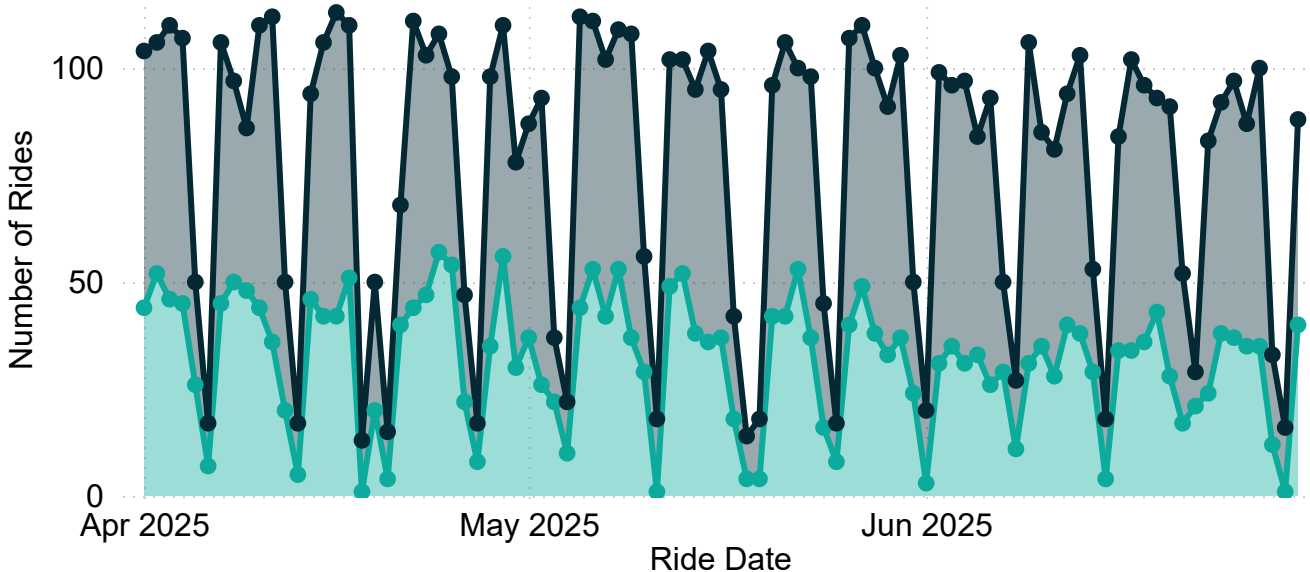
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Average Time On-Board
(min)

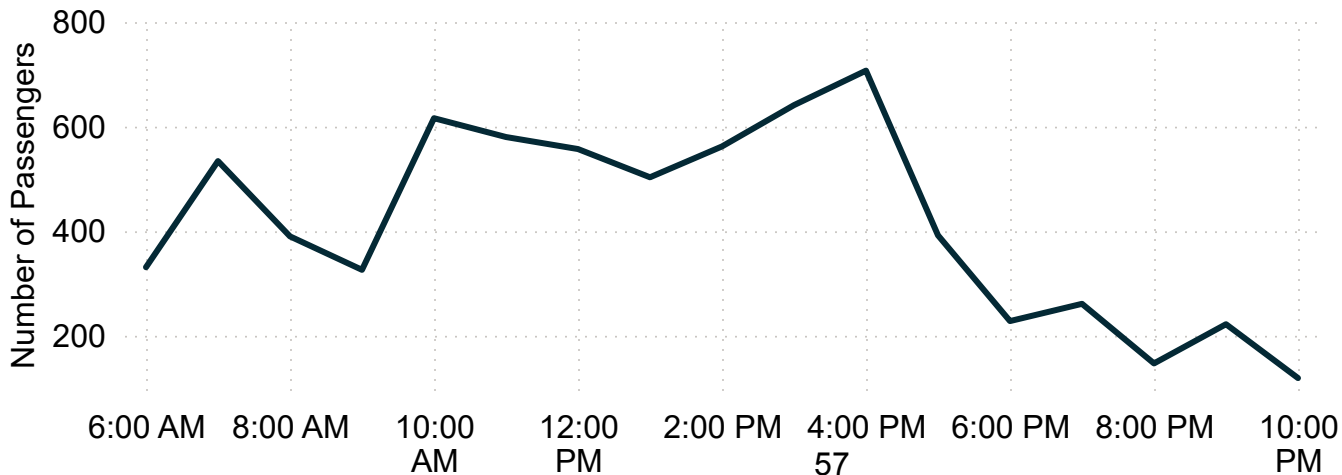
15.86

Daily Ridership

● Micro ● Specialized



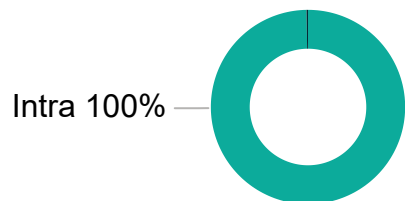
Peak Hours



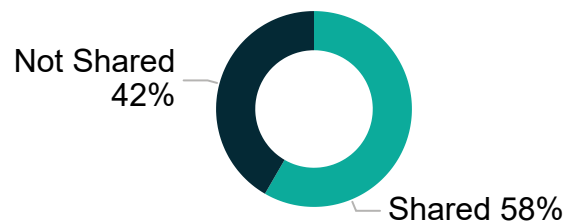
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	262	2449	2711
App	1661	1937	3598
Total	1923	4386	6309

Overall NT+ (Contract) Voyago Service Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

Number of Passengers

65,171

Number of Trips

59,223

Number of Accessible Trips

4,766

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

860

Average Direct Distance (km)

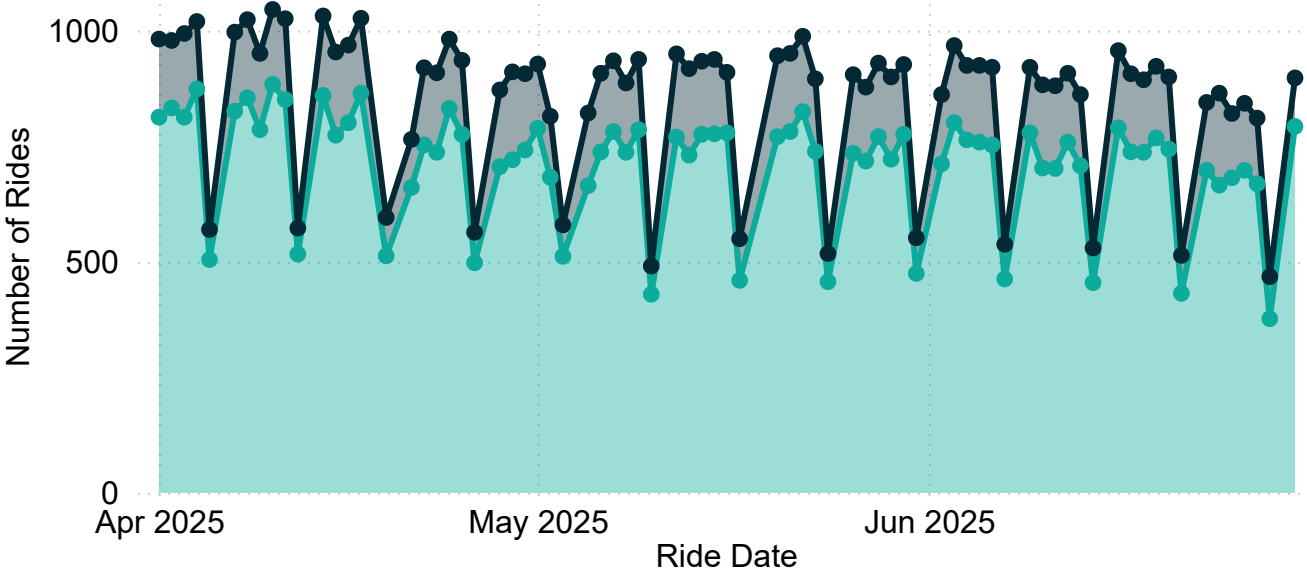
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Average Time On-Board (min)

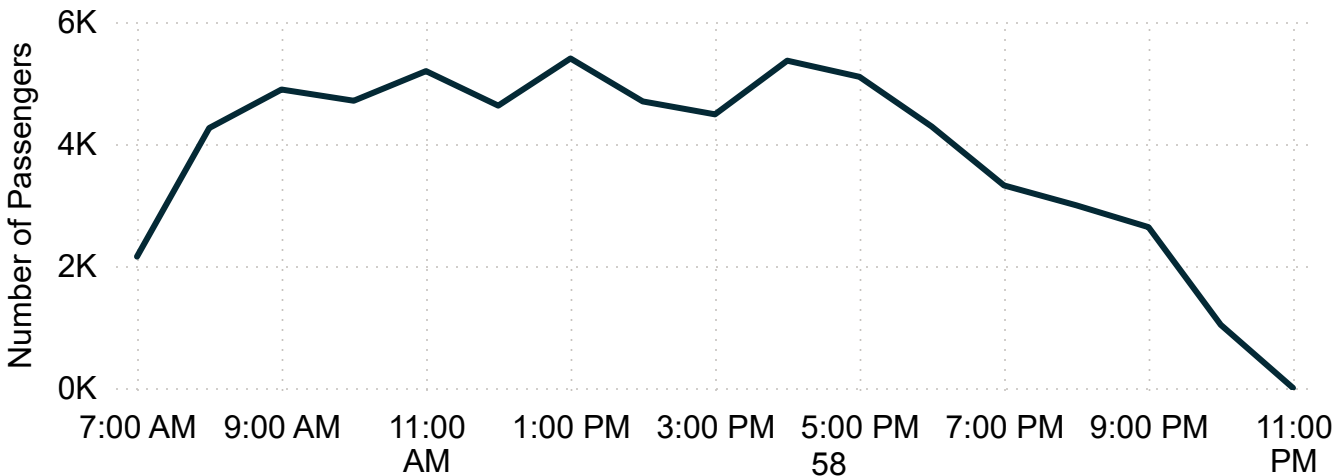
18.13

Daily Ridership

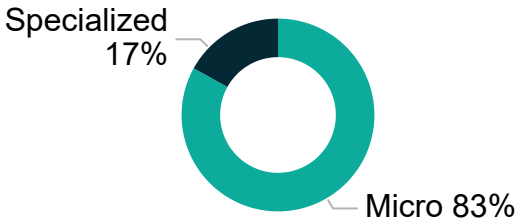
● Micro ● Specialized



Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	1775	4988	6763
App	26558	22960	49518
Subscription		2942	2942
Total	28333	30890	59223

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Fort Erie

Number of Passengers

24,406

Number of Trips

21,314

Number of Accessible
Trips

1,042

Number of Micro Trips with
an Accessibility Device

409

Average Direct Distance
(km)

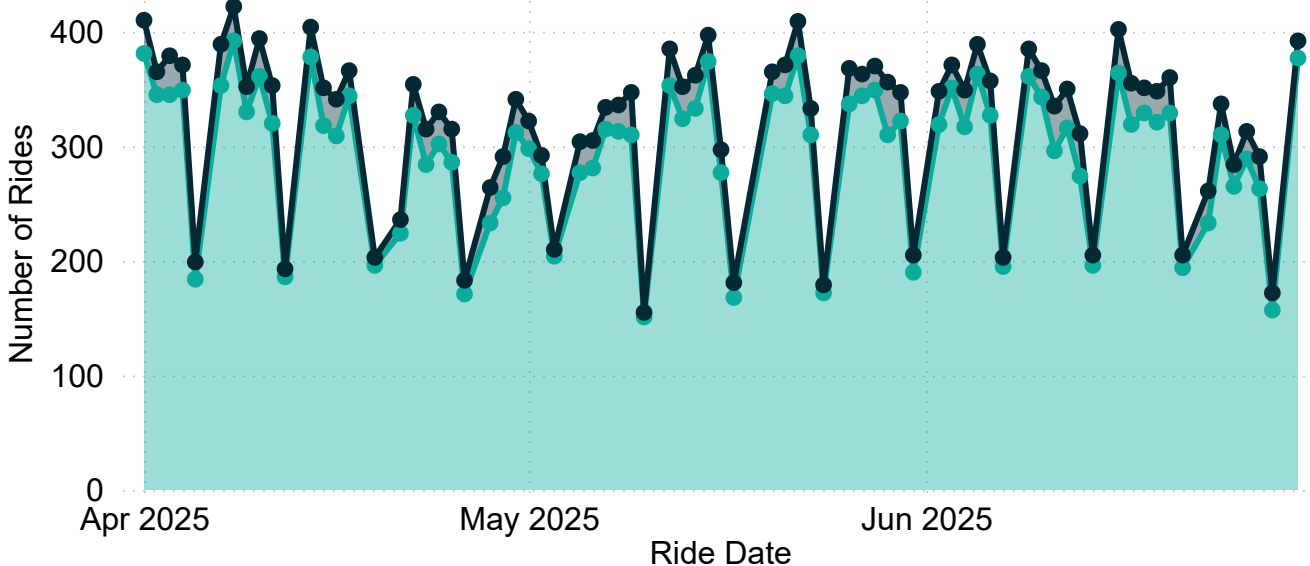
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Average Time On-Board
(min)

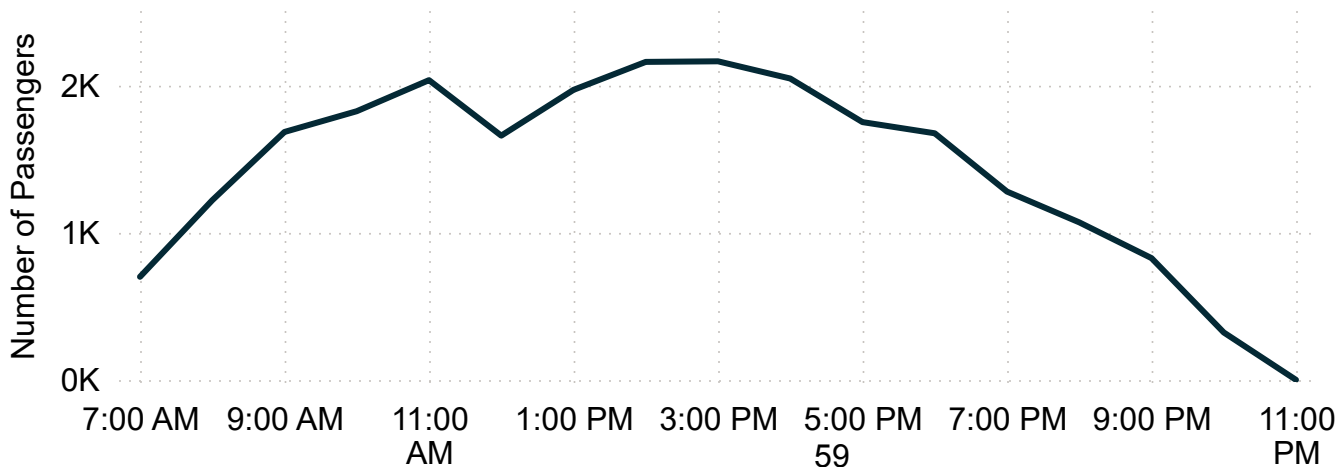
14.34

Daily Ridership

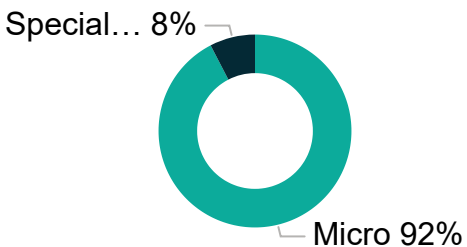
● Micro ● Specialized



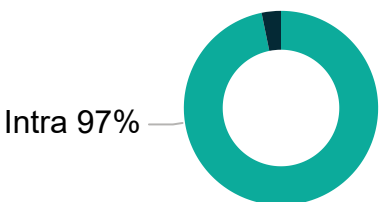
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	1027	1250	2277
App	12131	6334	18465
Subscription		572	572
Total	13158	8156	21314

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Grimsby

Number of Passengers

6,255

Number of Trips

5,910

Number of Accessible Trips

186

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

108

Average Direct Distance (km)

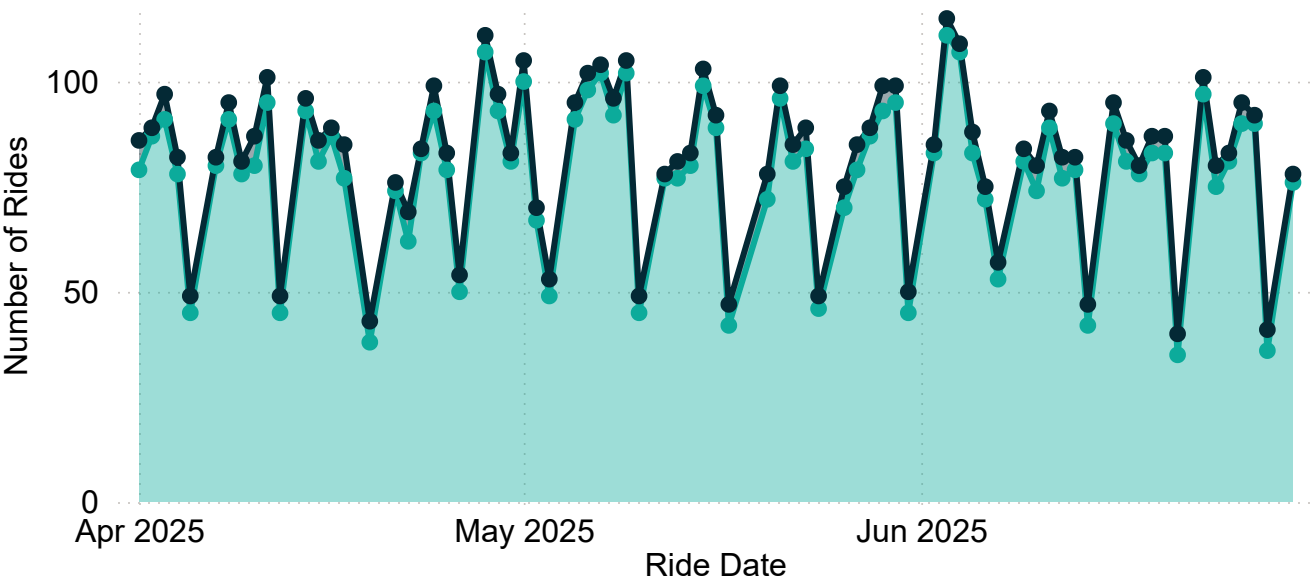
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Average Time On-Board (min)

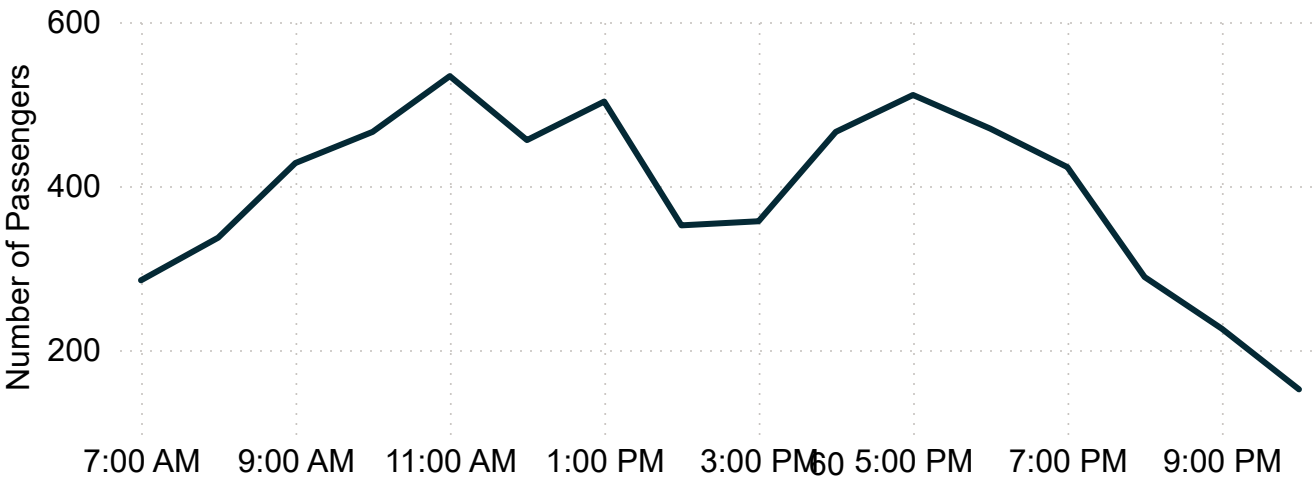
15.89

Daily Ridership

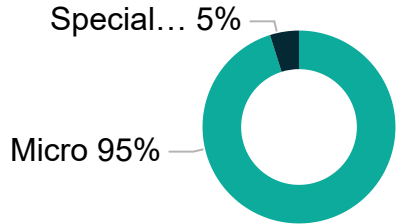
Micro Specialized



Peak Hours



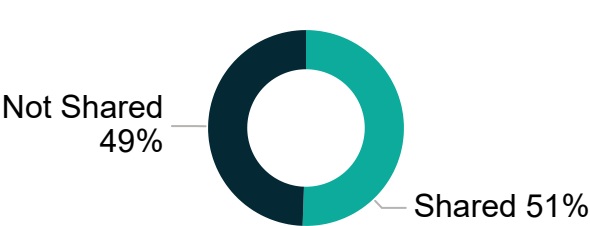
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	138	229	367
App	2510	2859	5369
Subscription		174	174
Total	2648	3262	5910

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Lincoln

Number of Passengers

5,856

Number of Trips

5,520

Number of Accessible Trips

241

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

117

Average Direct Distance (km)

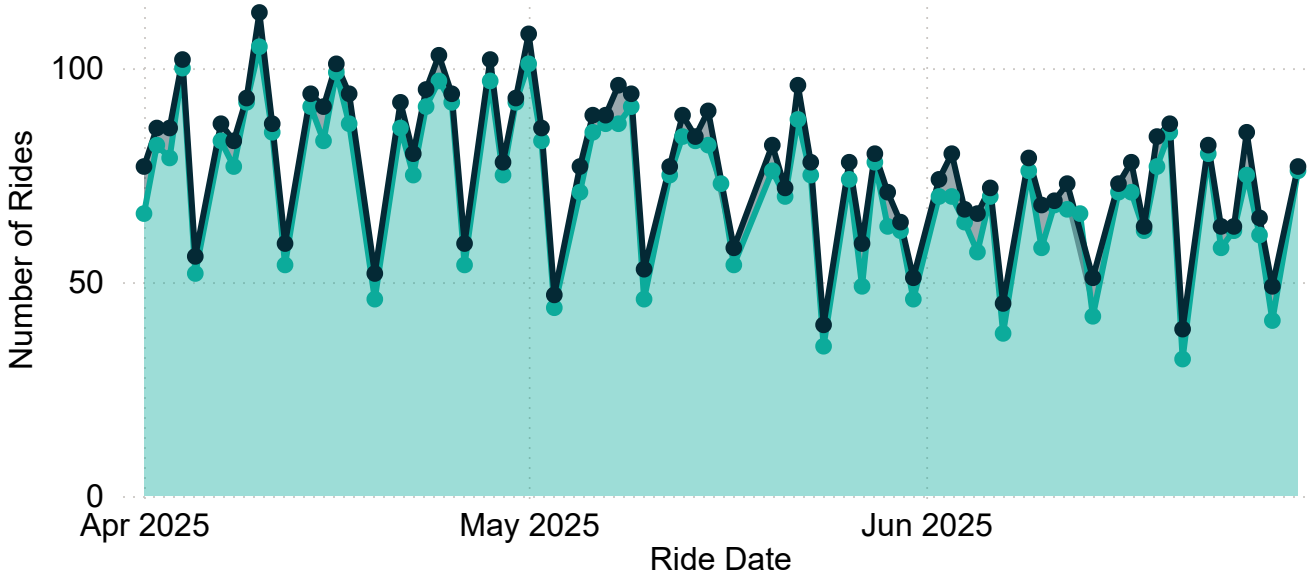
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Average Time On-Board (min)

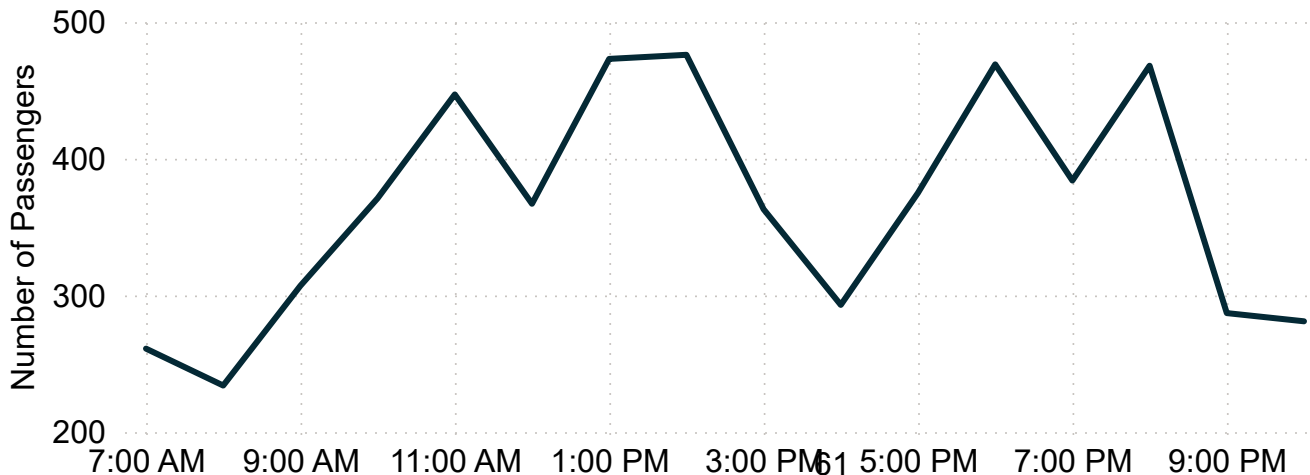
18.29

Daily Ridership

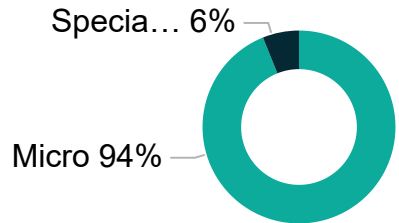
● Micro ● Specialized



Peak Hours



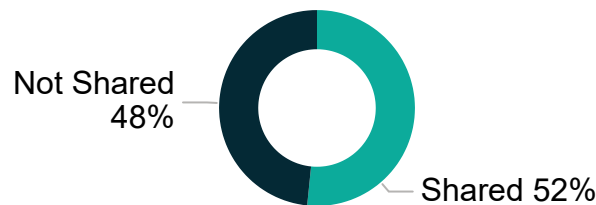
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	89	219	308
App	2390	2704	5094
Subscription		118	118
Total	2479	3041	5520

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Niagara Falls

Number of Passengers

2,125

Number of Trips

1,859

Number of Accessible Trips

724

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

2

Average Direct Distance (km)

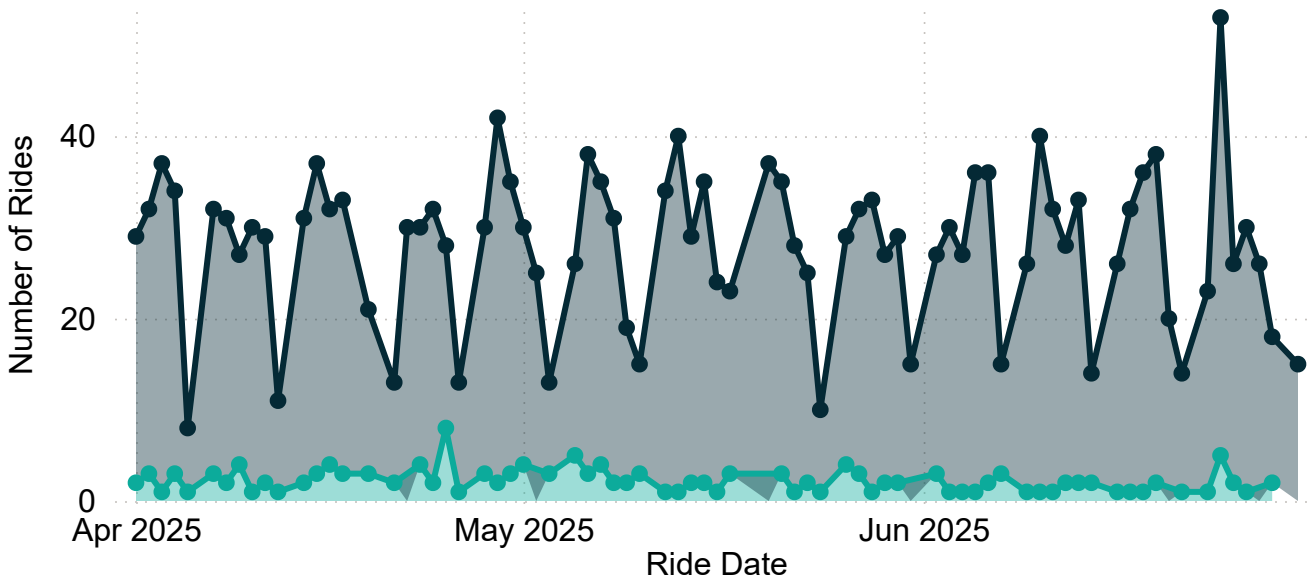
21.41

Average Time On-Board (min)

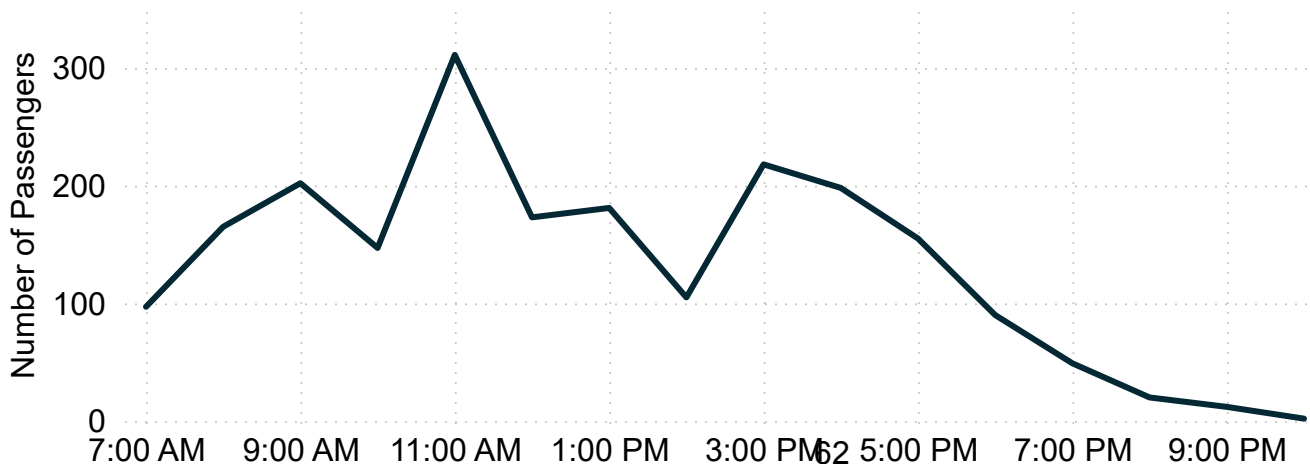
34.16

Daily Ridership

● Micro ● Specialized



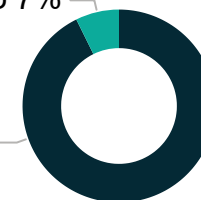
Peak Hours



Service Type

Micro 7%

Specialized 93%



Trip Type

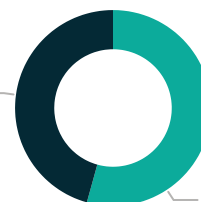
Inter 100%



Trip Utilization

Not Shared 46%

Shared 54%



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	23	766	789
App	112	478	590
Subscription		480	480
Total	135	1724	1859

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Niagara-on-the-Lake

Number of Passengers

12,212

Number of Trips

11,536

Number of Accessible Trips

242

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

132

Average Direct Distance (km)

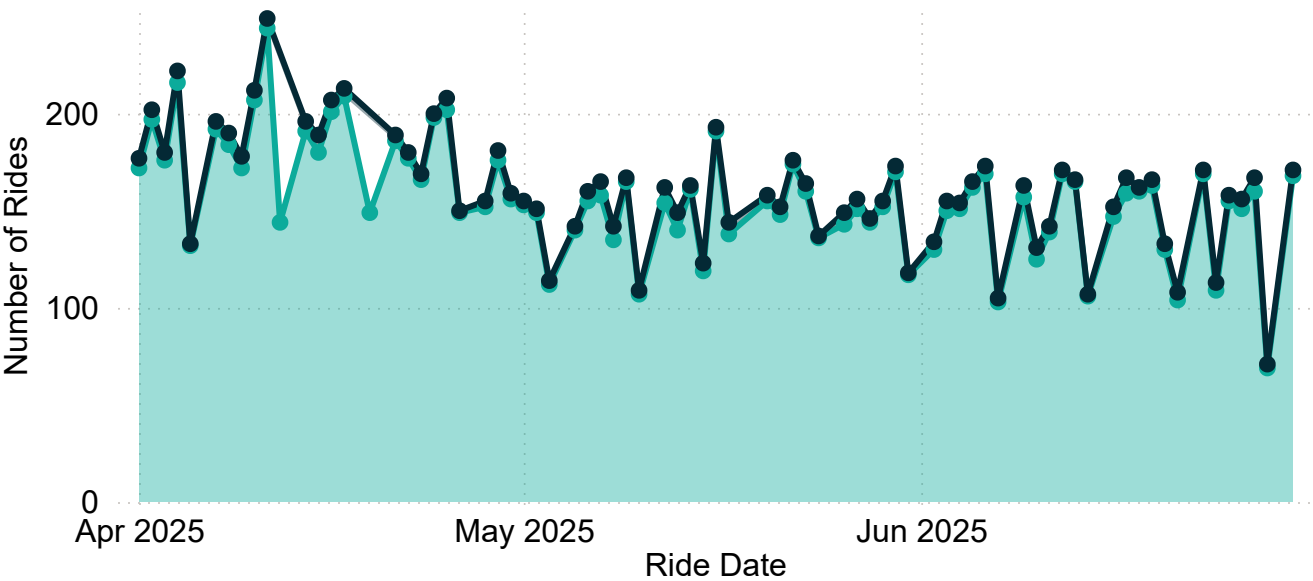
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Average Time On-Board (min)

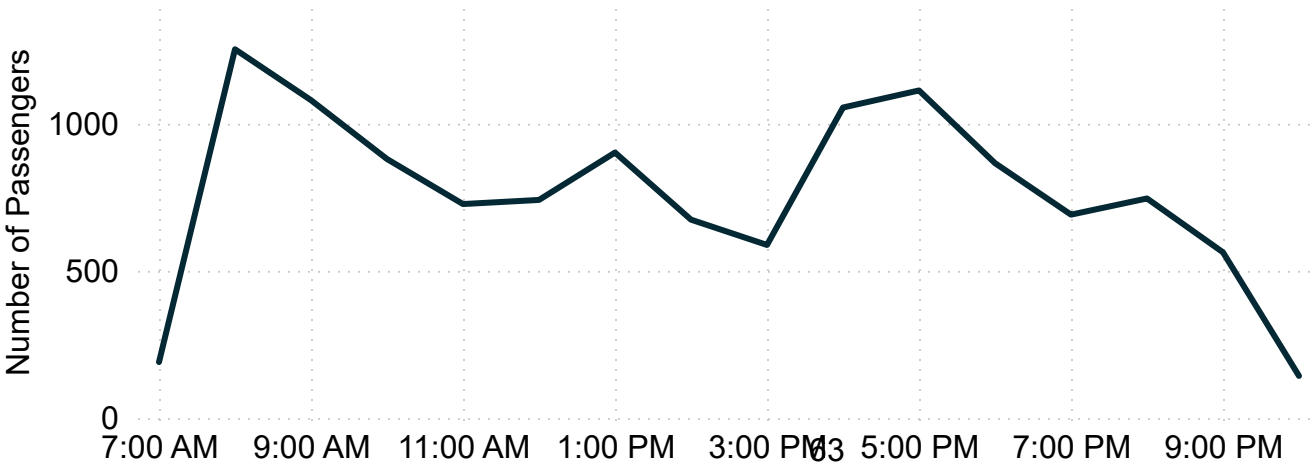
17.80

Daily Ridership

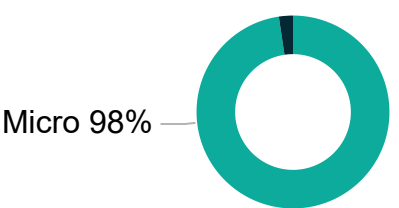
Micro Specialized



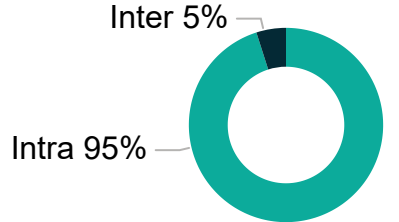
Peak Hours



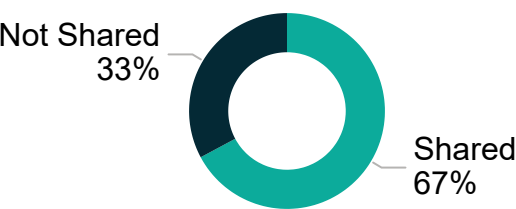
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	110	164	274
App	6100	5081	11181
Subscription		81	81
Total	6210	5326	11536

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Pelham

Number of Passengers

1,458

Number of Trips

1,400

Number of Accessible Trips

214

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

51

Average Direct Distance (km)

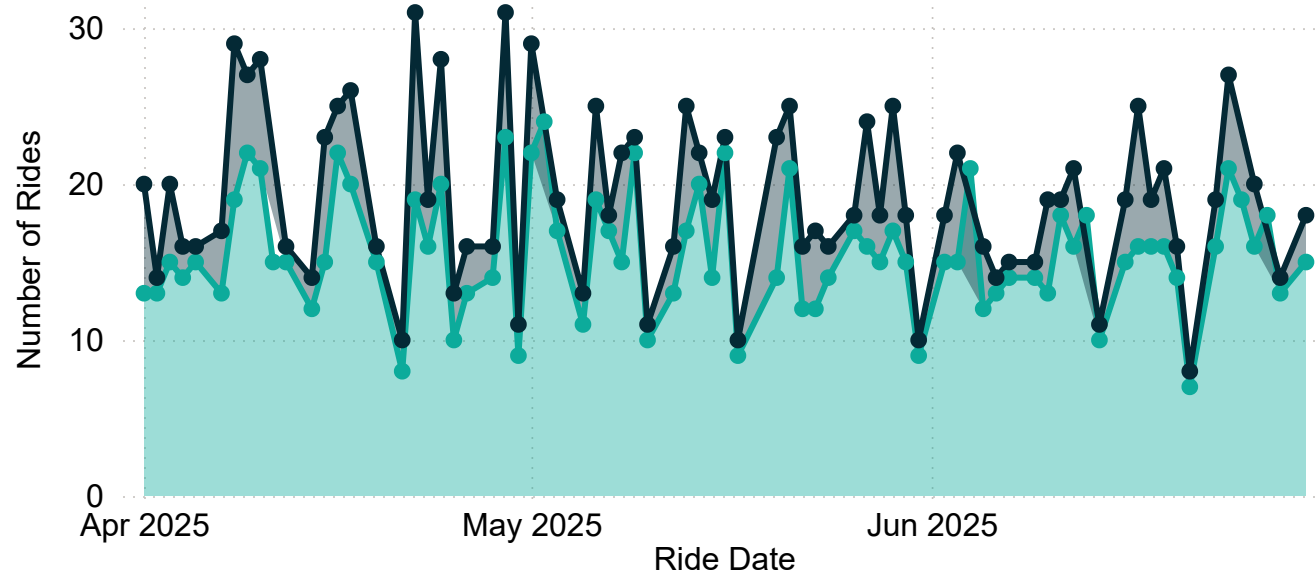
12.25

Average Time On-Board (min)

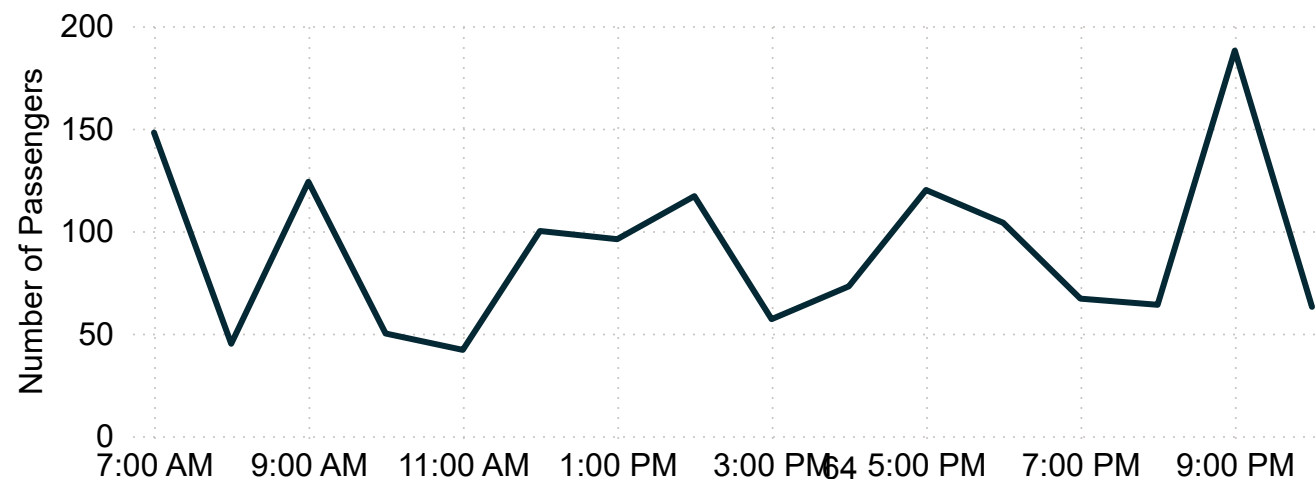
19.27

Daily Ridership

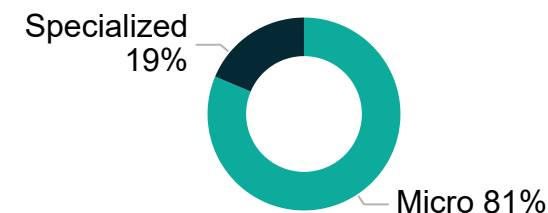
● Micro ● Specialized



Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Subscription		126	126
App	480	579	1059
Agent	36	179	215
Total	516	884	1400

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Port Colborne

Number of Passengers

3,976

Number of Trips

3,546

Number of Accessible Trips

190

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

21

Average Direct Distance (km)

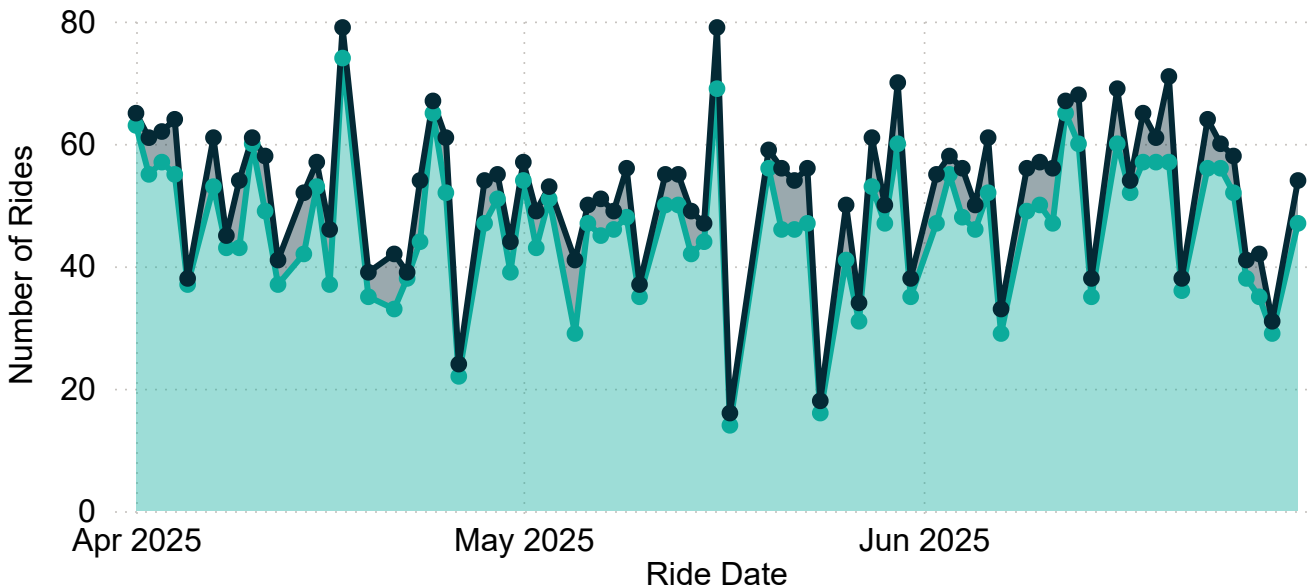
6.05

Average Time On-Board (min)

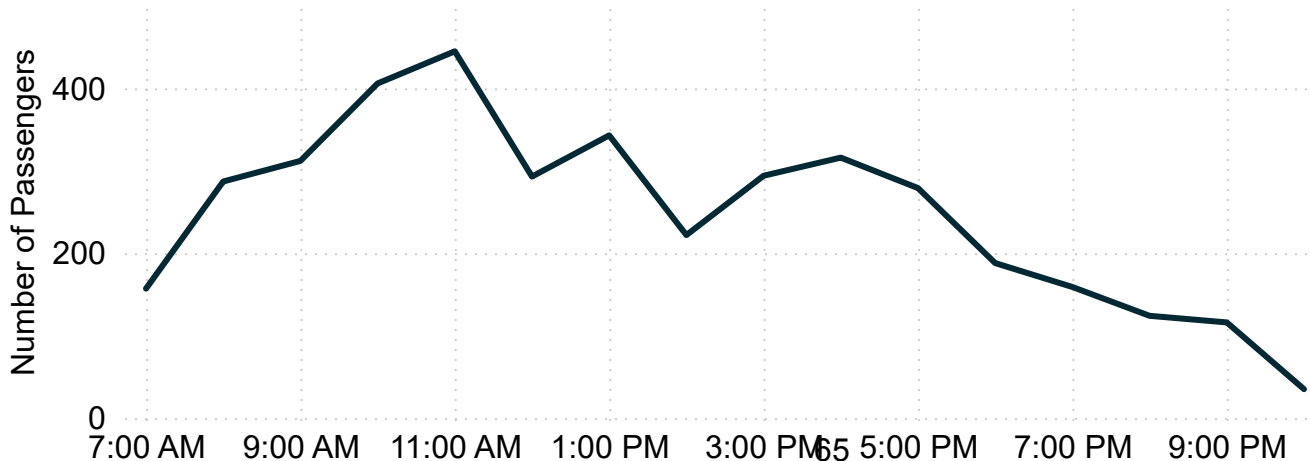
11.43

Daily Ridership

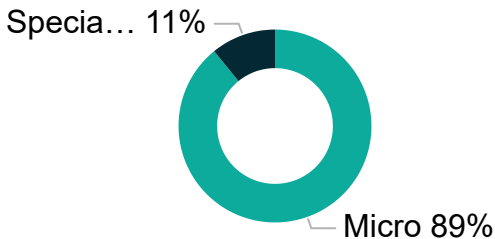
● Micro ● Specialized



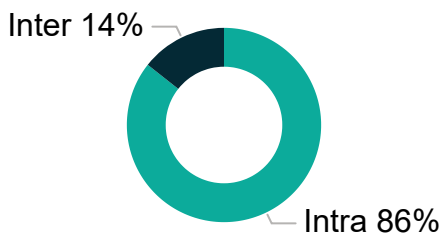
Peak Hours



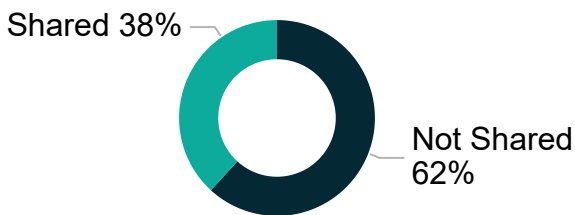
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	193	317	510
App	1976	817	2793
Subscription		243	243
Total	2169	1377	3546

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - St. Catharines

Number of Passengers

4,250

Number of Trips

3,947

Number of Accessible Trips

750

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

9

Average Direct Distance (km)

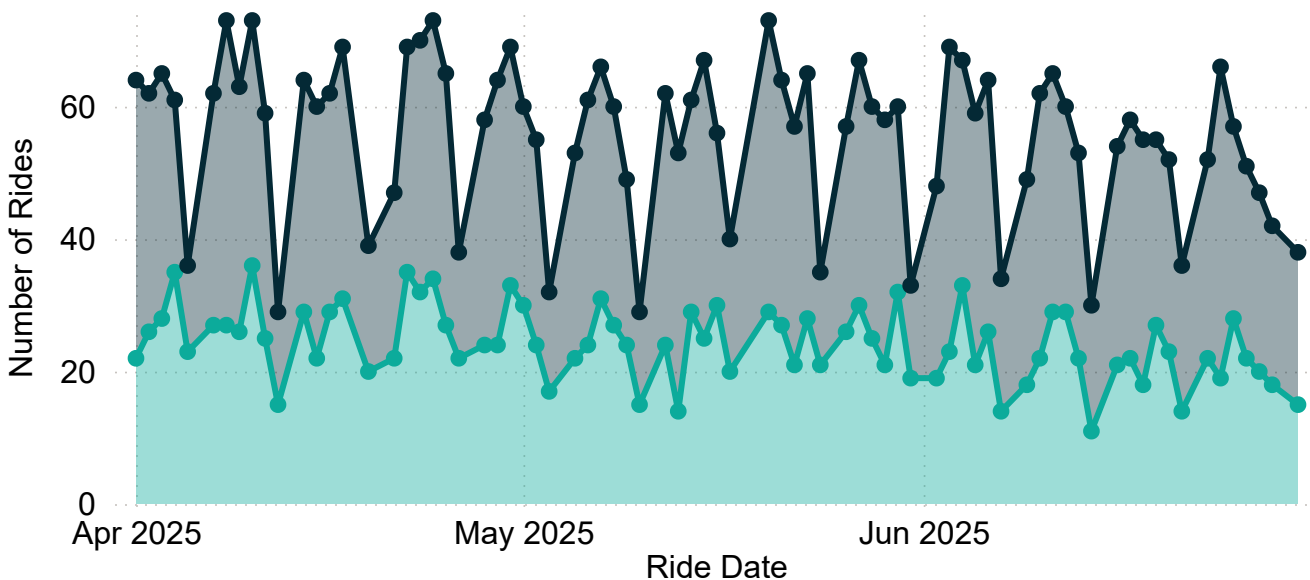
21.67

Average Time On-Board (min)

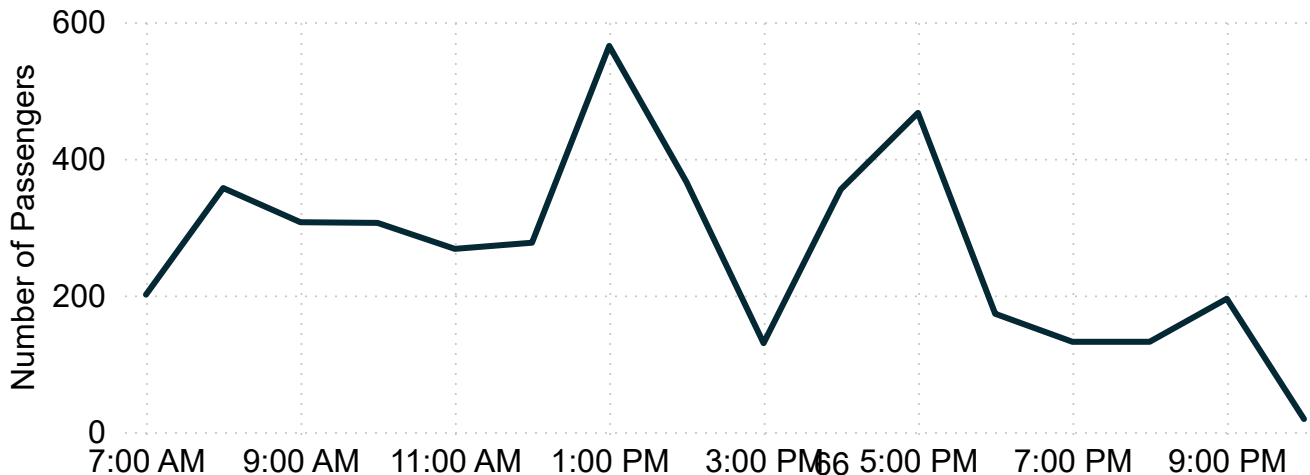
29.75

Daily Ridership

● Micro ● Specialized



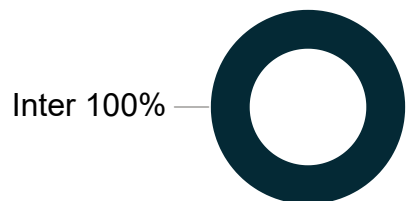
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	82	791	873
App	412	2205	2617
Subscription		457	457
Total	494	3453	3947

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Thorold

Number of Passengers

1,187

Number of Trips

1,002

Number of Accessible
Trips

432

Number of Micro Trips with
an Accessibility Device

(Blank)

Average Direct Distance
(km)

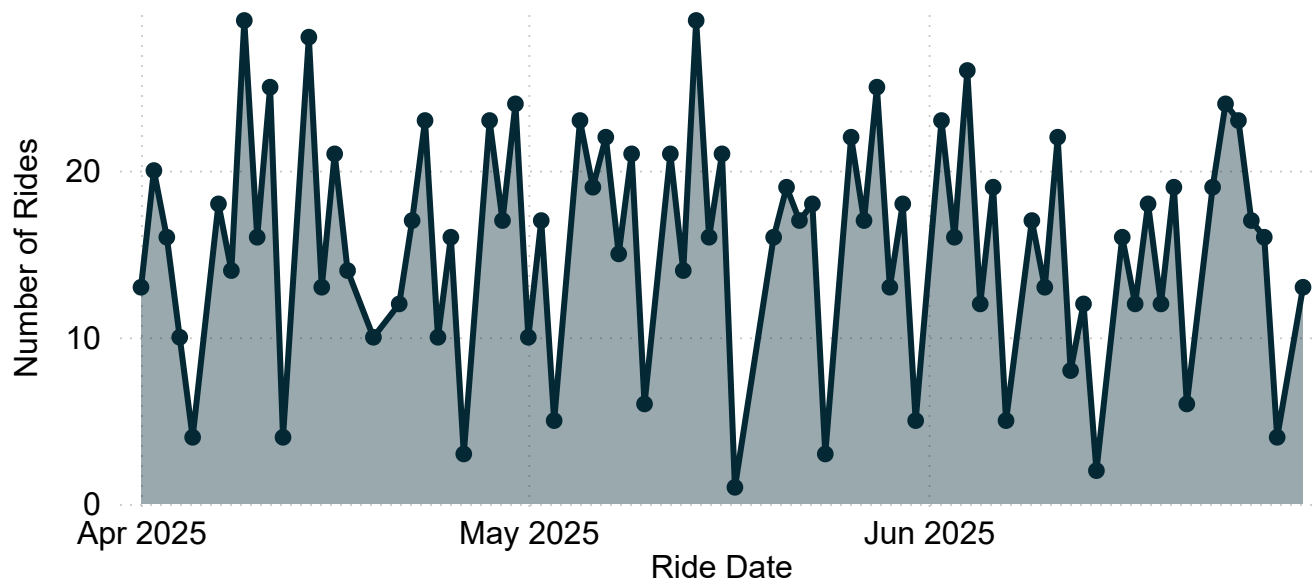
11.15

Average Time On-Board
(min)

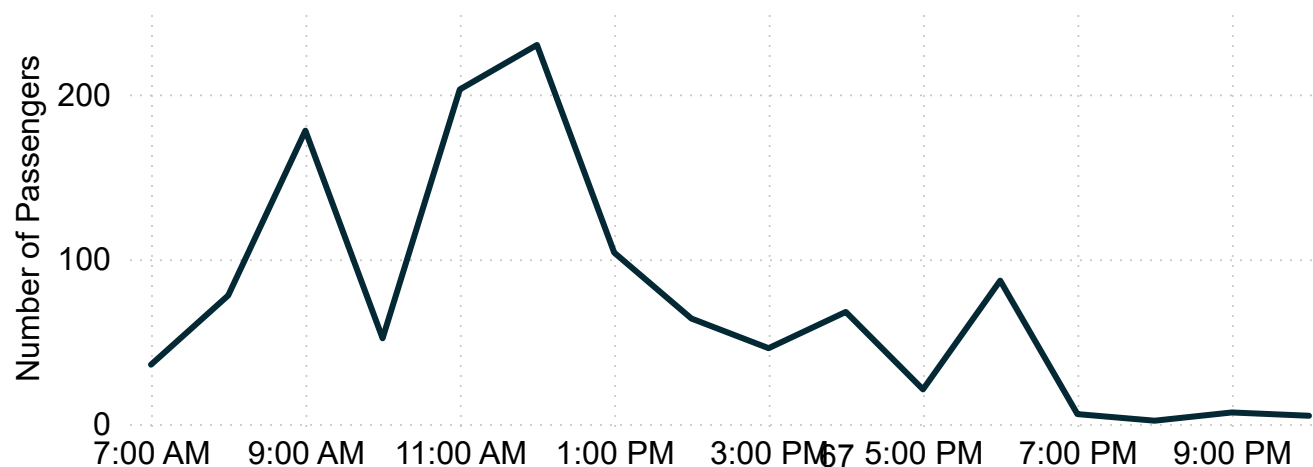
21.65

Daily Ridership

● Specialized



Peak Hours



Service Type

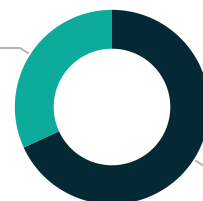
Specialized
100%



Trip Type

Intra 32%

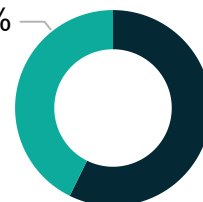
Inter 68%



Trip Utilization

Shared 43%

Not Shared
57%



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	31	356	387
App	12	458	470
Subscription		145	145
Total	43	959	1002

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Wainfleet

Number of Passengers

213

Number of Trips

203

Number of Accessible Trips

37

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

1

Average Direct Distance (km)

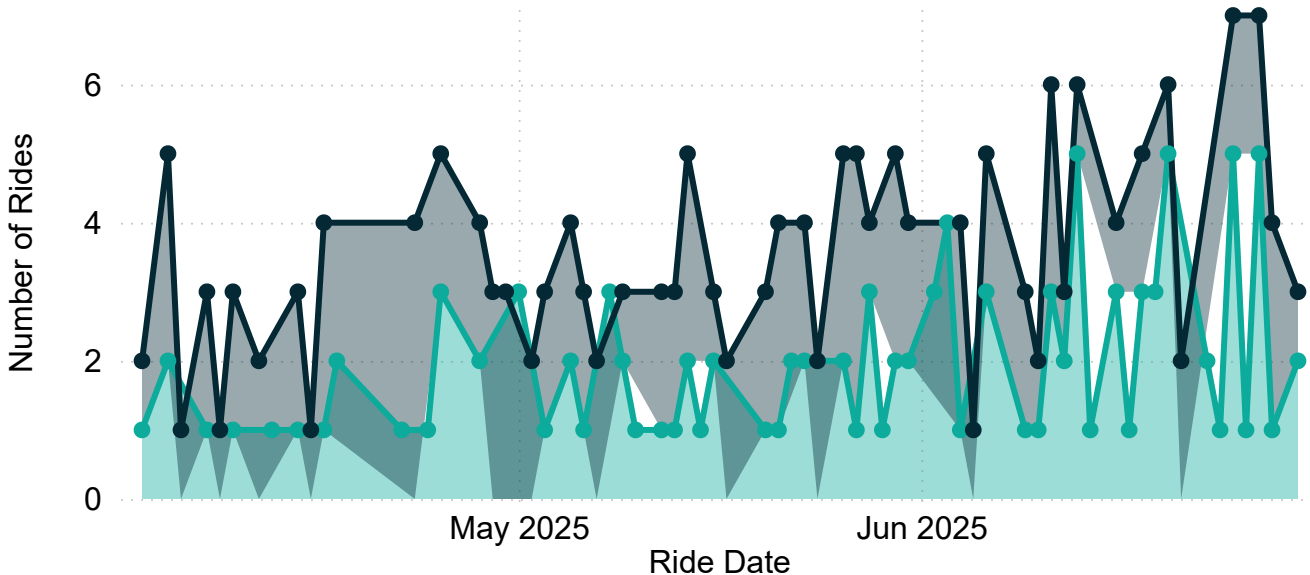
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Average Time On-Board (min)

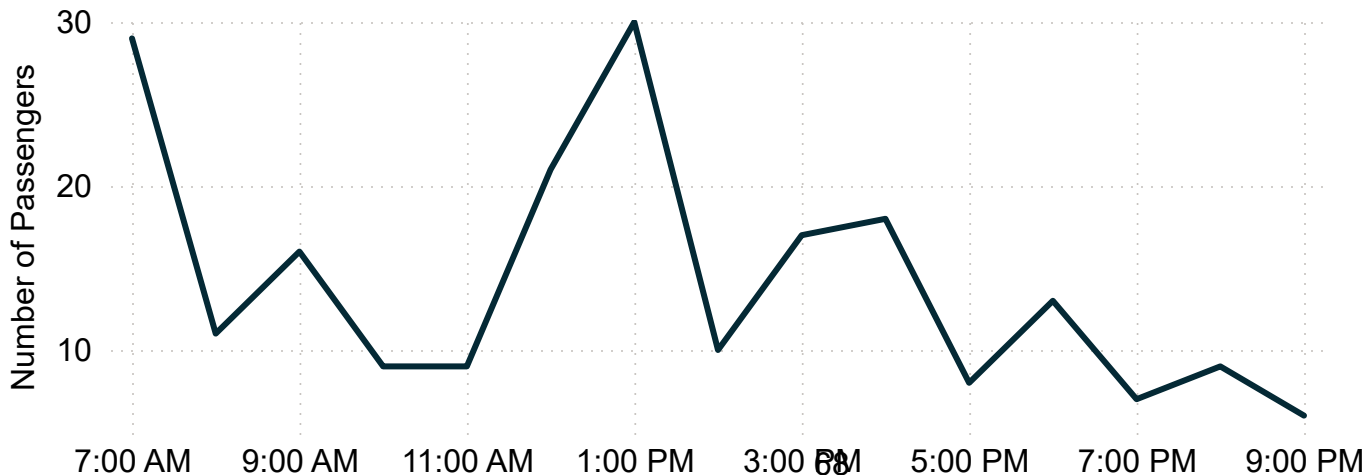
27.63

Daily Ridership

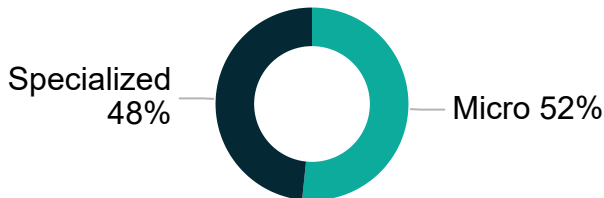
● Micro ● Specialized



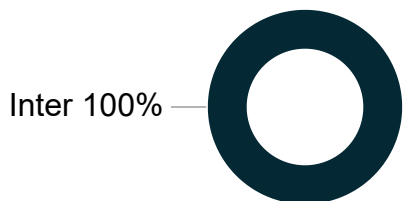
Peak Hours



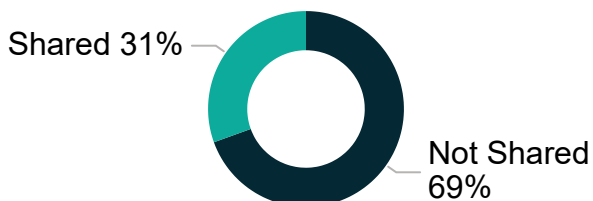
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	3	48	51
App	26	123	149
Subscription		3	3
Total	29	174	203

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Welland

Number of Passengers

2,482

Number of Trips

2,284

Number of Accessible
Trips

690

Number of Micro Trips with
an Accessibility Device

4

Average Direct Distance
(km)

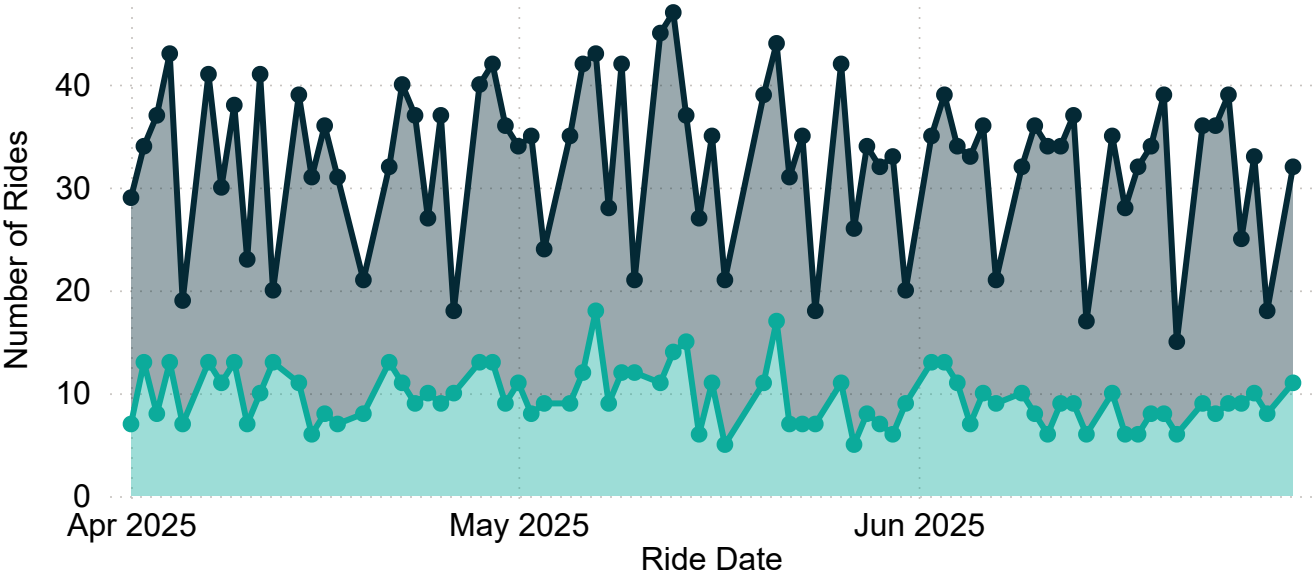
20.58

Average Time On-Board
(min)

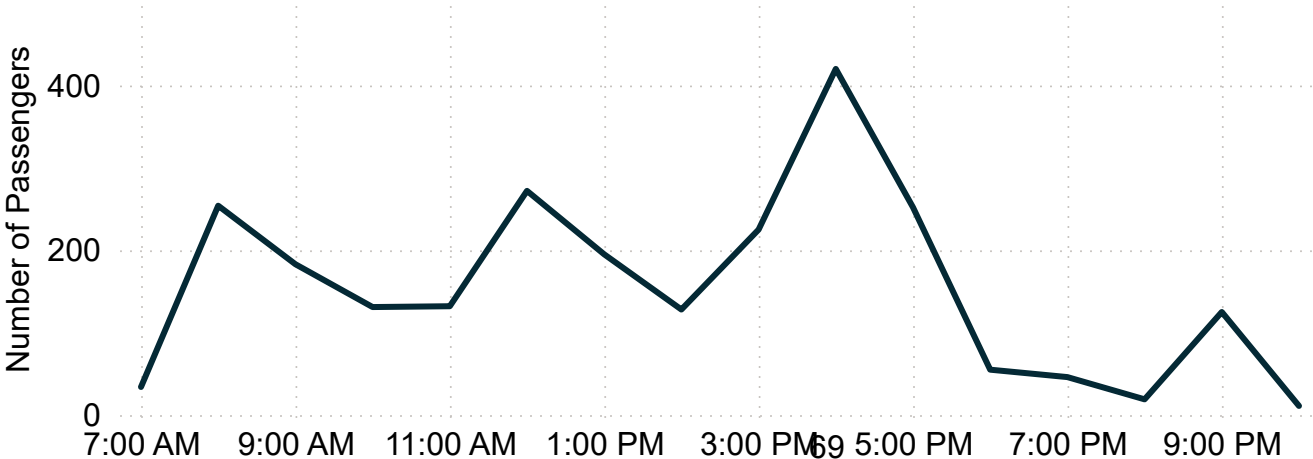
31.18

Daily Ridership

● Micro ● Specialized



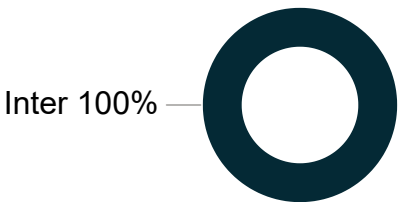
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	30	601	631
App	250	860	1110
Subscription		543	543
Total	280	2004	2284

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - West Lincoln

Number of Passengers

715

Number of Trips

675

Number of Accessible Trips

8

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

6

Average Direct Distance (km)

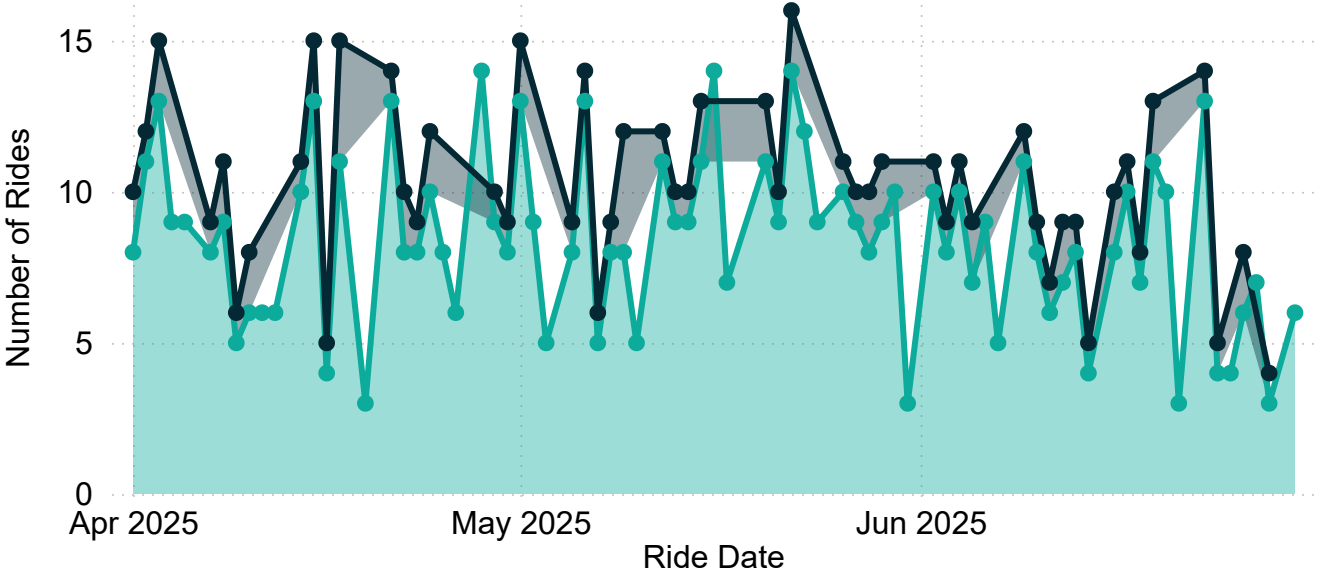
23.63

Average Time On-Board (min)

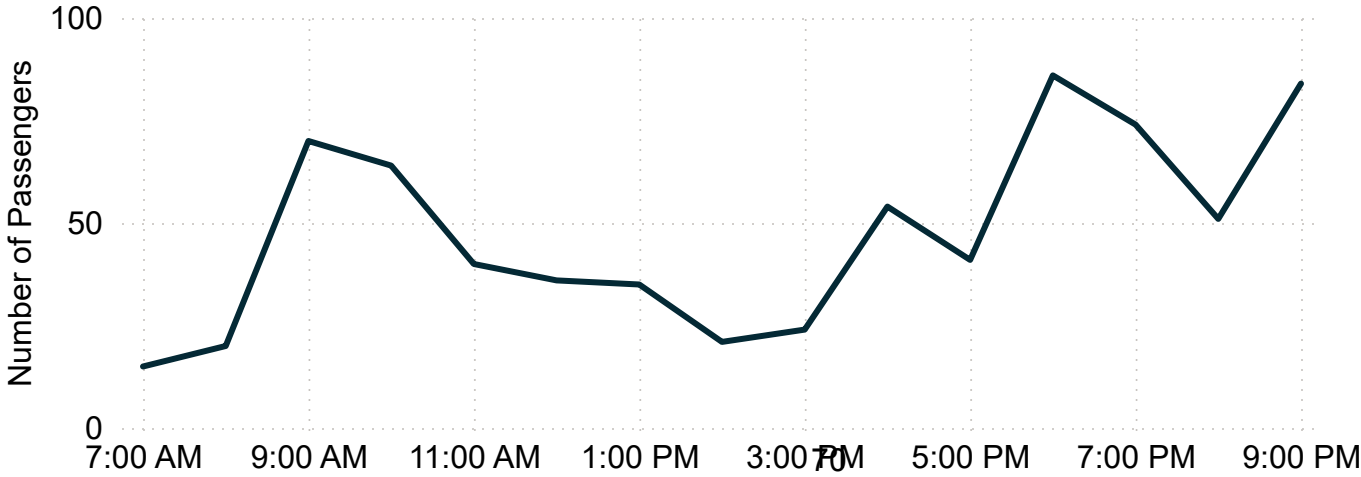
29.33

Daily Ridership

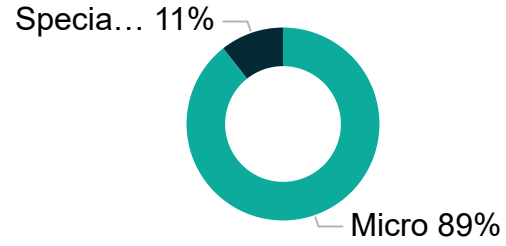
● Micro ● Specialized



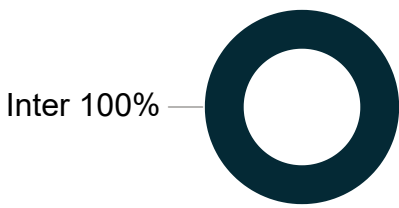
Peak Hours



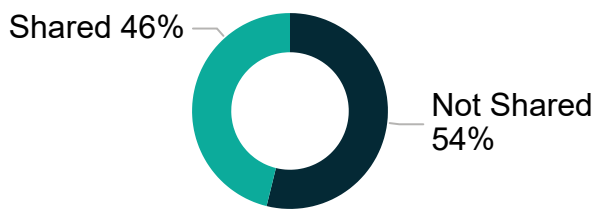
Service Type



Trip Type



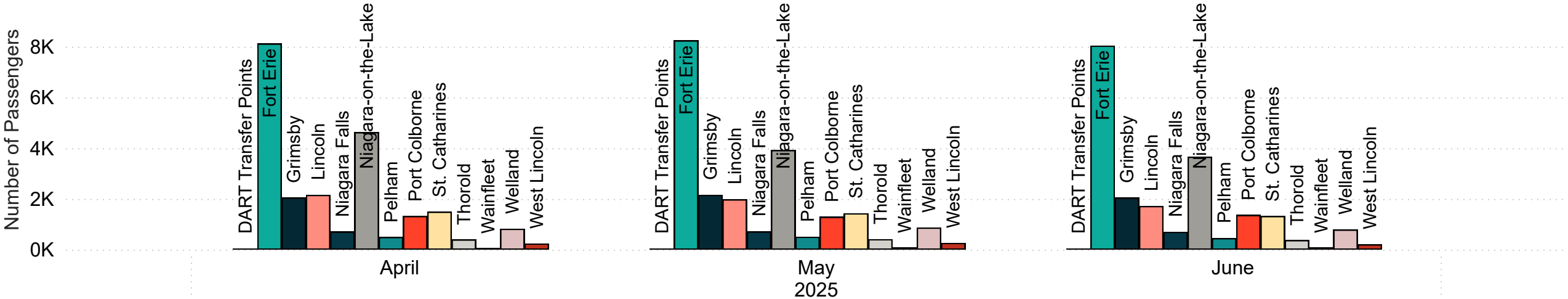
Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	12	48	60
App	159	456	615
Total	171	504	675

Overall NT+ (Contract) Voyago Trip Origin Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

Ridership By Trip Origin



Origin Municipality	DART Transfer Points	Fort Erie	Grimsby	Lincoln	Niagara Falls	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Pelham	Port Colborne	St. Catharines	Thorold	Wainfleet	Welland	West Lincoln	Total
DART Transfer Points		7	1		8				10			10		36
Fort Erie	7	23624			219	4		108	135	30		279		24406
Grimsby			4082	1119	6	1	29	12	755	3	3	52	193	6255
Lincoln			1058	2770	17	13	71	9	1554	21	1	127	215	5856
Niagara Falls	9	181	6	19		236	21	11	803	202	12	622	3	2125
Niagara-on-the-Lake		5		16	393	11610	18		126	36	1	5	2	12212
Pelham		3	47	70	18	19	464	6	226	32	10	554	9	1458
Port Colborne		116	11		12		8	3405	17	6	60	335	6	3976
St. Catharines	8	116	726	1387	795	188	201	17		296	14	353	149	4250
Thorold		30	3	21	207	42	32	4	358	378	16	92	4	1187
Wainfleet			3	4	11		12	25	7	22		122	7	213
Welland	10	247	21	179	600	6	516	327	367	92	74		43	2482
West Lincoln			178	233	1	5	9	6	167	50	7	59		715
Total	34	24329	6136	5818	2287	12124	1381	3930	4525	1168	198	2610	631	65171

Glossary

- **Agent Booking Method** - Rides that are booked by phoning in and speaking with a customer service representative
- **App Booking Method** - Rides that are booked by using the Niagara Transit Plus application on a mobile device
- **Average Direct Distance** - The average distance in kilometres it would take to drive directly from origin to destination without any stops
- **Average Time On-Board** - The average time a passenger is spending on-board the vehicle
- **Day of Booking Type** - Rides that are booked on the same day of use
- **Inter Trip Type** - Rides that travel from one municipality to another, crossing municipal boundaries
- **Intra Trip Type** - Rides that stay within the municipal boundary in which the trip originated
- **Micro Daily Ridership** - Number of passengers taking micro transit trips per day
- **Micro Service Type** - Number of trips that are using the micro transit service
- **Number of Accessible** - Number of trips that are using either the micro or specialized transit service that are accessible, where the passenger is using a mobility device
- **Number of Micro Trips with Accessible Device** - Number of trips using the micro transit service that are accessible, where the passenger is using a mobility device
- **Number of Passengers** - Total number of passengers that have completed trips
- **Number of Trips** - Total number of trips being completed
- **Peak Hours** - Hours of the day that have the highest demand for ridership
- **Pre-Book Booking Type** - Rides that are booked in advance of the requested trip day
- **Specialized Daily Ridership** - Number of passengers taking specialized transit trips per day
- **Specialized Service Type** - Number of trips that are using the specialized transit service
- **Subscription Booking Method** - Trips that are booked once and happen on a recurring schedule ie. trips to dialysis

MEMORANDUM

NTC-C 28-2025

Subject: Update on the Non-Union Job Analysis and Evaluation

Date: August 26, 2025

To: Niagara Transit Commission

From: Tim Luey, Director, Corporate Services

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a summary of the non-union job analysis and evaluation that has been completed.

The NTC engaged Ernst & Young LLP (“EY”) to conduct the job analysis and evaluation of all non-unionized roles to standardize job descriptions within the organization, provide role clarity for their teams, and align the roles to the organizational objectives.

All adjustments to non-union salaries resulting from the completed job evaluations were accommodated within the approved 2025 Operating Budget; therefore, there are no additional financial implications.

Following the amalgamation in January 2023, the NTC assumed responsibility for integrating staff from multiple municipalities into a single, unified organization. To support the formation of this new entity, the Regional Municipality of Niagara engaged an independent contractor to develop job descriptions. These were created using content from existing municipal job descriptions and supplemented with examples from other transit agencies.

All non-union employees offered positions with the NTC received new job descriptions and employment agreements. These agreements specified that compensation was based on interim job ratings and required the NTC to complete a Job Information Questionnaire (JIQ) for each non-union role.

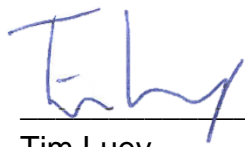
In late 2023, the NTC issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a comprehensive job analysis and evaluation process. The contract was awarded to Ernst & Young (EY) in early 2024.

EY's mandate included the following:

- Reviewing all existing job descriptions for non-union roles.
- Conducting market research and benchmarking to identify gaps relative to industry standards.
- Drafting updated job profiles by integrating current descriptions, industry benchmarks, and input from NTC leadership regarding future organizational and departmental needs.
- Evaluating all non-union positions using a standardized job evaluation tool.

As a result of EY's work and with the active participation of our non-union staff in this process, the NTC successfully updated all non-union job descriptions and compensation structures to reflect accurate duties, responsibilities, and internal alignment. Additionally, job titles were reviewed and revised, where appropriate, to ensure consistency and alignment with role responsibilities. A revised organizational chart is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

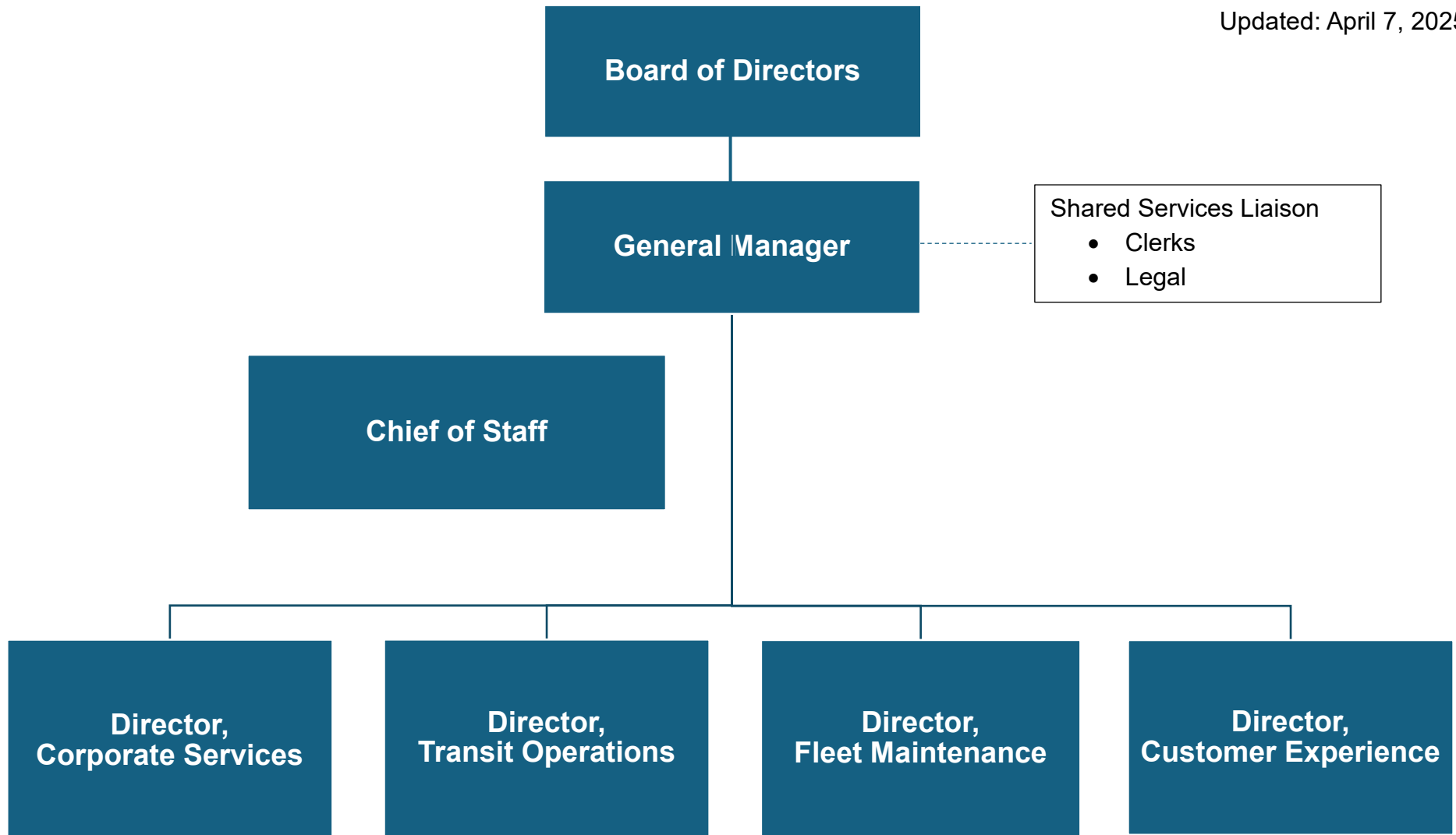


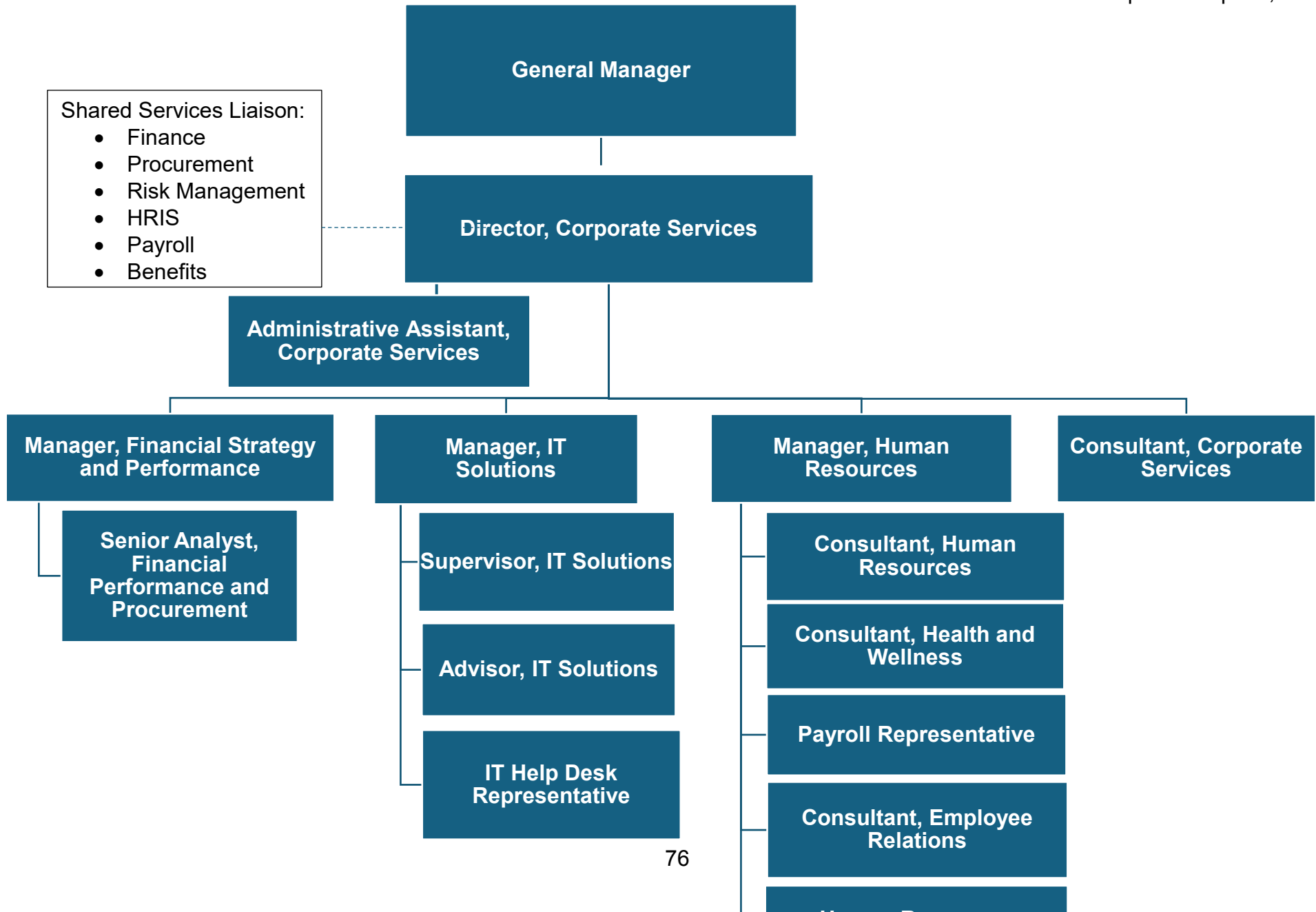
Tim Luey
Director, Corporate Services

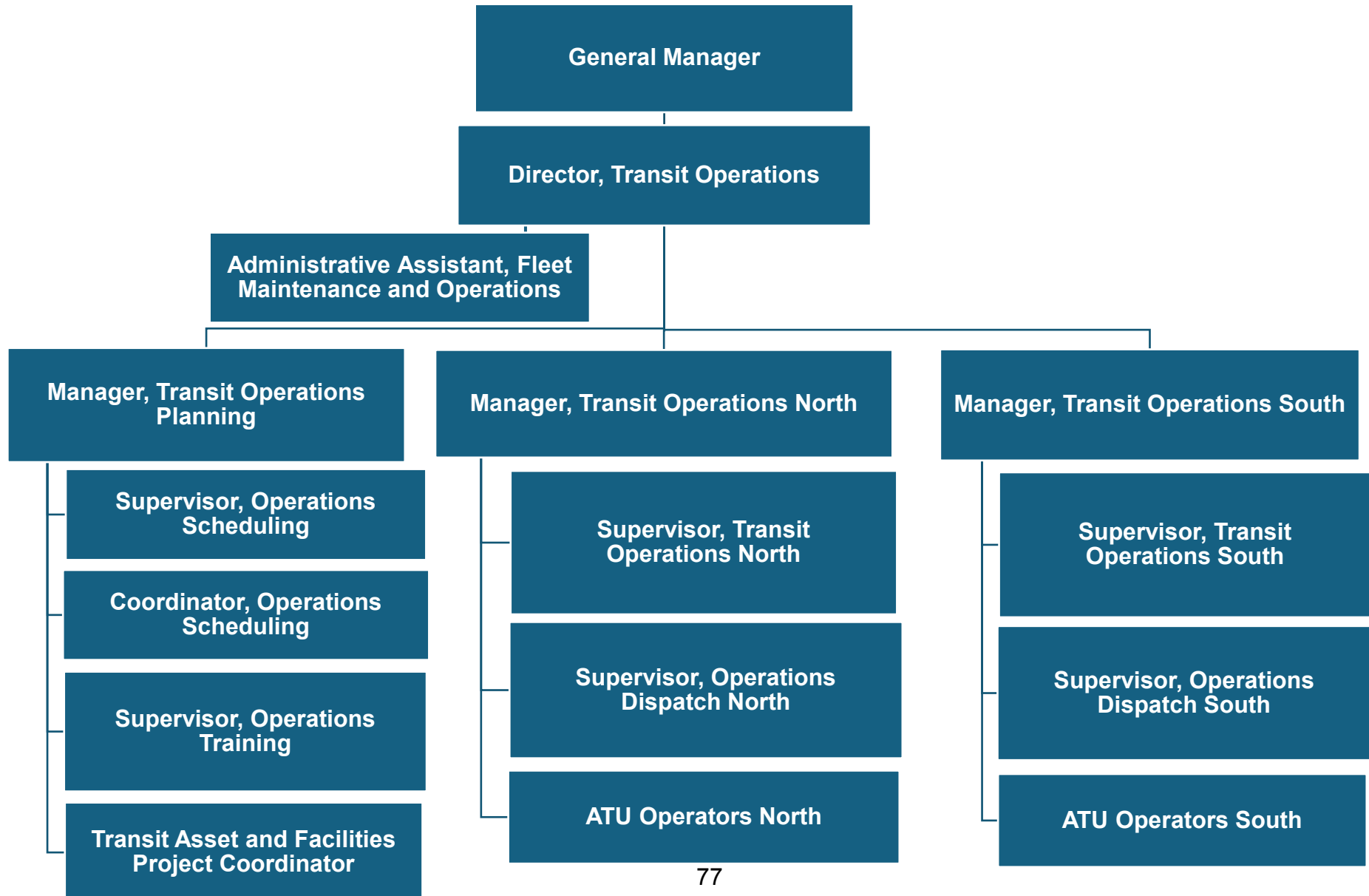
Appendices

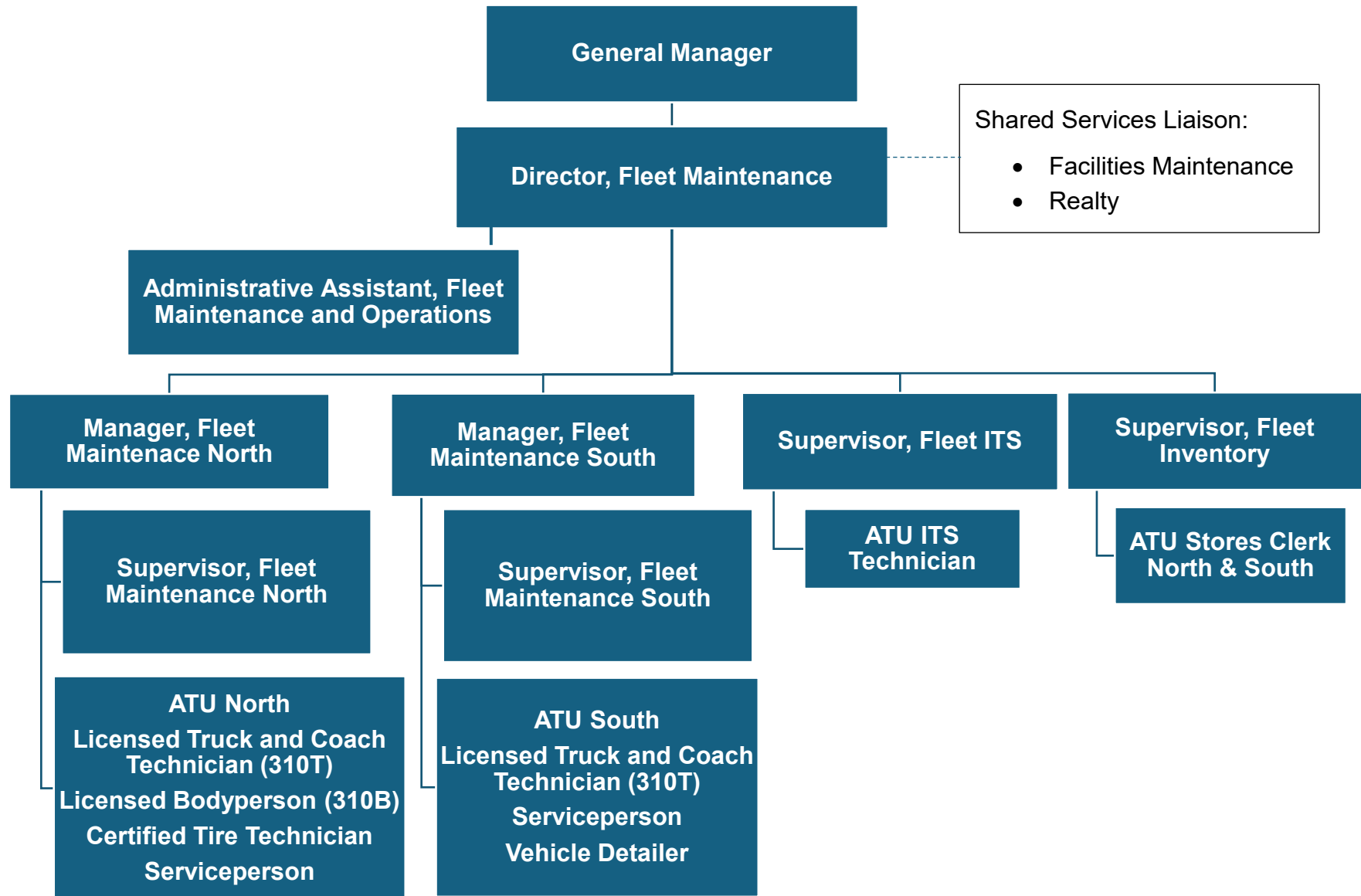
Appendix 1 NTC Organizational Chart

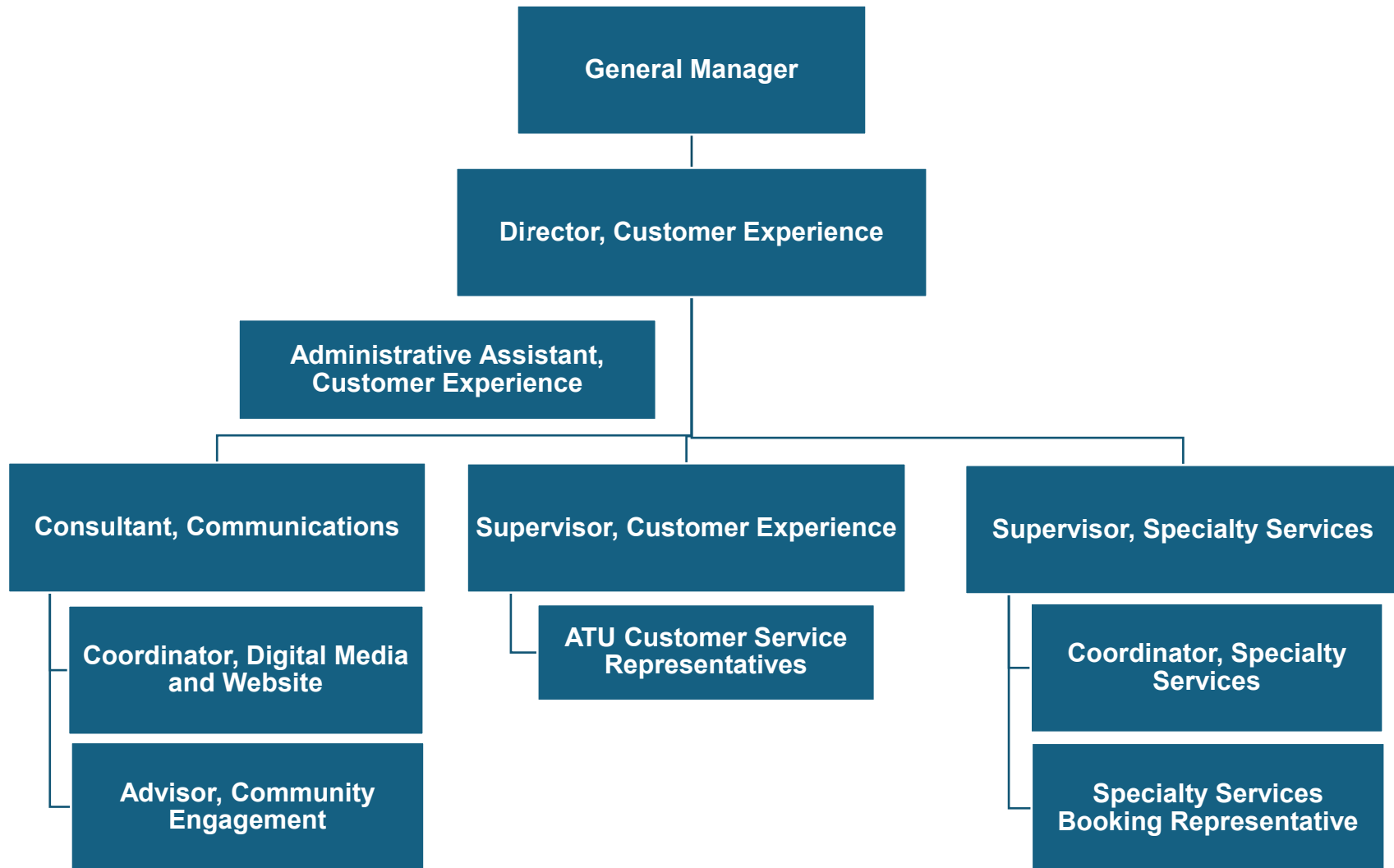
Updated: April 7, 2025













**The Corporation of the Town of Grimsby
Administration**

Office of the Town Clerk

160 Livingston Avenue, Grimsby, ON L3M 0J5

Phone: 905-945-9634 Ext. 2171 | **Fax:** 905-945-5010

Email: vssteel@grimsby.ca

July 10, 2025

SENT VIA E-MAIL

carla.stout@nrtransit.ca

Attention: Carla Stout

RE: Niagara and Hamilton Transit Connection

Please be advised that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Grimsby at its meeting held on July 7, 2025 passed the following resolution:

Moved: Councillor Freake

Seconded: Councillor Baradziej

Whereas transit services are critical to building 21st Century communities; and

Whereas the demand for transit is continuing to increase across Ontario, including in Hamilton and the Niagara Region; and

Whereas progressive transportation is vital to attract and/or retain economic investment and the wellbeing of the community; and

Whereas despite borders separating communities, many residents travel between them for a variety of important activities such as medical appointments, employment, education, and social events; and

Whereas many bordering municipal transit systems in Ontario have established connections between them; and

Whereas better connectivity by local transit is a factor in federal and provincial investments.

Therefore be it resolved that Grimsby Council requests that Niagara Transit and Hamilton Street Railway work to create a connection between the two transit services; and

That Grimsby Council requests that Niagara Regional Council prioritizes a connection between Niagara Transit and Hamilton Street Railway through their budget process; and

That Grimsby Council requests that the adopted Niagara Transit masterplan incorporate a near-future connection to Hamilton Street Railway transit; and

That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Niagara Transit Board, Hamilton Street Railway Board of Directors, Niagara Regional Council, Hamilton City Council, Town of Grimsby Council, and the Town of Lincoln.

If you require any additional information, please let me know.

Regards,



Victoria Steele
Town Clerk

CC:

Hamilton Street Railway Board of Directors; clerk@hamilton.ca

Niagara Regional Council; clerk@niagararegion.ca

Hamilton City Council; clerk@hamilton.ca

Grimsby Town Council; clerks@grimsby.ca

Lincoln Town Council; clerks@lincoln.ca



Administration

Office of the Regional Clerk

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, PO Box 1042, Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

Telephone: 905-980-6000 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215 Fax: 905-687-4977

www.niagararegion.ca

July 31, 2025

CL 11-2025, July 24, 2025

BRCOTW 3-2025, July 3, 2025

BRC-C 2-2025, April 3, 2025

Carla Stout,
General Manager, Niagara Transit
2012 First Street Louth
St Catharines, ON L2S 3V9

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

2026 Budget Update – Niagara Transit

BRC-C 2-2025

Regional Council, at its meeting held on July 24, 2025, passed the following recommendation of its Budget Review Committee of the Whole:

That Memorandum BRC-C 2-2025, dated July 3, 2025, respecting 2026 Budget Update – Niagara Transit, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

A copy of BRC-C 2-2025 is enclosed for your reference.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann-Marie".

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk

CLK-C 2025-084

cc: M. Raquion, Director, Financial Management & Planning/Deputy Treasurer
T. Ellis, Commissioner, Corporate Services
K. Beach, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner, Corporate Services

Memorandum**BRC-C 2-2025****Subject:** 2026 Budget Update – Niagara Transit**Date:** July 3, 2025**To:** Budget Review Committee of the Whole**From:** Melissa Raquion, Director/Deputy Treasurer, Financial Management & Planning

Following up on the May 22, 2025 Budget Review Committee of the Whole meeting, staff have communicated to Niagara Transit Commission (NTC) that they are included in the 3.50% guidance from Council.

Below is the 2026 budget increase based on applying the 3.50% guidance to NTC's approved 2025 budget.

Budget Categories	2025 Approved Budget	2026 Increase Allocation	% Change
Niagara Transit Special Tax Levy Budget	\$62,655,596	\$3,189,170	5.09%
Assessment Growth	--	--	-1.59%
Niagara Transit Special Tax Levy Budget Less Assessment Growth	\$62,655,596	\$3,189,170	3.50%

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Melissa Raquion
Director/Deputy Treasurer, Financial Management & Planning



August 12, 2025

Sent Via Email: jordan.hambleton@niagaratransit.ca

Jordan Hambleton
Chief of Staff
Niagara Transit

Dear Mr. Hambleton:

Re: Niagara Falls City Council Resolution regarding Transit for Seniors

Please be advised that, at its meeting of July 29, 2025, the Council of the Corporation of the City of Niagara Falls passed the following resolution:

Ordered on the motion of Councillor Ruth-Ann Niewesteeg, seconded by Councillor Chris Dabrowski,

THAT the Council of the City of Niagara Falls REQUESTS that the Niagara Transit Board of Directors investigate the feasibility of providing significantly discounted transit fares for Seniors.

Carried (Councillor Lococo was opposed).

I trust that this information will be of assistance and will be forwarded to the Niagara Transit Board for the appropriate follow-up.

Sincerely,

Bill Matson
City Clerk

**NIAGARA TRANSIT COMMISSION PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**NTCPAC 2-2025
July 14, 2025
Committee Room 4
In-Person and Electronic Meeting
Niagara Region Headquarters - Campbell West Entrance
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold**

Committee Members: M. Anees*, H. Chesshire*, L. Hay*, G. Hillhouse, T. Hounsell, S. Kosh*, H. Levine, S. Lord, G. McIlhone (Committee Chair), N. Rodrigues*, A. Romeo*

Non-Voting Member: C. Stout, General Manager

Absent/Regrets: M. Alba, W. Barnes, J. Jessop

Staff: E. Braniff, Supervisor, Specialty Services, A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, J. Spratt, Legislative Coordinator, L. Tracey, Communications Consultant

*indicates participants who attended the meeting electronically,
all other participated in person

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair McIlhone called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Committee Chair McIlhone read the Land Acknowledgement Statement

3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

4. SELECTION OF COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR

4.1 Call for Nominations for Committee Vice Chair

Committee Chair McIlhone called for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Niagara Transit Commission Public Advisory Committee for the remainder of this term of Council (2025-2026), as Carleigh Charlton's term as Vice President of University Affairs for the Brock University Student Union has ended and Natalia Rodrigues is now filling the role.

Moved by T. Hounsell
Seconded by H. Levine

That Gavin Hillhouse **BE NOMINATED** as Vice Chair of the Niagara Transit Commission Public Advisory Committee for the remainder of this term of Council (2025-2026).

4.2 Motion to Close Nominations for Committee Vice Chair

Committee Chair McIlhorne called a final time for nominations for the position of Niagara Transit Commission Public Advisory Committee Vice Chair, there being no further nominations it was:

Moved by T. Hounsell
Seconded by H. Levine

That nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Niagara Transit Commission Public Advisory Committee for the remainder of this term of Council, **BE CLOSED**.

Carried

4.3 Voting for the Position of Committee Vice Chair

There being only one nominee for the position of Committee Vice Chair, Committee Chair McIlhorne announced that Gavin Hillhouse would be the Niagara Transit Commission Public Advisory Committee Vice Chair for the remainder of this term of Council (2025-2026).

5. **DELEGATIONS**

5.1 Rapid Transit Infrastructure Proposal

Andrew Warriner, Student, Brock University, appeared before Committee and expressed the need for large investments to public transportation, the importance of reliable and effective transit and the benefit of exploring an intra-municipal streetcar system.

6. **PRESENTATIONS**

6.1 Niagara Transit Master Plan - 10-Year Investment and Growth Strategy

Pia Dimayuga, Engagement and Accessibility Lead, and Graham Hauptman, Transit Analyst, Left Turn Right Turn Ltd., provided information respecting Niagara Transit Master Plan - 10-Year Investment and Growth Strategy. Topics of the presentation included:

- Community Engagement
- Reimagining Transit in Niagara
- Service Outcomes

- Service Types and Standards
- Service Integration
- Implementation Summary
- Regional Network Evolution
- Local Network Evolution
- Benefits of the Plan

7. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no items for consideration.

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Moved by G. Hillhouse
Seconded by S. Kosh

That the following items **BE RECEIVED** for information:

NTC-C 4-2025
Niagara Transit+ Specialized Transit Eligibility Policy

NTCPAC-C 5-2025
NTCPAC 2025 Workplan Information Documents

Minutes NTC 1-2025
Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Minutes NTC 2-2025
Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Minutes NTC 3-2025
Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Minutes NTC 4-2025
Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Minutes NTC PAC 1-2025
Tuesday, February 10, 2025

Carried

Committee Information Request(s):

Provide previously circulated Committee orientation materials and the General Managers 2024 Annual Report. Member H. Levine.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 6, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in Committee Room 4, Regional Headquarters.

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Gerry McIlhone
Committee Chair

Jenna Spratt
Legislative Coordinator

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk