



CIMA+



Niagara Transit

Transit Facilities, Strategic Assets & Service Network Master Plan

Update to the Board

February 2025

NIAGARA

EVERYONE WELCOME

Agenda

- Project background
- Objectives
- Early findings
- Future concepts engagement
- Next steps

Transit Facilities, Strategic Assets & Service Network Master Plan

- Transit services across the Niagara region and 12 municipalities were consolidated on January 1, 2023
- Original focus was on smooth transition for customers and staff
- Minimal changes to the service network have been done
- This plan is the first master plan for transit since the start of the new Niagara Transit

Objective: Create a bold vision for what an integrated regional transit could look like and how it can meet all resident needs

Project Scope

This plan is about the ‘big picture’

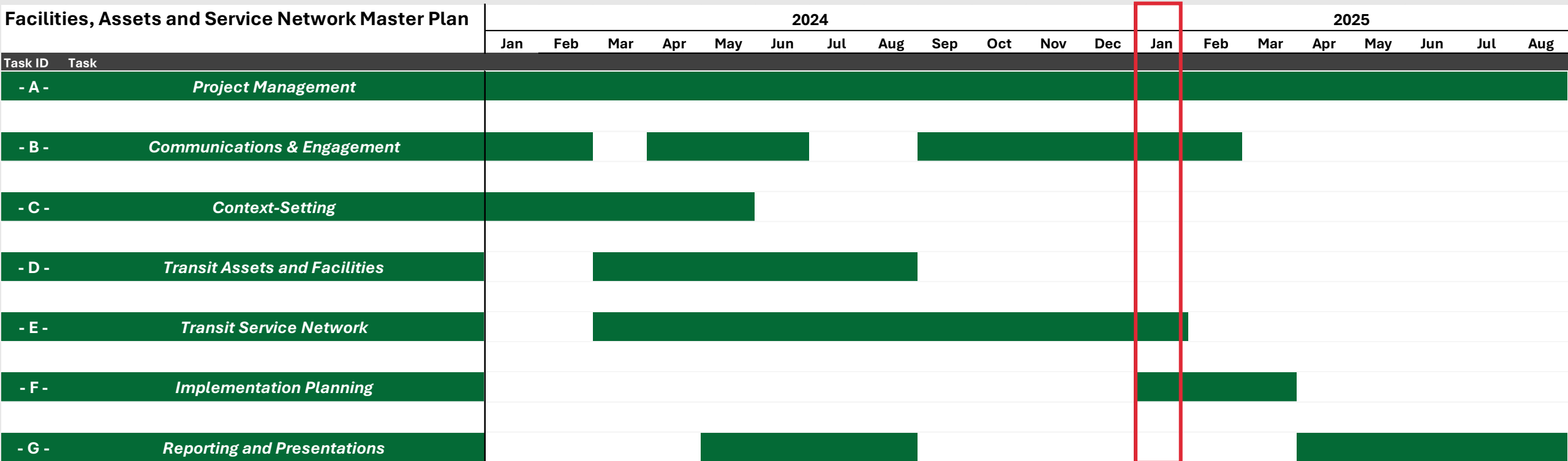
- Ensuring consistent and efficient transit services across the region
 - Including connectivity between microtransit, specialized, and conventional
- Developing a 10-year and 20-year transit network
- Planning for assets (buses, facilities) to meet future needs

What this plan is not about

- Specific scheduling changes for existing services
- Complaints about specific trips or services

Work Plan Overview

We are here



Community Engagement



Round 1: NT Today and Tomorrow

- Understand current perspectives on NT
- Receive input and guidance on future priorities
- Q2-3 2024

Round 2: Exploring Possibilities

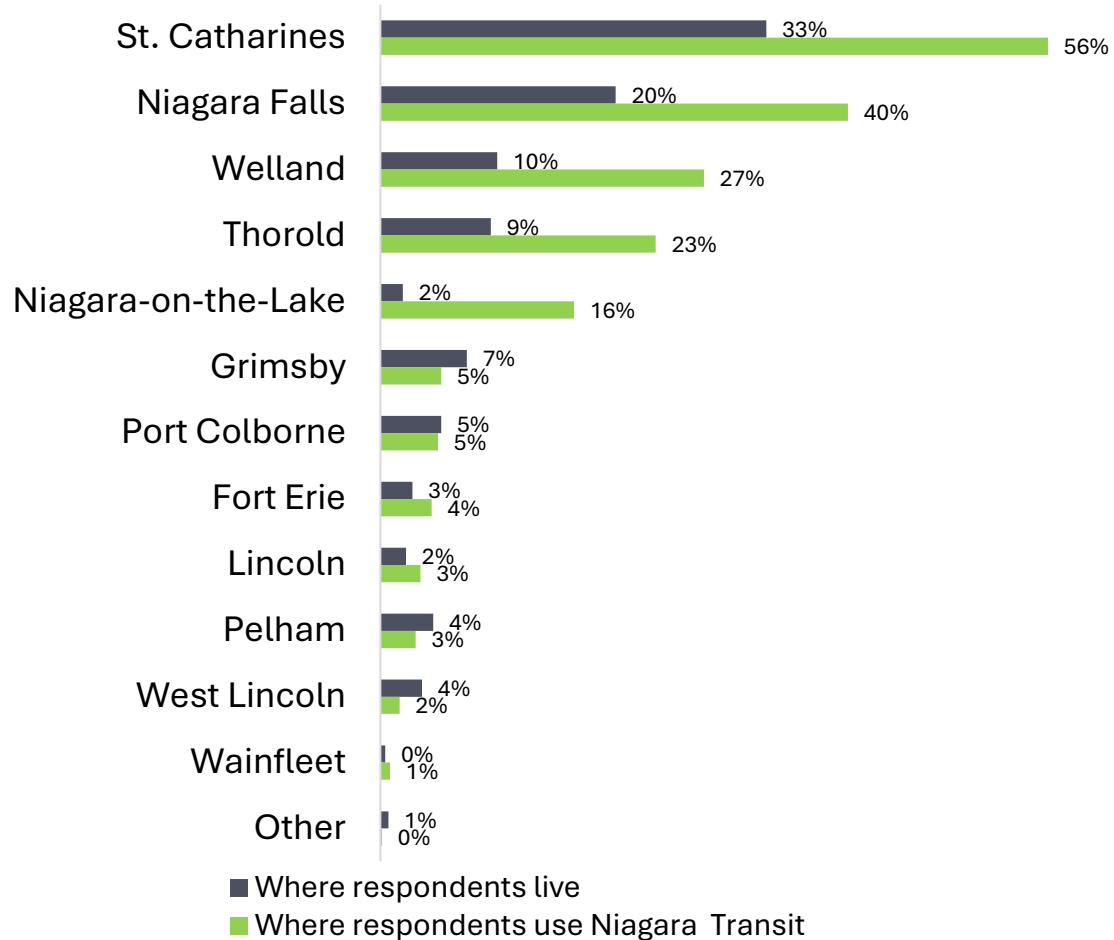
- Share potential future concepts (network and services)
- Receive feedback
- Q1 2025

Round 3: Feedback on the Plan

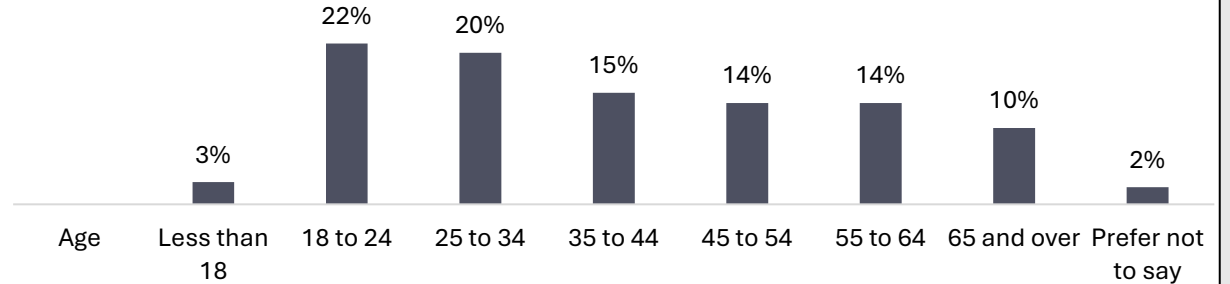
- Share draft plan publicly
- Receive feedback
- Q2-3 2025

Round 1 - Who Responded?

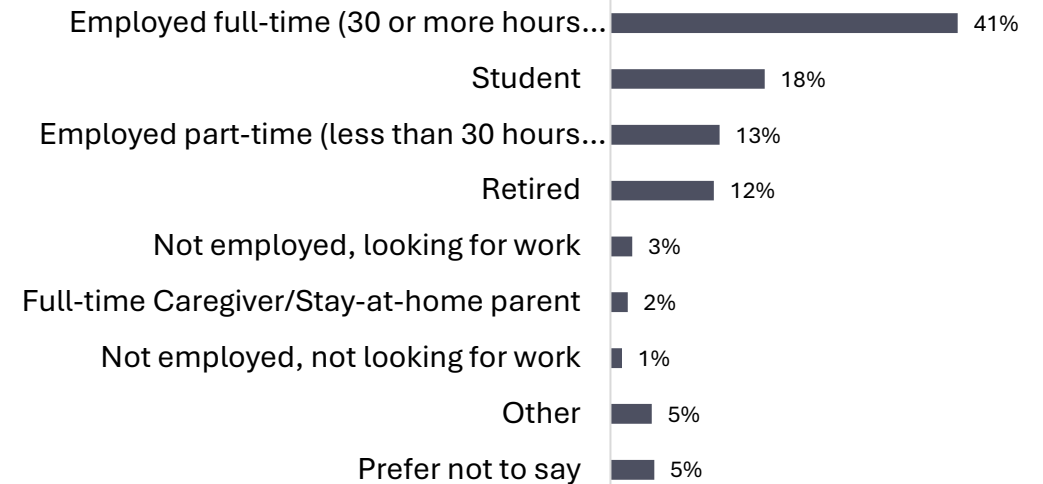
Where Respondents Live and Use NT



Respondents' Ages

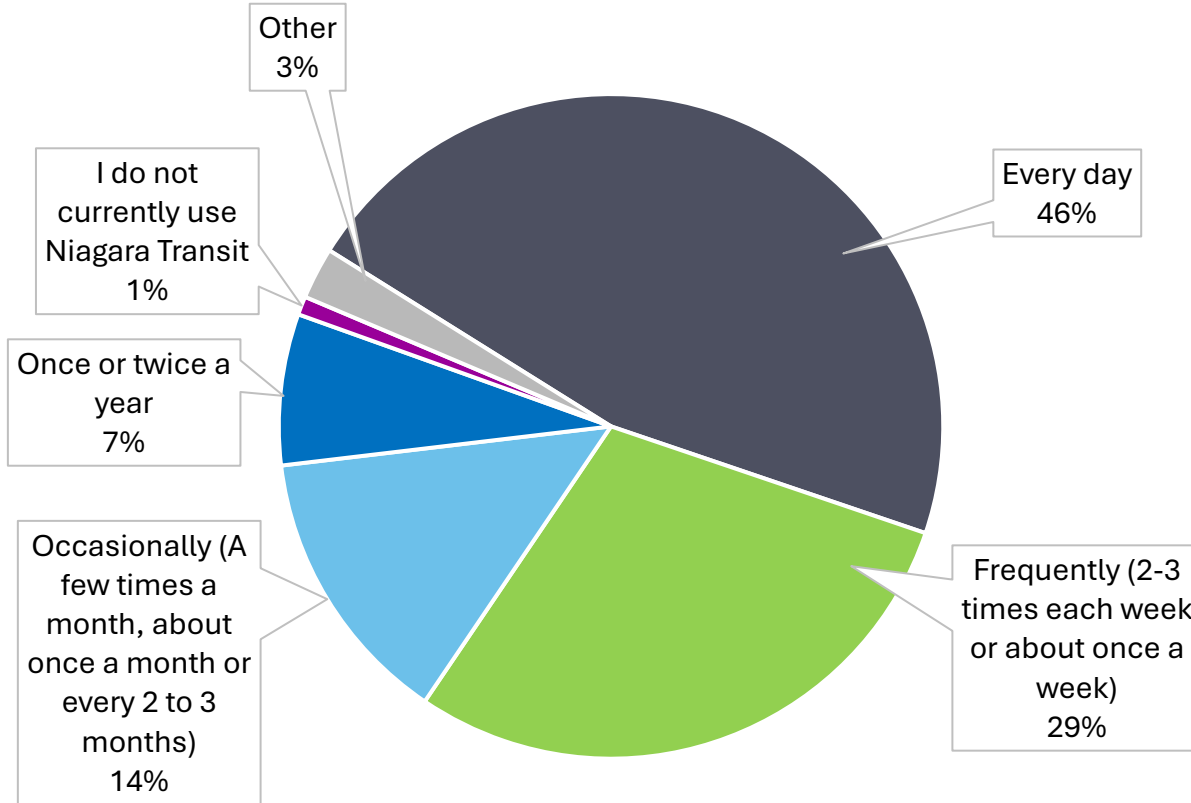


Respondents' Employment Status

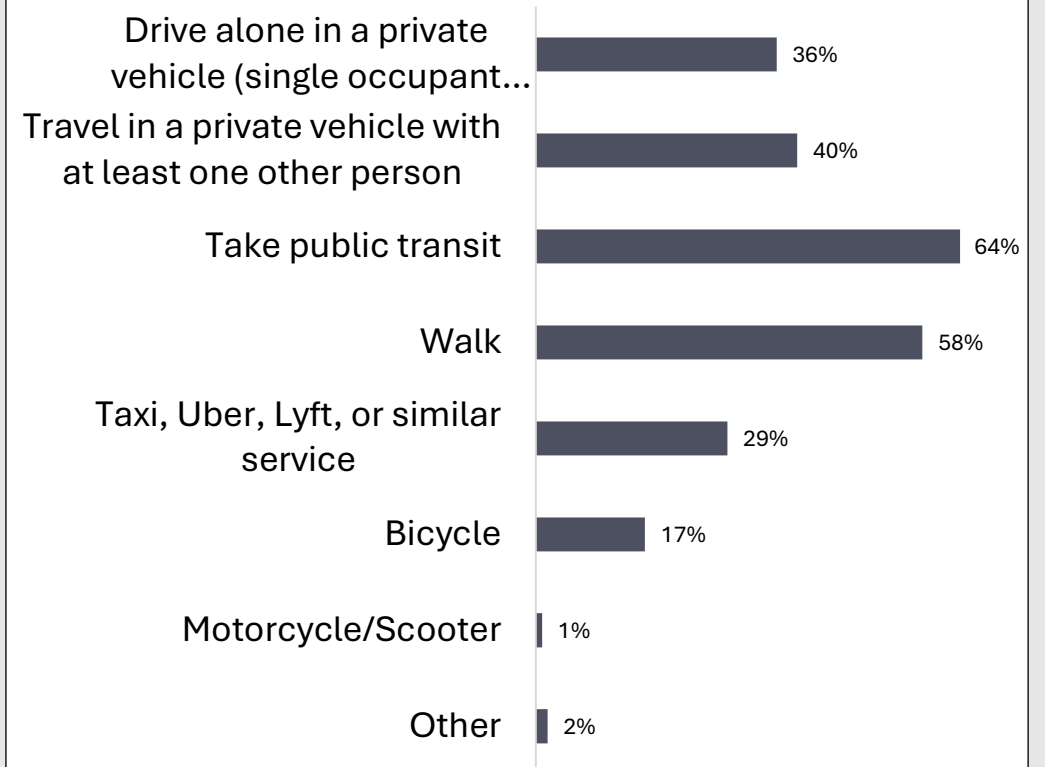


Respondents transit usage

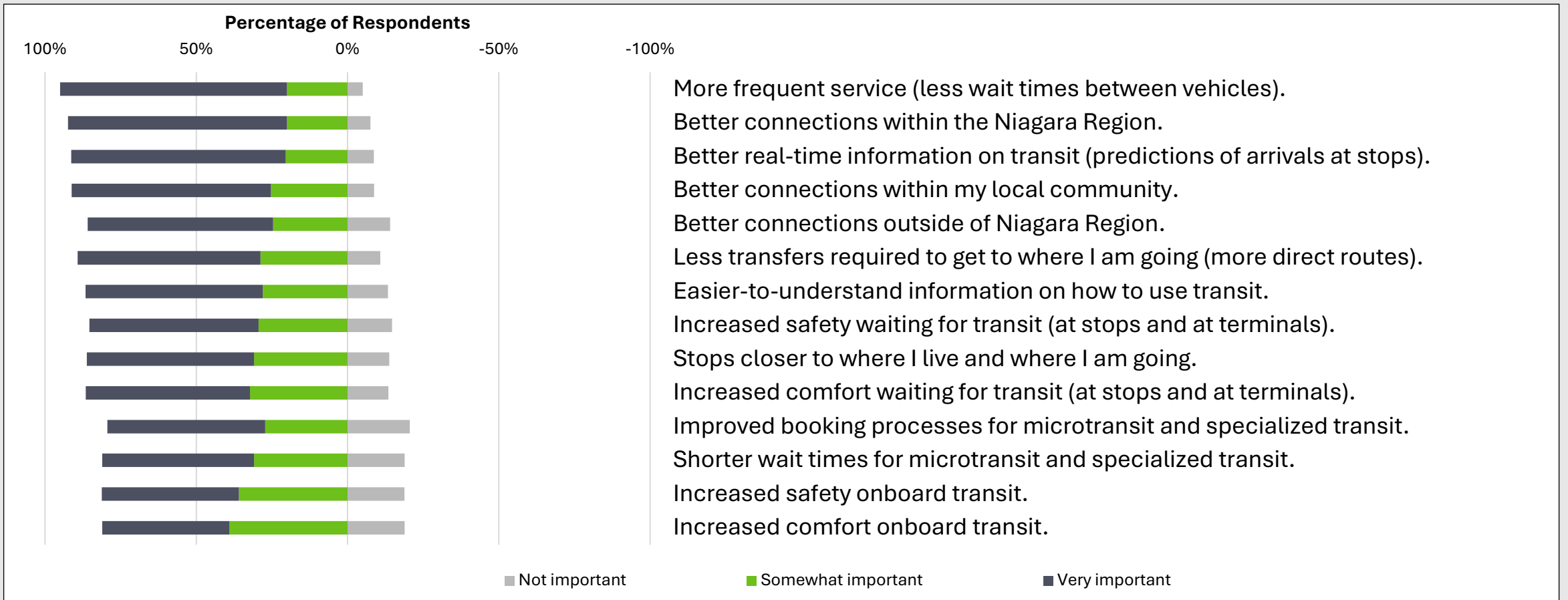
Respondents' Frequency of Using Niagara Transit Services



Most Common Transportation Modes Used by Survey Respondents

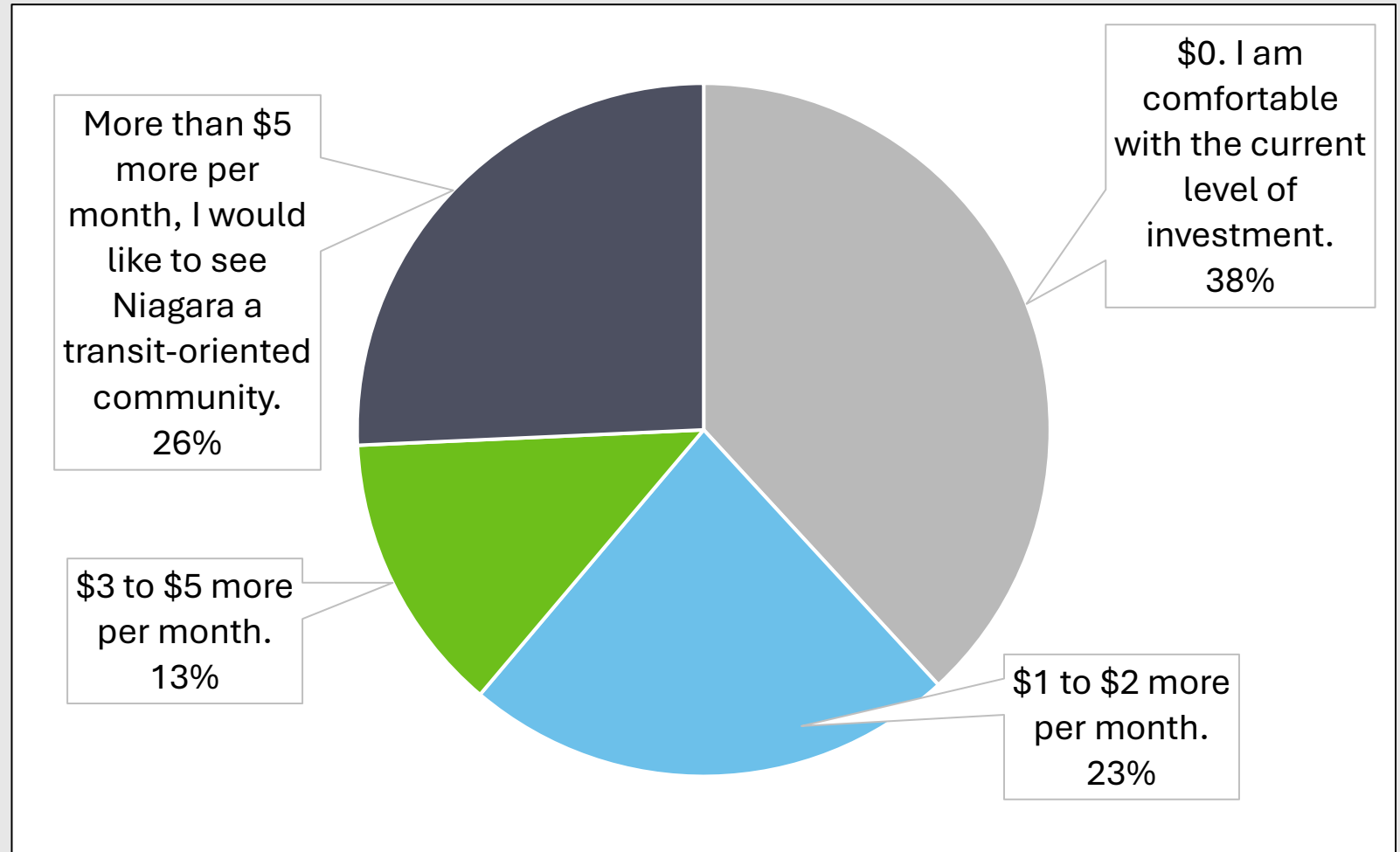


What respondents said they want



Importance of Regional Support

- Growing the service through fare increases will not be feasible – importance of funding through regional support.



Future Concepts

Option 1: Minimal
Change

Option 2: Improving
Efficiency

Option 3: Focusing
Investment

Option 4: Balanced
Investment

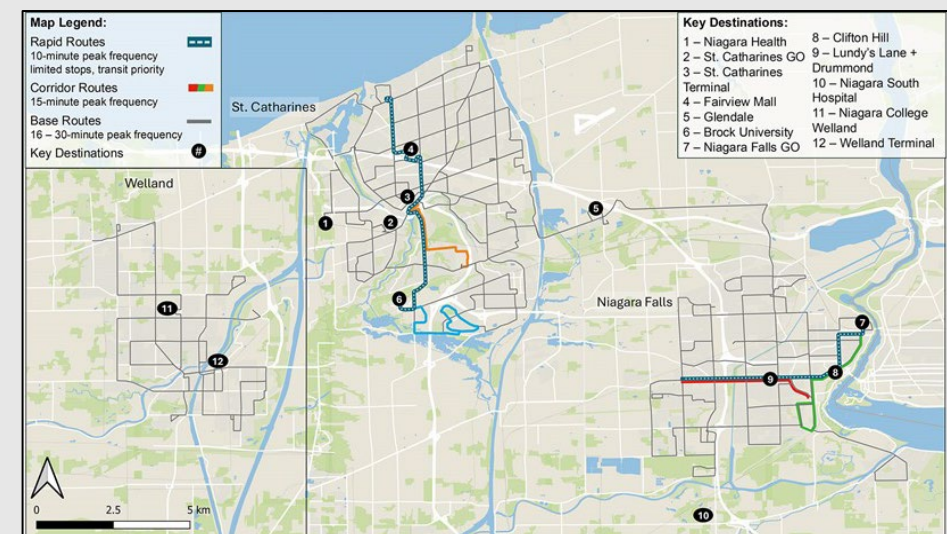
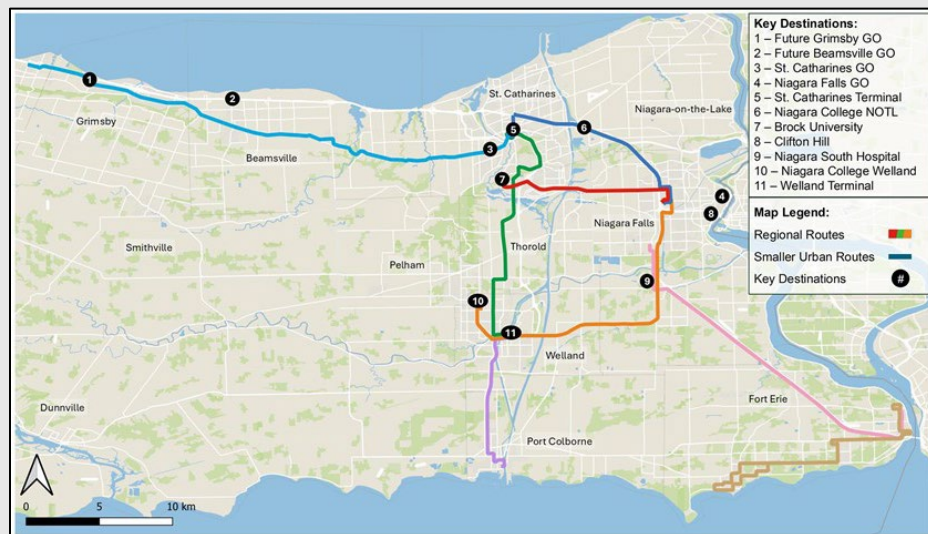
Option 1 – Minimal Change

Regional Network – Key Features:

- Most similar to the current network
- Moderate increase in transit investment
- Two new routes: Grimsby/Winona Park (connections to Hamilton) and Crystal Beach (reintroducing fixed-route in Fort Erie)
- Microtransit will be used to connect into the regional network (more passenger transfers)
- Service runs between 6 am and midnight every day

Conventional Network – Key Features:

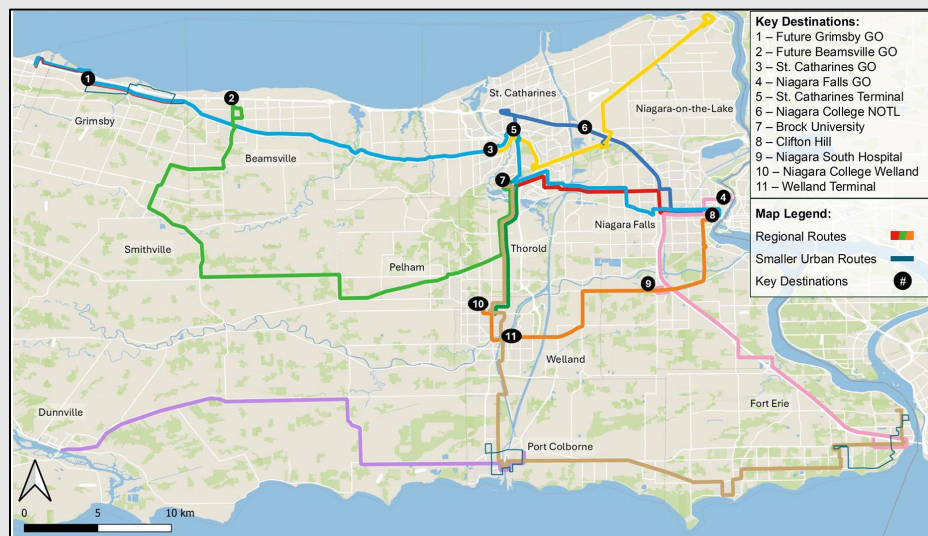
- Most similar to the current network
- Moderate increase in transit investment
- Two Rapid Bus routes (frequent and limited stop service): One in St. Catharines and one in Niagara Falls
- Minimal service for new development
- Slight increase in fixed-route coverage
- Service runs between 6 am and midnight every day



Option 2 – Improving Efficiency

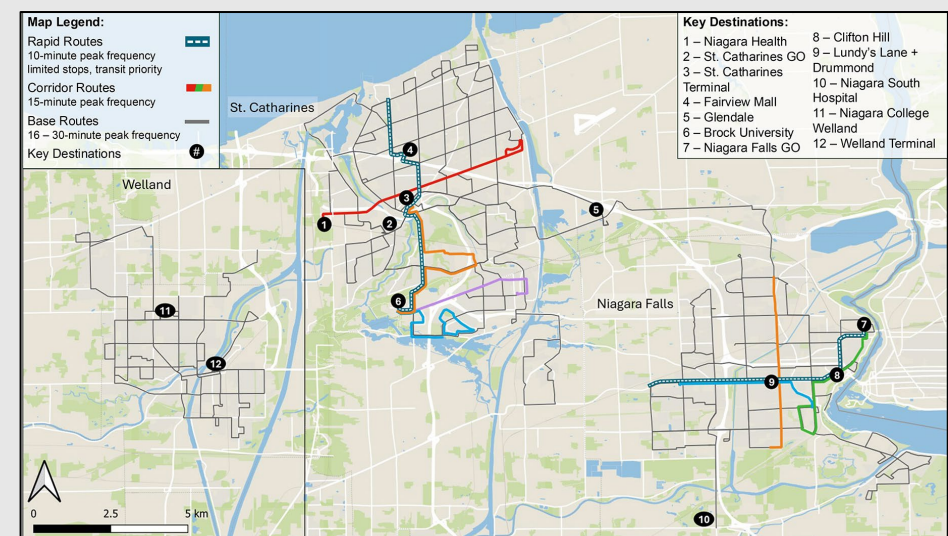
Regional Network – Key Features:

- Moderate increase in transit investment
- Major expansion of the network to connect: Grimsby/Winona Park, Beamsville, Smithville, Pelham, Dunnville, Crystal Beach, and Niagara-on-the-Lake
- Three new local routes in Grimsby, Port Colborne, and Fort Erie
- Service runs between 5:30am – 1:30am every day, with reduced hours on Sunday



Conventional Network – Key Features:

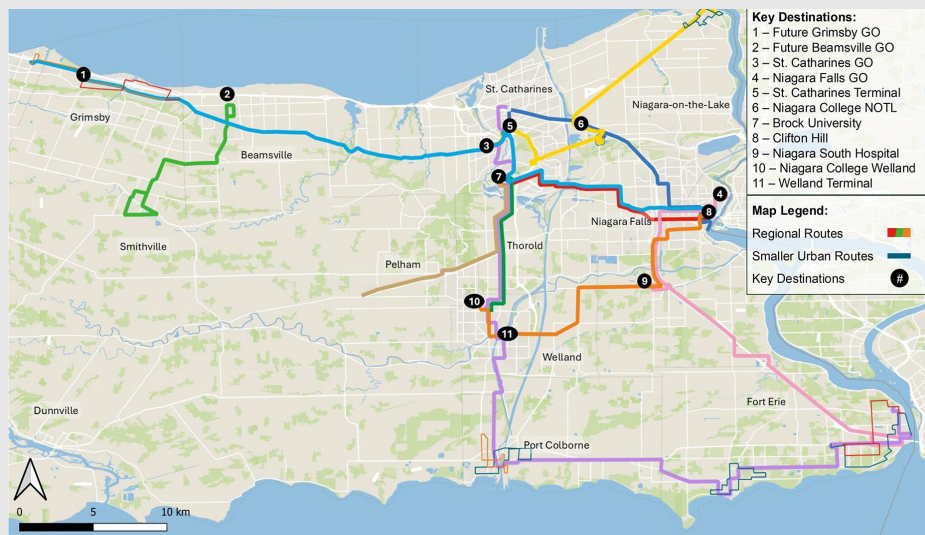
- Moderate increase in transit investment
- Two Rapid Bus routes (frequent and limited stop service): One in St. Catharines and one in Niagara Falls
- 15-minute frequency on corridor routes at peaks
- Minimal planning for planned growth
- Slight increase in local fixed-route coverage
- Service runs between 5:30am – 1:30am every day, with reduced hours on Sunday



Option 3 – Focused Improvement

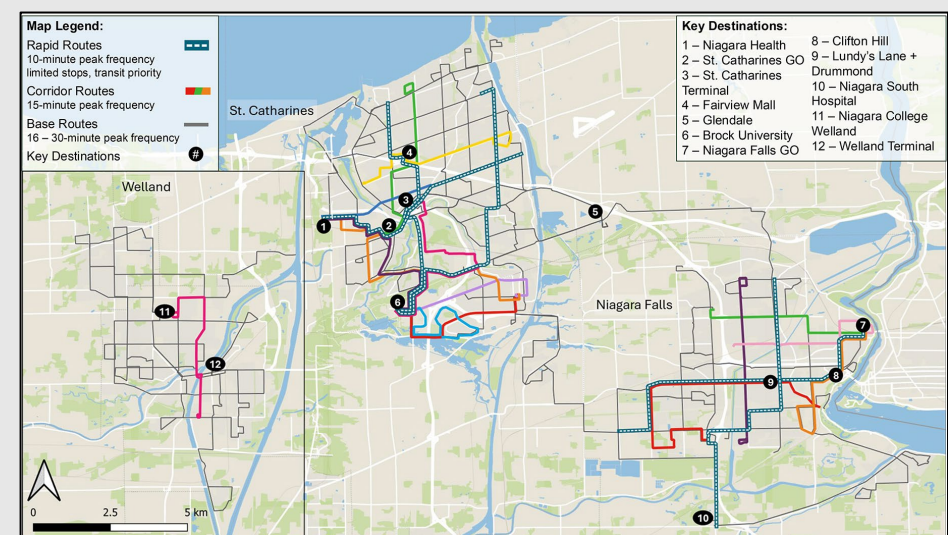
Regional Network – Key Features:

- Largest increase in transit investment
- Some expansion of the network to connect Grimsby/Winona Park, Beamsville, Smithville, Pelham, Crystal Beach, and Niagara-on-the-Lake
- Eight new local routes in Grimsby, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Crystal Beach and Niagara-on-the-Lake
- More than doubles microtransit service
- Service runs 24 hours on weekdays, with reduced hours on weekends



Conventional Network – Key Features:

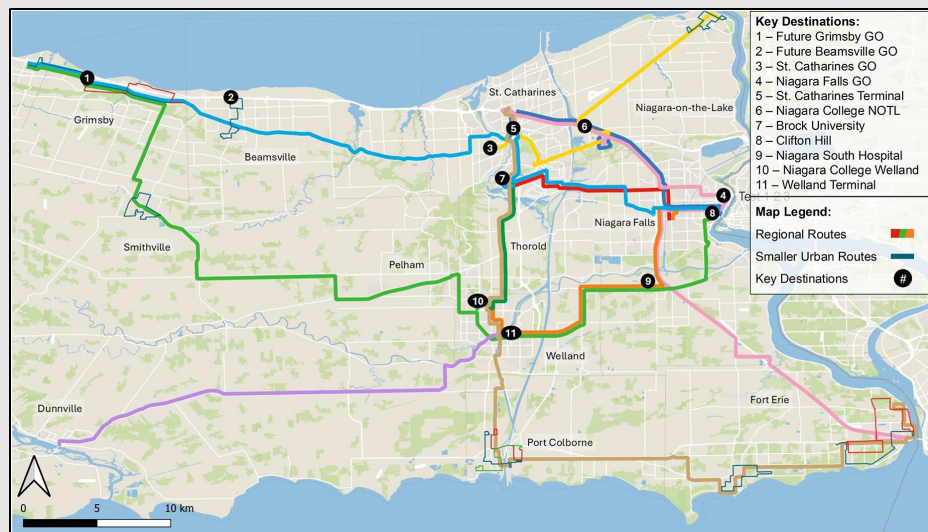
- Largest increase in transit investment
- Improves transit access the most for the region and adds transit in areas of growth
- Five Rapid Bus routes (frequent and limited stop service): three in St. Catharines and two in Niagara Falls
- 15-minute frequency in all urban centres at peaks
- Largest high-frequency/15-minute network
- Service runs 24 hours on weekdays, with reduced hours on weekends



Option 4 – Balanced Investment

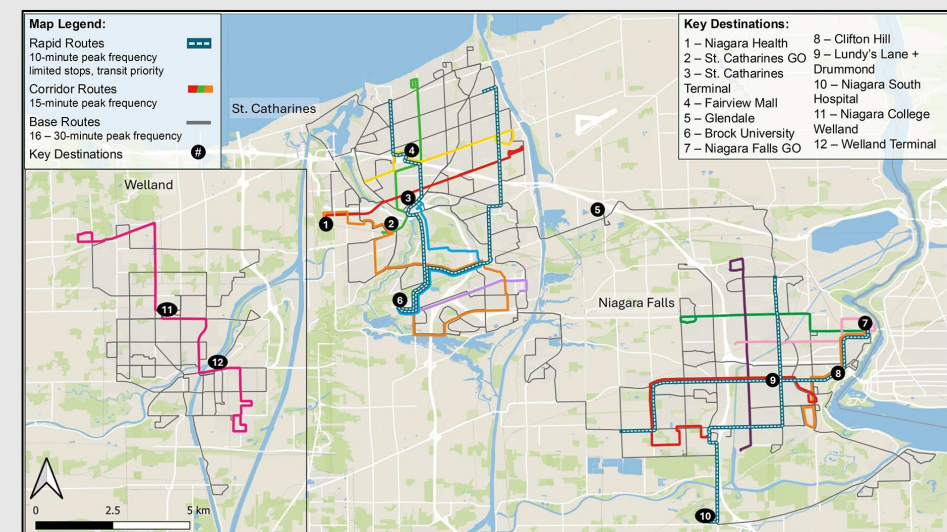
Regional Network – Key Features:

- Significant increase in transit investment
- Major expansion of the network to connect: Grimsby/Winona Park, Beamsville, Smithville, Pelham, Dunnville, Crystal Beach, and Niagara-on-the-Lake
- Focuses less on microtransit
- 11 new local routes in Grimsby, Beamsville, Smithville, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Crystal Beach, and NOTL
- Service runs 24 hours, using microtransit and some fixed-route overnight



Conventional Network – Key Features:

- Significant increase in transit investment, similar per capita for all municipalities
- Four Rapid Bus routes (frequent and limited stop service): two in St. Catharines and two in Niagara Falls
- 15-minute frequency in all urban centres at peaks
- Second largest high-frequency network
- Service runs 24 hours, using microtransit and some fixed-route overnight



Round 2 Engagement



What's Underway

- Staff (non-union and ATU) engagement
- Community engagement
- Public survey (closes on February 14th)

Communications


- In-person pop-ups across all 12 Local Area Municipalities
- Radio and newspaper
- Social media and other online sources
- Transit App notices

Next Steps

- Review engagement feedback
- Refine technical analysis and develop final network concept
- Finalize service guidelines
- Develop roadmap for the final network concept



Thank you!

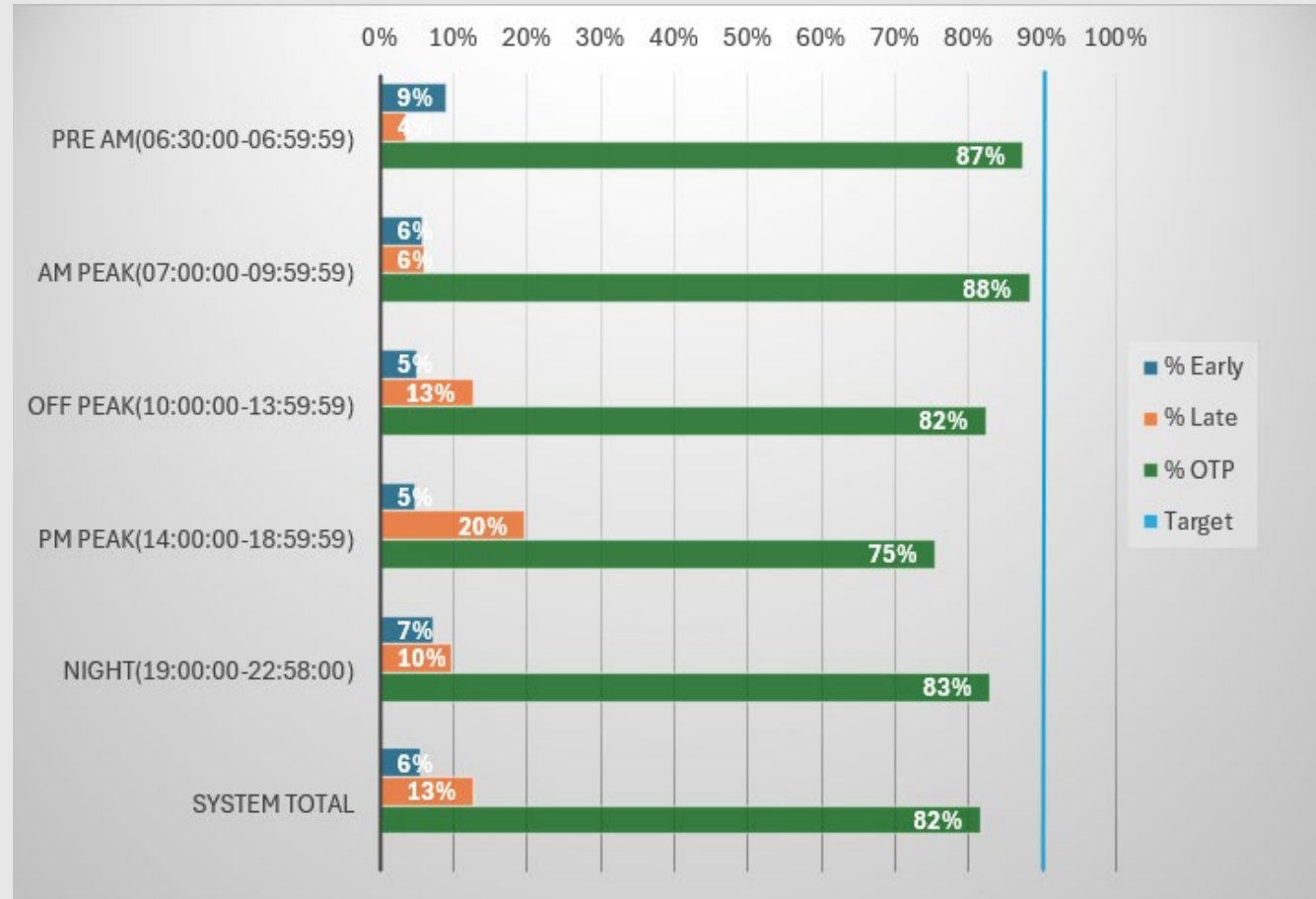
A vertical dark green line on the left side of the slide, with a large, light green arrow pointing upwards and to the right, partially overlapping the text.

Parking lot (other slides for inspiration)

Operational Review

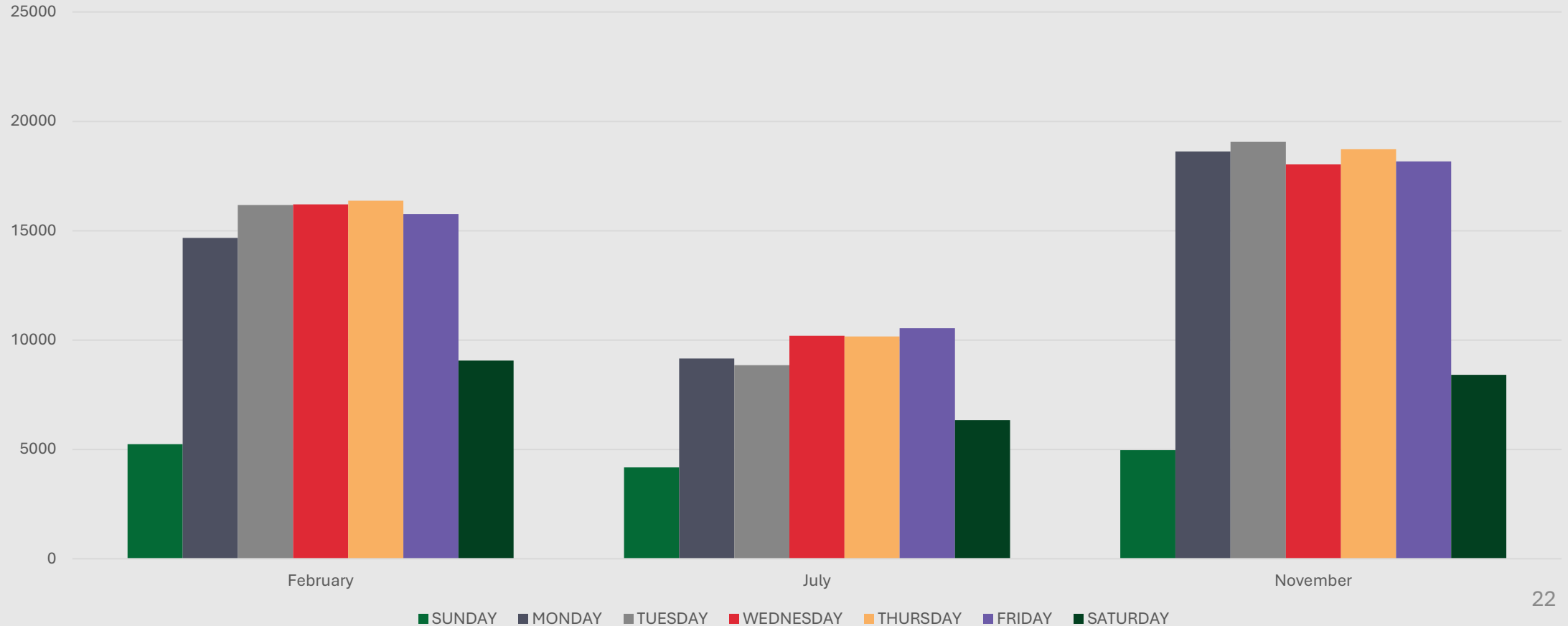
Preliminary Theme: Routes show low on-time performance compared to NT's target

- Late departures potentially due to lack of schedule adjustments throughout the day.
- Early departures are significant



Operational Review

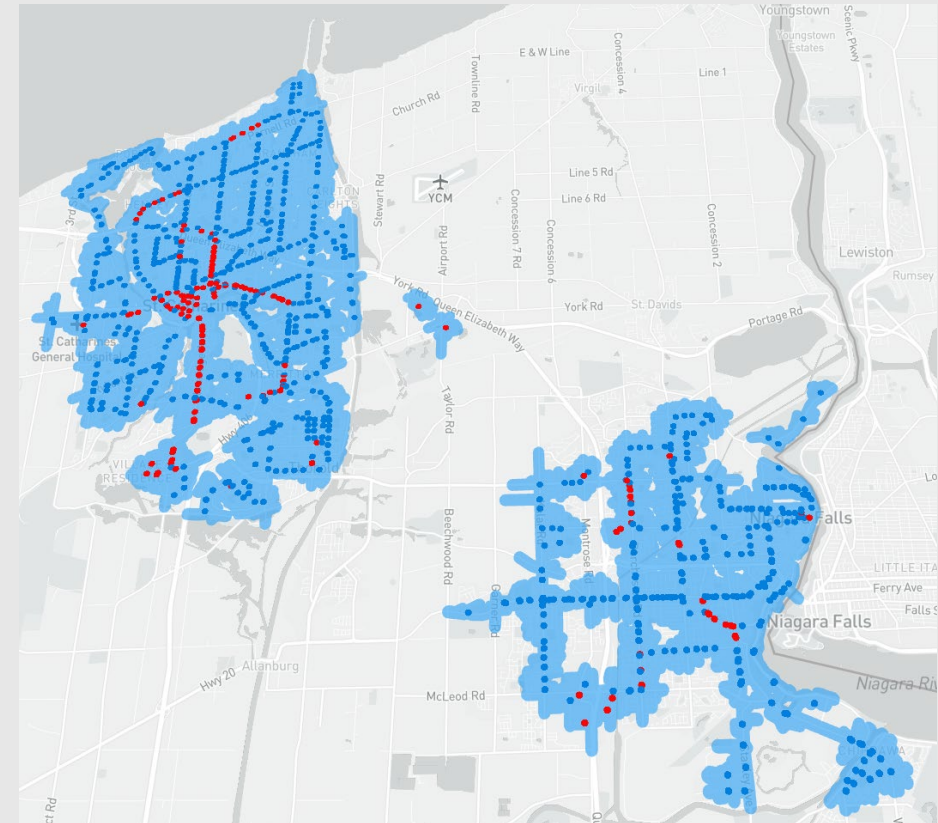
Preliminary Theme: Seasonal variation in boardings likely due to post-secondary institutions



Operational Review

Preliminary Theme: Similar coverage between weekdays and Saturdays (30-minute headway)

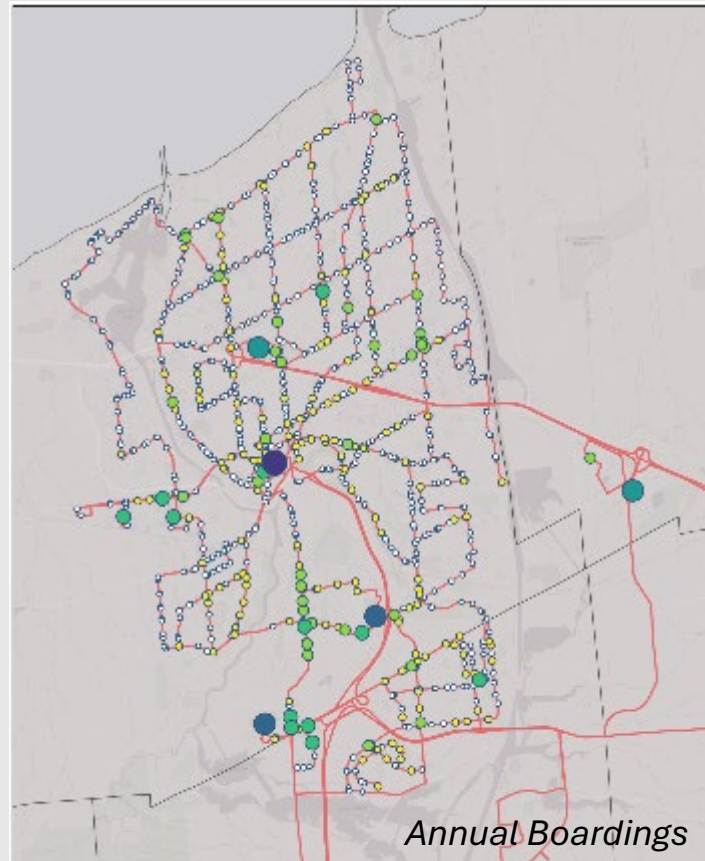
Time Period	Weekday	Saturday
7:00 am to 10:00 am	83%	69%
10:00 am to 2:00 pm	73%	65%
2:00 pm to 7:00 pm	80%	72%
7:00 pm to 11:00 pm	37%	32%



Operational Review

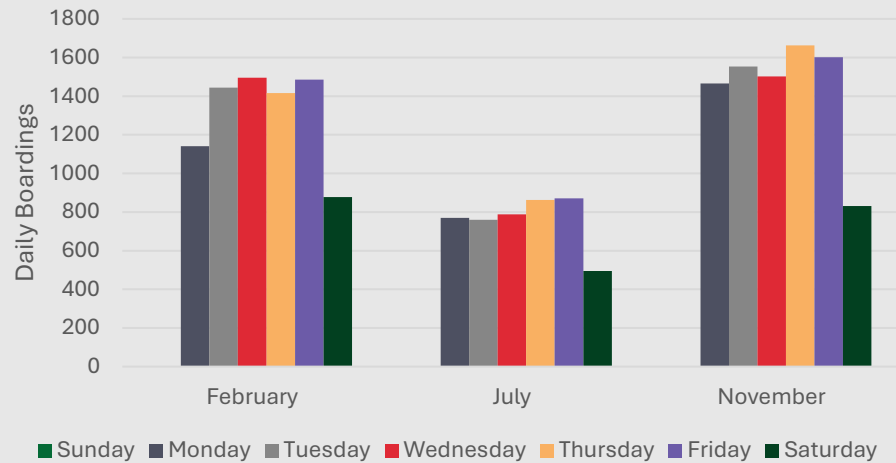
Preliminary Theme: High ridership productivity at Brock and Niagara College

- Niagara College and Brock University are major ridership locations
- North/south mismatch of service relative to demand in St. Catharines
- High ridership relative to service in Southern St. Catharines.
- Low ridership relative to service in Northern St. Catharines.
- Downtown has moderate to low ridership relative to service due to downtown focus radial network

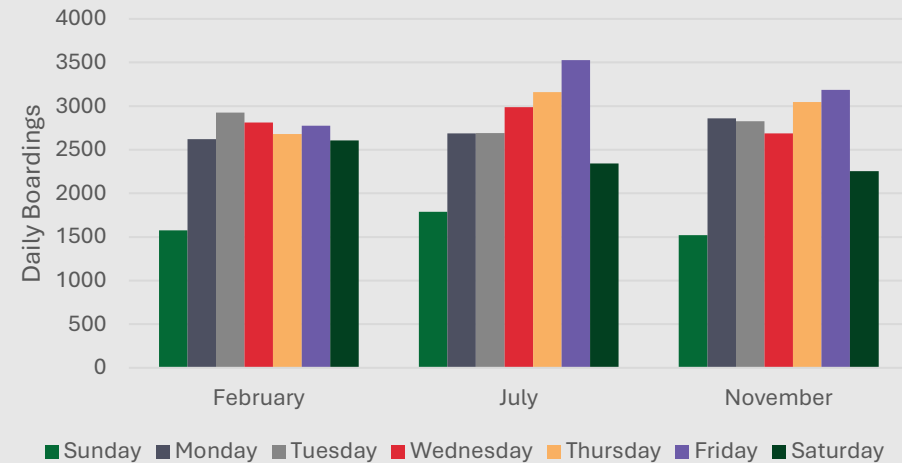


Daily Boardings

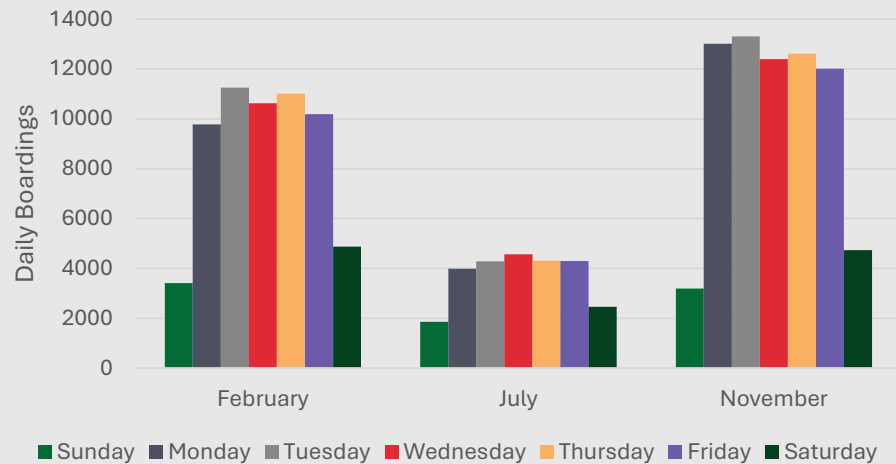
Regional Routes



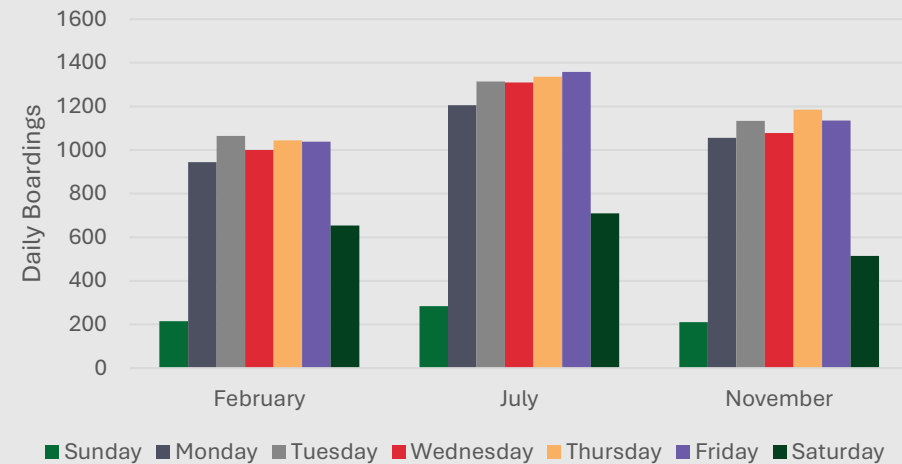
Niagara Falls Routes



St. Catharines Routes



Welland Routes

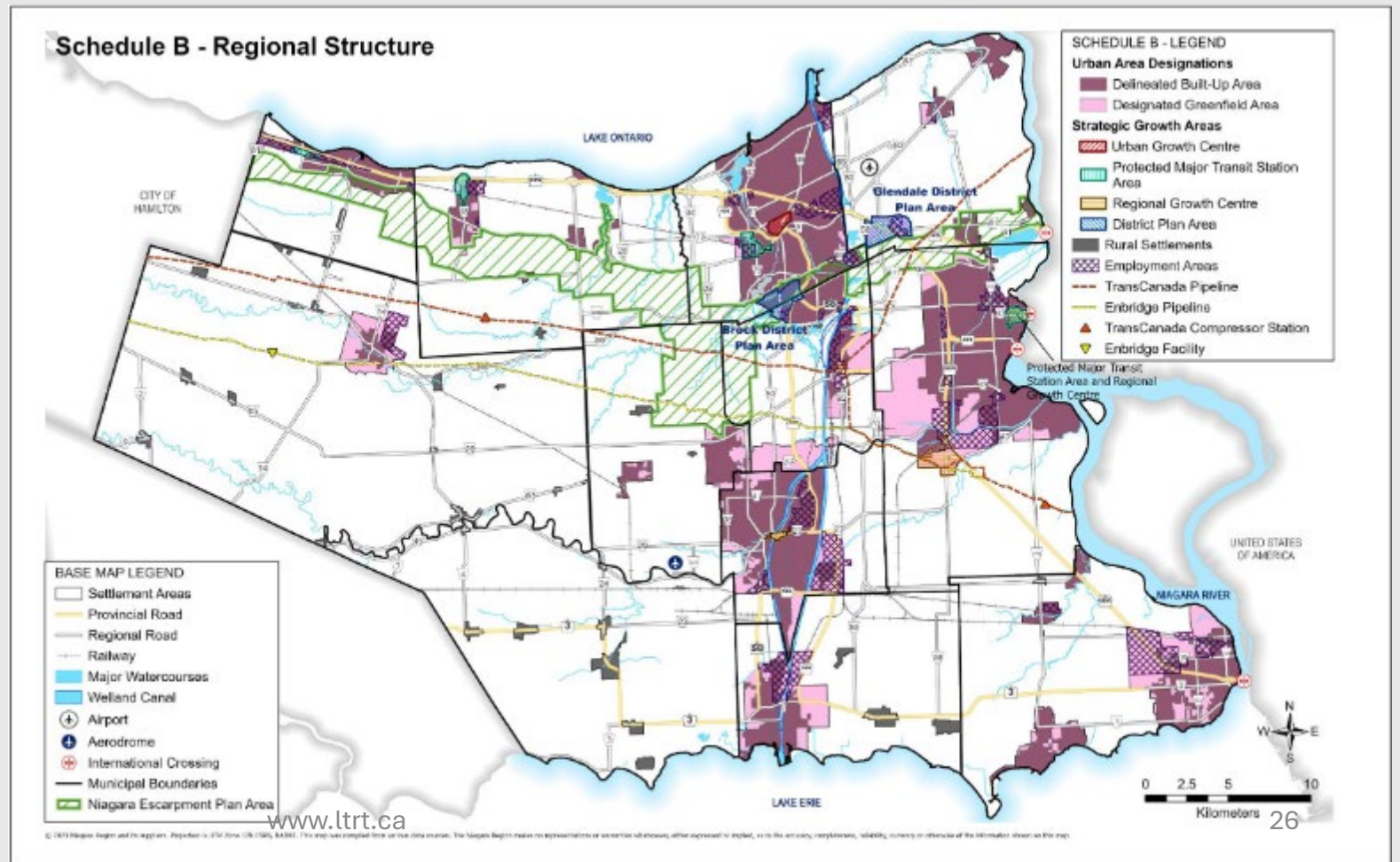


Future Context

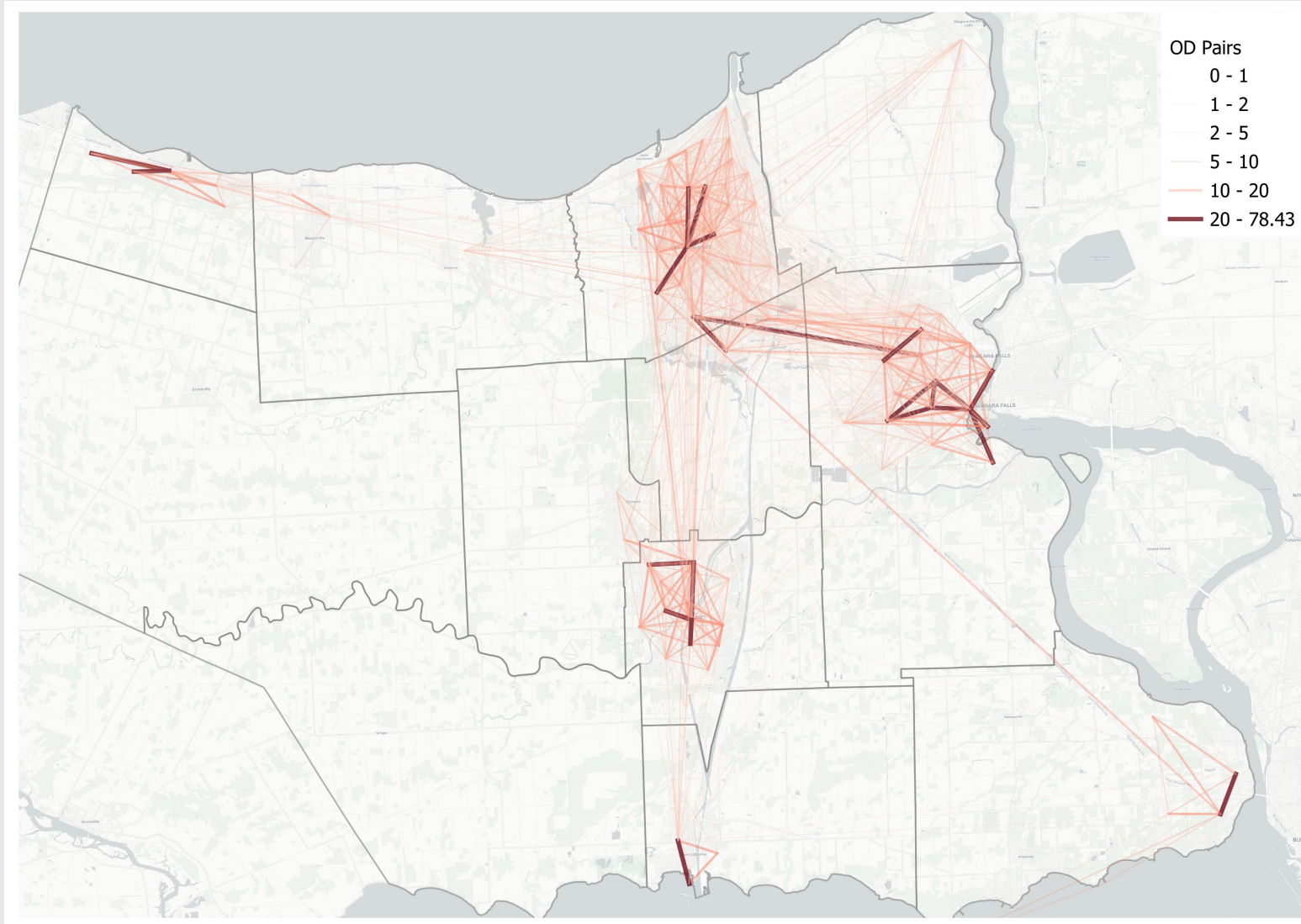
Baseline projected annual ridership growth

Conventional: 2.4-2.9%

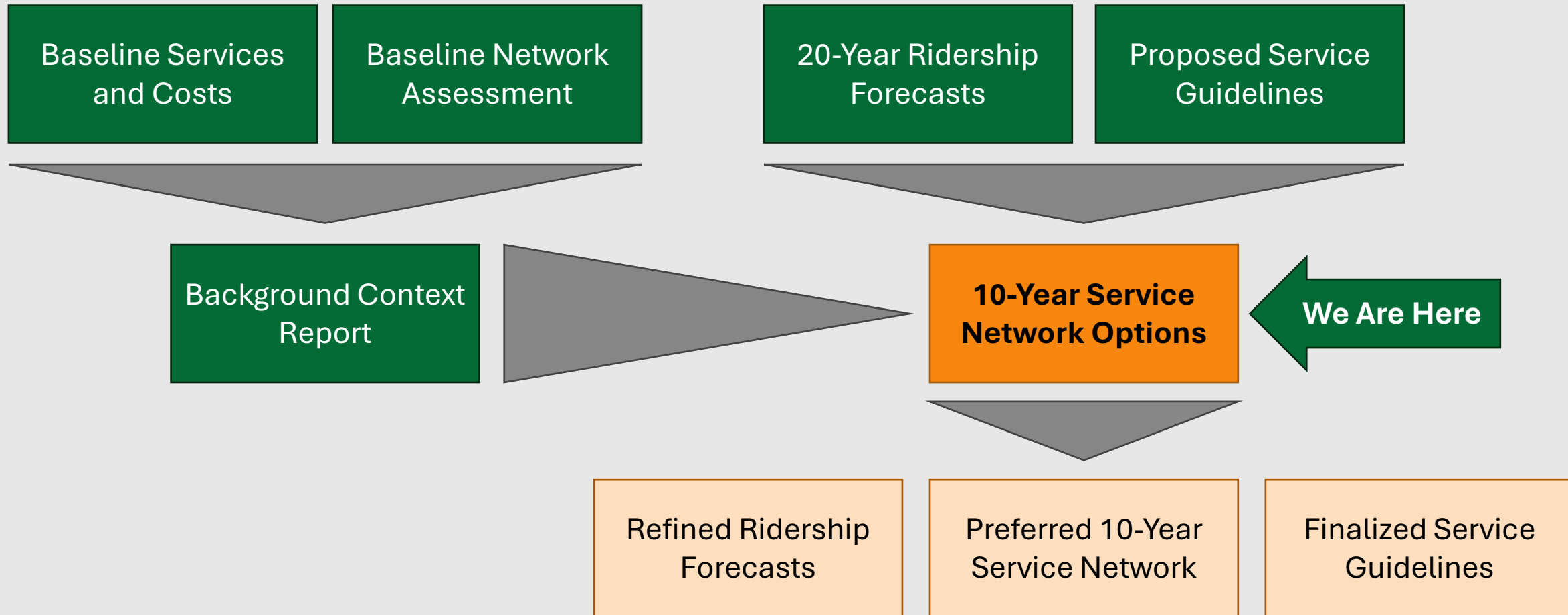
Specialized: 4.15% 2021-26



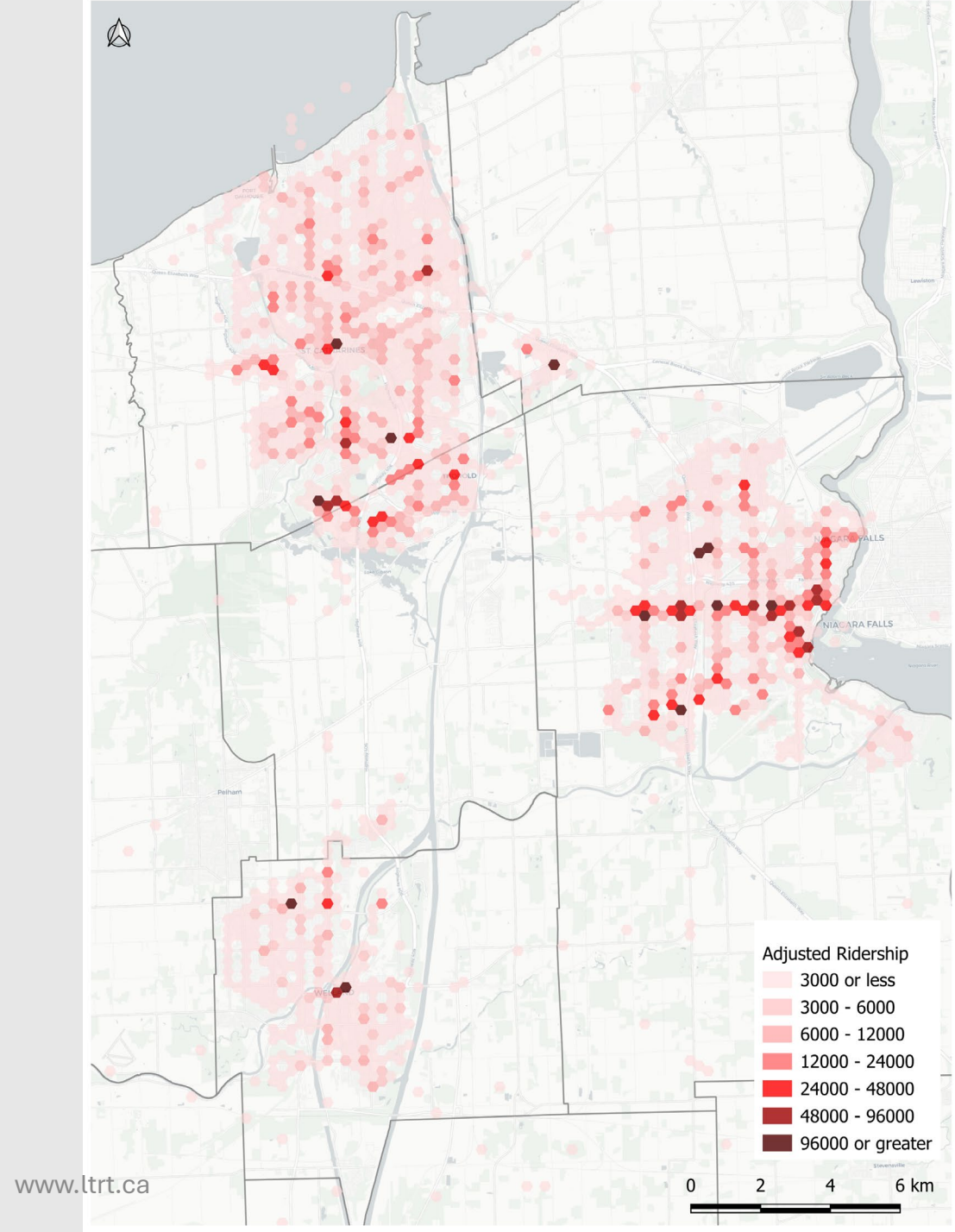
2045 Travel Patterns



Task Overview: Transit Service Network



Niagara Region Ridership Map



Future Concepts

Option 1: Minimal Change

- Least change relative to existing
- Moderate investment to keep up with growth

Option 2: Improving Efficiency

- Similar level of investment as Option 1, but with more dramatic changes to the network
- More robust regional route structure to reduce microtransit usage

Option 3: Focused Investment

- Increased investment across the region
- Highest level of service for rural communities
- More rapid transit service
- Focus on growing microtransit services
- Introduce 24-hour service (weekdays)

Option 4: Balanced Investment

- Increased investment with municipal equity in mind
- More rapid transit service
- More robust regional route structure to reduce microtransit usage
- Introduce 24-hour service (all week)