Moving Forward

Brantford Transit, reimagined by you.

City of Brantford

Moving Forward: Transit Plan

Recommended Plan

September 2024

Photo: Secondarywaltz

Brantford TRANSIT

DILLON CONSULTING

Table of Contents

Figures

Tables

Appendix

Acronyms

AODA	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities
CNIB	Canadian National Institute for the Blind
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
CUTA	Canadian Urban Transit Association
GTFS	General Transit Feed Specification
GTHA	Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area
IASR	Integrated Standards Regulation
ITS	Intelligent Transit Systems
km	kilometre
m	metre
MS	Multiple Sclerosis
N/A	Not Applicable
NWIA	Northwest Industrial Area
POA	Power of Attorney
RFP	Request for Proposal
WLU	Wilfrid Laurier University

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Document

The purpose of this report is to present the recommended Long-Term Transit Plan for the City of Brantford. The report builds on the analysis completed in the Interim Background Report, which evaluated existing performance against key objectives, reviewed growth plans and the municipal policy objectives, compared Brantford Transit against best practices and included key feedback from the community of the existing service and core values from the first round of engagement. This led to the development of a draft conventional transit service network and recommended modifications to Brantford Lift services, which was presented to the public in spring 2024. Feedback from this second round of engagement was considered to modify the draft recommendations, which are presented in this report.

The contents of this document include:

- A vision and mission statement for Brantford Transit;
- Recommended service standards to guide service decisions;
- Recommended five-year conventional service plan, including modification to routes, service hours and frequency of service;
- Recommendation modifications to the Brantford Lift specialized transit services;
- Recommended fare policy;
- Recommendations that focus on safety, security, and intelligent transit systems (ITS); and
- Financial plan, including ridership estimates, operating costs and vehicle requirements; and
- A marketing and communications plan to role out the service.

2.0 Policy Framework

2.1 Vision and Mission

Clear and transparent Vision and Mission statements, complemented by Service Principles, are fundamental in understanding the purpose of an organization, what it aspires to be, and how it delivers its mandate.

The following summarizes the Vision, Mission and Service Principles for Brantford Transit over the life of this Plan.

A Vision statement is an aspirational goal the organization is striving to achieve. Having a clear Vision will help Brantford Transit to better align each decision and action it takes towards achieving this recommended future plan.

The Vision for Brantford Transit is:

> Deliver a safe, reliable, and sustainable transit service that provides connections to work, education, shopping, and recreational opportunities in Brantford and beyond.

A Mission statement is a simple, often brief description that captures an organization's purpose and defines its culture and values. Unlike a Vision statement, which is forward-looking and aspirational, a Mission statement should answer the question, “What do we do today?”

Brantford Transit’s mission statement is:

> Work together to connect Brantford with a customer focused culture of safety to drive change.

2.2 Service Principles

Service Principles are intended to be general, values-based statements to help direct the development of the Plan and provide guidance to decision-making over the life of the Plan. Three Service Principles were developed that are linked to the Vision and Mission of Brantford Transit:

- **Ensure passengers are at the heart of all service-related decisions**: This principle speaks to having the customer and their experience at the centre of decisions that relate to how service is provided on the street. This positions Brantford Transit as a customer-centred organization, providing an integrated, affordable, and accessible transportation system for Brantford customers.
- **Invest in reliability and convenience of the transit service:** This speaks to the importance of the continual improvement of, and investment in, the existing transit service area to develop and maintain a service that passengers can depend on. This does not preclude the expansion of service beyond the existing transit service area and highlights the importance of continued investment in existing service to ensure it operates reliably and is responsive to increased demand.
- **Build a flexible transit network that facilitates a variety of transit trips:** This principle refers to ensuring that the Brantford Transit network is designed to meet a variety of different needs and abilities – it is not designed just for commuters, or students, for example, but can also accommodate a wide variety of trip types, such as shopping, recreation, and medical trips, based on a range of customer mobility needs. It should also be accessible for as many Brantford residents as possible who may have physical or cognitive challenges or limitations. This type of network will provide customers the flexibility to use transit to meet many of their trip needs.

3.0 Five-Year Conventional Service Plan

Conventional, fixed-route transit refers to public transit service that is provided on a defined route, with a specific schedule, which stops in predetermined locations. This is the way in which transit service is provided today in Brantford (with the exception of the Brantford Lift service, which is discussed in greater detail in **Section 4.0**). The following describes changes planned to the Conventional Transit network in Brantford, based on feedback provided in the second round of engagement. This feedback is summarized in the "Round 2 What we Heard Engagement" report included in **Appendix A.**

3.1 Network Design Principles

Network changes outlined in the plan were informed by the following principles:

- **Enhance the Level of Service to Address Demand and Ridership Growth:** Brantford Transit's level of service (service hours per passenger trip) is lower than many of its peers. This results in crowding and reliability issues on several routes. Additional service is required to improve the customer experience, increase ridership, and achieve the mode share targets identified in the Transportation Master Plan.
- **Decentralize Service and Improve Route Directness**: Requiring all routes to terminate in the downtown is not aligned with current passenger demand and causes passengers to travel out of their way and make transit less desirable. Providing more direct, two-way service to key destinations in Brantford will make the service more attractive.
- **Design Routes to Support Improved Reliability:** Improving reliability will be important to attracting and retaining transit passengers in future. Design strategies to do this include providing

consistent stop spacing, reducing the number of turns and reducing operations on local streets with significant on-street parking.

- **Improve Frequency of Service:** Respondents from the community survey note that one of their highest priorities for improvement is increased frequency of service during the afternoon peak period. This will increase the convenience and attractiveness of the service.
- **Improve Level of Service During Evenings and on Sundays:** A key result from the community survey was requests for improved frequency of service in evenings and on Sundays, when trip intervals are longer, and demand frequently outpaces supply.
- **Meet the Needs of a Growing Community:** Brantford is experiencing significant population and employment growth. Proposed service improvements should focus on areas of intensification and extend to new growth areas early in the development process to provide a sustainable travel option before travel patterns are formed.

3.2 Route Structure

A route structure enhances the customer experience and supports strategic planning by clearly differentiating and customizing services to meet specific needs, ensuring equitable and efficient resource allocation. This structured approach also facilitates better performance monitoring and adaptability, ultimately improving the effectiveness of the entire transit system. Brantford Transit's proposed conventional network is separated into four different route classifications based on a variety of factors, including:

- **Operating Environment**: The density and land uses of the area including high demand destinations;
- **Frequency of Service**: How often the service operates;
- **Route Purpose**: The primary objective or function of a specific public transportation route, such as serving commuter traffic, facilitating

local travel, or connecting key points of interest within a community; and

- **Operating Periods**: the specific hours and days that each route operates.

Based on these factors, the following route classifications were defined:

Core Routes

Core routes provide frequent service along corridors with high ridership potential connecting major centres, key destinations and transfer hubs. These routes typically operate along population-dense arterial or major collector streets at a higher frequency than local routes, operating all-day, seven days a week. These routes form the spine of the transit network.

Local Routes

Local routes focus on providing trips within residential communities, connecting them to the greater network at local destinations, or transfer hubs. These routes typically provide service on minor collectors or local streets, at a lower frequency than core routes. The hours and days of service are based on demand.

Regional Routes

Regional routes provide service outside of the City of Brantford. These services are designed to facilitate longer-distance travel. They typically have fewer stops than local routes and focus on connecting key regional hubs and reducing travel times over longer distances. In this case, these routes will connect Brant County and the City of Brantford. As such, the routes will be operated with a financial partnership from the connected municipality. Frequencies and hours of operation may differ based on the purpose, demand, and available resources.

On-Demand Transit

On-demand transit provides trips based on specific passenger requests rather than a fixed route or schedule within a pre-defined zone.

Passengers can book rides, and the routes and schedules are planned dynamically to meet demand, providing a more customized transit service in low-demand areas.

Depending on anticipated ridership, on-demand transit services can utilize vehicles of all sizes, including transit buses, shuttles or vans.

3.2.1 Route Numbering

Route numbering can improve the passenger experience of a transit system by creating a simple, intuitive system for recognizing and distinguishing between different routes. Clear and logical numbering helps passengers quickly identify the destination of a route and/or the level of service that can be expected on the route, making the transit system easier to navigate, especially for tourists and newcomers. As such, the following numbering structure has been developed to organize the routes.

Table 1: Proposed Route Numbering

Route Number	Type	Area
1 to 9	Core Route	City-wide
10 to 99	Local Route	City-wide
100 to 109	Regional Route	Between Brantford and adjacent municipality
Letters	On-Demand Transit	Select areas without fixed-route service

3.3 Service Standards

Service standards provide measurable benchmarks that guide planning, performance monitoring, and resource allocation. They also lead to transparent decision-making, ensuring all adjustments made to the system fit within a Council-approved, public document.

Table 2 and Table 3 illustrates a recommended Service Standards for both weekday and weekend service. **Table 4** outlines the recommended design-based Service Standards.

Table 2: Conventional Transit Service Standards – Time-Based Standards on Weekdays

Category	Route Type	Weekday A.M. Peak	Weekday Midday	Weekday P.M. Peak	Weekday Evening	Weekday Late Evening
Service Span	All Services	6 a.m. to 9 a.m.	9 a.m. to 3 p.m.	3 p.m. to 6 p.m.	6 p.m. to 9 p.m.	9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Maximum Headway (minutes)[1]	Core	20	30	20	30	60
	Local	30	30	30	30	60
	Regional	Demand-based	Demand-based	Demand-based	Demand-based	Demand-based
	On-demand	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Minimum Boardings per Hour[2]	Core	25	15	25	10	10
	Local	15	10	15	10	10
	Regional	10	10	10	10	10

[1] Policy-based headways can be increased based on ridership growth. Triggers for improvement include overcrowding; a high utilization that is two times the minimum boardings per hour standard.
[2] Routes that do not consistently meet this standard over a three-month period should be reassessed by Brantford Transit.

Table 3: Conventional Transit Service Standards – Time-Based Standards on Weekends and Statutory Holidays

Category	Route Type	Weekend Early Morning	Weekend Daytime	Weekend Evening
Service Span	All Services	6 a.m. to 9 a.m.	9 a.m. to 8 p.m.	8 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Maximum Headway (minutes)[3]	Core	30	30	60
	Local	60	30	60
	Regional	Demand-based	Demand-based	Demand-based
	On-demand	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Minimum Boardings per Hour[4]	Core	10	15	10
	Local	10	12	10
	Regional	10	10	10

[3] Policy-based headways can be increased based on ridership growth. Triggers for improvement include overcrowding; a high utilization that is two times the minimum boardings per hour standard.
[4] Routes that do not consistently meet this standard over a three-month period should be reassessed by Brantford Transit.

Table 4: Conventional Transit Design Service Standards

Category	Route Type	Standard
Minimum Stop Spacing[5]	Core	300 metres
	Local	300 metres
	Regional	No minimum spacing. Stops to be sited at high demand locations
	On-demand	Spaced so 90% of population in the zone are within 500m walking distance of a stop
Proximity	All services	90% population within 500m of a core / local transit stop or on-demand zone
Reliability	All services	A minimum 90% of trips will depart timepoints within 0 to 5 minutes of the published departure times. No trips will depart before the published departure time.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Gather additional data on route performance once the new network is in place and adjust the Minimum Boardings per Hour targets as necessary.
- Finalize the service standards and seek Council approval to adopt the standards.

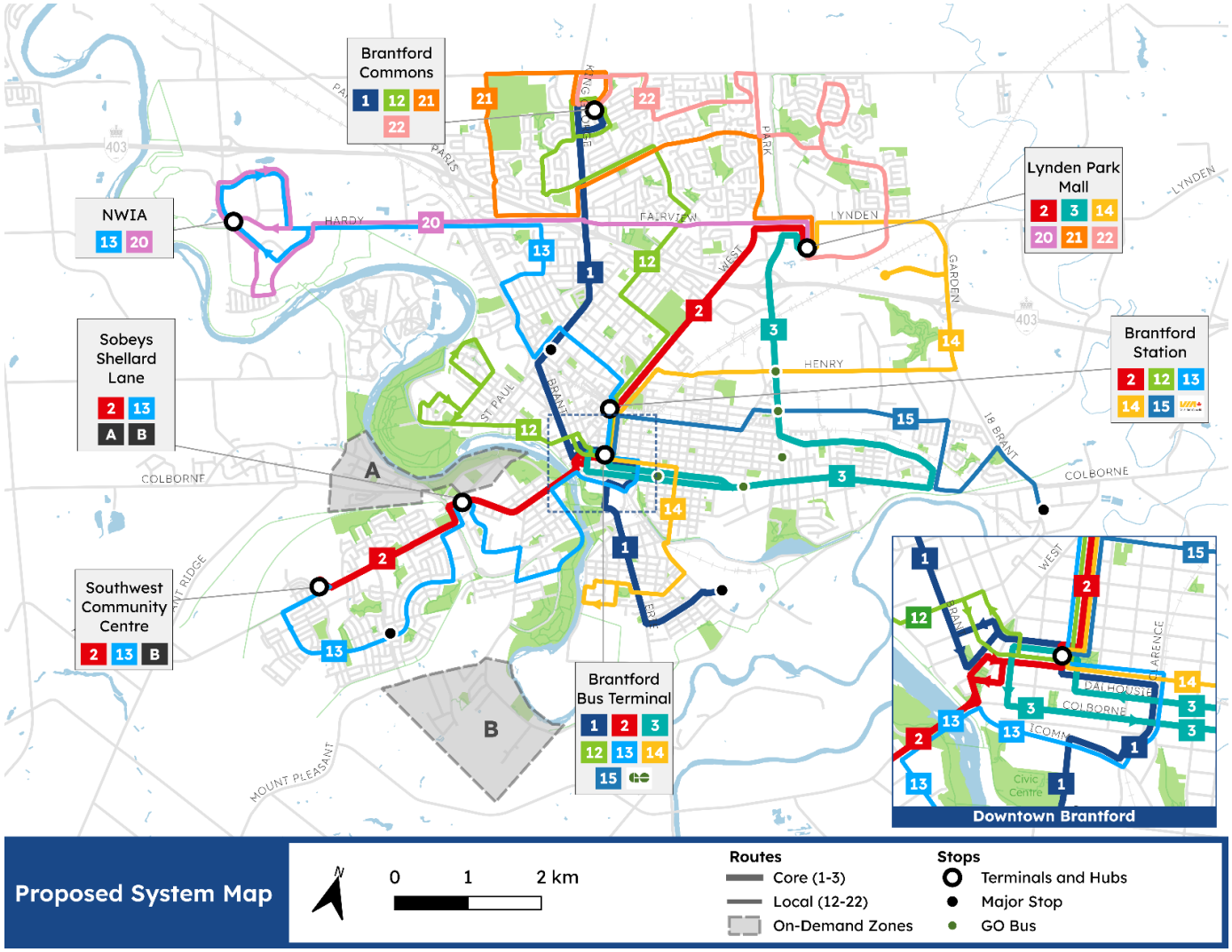
3.4 Recommended Five-Year Plan

The five-year plan represents a significant restructuring of the existing transit system. This was required to achieve the overall network design principles. The proposed network represents a shift to focusing on

[5] Stops closer together than 300m may be implemented if required to achieve the Proximity standard.

providing direct two-way service, with each route connecting to multiple destinations and providing more local transfer opportunities. It also introduces three core routes, that form the spine of the network, with local routes and on-demand transit services providing connections to the rest of the city. The recommended conventional transit network is illustrated in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1: Recommended Five-Year Transit Network



Compared to the existing network, the recommended five-year plan provides the following improvements:

Table 5: Improvements Analysis

Evaluation	Existing Network	Five-Year Plan	Notes
Amount of Service (service hours per capita)	86,300	174,700	The investment in service hours puts Brantford Transit within comparable range of the peer group and will help achieve the mode share targets in the Transportation Master Plan
Connectivity (number of hubs)	2 hubs	5 hubs	Increasing the number of hubs will improve connection opportunities throughout the city
Coverage (% of population with 500 m of transit stop)	83%	90%	The number of residents within close proximity of a transit route will increase.
Two-way service (approximate percent of routes that primarily provided two-way service)	25% of routes	100% of routes	There is a significant focus on providing two-way direct service in the five-year plan meaning that the route travels along the same streets in both directions for ease of wayfinding
Travel time (estimated travel time between key destinations)	-	-	Direct connection between many major origin-destination pairs have direct connections. This includes improved access to Lynden Park Mall, Brantford Commons and Northwest Industrial Area (NWIA).

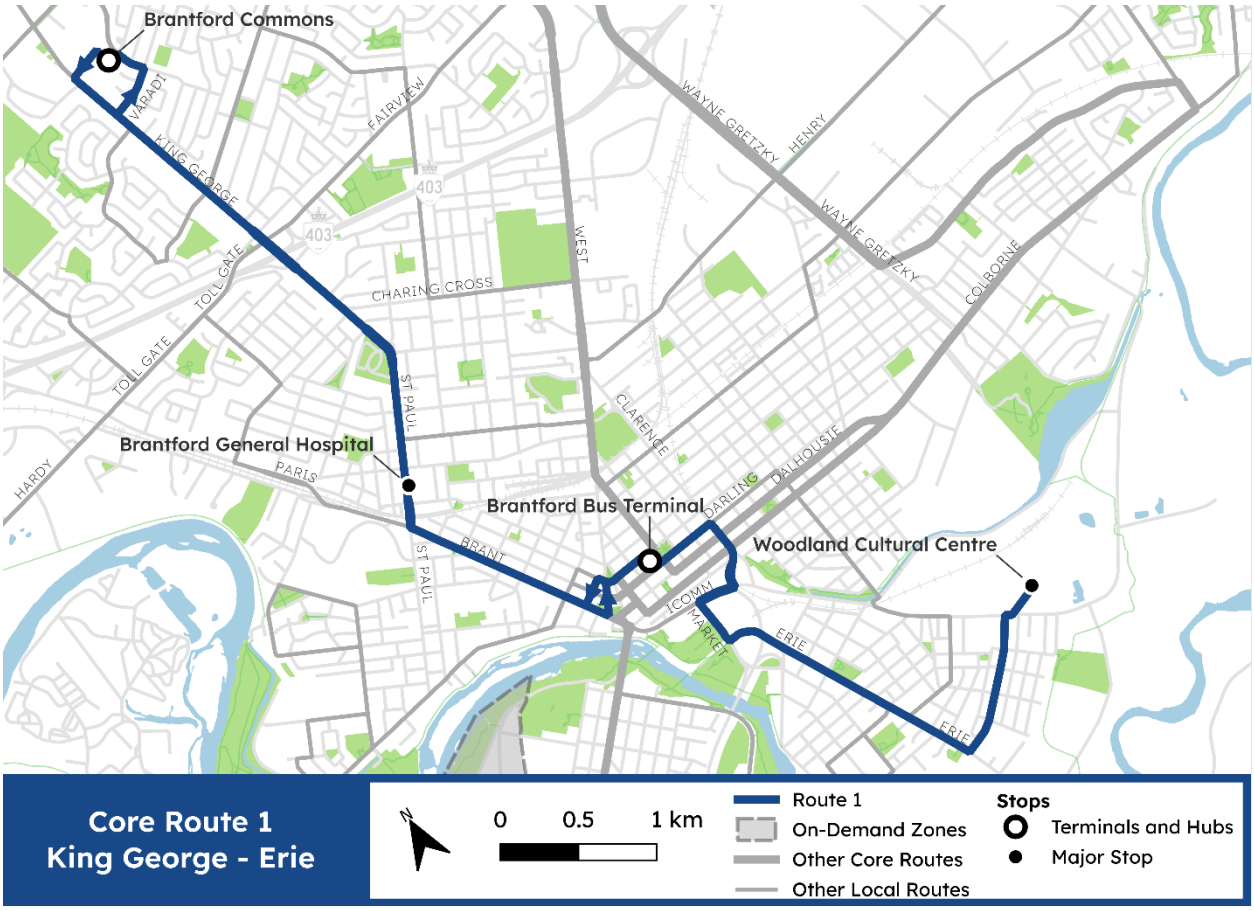
3.4.1 Route Summaries

The following section provides a detailed description of the each of the proposed routes in the Five-Year Plan. For each, a map is included along with the rationale for the change, the potential benefit and impact. The proposed service hours and headways are based on the route classification and are identified in the Service Standards (**Section 3.3**).

3.4.1.1 1 King George - Erie

Route 1 will be a core north-south service that travels between the Woodland Cultural Centre in the Eagle Place neighbourhood and Brantford Commons. This route will provide direct, two-way service along the King George Road-Brant Avenue-Erie Avenue corridor connecting to other key destinations such as Downtown Brantford, the Brantford Bus Terminal and Brantford General Hospital. The transit route, with its southern terminus at the Woodland Cultural Centre, will continue to serve the Eagle Place neighbourhood by providing new, two-way service along Ninth Avenue. The recommended route is illustrated in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2: Route 1 – King George - Erie



This route will improve the service that is currently provided by Routes 1, 4A, 4C, 8, and 11. Streamlining these services into one simple and direct route connecting various major destinations will allow for easier trip planning, more reliable service, and better neighbourhood connections. This route will also address the need for service on Erie Avenue south of downtown, where service is not presently provided.

As this is a core route, service levels in Eagle Place are also enhanced to provide a 20-minute weekday peak headway.

Major Destinations

- Brantford Commons
- Brantford General Hospital
- Brantford Bus Terminal
- Downtown Brantford
- Eagle Place Neighbourhood
- St. Paul Avenue and King George Road commercial destinations
- Woodland Cultural Centre

Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 60 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 20 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 3

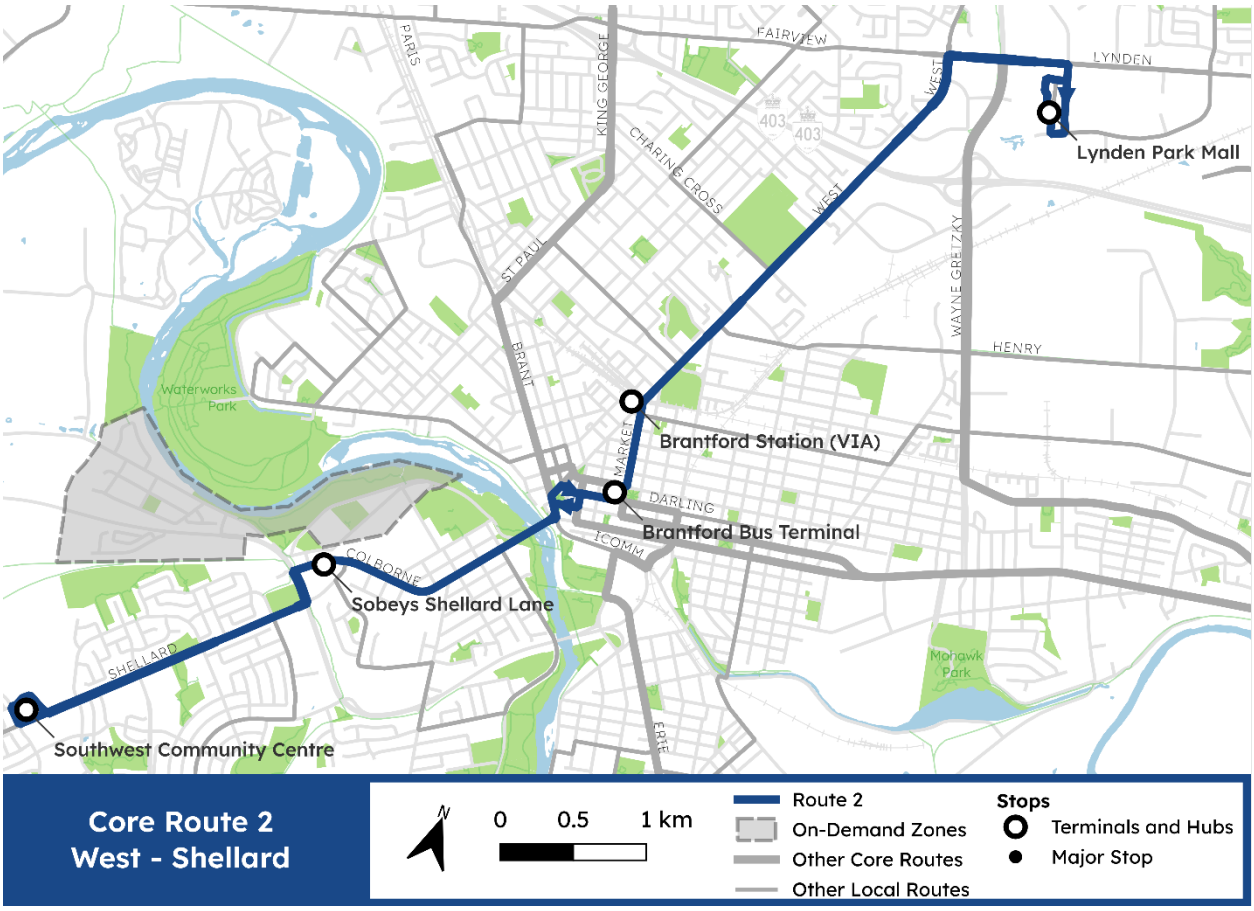
3.4.1.2 2 West – Shellard

This core route will operate from southwest to northeast across the city, primarily travelling along Shellard Lane, Colborne Street, and West Street. The western terminus will be located at the future Southwest Community Centre on Strickland Avenue with the route providing new two-way service in the Shellard community, enhancing route directness and travel times.

The route's eastern terminus at Lynden Park Mall will offer passengers direct access to nearby commercial and employment destinations. Additionally, new two-way service along Colborne Street West will enhance access to commercial and residential areas in West Brant.

This route will significantly improve regional connections by connecting the communities of Shellard and West Brant to the Brantford Station and the Brantford Bus Terminal. Along the entire corridor, from Lynden Park Mall to Shellard, transfers to other routes are possible fostering more direct local trips. The recommended route is illustrated in **Figure 3** below.

Figure 3: Route 2 – West Shellard



This route will replace the service that is currently provided by Routes 2, 5, 11, 12, and 15.

Major Destinations

- Lynden Park Mall
- Brantford Station
- Brantford Bus Terminal
- Shellard Neighbourhood
- Southwest Community Centre
- Downtown Brantford

Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 80 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 20 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 4

3.4.1.3 3 Echo Place

Route 3 is a core route that will travel between the Lynden Park Mall and the Brantford Bus Terminal via the Echo Place Neighbourhood. This route will serve residential areas in the east end of the city, connecting residents to commercial areas and the wider Brantford Transit network. By travelling along the Wayne Gretzky Parkway, travel times will be kept efficient and reliable.

Service along the Dalhousie Street and Colborne Street corridors will be maintained to preserve service to residential and commercial destinations. Two-way service will be brought to new developments in the Grey Street area of Echo Place, and new connections to Route 15, serving Cainsville, will be possible. The recommended route is illustrated in **Figure** 4 below.

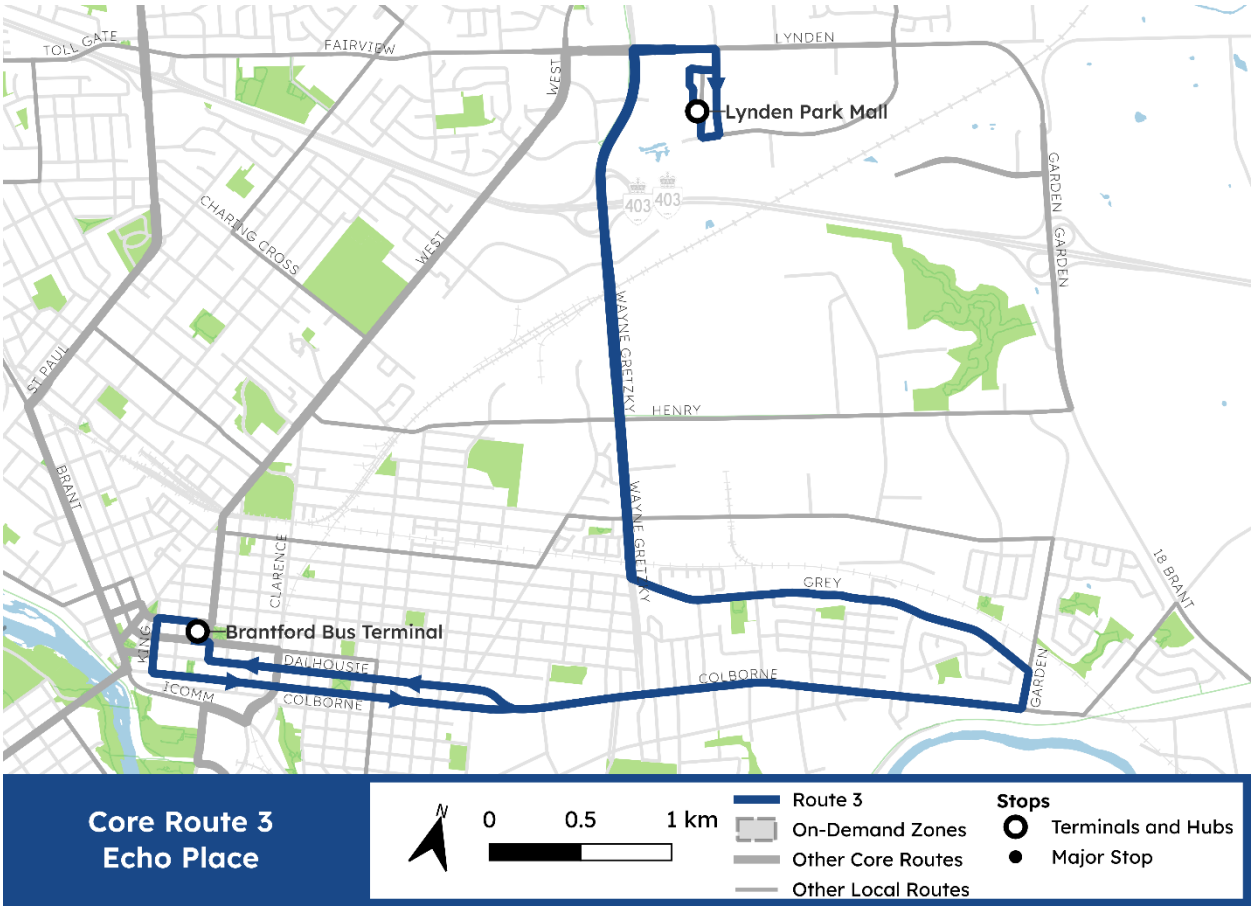
This route will replace the service currently provided by Routes 7, 9, and 14. By deviating the route to Colborne Street and Garden Avenue, all-day, every-day service is maintained within the Echo Place neighbourhood. Route 9 is one of the highest ridership routes in the existing network and the new route structure maintains a 20-minute peak frequency and provides an added connection to Lynden Park Mall.

Major Destinations

- Lynden Park Mall
- St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre
- Echo Place Neighbourhood
- Brantford Bus Terminal
- Downtown Brantford

- Grey Street Communities
- Woodman Park Community Centre

Figure 4: Route 3 – Echo Place



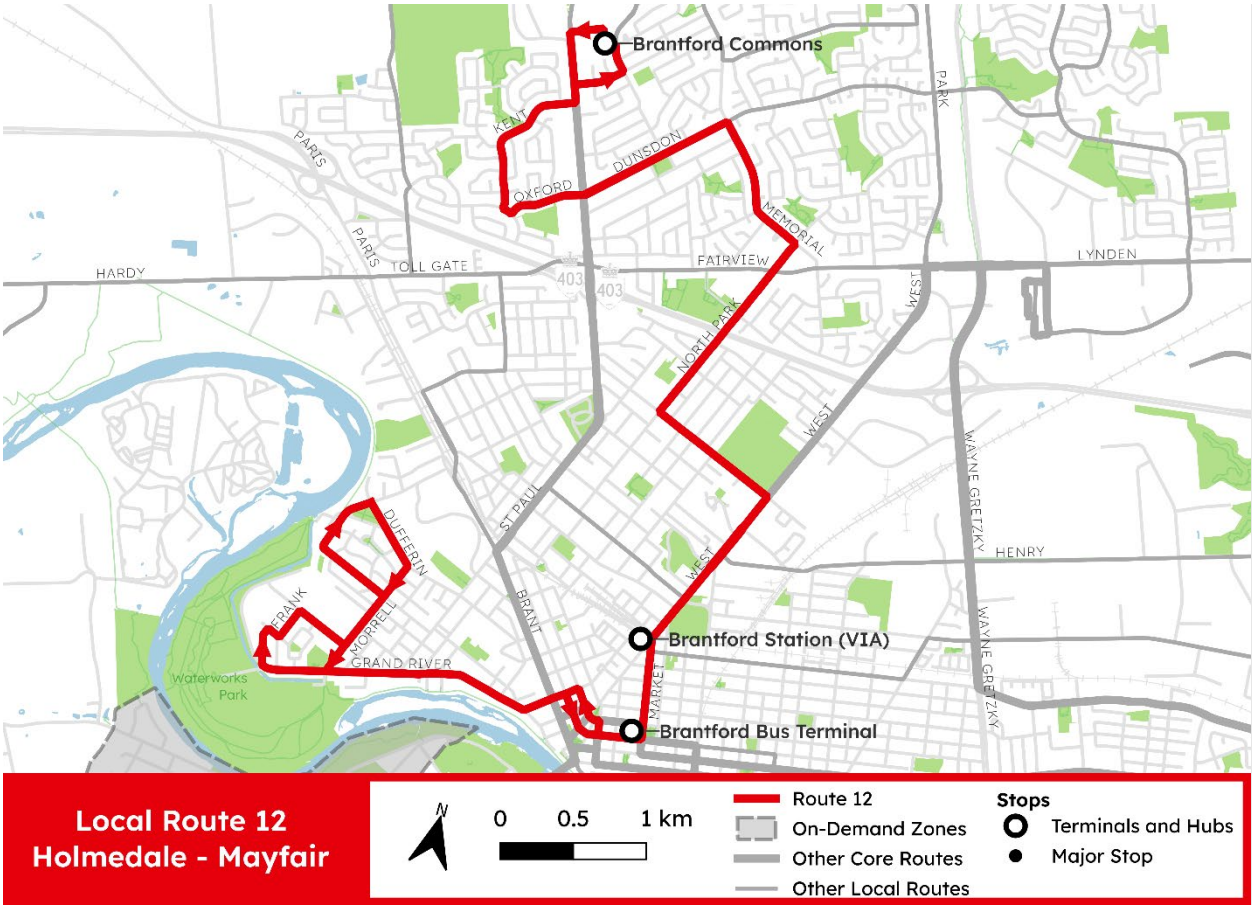
Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 80 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 20 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 4

3.4.1.4 12 Holmedale – Mayfair

This local route is proposed between the Holmedale area and Brantford Commons via Downtown. In Holmedale, service will be provided to the industrial plants near Webster Street and to the North Holmedale residential neighbourhood. New, two-way service will be provided north of Downtown, with connections to other routes possible at multiple points. This route will serve Brantford Station, in addition to the Brantford Bus Terminal and Brantford Commons. For residents living in the central area of Brantford, the proposed route provides a direct connection north and south to three major destinations, which limits the need for transfers. The recommended route is illustrated in **Figure 5** below.

Figure 5: Route 12 – Holmedale - Mayfair



This route will replace portions of existing Routes 2, 4A, 4C, 8, 11, 13 and 15.

Major Destinations

- SC Johnson Plant
- Brantford Bus Terminal
- Brantford Station
- Brantford Commons
- Brantford Transit Garage

Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 90 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 30 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 3

3.4.1.5 13 Blackburn – Northwest Industrial Area

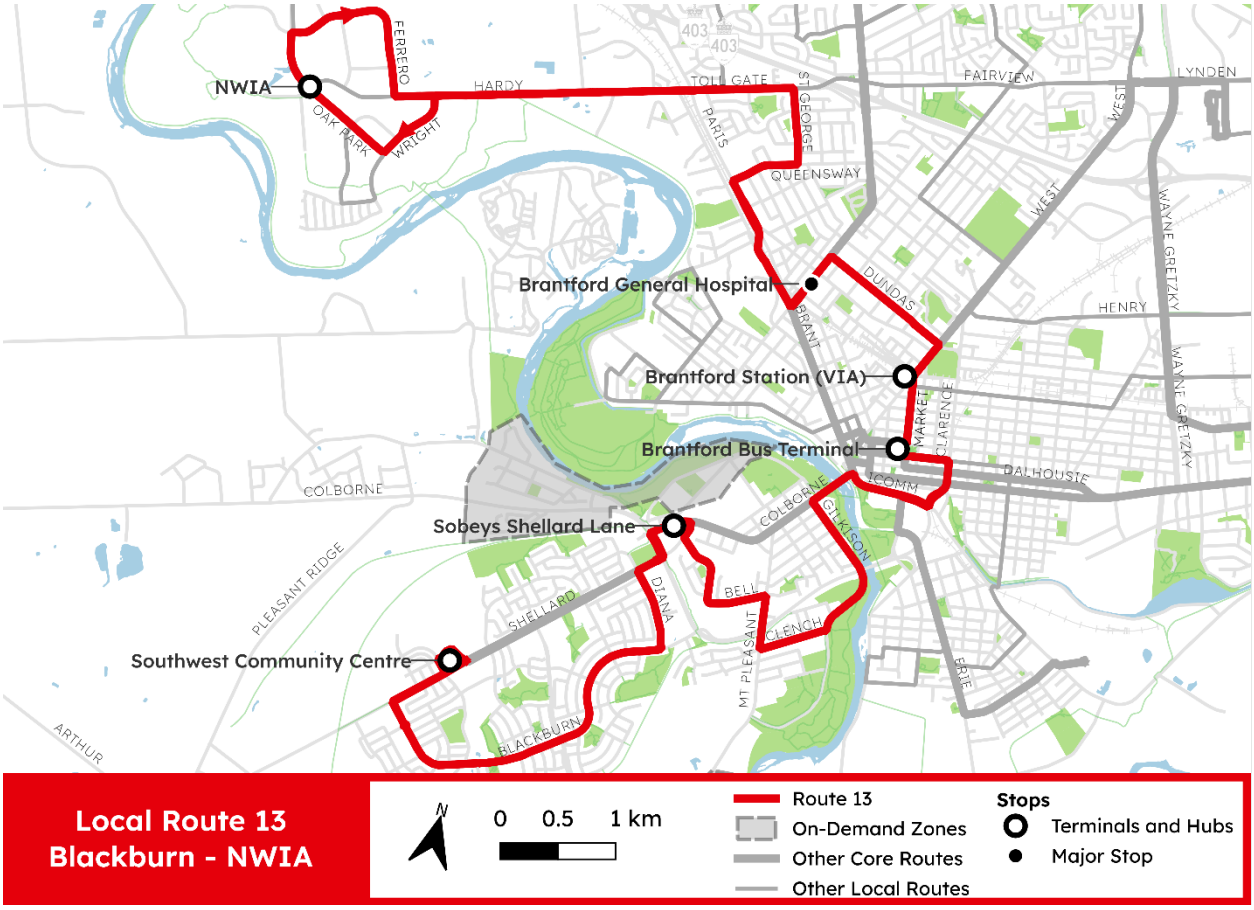
This local route will travel between the Shellard/Blackburn neighbourhoods and the Northwest Industrial Area via Downtown Brantford. This will increase service between Downtown and the NWIA by improving frequencies to every half hour during the majority of the day. Currently, the NWIA route operates every 45 minutes (except for every half-hour during the morning peak) on weekdays and Saturdays, and every hour on Sundays. Route 11 provides hourly evening service Monday through Saturday.

Service will be provided in West Brant along Gilkison Street, Clench Avenue, Mount Pleasant Street, Bell Lane and Hillcrest Avenue. A new hub will be created at Sobeys Shellard Lane providing access to a local community retail location, as well as the opportunity to transfer onto Core Route 2.

This route will cross the Grand River at the Lorne Bridge and will serve key destinations such as the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind, the

Brantford General Hospital and the Brantford Station. Improved coverage in Shellard will be complemented by the new Route 2. The recommended route is illustrated in **Figure 6** below.

Figure 6: Route 13 – Blackburn - Northwest Industrial Area



Major Destinations

- Northwest Industrial Area
- W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind
- Brantford General Hospital
- Brantford Station
- Brantford Bus Terminal
- Sobeys Shellard Lane

- Blackburn Drive
- Southwest Community Centre
- West Brant
- Conklin Plaza

Operating Characteristics

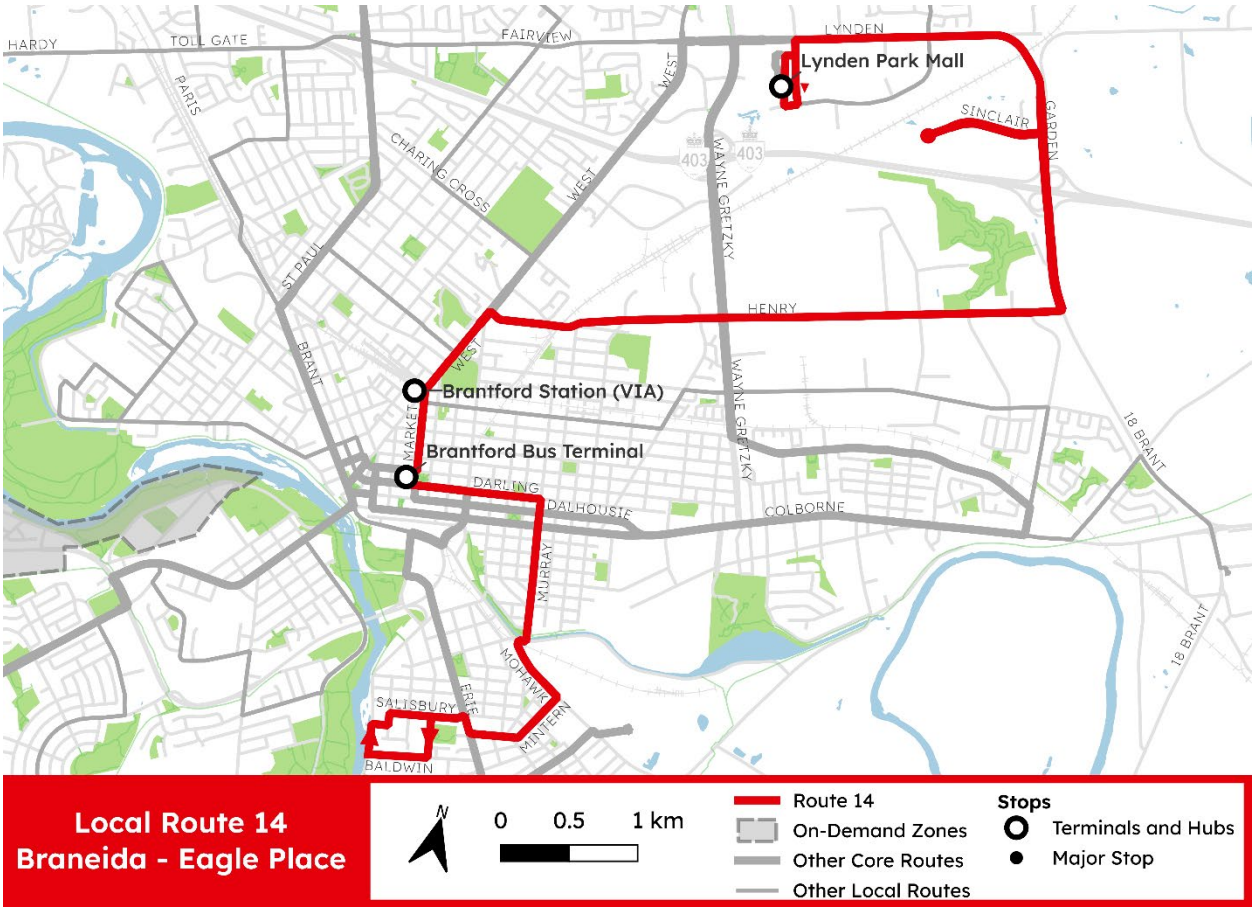
- Round Trip Travel Time: 120 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 30 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 4

3.4.1.6 14 Braneida – Eagle Place

This local route will operate between Eagle Place and the Lynden Park Mall via East Ward and Braneida. This route will make important connections in the eastern areas of the city and provide critical service in areas which currently have only indirect transit options. Important destinations along the route include numerous industrial employment areas, primarily in Braneida, and many residential communities. Fixed-route service in East Ward will be preserved and improved, with new, two-way service along Murray Street. Eagle Place bus service will be further complemented with the addition of Route 1.

The route also provides direct access to several employment opportunities along Henry Street for both residents in the south of Brantford and residents in the northeast (via the Lynden Park Hub). With two-way service, the trip to work and from work will be approximately the same travel time.

Figure 7: Route 14 – Braneida – Eagle Place



Major Destinations

- Woodland Cultural Centre
- Eagle Place
- Downtown
- Brantford Station
- Brantford Bus Terminal
- Henry Street employment area
- Braneida South
- Braneida North
- Lynden Park Mall

Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 105 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 30 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 3.5 (if interlined with Route 20)

3.4.1.7 15 Cainsville

This local route will provide a direct connection between the employment lands and residential areas of Cainsville and Downtown Brantford. Service will also be provided in the southern Braneida employment areas, in addition to service along Grey Street west of Stanley Street.

Service along Elgin Street will maintain access to employment destinations and serves as a direct east-west route to the eastern areas of the city.

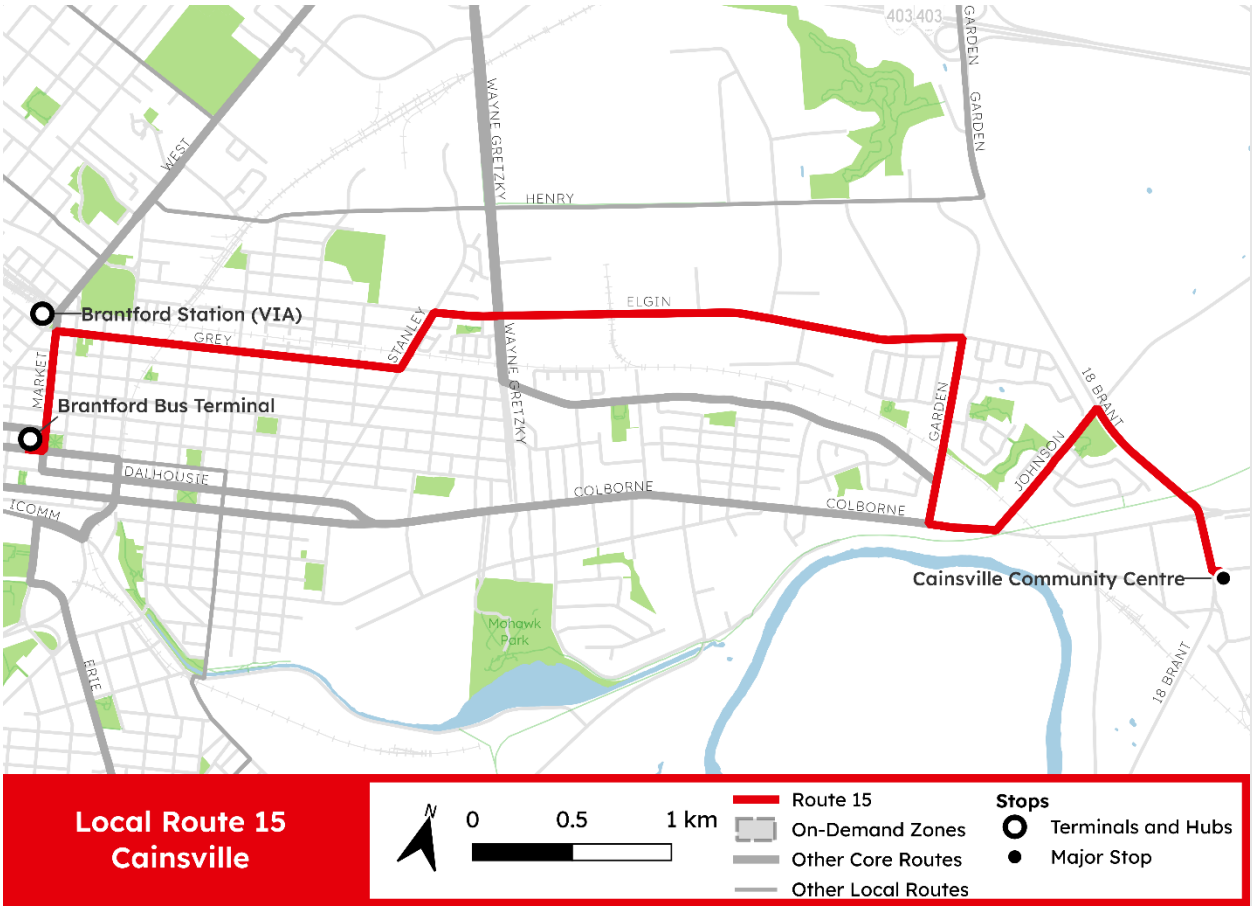
Major Destinations

- Cainsville Community Centre
- Elgin Street employment areas
- Brantford Station
- Brantford Bus Terminal

Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 60 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 30 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 2

Figure 8: Route 15 - Cainsville



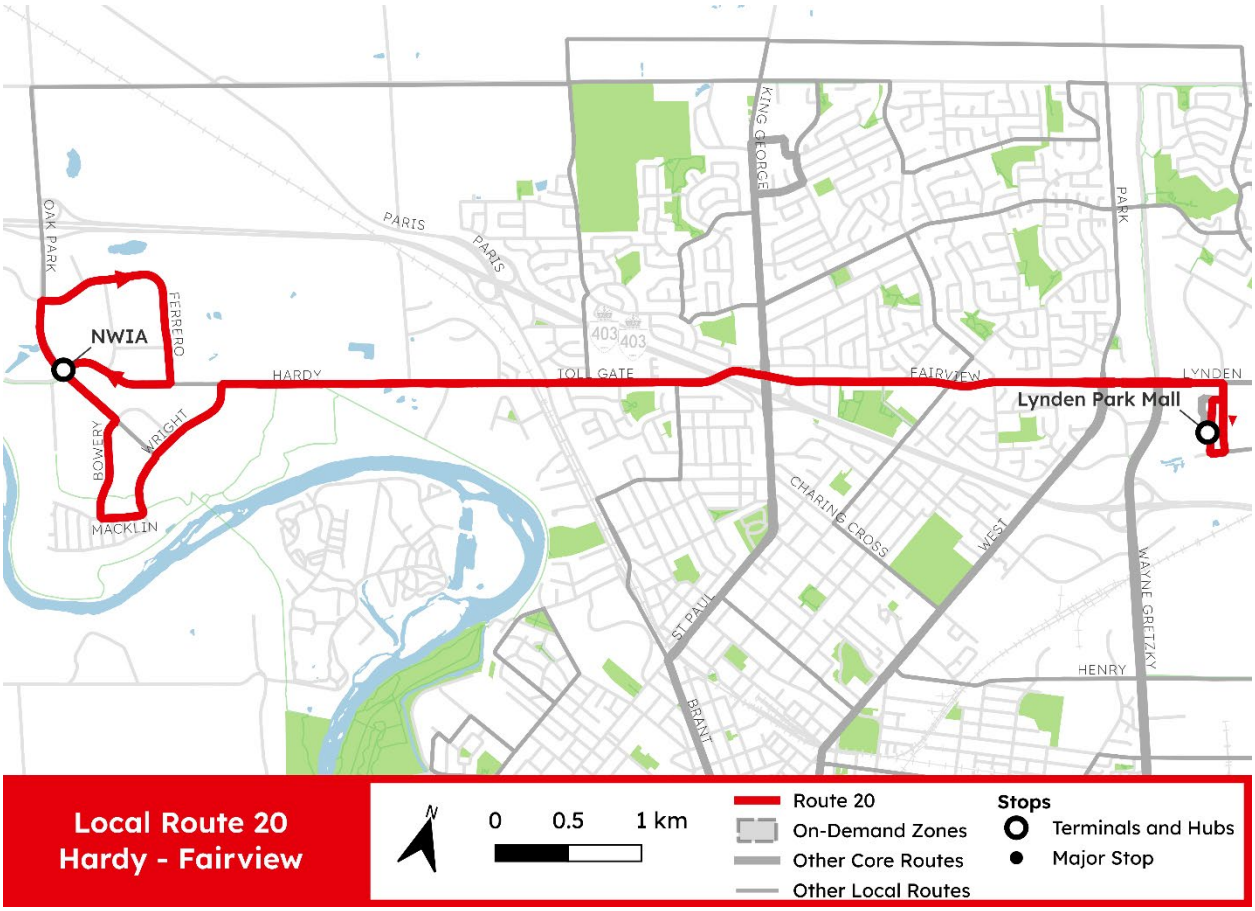
3.4.1.8 20 Hardy – Fairview

This local route will provide a direct connection between Lynden Park Mall and the NWIA, improving east-west service options in the north of the city.

This will provide a significant reduction in travel time for residents that live in the north of the city that need to work in the NWIA, as they will no longer have to travel to downtown Brantford. The service will also provide consistent all-day service, increasing service options to both important destinations.

Important coverage to new residential communities is provided along Macklin Street.

Figure 9: Route 20 – Hardy - Fairview



Major Destinations

- NWIA
- Macklin Street
- Hardy Road
- Fairview Drive
- Lynden Park Mall

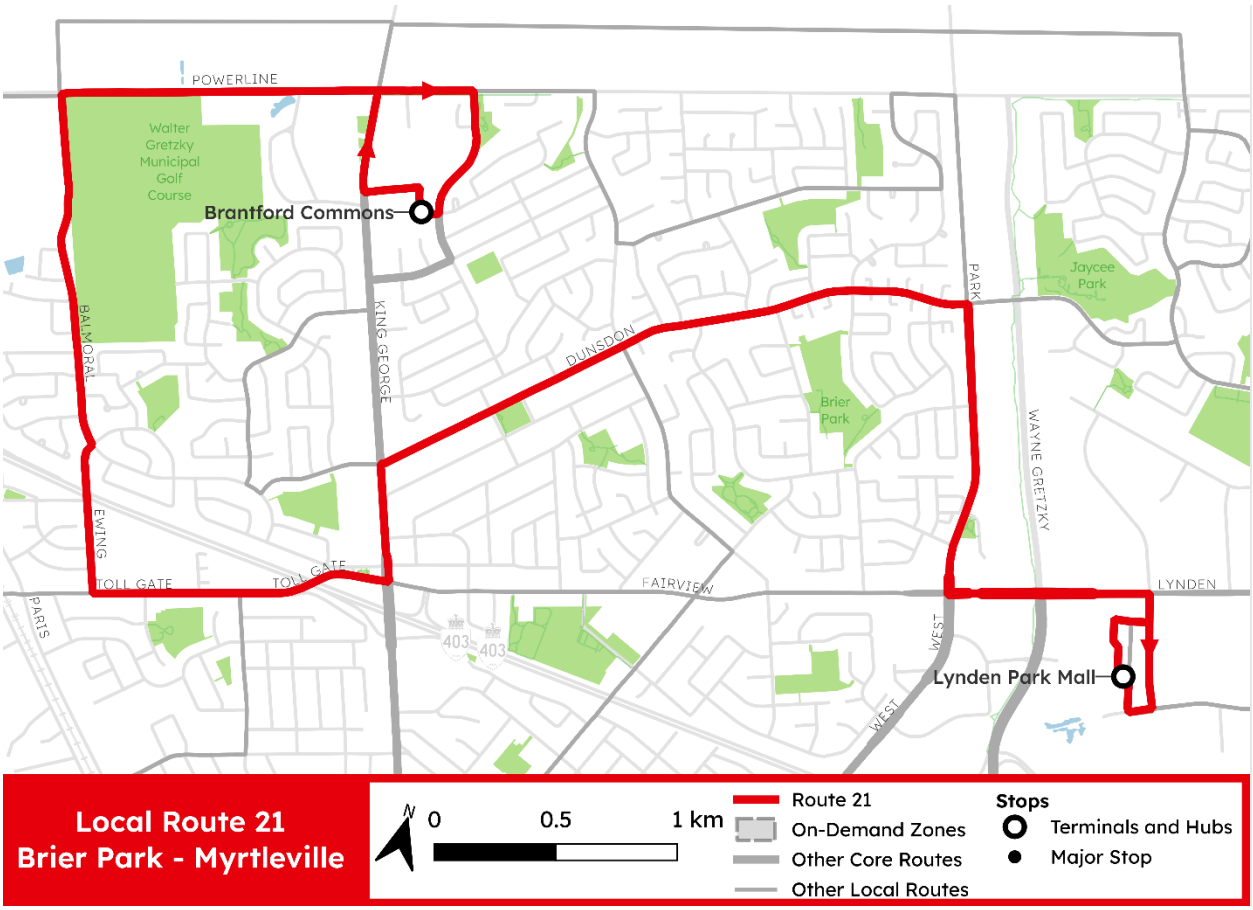
Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 75 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 30 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 2.5 (if interlined with Route 14)

3.4.1.9 21 Brier Park – Myrtleville

This local route will operate between Brantford Commons and the Lynden Park Mall, providing local coverage in the northern areas of the city and complementing the surrounding core and local routes. New two-way service will be provided on Dunsdon Street, Balmoral Drive and Ewing Drive. Major transfer points at either terminus and at King George Road will improve travel times for passengers. This route will also supplement service where the future Powerline West route is proposed, until sufficient ridership warrants the service.

Figure 10: Route 21 – Brier Park - Myrtleville



Major Destinations

- Brantford Commons
- Lynden Park Mall

Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 75 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 30 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 3 (if interlined with Route 22)

3.4.1.10 22 Branlyn – Cedarland

This local route will operate between the Lynden Park Mall and Brantford Commons. This route will provide a local service, ensuring there is adequate coverage in subdivisions where transit would otherwise be difficult to access. Service along Park Road North will ensure that any growth in the area is accommodated by transit. As with other routes, transfers will be possible at numerous points along the route, and travel times will be improved.

It should be noted that as development occurs north of Powerline Road and a new route is proposed to this area, there may be a potential to streamline the route further and remove the loop on Brantwood Park Road and Banbury Road. This will reduce the overall travel time.

This route will replace service currently provided by Routes 2, 4A, 4C, 9, 13, 15.

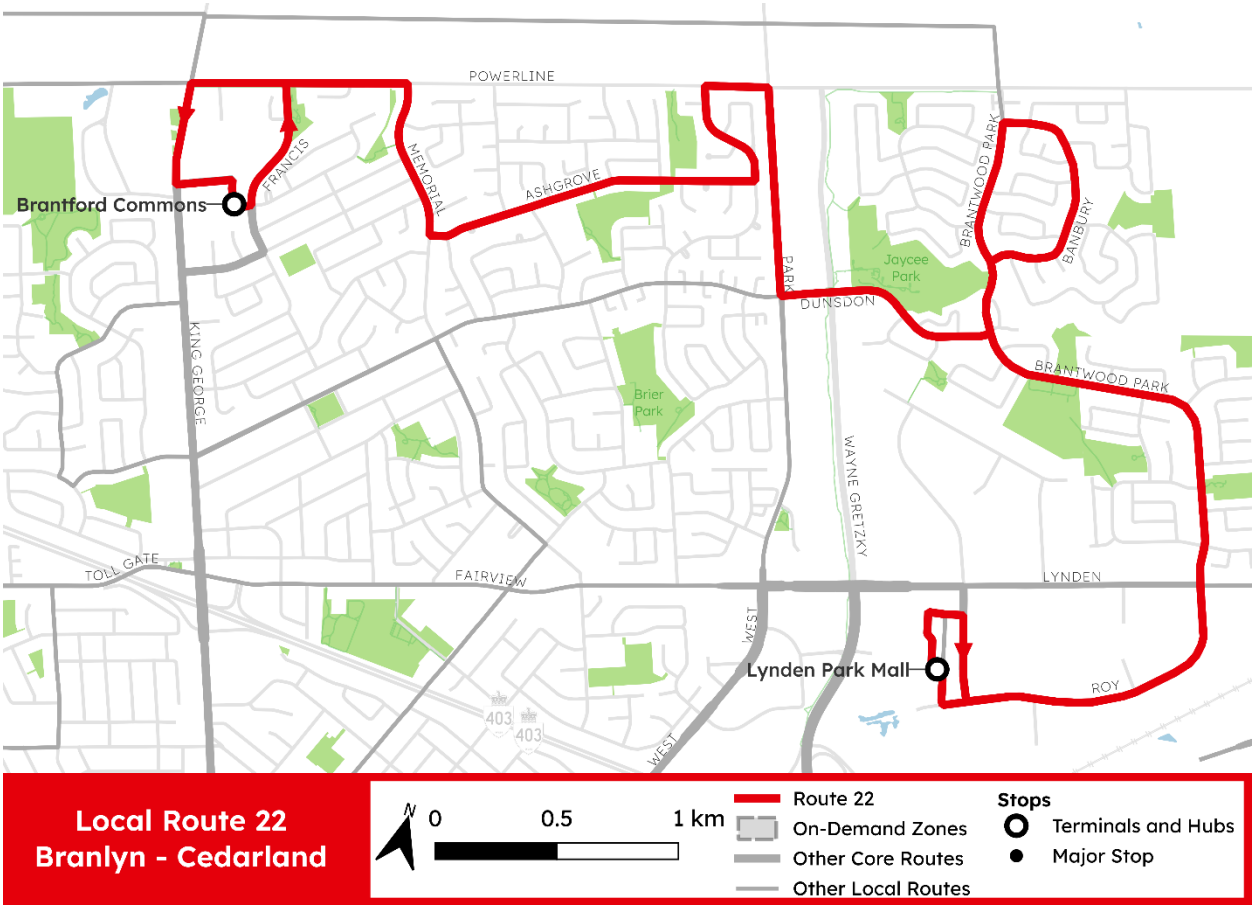
Major Destinations

- Lynden Park Mall
- Brantford Commons
- Branlyn Community Centre
- North Braneida Industrial Areas (Roy Boulevard)
- Brantwood Park

Operating Characteristics

- Round Trip Travel Time: 75 minutes
- Weekday Peak Headway: 30 minutes
- Peak Vehicle Requirements: 2.5 (if interlined with Route 21)

Figure 11: Route 22 - Branlyn – Cedarland

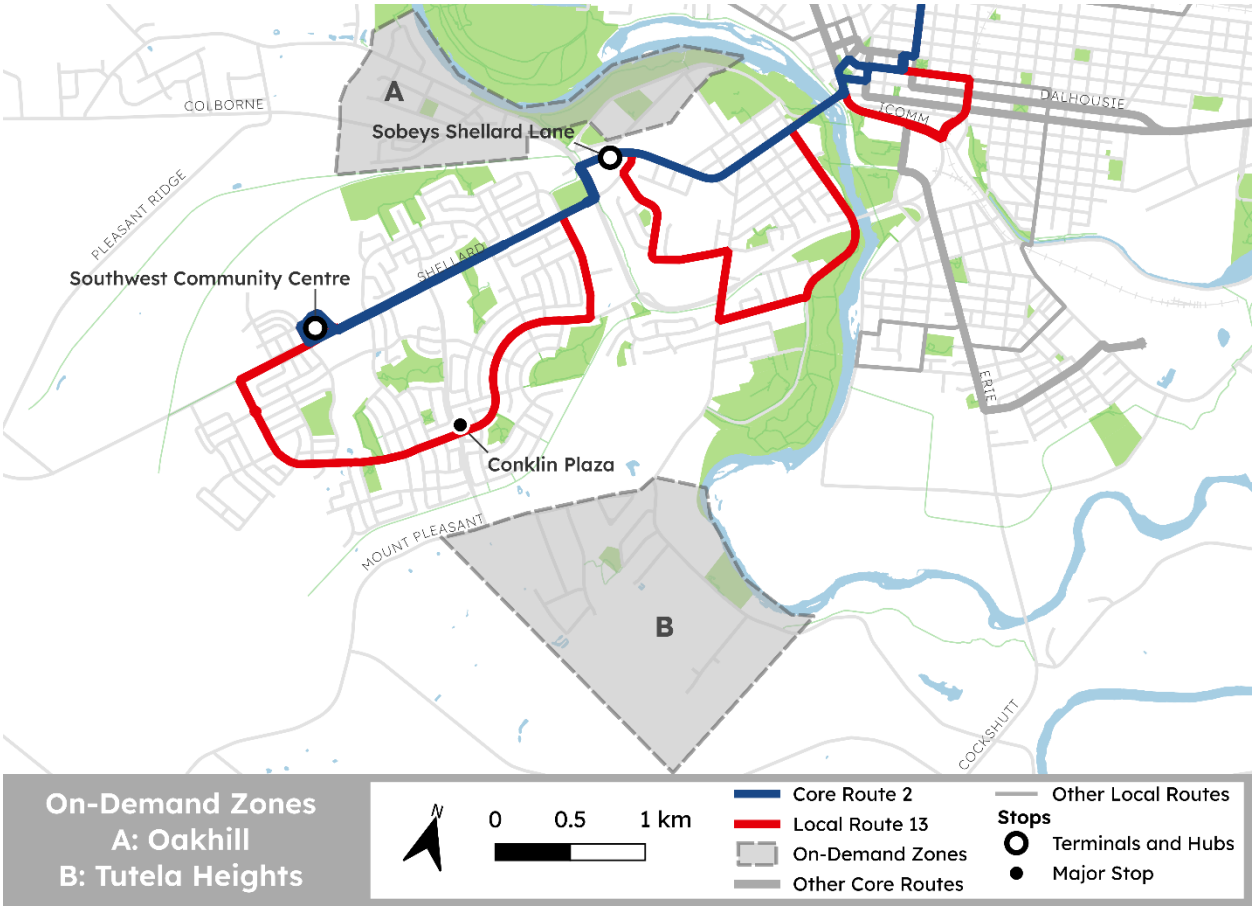


3.4.2 On-Demand Transit

Two on-demand transit zones are proposed to complement the fixed-route services. These zones will encompass the communities of Oakhill and Tutela Heights, which each have low transit demand. The on-demand transit service will allow passengers to receive shared-ride service within each community or to key destinations just outside of the zone that also have a fixed-route connection. Passengers would need to request a ride

within half hour of their preferred pick-up time using an app on their smartphone or by calling the Brantford Transit call centre. The hours of service would be the same as the fixed-route service, however, a vehicle would only be dispatched if there was a trip request. Transfers between fixed-route and on-demand transit would be free, based on Brantford Transit's transfer policy.

Figure 12: On-Demand Zones



Oakhill (A)

The service will operate within area bounded by the Grand River, Catharine Avenue, Spalding Drive, the T.H. & B. Trail, and the County line.

Passengers will be able to connect to Routes 2 and 13 at the Sobeys Shellard Lane.

Tutela Heights (B)

The service will operate within area bounded by the Grand River, the County line, Mount Pleasant Road, Ruijs Boulevard and Davern Road.

Within these zones, several bus stops would be located to allow passengers to book a ride and connect between the closest bus stop within the on-demand transit zone and the nearest accessible transit hub (where they can transfer to Routes 2 and 13 at Sobeys Shellard Lane, Southwest Community Centre and to Conklin Plaza (where they can also connect to Route 2). The connection to these two transfer points also provides residents within the zone a direct trip to two retail hubs without the need to transfer to a fixed-route service.

3.4.2.1 Integrated Service Delivery

It is recommended that an integrated service delivery approach is used, delivering the service with Brantford Lift vehicles. In this operating model, on-demand transit customers may share a ride with specialized transit customers. Specialized transit customers would continue to receive door-to-door service throughout the city, while on-demand transit customers would receive stop-to-stop service within the zone or a connection to one of the fixed-route transfer points outside of the zone.

This approach to trip integration is considered a growing best practice, as it has the benefit of:

- Reducing duplication of vehicles and increasing efficiency of service;
- Enhancing trip booking tools and the ability to book same-day trips for registered specialized transit clients (as trip itineraries can be adjusted and optimized in real time); and
- Reducing walk/roll distance to residents that live outside of a 500 m distance from a transit stop.

3.4.2.2 On-Demand Technology

The implementation of on-demand transit also comes with the introduction of on-demand software which can be accessed using both a smartphone app and a website. The technology provides numerous benefits for both specialized transit and on-demand customers as well as staff. These include:

- Ability for book, adjust or cancel trips using the on-demand app for both specialized and on-demand customers. This can reduce customer wait-times for those still using the call-centre and allow customers that use the app or website to book, adjust or cancel a ride at all hours (not restricted to when the call centre is open);
- Improved optimization of trips, which increases the ability to accommodate same-day trip requests on Brantford Lift;
- Ability for customer to track in real-time the location of their vehicle by using the on-demand app or website;
- The ability to pay for fares on-line if Brantford decides to move forward with this option; and
- Ability for Brantford Transit staff to monitor in real-time the location of vehicles, including time or arrival and departure. This data can be used to confirm any reports of no shows or early/late arrival and departure times.

3.4.2.3 Challenges

While the recommendation presents several benefits, there are certain challenges that need to be addressed:

- **Increase in non-accommodated Trips for Brantford Lift Clients**: If the system is adding passengers that are not registered for Brantford Lift, this has the potential to increase non-accommodated trips. This can be overcome by using on-demand transit software,

which can optimize trips in real-time, finding more opportunities to accept rides, even for same day trips. On-demand transit rides are also typically shorter, and do not accommodate a large amount of time. If ridership does increase, it can be addressed by monitoring key performance indicators and adding vehicles based on achieving pre-determined targets for service enhancement.

- **Trips that are Difficult to Integrate**: Certain passengers have a specific disability which makes it difficult to share a ride with other passengers. For example, passengers travelling home from a dialysis treatment will typically be tired and would be better off being taking home as quickly as possible, without stopping to pick-up other passengers on route. This can be accommodated by documenting these conditions in the on-demand transit software.

3.4.2.4 Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Implement the fixed-route modifications noted above, based on the hours of service and headways for each route type noted in the service standards.
- Introduce on-demand transit using Brantford Lift vehicles in Zones A and B once software is in place.
- Integrate on-demand transit trips on Brantford Lift vehicles, with on-demand passenger receiving stop-to-hub trips while Brantford Lift passengers continue to receive door-to-door or door-to-hub service.
- Upgrade the scheduling software (see note on software upgrades, **Section 4.9**) to allow trip integration to occur between on-demand transit passengers and Brantford Lift passengers. This would typically involve the use of an on-demand transit platform that can:
  - Schedule on-demand stop-to-stop/hub trips and specialized transit door-to-door/hub trips based on predefined eligibility criteria; and

- Provide trip booking and real-time trip tracking using an app or web-based tool.

- Consider revision of the Brantford Lift brand to recognize the appropriate type of service provided as opposed to the customers that the service is provided to. Some examples inspired from other transit agencies that have integrated specialized transit and on-demand transit services include “Brantford On-Demand”, “Brantford On-Request” or “Mobility On-Request”.

3.5 Long-Term Network

In the coming years, it is anticipated that there will be significant growth in the City of Brantford. As growth occurs, it is recommended that the on-demand transit service model is extended to these areas once the major roads are assumed and there is appropriate pedestrian infrastructure in place. This early introduction of transit service will help establish travel patterns as residents move into the new area.

As development continues, it is recommended that Brantford Transit transition the on-demand transit service to a fixed-route model. This should occur as the population around routes begins to approach a level where the minimum ridership targets as identified in the Service Standards can be reached.

The following routes should also be considered for implementation in new development areas.

3.5.1 23 – Powerline East

This local route would be completed once the Powerline East and Powerline Central developments are underway, and the road network allows for bus movement.

This route will connect Lynden Park Mall and Brantford Commons via Brantwood Park Road and the new collector or arterial street within the

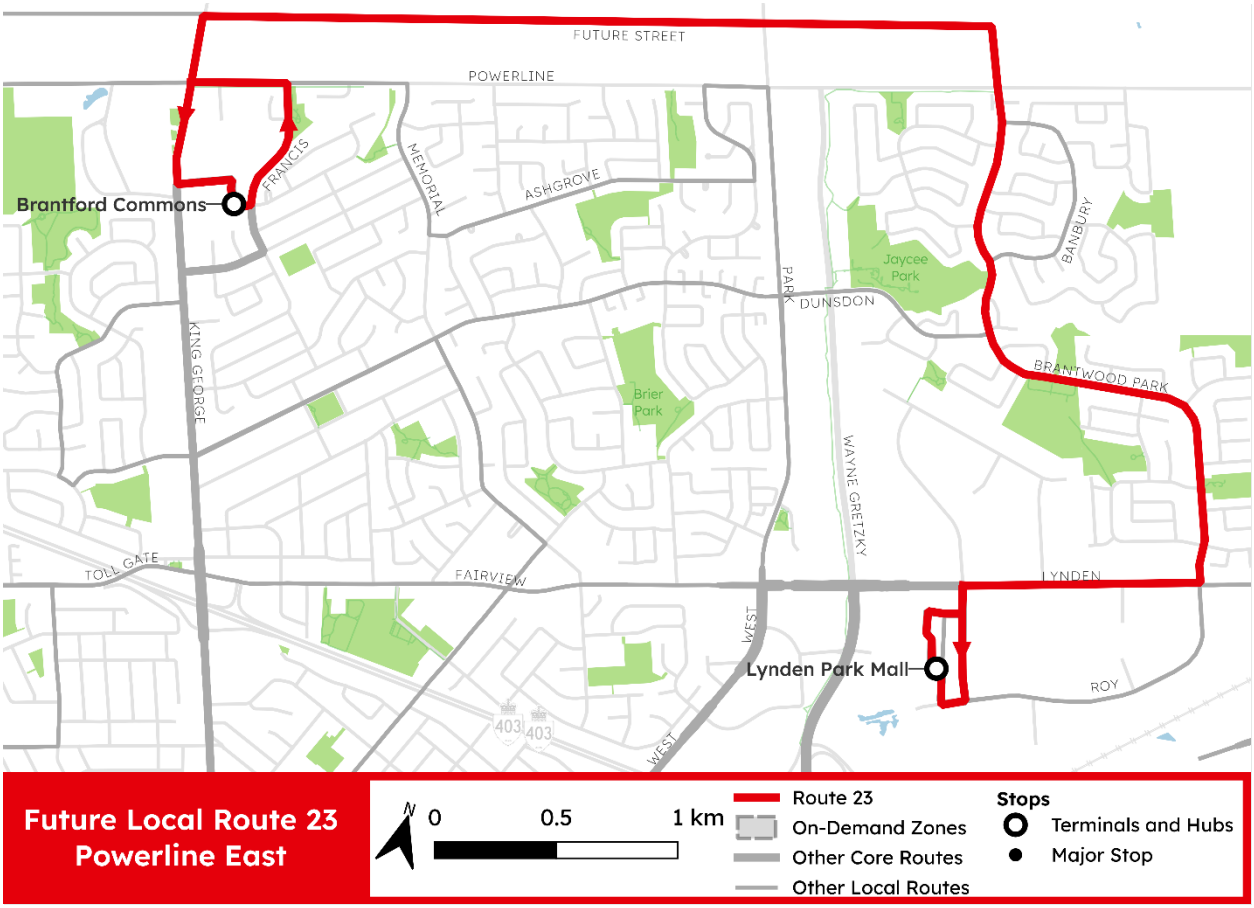
Powerline East and Central subdivision. The east-west street north of Powerline Road will see significant development and is planned to have a transit hub to be located within the development.

Once this route is implemented, consideration should be made to adjust Route 22 by removing the duplication of service on the east side of the route. This will help make the route more direct while still providing adequate coverage in the northeast neighbourhood in Brantford.

Major Destinations

- Brantford Commons
- Lynden Park Mall

Figure 13: Future Route - Powerline East



3.5.2 24 – Powerline West

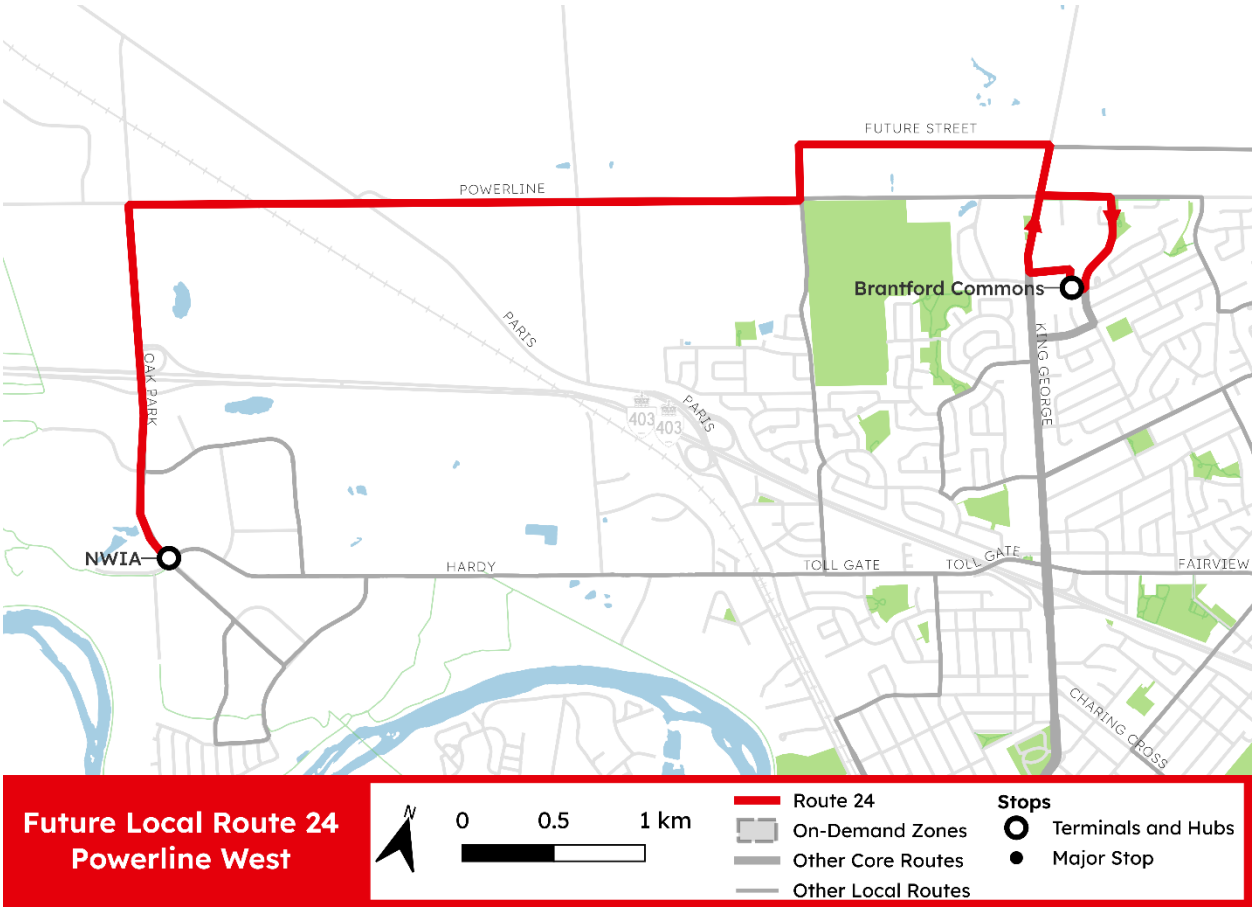
This local route would be completed once the Powerline West and industrial developments are underway, and the roads are assumed to allow for bus movement.

The proposed route will provide access to new residential areas north of Powerline Road, as well as a third connection to a growing NWIA area. Residents will also be able to directly connect to Brantford Commons for retail activities and to transfer to other core and local routes in the network. Specific routing within the NWIA and the Powerline Road corridor will be finalized as the roads in the new developments are finalized.

Major Destinations

- Brantford Commons
- Major employers at NWIA

Figure 14: Future Route - Powerline West



3.5.3 Potential Future Transit Corridors

As development within the western areas of the city continues, the transit service will need to keep pace with demand to ensure that congestion remains manageable and does not overwhelm the local and city-wide road network. Furthermore, it is crucial for these areas to be well-connected to the rest of the city from the start, to encourage sustainable mobility and increase transit's modal share.

Future development service options included within this plan are the Powerline East and West routes, where, subject to development timelines,

increased bus service will benefit both existing and future residents of these communities.

In the western areas of the city, several future corridors have been identified for long-term transit service.

- Conklin Road;
- Gillespie Drive;
- McGuiness Drive; and
- Mount Pleasant Road (between Conklin Road and Colborne Street West).

In some of these areas, on-demand transit service could be used as an initial measure, should ridership levels increase to warrant fixed-route service. Expansions of On-Demand Zone B (Tutela Heights) or a new on-demand zone could be considered to service those areas in the short-term.

Further transit network expansion may also occur as the local road network continues to develop. This includes the proposed Oak Park Road Extension over the Grand River, which could permit a direct route between West Brant and the NWIA.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Work with Planning and Development department to ensure appropriate transit infrastructure is in place in new development areas and that secondary plans make the best use of the proposed transit route structure (e.g., ensuring the highest density and adequate pedestrian connections near the proposed transit corridor north of Powerline Road).
- Monitor the pace of development north of Powerline Road and assess the phasing of an initial on-demand transit service, with progression to the two fixed-route corridors.

- Explore on-demand transit in the growing areas of West Brant as a precursor to new fixed-route service.

3.6 Service Expansion Outside of Brantford

Brantford is an important service and employment centre for many outlying communities. As a growing community, Brantford's location in the western edge of the Greater Golden Horseshoe also provides an opportunity to improve connections to other urban centres, including Cambridge to the north and Hamilton to the east.

The following section identifies potential opportunities to introduce inter-community transit options. The options presented below would need to be assessed reviewed in more detail to determine potential funding partners and operators. For example, Brant County currently operates an on-demand transit service with connections into Brantford, and there are opportunities to introduce fixed-route services from urban centres such as Paris that could be operated by Brantford Transit.

With the expansion of Metrolinx's jurisdiction into the entire Greater Golden Horseshoe, other inter-community connections could also be operated by GO Transit. In these instances, Brantford's role would be to support service and fare integration with GO Transit.

The following section presents some options for consideration.

3.6.1 Paris-Brantford Fixed-Route Service

Paris is located northwest of Brantford and has a growing population of approximately 15,000. There are currently 24 daily on-demand transit trips operated by Brant County that travel between Paris and Brantford. In addition to these, there is an additional 6 non-accommodated trips (due to trip availability or passengers making multiple requests and only selecting their preferred trip). As population continues to grow in Paris, there is an opportunity to convert these on-demand trips to a fixed-route service. This would provide County residents with an opportunity to connect to

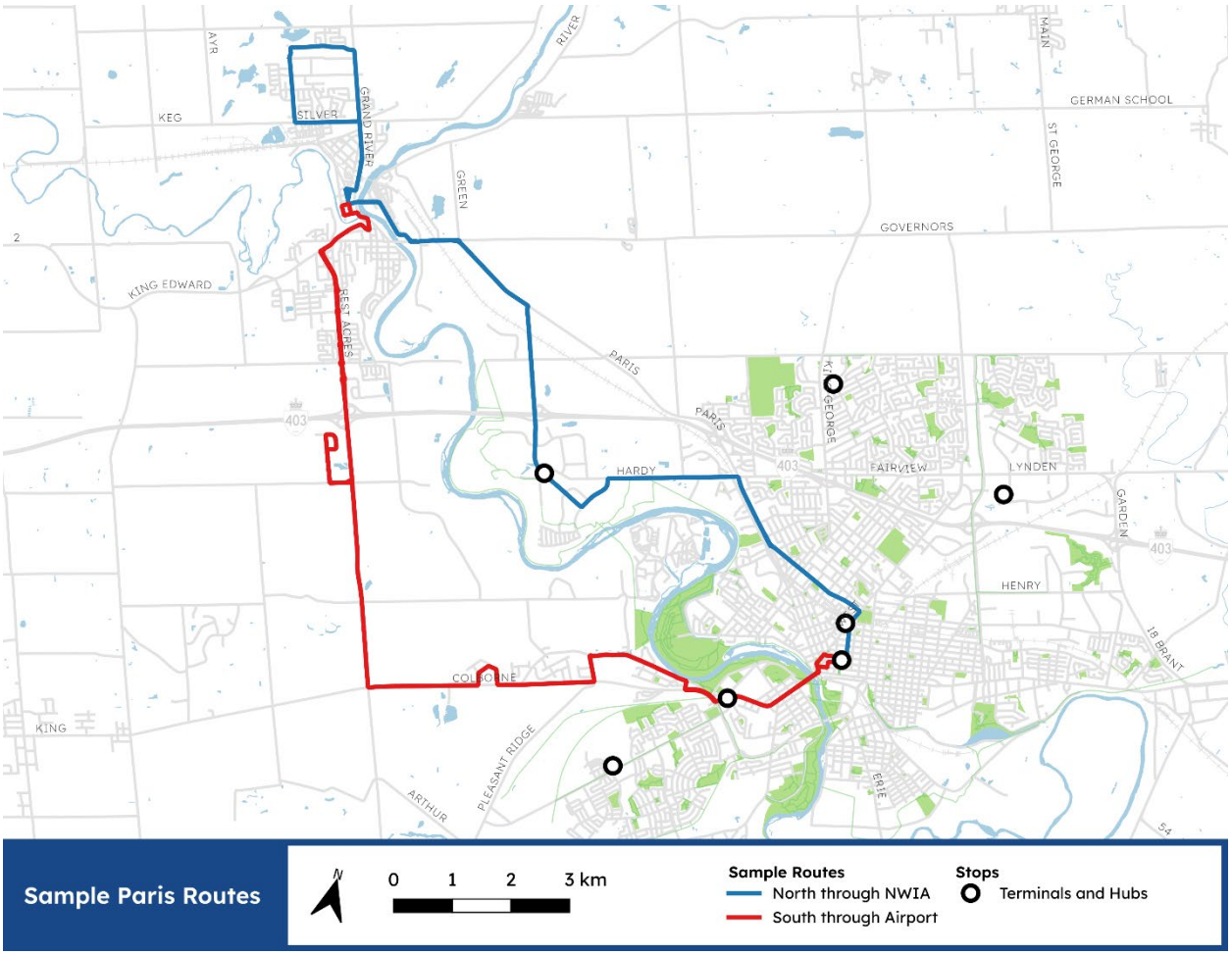
employment opportunities, education, medical appointments, retail and inter-community transit connections such as VIA Rail and GO Transit that are not available in Brant County.

There are several benefits of a fixed-route service over the existing on-demand model. This includes the knowledge that a regular service will arrive at set times every day, making it easier to build one's schedule around work or other planned activities. It also improves spontaneity of travel, as customers can change their schedule the same day of travel and still be able to connect to a bus service.

A potential bus service could either go through the NWIA in Brantford or pass by the Brantford Municipal Airport and 403 Industrial Park on route to Paris. Within Brantford, the route could operate as a semi-express service with stops at key destinations, having the secondary effect of providing faster travel times for city residents. Within Paris, the route could either provide a local feeder service within the community or stop at a transfer point and have the on-demand transit service provide connections to the fixed-route. Two examples of a potential route structure are identified in **Figure 15.**

For this service to be implemented, the city would need to work with the County to confirm the route structure, travel time, and frequency, and develop a contracted service agreement which includes integration with Brantford Transit.

Figure 15: Potential Route Options Between Paris and Brantford



3.6.2 Brant County - St. George and Burford

Outside of Paris, two of the largest population centres in the County are St. George and Burford. St. George is a small community about 9 kilometres north of Brantford with a population of approximately 3,300 residents. Burford is small community located about 13 km west of Brantford with a population just over 1,000 people.

Both communities have an on-demand transit service provided by Brant County which allows residents to travel anywhere in the County and the City of Brantford. Brant Transit completes approximately 1 daily trip between St. George and Brantford and approximately 1 daily trip between

Burford and Brantford. Unaccommodated trips from both communities account for less than 1 trip request per day. This amount of ridership does not warrant a daily fixed-route service, suggesting that the existing on-demand service is effective unless ridership grows significantly.

For service to St. George, a fixed-route stop may be possible if there was a desire to provide a service between Brantford and the City of Cambridge. This type of inter-community transit service (to Cambridge) would likely be operated by GO Transit using a GO Bus, which fits within their mandate to provide long-distance cross-boundary service between multiple jurisdictions within the Greater Golden Horseshoe, unlike those typically offered by a local transit operator like Brantford Transit. Another alternative could be an express bus with a connection to Brantford Commons, when ridership permits.

Brantford Transit has the potential to operate on-demand services on behalf of the County. The city has spare Brantford Lift vehicles and trained drivers that would also accommodate the needs of passengers with a disability. Since most of the demand would be from Brant County residents going to Brantford, this type of service model would need to be funded by the County through a contract or a shared-service agreement. The benefit would be better integration with Brantford Transit services, particularly if these communities grow and a fixed-route service is warranted.

3.6.3 Cambridge and Hamilton

The largest municipalities adjacent to Brantford are the City of Cambridge and the City of Hamilton. Connecting these municipalities via Brantford would help address inter-community travel within the region, including access to major post-secondary institutions, hospitals, major retail areas and employment opportunities in all three cities. Currently, the overall

travel demand to Hamilton is approximately double the travel demand to the Region of Waterloo, even though it is slightly further[6].

Providing an inter-community connection to Cambridge was requested in the engagement process, but the travel time would be up to 60 minutes or between 20 to 30 kilometres per direction depending on the route taken and number of stops.

The distance between Brantford and Hamilton is over 40 kilometres depending on the route and destinations. GO Transit currently operates a bus service between Brantford and Hamilton every 1 to 2 hours. The one-way travel time between downtown Brantford and the Hamilton GO Centre is between 1 to 1 hour and 23 minutes.

These inter-community trips are better suited to be operated by GO Transit as they connect long-distance trips between multiple jurisdictions through large undeveloped areas. As Brantford continues to grow, the demand between Brantford and Hamilton will continue to increase and discussions should be had with Metrolinx to increase the frequency of the GO Bus service or assess the feasibility of extending the GO Train from Hamilton.

For trips between Brantford and Cambridge, the feasibility of introducing a direct GO Bus should also be discussed with Metrolinx, particularly when the ION light rail service in the Region of Waterloo is extended into Cambridge (providing better connections to the rest of the Region).

Brantford should also continue discussion with Metrolinx about adopting the single fare agreement. This agreement is in place with most transit agencies in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area and would eliminate the Brantford Transit fare for passengers transferring to/from a GO Transit service. This would require Brantford to work with Metrolinx on a bridging

[6]Based on 2016 Transportation Tomorrow Survey Data

solution between their new smartcard and the Presto card used by Metrolinx when passengers transfer between services.

3.6.4 Six Nations of the Grand River

Six Nations of the Grand River (Six Nations) is located approximately 25 km southeast of Brantford. In recent years, Six Nations completed a transit feasibility study which assessed the implementation of a local and inter-community transit service. One of the recommended routes was a service between Ohsweken and downtown Brantford. If the Six Nations decides to move forward with this service, it is recommended that Brantford Transit work with Six Nations to allow use of their transit hubs and identify opportunities for fare and service integration.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Continue discussions with Brant County to explore opportunities to introduce a fixed-route service connecting Paris to Brantford and identify integration opportunities with the Brant County on-demand service.
- Continue discussions with Metrolinx about implementing the single fare agreement and exploring the feasibility of a GO Bus service between Brantford and Cambridge, as well as an expanded GO service between Brantford and Hamilton.
- Continue discussions with Six Nations of the Grand River about potential service and fare integration if the Nation introduces a fixed-route service to Brantford.

3.7 Transit Facilities

Transit facilities range from bus stops to terminals and are the interface between public transit vehicles and transit users. It is important that they have a strong presence in the urban landscape, and provide a safe,

convenient and visible connections to nearby jobs, retail and housing. They should also make a positive impression on both current and potential transit customers.

To facilitate transfer connections, high quality facilities that provide weather-protection to waiting passengers, route and schedule information, convenient pedestrian and cycling access, and safe bus operations are required at key points in the network.

3.7.1 Classification of Passenger Amenity

There are hundreds of locations in Brantford where passengers access transit service, some of which have a very high number of boardings per day, and many with fewer than 10. The following guidelines outline the level of passenger amenities which should be provided at these locations based on the number of passengers using the facility, the number of routes servicing the stop, and environmental conditions.

All bus stops and passenger facilities should be accessible, allowing passengers with mobility restrictions to access the entire network. When constructing and upgrading facilities, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards should be used.

3.7.1.1 Level 1: Standard Bus Stop

Basic bus stop amenities are found at all locations where passengers can board or exit a transit vehicle in Brantford. These bus stops can be served by any number of routes, and all bus stops are marked by a bus stop sign with route information, a stop number, and a phone number to access scheduling or real time trip departure information. All bus stops should include an unobstructed concreate pad or paved surface that is at least 1.5 metres long and 2.5 metres deep to accommodate persons using mobility aids. These should be connected to a sidewalk that also meet minimum accessibility standards. It should be noted that not all stops

currently meet the accessibility standard, but Brantford should make this a goal.

3.7.1.2 Level 2: Sheltered Stop

In addition to a marked bus stop, Level 2 stops should include a shelter that accesses the concrete landing pad. A standard bus stop is a candidate to have a shelter installed if there are more than 50 passenger boardings per day. Shelters may be considered in some circumstances with lower volumes when there are other factors which may make them strong candidates, such as when the stop is adjacent to a seniors' residence or community centre. A stop may also be considered for a shelter if environmental conditions warrant a passenger shelter (i.e., the stop is located in a particularly exposed or windy location). Due to maintenance contracts, resource availability, and space constraints, not all stops which meet these criteria will receive shelters. Level 2 stop should also contain standard passenger amenities including a bench (in the shelter) and passenger information on the shelter.

3.7.1.3 Level 3: Transit Hub

Transit hubs are typically found at major destinations and/or a transfer location for a large volume of passengers, but does not have interior waiting space, like a terminal. This type of stop is meant to facilitate the transfers required to complete a trip in the transit network, beyond the Brantford Bus Terminal. A bus stop is a candidate to become a transit hub if there are more than 250 boardings per day, and the stop is serviced by at least two routes and/or is located at a regional destination or intermodal transportation hub. Bus stops will be upgraded to a transit hub based on resource availability.

The amenities at a transit hub will vary based on site conditions, but in addition to a standard shelter, they may be equipped with additional seating, lighting, passenger information (route maps or schedule

information, electronic message boards), bike racks, waste receptacles, or additional/larger/ heated shelters.

An example of a stop which could be upgraded to become a transit hub is Lynden Park Mall.

3.7.1.4 Level 4: Transit Terminal

This level only exists at transit terminals that have interior passenger waiting space. The Brantford Transit network currently only has one terminal that has interior passenger waiting space. If in future, if Brantford Transit were to introduce another terminal, these terminals should include public washrooms, drinking fountains, electronic message boards sharing departure times, the availability of refreshments, and interior seating.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Implement the categorization of transit stops as described above and prioritize investment in stop amenities at busier stops to enhance passenger experience.

4.0 Specialized Transit Service

Several recommended actions are identified below for the Brantford Lift specialized transit service. These include recommendations around eligibility, service delivery, operations, customer experience and growth.

4.1 Eligibility

Eligibility criteria, policies and processes are critically important to the success of the overall Brantford Transit Long-Term Plan. Ensuring optimal elements of eligibility are in place ensures Brantford Transit can match the correct type of service to each customer, helping to increase availability, flexibility and independence for customers while taking advantage of the accessibility improvements Brantford continues to make to the built environment and the conventional transit network. The goal is to establish a clear, consistent and robust eligibility process to ensure Brantford Transit services and resources are allocated appropriately based on customer ability. By adjusting strengthen eligibility, Brantford Lift can also provide a strong foundation for the future success of the integrated service delivery model.

While Brantford Lift utilizes the eligibility categories outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) and the Integrated Standards Regulation (IASR) O. Reg. 191/11, S.63 (1)-(4), there are opportunities to improve clarity and better align customers to the right type of service.

The investments Brantford Transit has made to increase the accessibility of its conventional service open the opportunity for Brantford Lift customers to integrate conventional transit for all or part of their trip. For example, a customer may have the functional abilities required to board and ride a conventional bus, however, they face a barrier in getting to/from the transit stop (e.g., unable to ambulate further than 100 metres). A demand-responsive Brantford Transit vehicle could remove this barrier

by picking the customer up at their home and bringing them to their nearest bus stop. To do this, the eligibility process needs to reveal the right information about the customer's needs and abilities.

Industry best practices point to matching the customer with the best level of service based on their functional transit abilities. However, Brantford Lift is limiting this potential in three key ways:

1. Application questions aren't providing the opportunity for conditions to be captured by eligibility staff.
2. Using only one condition for conditional eligibility (i.e. winter only).
3. Using the temporary category in lieu of making a permanent eligibility determination.

Brantford Lift eligibility presently falls into the responsibility of one single staff member who has all the knowledge, which is an identified risk. As the customer base grows, both the volume and the specialized knowledge of functional abilities may need to be supported externally. Exploring third-party assessments may help address two key issues identified. For example, many Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) transit agencies have seen an increase in applications for customers who are neurodiverse, or those who have complex mental health conditions, or an increased number of people wanting to travel with dementia. The eligibility decision making can be complex for certain cases or scenarios. Having the option for a third-party review, assessment, and eligibility recommendation, may help Brantford Lift in the future. Typically, these programs are established through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, where the range of submissions varies from large medical organizations to smaller niche transit eligibility evaluation firms. The cost can range anywhere from $150 to $450+ per application assessment. Approximately one third (or less) of applications are sent for third-party evaluation. Establishing a clear procedure/criterion for when third-party assessors are engaged is important to ensure it is a fair and objective process, consistent across all applicants (e.g., to be able to defend why customer X

was sent to third party and Y was not). These criteria usually involve some sort of complex case criteria (e.g. multiple disabilities, complex abilities and needs, not easily placed into one category, follow-up phone call interviews to discuss with the applicant are required, etc.).

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit make the following changes to the eligibility criteria:

- **Match Customers to Service Level**: Clarify and better align customers to the right type of service by utilizing a decision-making framework that is based upon functional abilities. Brantford Lift's current eligibility decision making approach has elements remaining from historical, outdated frameworks, such as the medical model of disability. For example, determining eligibility categories are based on elements such as type of disability, type of device, and overly focusing on mobility barriers. Functional abilities decision making stems from the social model of disability that focused on barriers in the environment that may prevent the customer from accessing conventional transit some or all of the time. Functional abilities needed to take conventional transit would include, but not limited to, the ability to ambulate to the bus stop, to read and understand navigational signage, to be able to safely and independently cross the street, to ask for help if lost, etc. By implementing a functional abilities approach, Brantford Lift will be better positioned to match customers to the right level of service (e.g., door-to-door, conditional, integrated, on-demand transit, etc.).
- **Expand Conditional Eligibility**: Expand the current conditional eligibility category from winter only to include other customer conditions and improve customer identification to facilitate integrated trips. The first logical expansion would be to add the condition of summer only from April 1 to October 31. Certain disabilities, such as people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), experience

worsening and exacerbation of symptoms during the hotter months. Other conditions that could be helpful for implementing future integration could include time of day, unfamiliar routes, dialysis only, day program only, etc. Note that introducing additional conditions requires specific technology and software capabilities as well as both public and staff education and training.

- **Re-align Temporary Eligibility**: Re-align the use of the temporary category to its intended purpose, i.e., only use for customers whose functional abilities are set to improve within a specified time frame of 3 months, 6 months, or 1 year. Temporary eligibility should not be longer than 12 months or as a holding category when eligibility isn't clear on the application form. Strive to make an eligibility determination of conditional or unconditional whenever possible.
- **Explore Third-Party Assessments**: Further explore the potential of conducting third-party assessments with the change in the application process and eligibility and as the customer-based continues to grow. This should involve establishing a clear procedure/trigger for when third-party assessors are engaged to ensure a fair and objective process.

Challenges to be addressed to implement eligibility recommendations:

- **Software Capabilities**: ensure the scheduling software can capture and accommodate trip scheduling for each type of condition.
- **Eligibility Tools and Staff Training**: ensure that the proper decision-making tools and staff training are in place to produce consistent conditional eligibility determination.

4.2 Application Form

To successfully support the eligibility recommendations in **Section 4.1,** it is essential to consider improvements and adjustments to the current application form. Industry best practice reveals that the eligibility application form should be effective in capturing the barriers customers

with disabilities face with respect to the functional abilities required to take conventional transit.

In addition, the application form should adequately capture barriers and functional abilities across a diverse range of disability types. The current application form adequately addresses physical barriers and abilities. However, there is an opportunity to rebalance questions to ensure the transit agency is also effectively capturing barriers and functional abilities for sensory, cognitive, mental health and neurodiverse disabilities.

For example, Section A (applicant portion) Question 8 states "If you can never get to and from a fixed-route bus stop please explain why." This question alone identifies a few gaps; what about the customers who can "sometimes" get to and from a bus stop (i.e., conditional), and what about the other functional abilities needed to take transit (i.e., it's more than just getting to and from the stop). There are many gaps and opportunities to ensure barriers and functional abilities are being addressed across a broad and balanced range of disability types within the entire application form.

Specifically, there is a need to adjust questions to strengthen the overall eligibility process to ensure clear, consistent and defendable decision making and to better align with industry practice towards the social model instead of the medical model of disability. For example, Section A uses language/emphasis on "limitations", "restrictions", "never able", etc., which should be shifted to terms such as "abilities, identifying barriers, environmental impacts, etc."

Additionally, updates to the application form will ensure the responses capture the necessary information needed to better reflect the ability to use conventional transit for certain trips (conditional eligibility) and for the expanded conditions set forth in **Section 4.1** to support the integrated transit model.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the eligibility application form be improved in the following ways:

- **Conduct a Gap Analysis**: Undertake a comprehensive review of the application form questions to identify which questions add value and which questions could be modified or removed. Examples of some of the gaps are noted above. This should include a best practice scan to identify opportunities for enhancement and alignment with the application forms of industry peers.
- **Expand Questions around Functional Abilities**: Within both Section A (applicant portion) and Section C (health care professional portion), Brantford Lift should include questions to reveal functional abilities beyond just physical ones, such as: ability to safely navigate and wayfind in the environment to locate the bus stop, ability to receive and process auditory/visual information to recognize and board the correct bus, ability to analyze and process various traffic patterns to be able to safely cross the street, ability to problem solve common transit challenges, ability to interact safely with the public and seek help if needed, etc.
- **Update list of Health Care Professionals**: Include additional licensed health professionals for Section C, especially those related to supporting patients with mental health, cognitive, sensory and neurodiverse disabilities (e.g., psychologist/psychotherapist, orientation and mobility specialist, etc.). This ensures that customers have a broad range of options to choose the health care professional that can best speak to their abilities. For example, a family doctor may not be able to provide insight on the times of day that their patient who is partially sighted can safely see and navigate to take conventional transit, whereas their orientation and mobility specialist would be able to provide that level of detail. This change also reflects the fact that in 2017 specialized transit opened up to

more types of disabilities (not just physical) so the list of health care professionals should align with that (e.g., someone who can most appropriately speak to the mental health disability of a customer).

- **Revise or Remove Question 2 Health Care Professional**: This question asks what symptoms or effects the applicant would expect to experience if they were not permitted to use Brantford Lift. Left alone this question could pose risks as the AODA expects eligibility to be based on a person's current barriers to travelling on conventional transit, rather than what would happen in the future if they weren't granted eligibility. This question could either be removed or revised slightly if there is a desire to under this. The following provides an example of a slightly revised question: "What symptoms or effects does your patient experience today, that would be exacerbated by not being permitted to use Brantford Lift?" This would keep the question in present instead of future tense.
- **Inclusive Language**: Conduct a review of the language used within the application form to identify opportunities to include more inclusive language by shifting away from outdated terminology such as "restrictions, limited abilities, etc."
- **Increase Data Collection**: Add or improve questions regarding customers and eligibility to be able to better understand Brantford Lift's customer base. This could be included as part of a customer satisfaction survey (e.g., travel frequency, typical trip types) or included in the application form to allow Brantford information important to planning the service ambulatory versus non-ambulatory, types of mobility devices, average age of customers, and disability types. This data can be used to support the future model of Brantford Transit with respect to future vehicle/fleet purchase decisions, identifying customers who would benefit from integrated service delivery, determining where to focus resources within customer service, etc.

- **Request Emergency Contact/ Power of Attorney**: Add an optional question for Power of Attorney (POA) contact, in addition to the already requested Emergency Contact.

4.3 Recertification Process

Certification is the process by which applicants confirm that the functional disability information provided in their application form, is accurate and true.

Recertification is a critical component and process to effectively manage eligibility, service levels and understanding how to best match customers with the level of transit service they need. Presently, there is no formal recertification process in place at Brantford Lift.

Recertification allows Brantford Transit to understand and respond when a client's ability or condition changes. Without a recertification process, Brantford Lift risks having outdated passenger information, which does not recognize that disabilities are not static. Disabilities change and evolve over time, across the spectrum of functional abilities.

Recertification of existing passengers can be the most controversial aspect of this process, as some individuals, who have relied on the service may no longer be allowed to do so. The issue of "lifelong" certification of passengers means that those passengers, who through changes in circumstances now can use conventional transit, will be identified, and flagged, through a recertification process approach. This is also important when moving to an integrated service delivery approach, as some unconditional passengers may received conditional eligibility based on their functional needs/abilities.

The importantly, recertification also allows Brantford Transit to understand and respond when the condition of a passenger deteriorates (they initially may be conditional and then move to unconditional or may

not need an attendant, for example). This helps ensure the right level of service based on a customer's changing abilities and needs.

Community support for the recertification of existing passengers is greatly enhanced, when the community learns of the intended outcomes around customer health and potential savings, that can be redirected to provide service for those in need of Brantford Lift. However, there is a cost to recertification that needs to be noted, and it may not always result in large cost savings.

Recertification also will have administrative benefits by allowing Brantford Transit to have enhanced data (to better understand their customer base), updated information on mobility devices, support person needs, functional abilities, average age, most frequent destinations, etc. It will also clean up the passenger database if some registrants have passed away or no longer use the service since registration.

Best practices for recertification of specialized transit registrants occurs at an interval of 3 to 5 years. Anything less than 3 years adds an unnecessary burden on the individual passengers, and additional unnecessary administrative costs. Any term greater than 5 years is too lengthy to maintain and update the passenger database.

The AODA does allow for recertification of passengers. Section 64 (3) of the AODA allows for recertification to be completed "at reasonable intervals".

The initial passenger recertification will also collect additional data that will be available in the updated application form (see **Section 4.2**) which will allow Brantford Transit to better understand their customer-base and make better decisions around integrated service delivery, accessibility improvements and resource requirements.

Passenger data should be analyzed to determine the appropriate pathway for recertification, which could include a post-card mailout, phone call interview, or full application process.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Introduce and implement a recertification process for Brantford Lift to ensure that each customer receives the most appropriate level of service, and that resources are utilized efficiently to optimize operations. This should apply both to existing registrants and new applicants.
- The upgrade of the current software, which is being planned, will be valuable in this endeavor, especially in tracking the passenger's individual eligibility period expiry, which then allows for recertification.
- Recertify Brantford Lift clients every four years from the date of registration. It is recommended that a date be set to begin the recertification process for existing and new customers. All new customers and customers that were registered within the past four years of starting this policy would begin this four-year cycle prior to the four-year anniversary of their registration. All legacy customers that have been registered for longer than four years should be prioritized for recertification and should be reviewed first to ensure they are receiving the adequate level of service based on their ability. This should be completed once the application form has been updated see **Section 4.2.**
- Create and implement a shortened version of its application form for those applying for recertification. Individuals identified by Brantford Lift's eligibility process to have disabilities, or possibly health-related conditions, that are unlikely to change (based on medical professionals' assessment) will automatically be provided the shorter

form application to be used for recertification at the end of their current eligibility period. This could be achieved by mailout, phone call, or email.

4.4 Appeal Process

Brantford Lift currently only evaluates appeals from a healthcare perspective. Industry best practice utilizes an appeal panel, rather than just one person to make appeal determinations. Appeal panels typically consist of a healthcare professional, a transit expert and a person with a disability or disability advocate. This structure ensures a comprehensive and robust evaluation from a multitude of perspectives.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the appeal process be improved in the following ways:

- **Create a new Request for Appeal Form**: to ensure the customer can provide additional information.
- **Establish an Appeal Panel**: consisting of a health care professional, transit expert and disability representative. Ensure that no one involved in the original eligibility decision is involved in the appeal decision as per the AODA. Best practice is to conduct a formal recruitment and conduct thorough training including a mock appeal panel.
- **Formulate an Appeal Process**: create a procedure to ensure a seamless experience for both the customer and appeal panel members. This may include regularly scheduled appeal panel dates, interview formats, types of background information for the panel members to receive and communication to the customer about the outcome of the decision.

- **Track Appeal Data**: to see long-term trends, monitor quality assurance and ensure consistency and objectivity of appeal panelists.

4.5 Trip Booking

The Customer Call Center reports the that amount of time a customer is "on hold", waiting to speak to a customer service representative is remarkably low (approximately one to two minutes), setting a benchmark above industry standards. Nevertheless, it is important to note that customer metrics are currently quite limited. To enhance the customer experience, Brantford Lift should prioritize the collection of customer demographic and experience data. The prioritization of the collection of data will also assist in identifying opportunities to increase same day bookings.

The AODA allows specialized transit customers to book trips on the same day of travel wherever possible. Alternatively, customers may book travel 3 hours before the end of the system's hours of operation. This mandate in the AODA recognizes that specialized transit customers need to take spontaneous trips as well as planned ones.

The booking window for Brantford Lift is between 30 days in advance to 9:30 p.m. the day before travel, with same day service if available (not guaranteed). Trips tend to be less available the closer the booking is to the requested departure date, due to overall travel demand.

The trip booking window of many other transit agencies is between 1 hour before a trip and 7 to 14 days. Longer booking windows can better assure passengers that their trip will be accommodated because trip requests are made well in advance. As a consequence, passengers would need to plan ahead for their travel, which reduces trip spontaneity. For no-shows and late cancellations, the closer a passenger books their trip to the date of travel, the higher the likelihood that they will complete their trip, potentially reducing no-shows and late cancellations.

At the other end of the spectrum, increasing the trip booking window to formally allow trips to be made up to one hour before the requested departure time can benefit both the passenger and the transit system. These benefits include:

- Potential increase in fleet productivity. If a passenger who has prebooked a trip has to cancel or no shows, that driver and vehicle can be used for same day requests.
- Improved customer service. The transit systems' passengers will benefit from the convenience and the flexibility of same day services.

Brantford Lift is pursuing the selection and replacement of aging software currently being used for trip booking and scheduling. The new software, once selected and implemented, will offer more opportunities for same day bookings and should be adjusted to reduce the maximum booking window to be more in line with industry standards.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Change the trip booking window to between 14 days and 1 hour of the requested pick-up time. Continue to monitor this change and potentially look to further reduce the trip booking window to between 7 days and 1 hour of the requested pick-up time in the future to further encourage trip spontaneity.
- Continue to pursue the acquisition of new scheduling software for Brantford Lift. This will help to accommodate both planned bookings and same day trip bookings.
- Assisted by the new software, collect data on passenger demographics and experiences, to better understand the needs of passengers.

4.6 No-Shows and Late Cancellations

Brantford Lift is experiencing a high number of late cancellations, same-day cancellations and no-shows, accounting for 9% of all trips. To address this issue and ensure resources are not being wasted, it is important to establish and implement a clear policy. This will help educate customers on the potential outcomes of late-cancellations and no-shows, lowering incident rates.

Currently, a policy on late cancellations and no-shows is mailed to new registrants as part of their welcome package. The policy is not provided anywhere else, including on the Brantford Lift website. This information was not available to the consulting team, and it was difficult to determine the effectiveness of the policy to address the high rate of occurrence.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Conduct a review of how well the cancellation and no-show policy is shared with passengers of Brantford Lift and explore other methods of communication, including on the Brantford Lift website.
- Review the process of how excessive cancellations and no shows are dealt with.

4.7 Driver Training

The consulting team conducted a review of the existing driver training program and identified several updates that the existing driver training program would benefit from.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Create a new driver training program for all new drivers and provide retraining for all existing drivers. The training should include wheelchair handling and securement protocols, lift operations and vehicle operations.
- Rework the existing Driver Training materials into a format that summarises the training and is produced for the Drivers to retain. Prioritization of this change is required to ensure all drivers are properly and consistently trained, with safety and passenger satisfaction in mind.
- Choose one or two trainers from current Brantford Lift employees or available operations staff to provide consistent delivery of training.

4.8 Integrated Service Delivery

Integrated service delivery is an approach to deliver transit that uses any type of accessible transit service provided by Brantford Transit to help a registered passenger make their trip, subject to the conditions of their specialized transit eligibility. Some examples of integrated trips could be:

- Brantford Lift vehicle picks up a passenger and transports them to a transfer point/stop where an accessible conventional bus can take them to their final destination.
- A customer starts their trip on an accessible conventional transit route, and a Brantford Lift vehicle picks up a passenger from a transfer point/stop and transports the passenger to their final destination.

The decision about whether to book an integrated trip should be based on several conditions being met. This includes the booking agent asking the following questions:

1. How many transfers would the integrated trip require? Is the passenger capable of making them?

2. Does the transfer location provide a safe, comfortable, and accessible waiting environment? Is there any staff available at the transfer location to assist the passenger to make the transfer if required?
3. Does the conventional route that the registered passenger would be transferring to/from provide frequent and reliable service?
4. Does the Brantford Lift operator need to wait for the passenger to board the conventional transit vehicle?
5. Is the leg of the trip which would be made on conventional transit service long enough to justify the transfer? Are clients being inconvenienced by adding a transfer for only a short trip on conventional transit?
6. Will the registered passenger have a similar trip duration on an integrated trip as they would on a full door-to-door trip?
7. Are types of vehicles the passenger will need to use for part of their trip within the abilities of the passenger (e.g., wheelchair securement places available and lift/ramp access into bus).

A key benefit of an integrated service delivery model is that it can introduce passengers to conventional service who otherwise may not have chosen to use it otherwise. The conventional portion of an integrated trip would include additional support from the booking agent as well as travel training, which may reduce the uncertainty about using conventional service. If a passenger becomes comfortable using conventional service as part of an integrated trip, this will increase their mobility options and improve the ability to book same-day trips.

Since integrated trips reduce the trip distance provided by a Brantford Lift vehicle, this would allow Brantford Transit to reinvest the hours and make the service more available and reliable for all passengers, including those that continue to fully require a door-to-door service.

The move to an integrated service model is not a simple process and requires several steps to be taken. These include:

- Revise application form and better use conditional eligibility tied to ability to use conventional transit;
- Define integrated service, including stops and routes that should be targeted;
- Collect and keep a database on accessible stops;
- Re-establish a formal travel training program that is tied to the integrated service delivery model; and
- Develop policies and procedures, particularly around incident management.

A more detailed discussion around some of these steps are include below.

4.8.1 Defining Integrated Trips

Integrated trips that are promoted to passengers should provide a benefit. This should include trips that provide a similar travel time to a passenger that books a shared-ride Brantford Lift trip, or ability to accommodate more flexibility with a same-day trip request that could not be accommodated with a full door-to-door Brantford Lift Trip. This suggests focusing on long-distance trips where the conventional fixed-route portion of the trip is frequent and direct. Stops need to be accessible to allow vehicles to layover and passengers to transfer between vehicles without barriers. **Table 6** provides recommendations for integrated trips:

Table 6: Characteristics of Integrated Routes and Transfer Points

Priority	Integrated Routes	Integrated Stops
Required	• 30-minute peak headways or less • Located on a long-distance arterial (minimum 8 km in length) • Vehicles that operate on corridors where over 60% of stops are fully accessible • Average crowding on route during • time of trip is 125% of seated capacity or less	• Stop is accessible based on accessibility guideline • Paved hard surface path for passengers transferring between Brantford Lift and conventional transit bus • Sufficient space for Brantford Lift vehicle to layover without impeding the conventional transit vehicle • Integrated stop in both directions of the trip (within close proximity to each other) • Presence of adequate lighting, bench, shelter
Preferred	• 20-minute peak headways or less • Over 80% of stops on the route are accessible • Average crowding on route during time of trip is 100% of seated capacity or less	• Located at a transit terminal or hub with multiple connections to accessible conventional transit routes • Passenger amenities, such as washroom, shelter, indoor waiting area, are available and accessible

While the characteristics above are preferred when encouraging registrants to take an integrated trip, any accessible bus route with an accessible stop can be used as an integrated trip when the condition that prevents a registrant from using conventional transit is the ability to walk/roll from their pick-up/drop off point to an accessible transit stop.

4.8.2 Travel Training

The move to an integrated service model should be accompanied by a requisite training program which include features that help passengers use this type of service. The goal is to provide passengers the opportunity to learn how to transfer to and from and use conventional portions of an integrated trip through group or one-on-one training, in which a travel trainer helps the passenger identify the correct platform or location to board a conventional vehicle, pay the fare, secure their mobility device (if applicable), identify their stop, disembark, and find their specialized transit vehicle to transfer to (if applicable).

As an example, a one-on-one training approach would see the travel trainer stay with the passenger for the duration of the trip and be available for the return trip if necessary. The travel trainer would then determine whether the passenger could make additional integrated trips on their own, requires additional training, or should not be recommended for integrated trips. This information would need to be updated on the passenger's file and visible to the customer service agent. In some cases, the training may also include how to plan a trip using maps and timetables to increase the confidence level of passengers in utilizing an integrated trip. To avoid a conflict of interest, the agency providing travel training should not be the same as the one tasked with completing the applicant eligibility assessments.

4.8.3 Options for Incident Management

Moving to an integrated service model would require an update of policies and procedures to help support vulnerable passengers using conventional transit and transferring between vehicles. This should include policies around:

- Waiting at the Conventional Stop: Outline when a Brantford Lift vehicle should wait at the conventional stop for the specialized transit passenger to transfer to/from a conventional route.

Generally, this should be based on the frequency of service and the independence and mobility of the passenger (e.g., whether based on the registration process that Brantford Transit believes the customer can wait up to 15 minutes at a bus stop for a vehicle to arrive).

- Missed Connections: Identify what to do if a Brantford Lift vehicle is late for a connection. Options include requiring the vehicle make the full door-to-door trip or dropping off the passenger off to wait at the bus stop (based on the timing of the next conventional bus).
- Travelling with Companions: Determine whether a companion would pay a fare when they board the conventional portion of an integrated trip.
- Operator Assistance when Transferring: Identify when a Brantford Lift operator would need to assist a passenger to transfer between a specialized transit vehicle and a conventional transit vehicle.
- Passenger not able to Board the Conventional Bus: Provide instructions on what an operator should do in the event of a pass-by (the conventional vehicle is full and cannot accommodate the specialized transit passenger). This could include:
    - Wait for the next bus (based weather conditions, time of day and frequency of next route, visible assessment of passenger); and
    - Radio a Specialized Transit vehicle to pick-up the passenger to complete their trip.

If these solutions cannot be accommodated, some transit agencies that use the integrated service model use on-street supervisors to address the situation. This would involve radioing an on-street supervisor to drive to the area where the passenger is waiting to make sure they are 'okay'. As ridership continues to grow, additional accessible supervisor vehicles should be added to the network.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Begin the steps required to transition to an integrated service delivery model once the new conventional route plan is in place.
- Update the application form to request more information on conditions that would allow a registrant to use conventional transit for part of or all of their trip.
- Confirm routes that should be targeted for integrated trips based on the guidelines provided in **Table 5** (start with core routes).
- Update design guidelines for stops where transfers between Brantford Lift and conventional transit vehicles can take place and conduct an audit of stops based on new guidelines.
- Update policies and procedures for operators to include a policy for passengers and operators on service integration (e.g., when the Brantford Lift operator should wait for the transfer to take place).

4.9 Update Software for Trip Booking/ Scheduling/Managing Data

Brantford Transit's scheduling and dispatch software for specialized transit is aging and is no longer efficient or effective for booking trips on Brantford Lift. Several of the recommendations above, will require a more robust platform to allow for the changes recommended. With the recommended introduction of an on-demand transit service, consideration should be made to procuring one software solution that is able to book, schedule and monitor data for both Brantford Lift and an on-demand transit service. This will allow Brantford Transit to co-mingle trips between Brantford Lift passengers and on-demand transit passengers where appropriate. It will also provide Brantford Lift passengers an option of booking and tracking trips online or using a mobile application.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Procure a new scheduling software platform that is able book and schedule both specialized transit and on-demand transit service using one platform.
- Consider all recommendations that will require an upgrade in software, and likely hardware prior to the acquisition of any new hardware/software.

4.10 Policies and Procedures

Establishing clear public, passenger-facing policies is another important step in appropriately positioning Brantford Lift for success in the future. Undoubtedly, policy is an essential element to ensure long-term success for an integrated transit model, but perhaps most importantly, correct policy establishment is a simple but highly necessary foundational pillar for the future growth of specialized transit.

Currently, Brantford Lift utilizes a set of internal standard operating procedures to govern its operational transit delivery. However, there are no formally documented policies surrounding passenger experience. Establishing a set of public-facing passenger policies ensures transparency and builds trust with the public by clearly outlining expectations and standards of conduct. There is an opportunity for Brantford Lift to align with the best practices of its peers and provide a framework that clearly communicates passenger rules and guidelines to foster a positive environment and provide a clear resolution for complaints and disputes.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- Document, update and formally publish a set of public passenger-facing policies. This should include:
  - Eligibility Policy;
  - Code of Conduct Policy;
  - Policy and Procedures Manual;
  - Brantford Lift Organizational Chart;
  - Driver Training Manual;
  - Travelling with Mobility Aids & Devices Policy;
  - Support Persons & Companions Policy;
  - Service Animals & Pets Policy;
  - Late-Cancellation & No-Show Policy;
  - Travelling on an Integrated Trip Policy; and
  - Travelling with Infants & Children Policy.

5.0 Fare Policy

Brantford Transit offers a range of fares based on age and usage, and categories which have evolved over time due to changing policy direction. At the present, in addition to cash fares, Brantford Transit offers passengers the option of:

- day passes;
- a single use/disposable fare card (Disposable B-Card);
- refillable fare cards (Multi-Value Refillable B-Card); and
- a monthly fare card (31 Day B-Card).

All fares are applied to both conventional transit and Brantford Lift, consistent with AODA requirements.

The average passenger fare for Brantford Transit in 2022 was $2.34, down from an average fare of $2.55 in 2021. This is likely due to a higher uptake in passes/B-Cards or other reduced rate fare media versus cash fares due to post-COVID-19 ridership recovery. Over this same period, the cost recovery ratio has increased from 20% in 2021 to 25% in 2022, which is consistent with the observed increases in ridership. While data is not yet available, it is anticipated that the average fare continued to decrease in 2023, while cost-recovery continued to rise.

Brantford Transit and Brantford Lift fares are described in City of Brantford Bylaw 52-2021, which outlines the legislative requirement for Council approval and public hearings to implement fare changes.

The City of Brantford and Brantford Transit does not have a clear policy on how and why fares have been set, however, some values and priorities can be inferred based on analysis of the existing fare structure. These are:

- **Age-Based Monthly Pass Fare Discounts**: Preferential rates provided to seniors and students, with children 12 and under being provided free trips.

- **Reduced Fares for Passengers who are Blind or with Limited Vision**: Significant reductions are being offered to Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) clients for a three-month period.
- **Cash Fares**: Single fixed fare with no discount category for age.
- **Partnership with Post Secondary Institutions**: Brantford Transit has partnered with Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College to offer transit at a student participation rate for all registered students during the fall and winter terms as part of the U-Pass agreement.

5.1 Comparison of Fares Against Peer Agencies

At $2.34, the average Brantford Transit fare in 2022 is comparable to Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) peer agencies, who reported average fares of between approximately $1.65 and $2.90 per passenger during the same period. Brantford has one of the lowest cash fares amongst its peers, with most systems moving to $3.25 or $3.50 per ride.

Like Brantford, some agencies also report offering an Affordability Pass, a program which typically offers unlimited transit rides over a defined period for a person or members of a household who are identified as low income. This program is intended to offset the impact of higher fares, ensuring that all passengers who need to use transit can access it. Aside from Barrie, Brantford offers the smallest discount on the Affordability Pass.

5.2 Priorities of the Brantford Transit Fare Policy

The following values and priorities were used to assess the fare structure:

- **Simple**: There is a strong desire to simplify the existing fare categories. Passengers indicate there is confusion associated with the wide variety of fare categories and may not be aware of certain

pass categories from which they could benefit (e.g., weekend family passes).

- **Focus on Passes & Optimize New Fare Media**: The fare structure should incentivize the purchase of passes over cash fares and utilize existing and planned technology to implement fare capping.
- **Increase in Cost Recovery**: The cost recovery for Brantford Transit's conventional service in 2022 was approximately 25%, up from 20% in 2021. While cost recovery has been growing, Brantford Transit is still below the peer group average of 29%. There is a desire by Brantford Council to increase cost recovery to 35%. This will be particularly important to fund the significant improvements in service that are planned over the next 5 years.
- **Needs-Based Fare Reductions**: While many transit agencies continue to offer reduced fares for students or seniors, many transit systems are moving away from age-based fare reductions, instead focusing on affordability and the level of need for a particular rider, often as measured by household income.
- **Responsibility for Fare Subsidization**: Further to the above, the provision of any subsidy to passengers to increase transit accessibility should not be the financial burden of Brantford Transit. It is beyond the mandate, expertise, and financial ability of Brantford Transit to effectively resolve issues such as income distribution. Therefore, any new or reduced cost fares intended to resolve broader social issues should only be considered if arrangements are made to compensate Brantford Transit for the associated revenue loss and reduction in cost recover.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit.

- **Upgrade fare technology**: Continue to move forward with the planned implementation of the account-based fare payment system,

which includes an upgraded smartcard and mobile payment option. Also, explore other opportunities to continue to enhance fare payment options, including open payment features, allowing passengers to use their credit, debit or Interac card directly on the bus. The technology selected should include a solution that is compatible with the Presto card used by Metrolinx to facilitate the co-fare agreement for passengers transferring to/from a GO Bus service.

- **Improve fare tracking**: It is recommended that all fare discount programs require the use of a new account-based fare payment system to improve tracking, including children riding for free. It is also recommended that Brantford Transit continue to work with Wilfred Laurier University to consolidate valid student cards to improve tracking and reduce fare evasion.
- **Simplify fare options and move towards fare capping**: Using the new fare technology, implement an automatic fare capping system including daily cap and a 31-day cap for both conventional and specialized transit services. In doing so, eliminate the One Day Pass, the Multi-Ride pass and the 31 Day pass.
- **Increase fares to reflect higher operating costs and achieve a higher R/C ratio**: It is recommended that Brantford Transit adopt the fare structure noted in **Table 8** once the new account-based smartcard system is in place and once a new Affordability Pass Structure has been approved. Any changes to fares should also coincide with the roll out of service improvements.
- **Address affordability through an enhanced or expanded Affordability Pass**: It is recommended that Brantford Transit work with the City of Brantford Social Services department to expand the Affordability Pass to include residents with low-income status, or that are sponsored refugees in the community. Residents currently receiving Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program support should be funded through these agencies, and Brantford

Transit should approach these to include them in the same Affordability Pass program. It is also recommended that the program should be tied directly to the new smartcard and digital fare wallet only to improve tracking.

- **Extend transfer window**: Brantford Transit should increase the transfer window from 60 minutes to 90 minutes from the time of boarding. This policy change should align with the next fare increase, and ideally be rolled out at the same time as service improvements to encourage passengers to try out the new network. It is also recommended that transfers be accepted on the same bus route as where the first fare was paid, allowing passengers to make a short stop at a location along the route, then board the same bus route to continue their journey.
- **Develop Employer Pass program**: Brantford Transit should initiate an employee pass program to provide a discount on a monthly or annual fare cap. This program should require an agreement between the employer and the City that the subsidy be shared, with equal discounts offered by the employer and Brantford Transit. The program should be marketed to major employment areas, with information available on the Brantford Transit website.

Table 7: Comparison of Existing and Proposed Fare Structure

Fare Types	Fare Categories	Existing Fare	Proposed Fare	Change in Fare
Cash Fare	Adult	$3.00	$4.00	33%
	Senior	$3.00	$4.00	33%
	Student	$3.00	$4.00	33%
	Canadian National Institute for the Blind	$1.75	$2.00	14%
One Day Passes	Single-Rider Pass – Monday to Friday Only	$9.50	$9.60	1%
	Multiple-Rider Pass (Two adults & 3 children) – Weekend Only	$9.50	Remove	N/A
Disposable B-Card (or new Smart Card)	Adult	$2.90	$3.20	10%
	Senior	$2.45	$2.60	6%
	Student	$2.45	$2.60	6%
	Child	Free	Free	0%
Multi-Value Refillable B-Cards	10 Ride (Regular)	$24.50	Remove	N/A
	20 Ride (Regular)	$49.00	Remove	N/A
	30 Ride (Regular)	$73.50	Remove	N/A
	40 Ride (Regular)	$98.00	Remove	N/A
31 Day B-Cards	Adult (2.27/day)	73.5	$96.00	31%
	Senior ($1.79/day)	55.5	$78.00	41%
	Student ($1.79)	55.5	$78.00	41%
	Summer Student (July and August only)	$64.00	$78.00	22%
	CNIB (3 months)	39.00	$42.00	8%
Reduced & Free Fare	Affordability	$55.50	$48.00	-14%
	War Veteran Pass	Free	Free	N/A
	Children (12 and under)	Free	Free	N/A

6.0 Safety and Security

A high-level review of safety and security concerns was completed for the Brantford Transit system. The outcome of the review is presented in Interim Report #1 (Background Review).

While there were no significant safety and security issues identified, it is important to continue to be proactive to address potential incidents that may occur. There are certain areas of focus that Brantford Transit is already or should consider over the next five years.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit:

- **Update Operator Policies and Procedures**: Brantford Transit staff are currently in the process of enhancing policies and procedures for Brantford Transit operators. This coincides with the enhanced training programs currently in place which focused on safety guidelines and de-escalation practices in the event of an incident.
- **Formalize the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles at Terminals and Stops**: Applying design principles of CPTED will ensure that passengers and Brantford Transit staff will be safe, and comfortable in any Brantford Transit facility, and while waiting for the bus at a stop. While Brantford Transit already considers this as part of the review of stops, having a formal policy in place will help ensure new or retrofitted stops and facilities consider safety as a design guideline.
- **Develop a Passenger Code of Conduct**: Develop a pubic-facing policy which clarifies the expectations of passenger behaviours, and outlines repercussions if passengers repeatedly act in a way contrary to the code of conduct. This should be posted on the website, with key messages noted in public spaces or on-board vehicles.

- **Onboard Camera Update**: In next camera update, ensure onboard security cameras can transmit video in real-time, and that recordings are automatically uploaded upon return to the garage.

7.0 Intelligent Technology Systems

Brantford Transit is currently updating a number of their systems to improve operational efficiency and customer experience. Ongoing upgrades include the replacement of fareboxes and the roll out of new fare mediums for passengers (anticipated Fall 2024), and the implementation of new contract with Strategic Mapping Inc., which will improve the quality of data that Brantford Transit will have to better analyze boardings/ridership, and on time performance. These planned enhancements will enable staff to continuously make route and schedule modifications and improvements to enhance performance and customer satisfaction.

A review of existing ITS was completed with Brantford Transit staff and documented in Interim Report #1. The assessment identified several issues/gaps and opportunities for improvement. The identification of improvement opportunities that are not already underway are documented below.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Brantford Transit.

- Upgrade their scheduling software program for both its conventional and specialized/on-demand transit service (see **Section 4.9**).
- Improve ability for passengers to track their vehicle using comment navigation apps such as Google Maps, Transit and Apple Maps.
- Explore the use of real-time messaging boards to be included at terminals and hubs.
- Explore the potential of adding a workforce management software as the system grows and there is a need to increase the number of operators, mechanics and front-line staff.

- Work with the City's Transportation / Traffic division to explore opportunities to implement transit signal priority on key corridors and at hubs where there are significant delays.
- Identify potential to upgrade cameras to automate the manual process of uploading videos when requested (see **Section 6.0**).

8.0 Financial Plan

The recommended plan will see an increase in service hours and vehicle and infrastructure requirements over the next five-years for both conventional and specialized transit service. The following section of the report provides a more detailed assessment of the financial impacts of the recommended plan.

8.1 Ridership Forecasts

8.1.1 Conventional Transit

Existing ridership data by route collected on the conventional transit network was not reliable and made it difficult to use when assessing boardings by route and stop, and for forecasting future ridership. This further reinforces the need to upgrade the on-board ridership data collection technology as identified in **Section 7.0**.

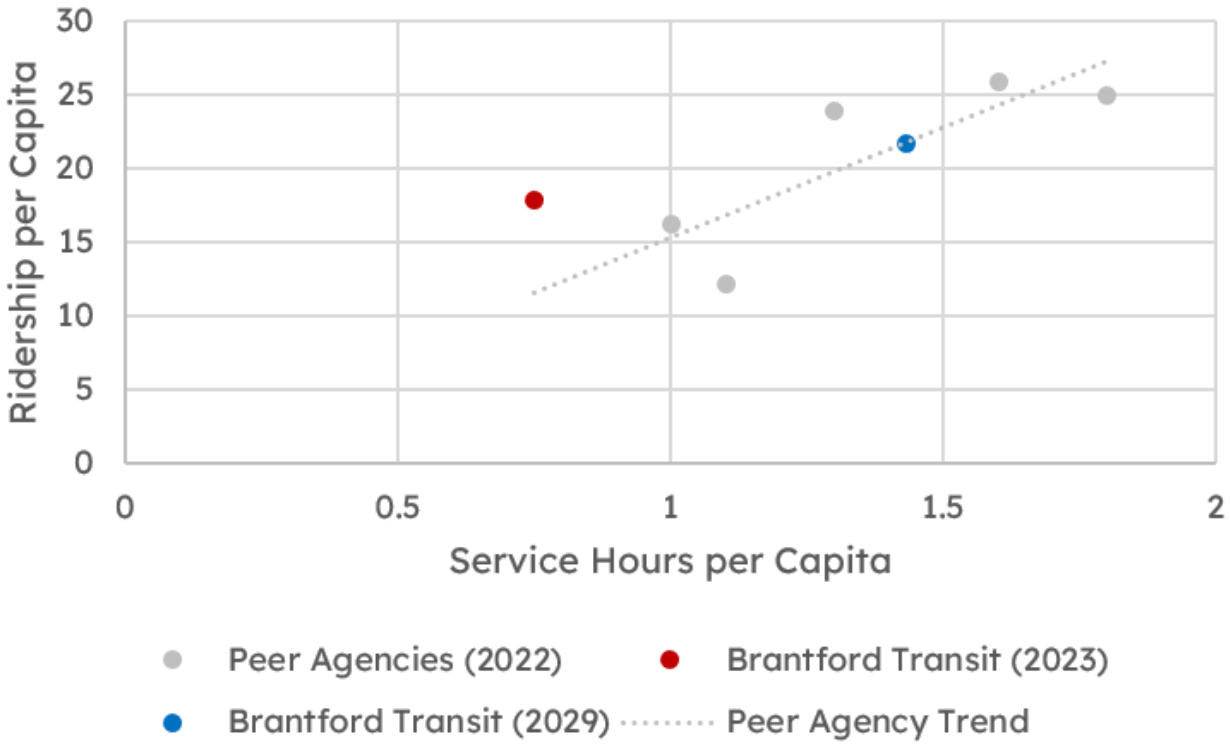
To forecast ridership for the recommended conventional route structure, a high-level analysis was conducted based on the growth in revenue service hours and the ridership per hour and per capita of Brantford and its peers.

Brantford Transit currently deliver an estimated 1,949,000 annual riders (linked boardings, based on 2023 data). This equates to approximately 17.9 rides per capita or 0.79 rides per revenue hour of service. When compared to Brantford Transit's peers, the number of rides per capita is much lower in Brantford, due in part to the fact that Brantford operates the fewest service hours in its peer group (see Interim Report 1).

The recommended service plan will introduce 86,684 annual service hours to the network by the time the full service is implemented. This increase in service hours will bring Brantford to the peer group average of service hours per capita.

To calculate the impact on ridership, **Figure 16** illustrates the linear relationship between the number of service hours and the annual ridership between Brantford and its peer agencies.

Figure 16: Ridership per Capita vs. Service Hours per Capita



This linear relationship was applied to the projected service hours and increase in population over the next five years. The result is a growth in ridership from 1,949,000 to 2,623,000 estimated annual passengers. This does not take into account the fact that the proposed route plan will also improve the quality of service, which should increase the overall attractiveness of the service and the number of trips per capita.

8.1.2 Brantford Lift / On-Demand Transit

The need to grow the fleet and service hours will be based on growth in registrants and the number of trips that are made. This is influenced by:

- Population growth;
- Aging population (as the likelihood of have having a disability increases as you age);
- Change in trips accommodated, including same day trips; and
- Change eligibility, policy or programs and that influence the number of trips per registrant.

Population growth and an aging population will increase the number of registrants that use the service, while changes to eligibility and the move to an integrated service delivery model would likely reduce the number of trips made by each registrant (or the average length of each trip). However, changes to the trip booking window and upgrade of the scheduling software would increase the number of same-day trips, which may increase the number of trips per registrant. To account for both directions, the same number of trips per registrant was used to forecast future demand.

In addition to this, the introduction of the two on-demand transit zones (**Section 3.4.2**) will also see an increase in ridership. The population of each zone was used to determine the potential ridership, by applying a boarding per capita of 1.5, which reflects a reduction from Brantford's average boarding per capita.

The projected ridership is illustrated in **Table 8** below. This assumes there is no change in the rate of non-accommodated trips.

Table 8: Brantford Lift Forecasts

Ridership Forecast	Existing	Planned	Growth
Brantford Lift Registrants	1,927	2,171	+244
Total Brantford Lift Trips	32,788	36,900	+4,112
Total Trips Per Registrant	17	17	0
On-Demand Transit Trips	0	38,000	+38,000
Total Ridership	32,788	74,900	+42,112

8.2 Service Hours and Vehicle Impacts

8.2.1 Conventional Transit

Based on the proposed route changes presented in **Section 3.4**, the proposed revenue service hours and peak fleet expansion are summarized in **Table 9** below. This is based on estimates around average travel time, layover time and potential to interline routes to increase vehicle efficiency. It also does not reflect any additional non-revenue service hours that are required to allow buses the appropriate time to travel between the Brantford Transit maintenance facility. As a next steps, more a detailed schedule should be created to provide more accuracy to the anticipated service hours required to operate the recommended route structure.

The projected vehicles needed to operate the proposed service plan is also identified in the table below. There are currently 31 40-foot vehicles used for conventional service, 20 of which are required for peak service. This represents a 35% spare ratio.

Table 9: Projected Five-Year Service Hour and Vehicle Growth

Resource	Existing	Planned[7]	Growth
Revenue Service Hours	86,316	173,000	+86,684
Peak Buses	20	31	+11
Spare Buses	11	11	0
Total Buses	31	42	+11
Spare Ratio	35%	26.2%	N/A

The recommended service plan will see a growth in 11 vehicles used for peak service, which would bring the peak fleet up to 31. If buses are not interlined, it is anticipated that 33 total buses would be needed. This does not include the vehicle requirements for the on-demand transit service, which will use Brantford Lift vehicles, or the future expansion of service north of Powerline Road. It is expected that service north of Powerline Road will add 5 to 6 additional buses and around 30,000 service hours.

As the fleet size grows, there is also an ability to reduce the overall spare ratio assuming that buses are properly maintained through an effective preventative maintenance program. For this plan, it was assumed that the existing 35% spare ratio could be brought down to 25%. This has the impact of not expanding the number of spares required. This suggests that 11 new expansion buses will be required over the life of this plan.

8.2.2 Brantford Lift / On-Demand Transit

The current fleet consists of 18 specialized transit vehicles, 10 of which are regularly scheduled during peak demand periods (1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The remaining eight vehicles are used as spares.

The growth in vehicles used for Brantford Lift was based on an existing ratio of trips per peak vehicle. Currently, each Brantford Lift vehicle provides approximately 3,350 trips annually. To calculate future vehicle

[7] Does not include on-demand transit service and expansion in new development areas

requirements, the number of trips per peak vehicle was applied to the growth in specialized transit trips.

The on-demand vehicles are expected to operate in geographically small zones where trips are expected to be short. In addition, passenger boarding and alighting times are expected to be shorter as most passengers will require less operator support when boarding. As such, more trips can be accommodated, and peer agencies operating on-demand experience ridership between three and five boardings per service hour. The on-demand transit service is expected to operate 19 hours daily and, as such, could result in up to 34,675 boardings per vehicle annually. Based on the anticipated ridership, up to two peak vehicles would be required to operate.

To estimate the increase in service hours, the number of service hours for each peak vehicle was applied to the growth in peak vehicles. This estimate does not account for non-revenue vehicles hours and may be adjusted based on more detailed scheduling. This is illustrated **Table 10** below.

Table 10: Projected Service Hour and Vehicle Growth

Vehicle Type	Existing	Planned	Growth
Brantford Lift Revenue Service Hours	19,300	21,230	1,900
On-Demand Revenue Service Hours	0	6,600	6,600
Brantford Lift Peak Vehicles	10	11	1
On-Demand Transit Peak Vehicles	0	2	2
Spare Vehicles	8	5	-3
Total Vehicles	18	18	0
Spare Ratio	44%	28%	N/A

Based on the above-noted analysis, Brantford Transit will not need to invest in any peak vehicles to operate the service; however, the service hours will increase by 8,500 hours annually. This increase in service hours will allow Brantford Transit to accommodate for the impacts of a growing and aging population as well as the addition of the on-demand transit service over a 5-year period.

8.2.3 Facility and On-Street Infrastructure Improvements

The proposed network also expands the service area. Routes will operate along new streets or sections of streets, and therefore, bus stop infrastructure will be required to facilitate accessible boardings and alightings. These costs will be higher in locations where a hub has been recommended due to the increased amenities for these stop types.

The existing transit storage facility will also need to be expanded as the current facility has reached capacity. The City is already in the process of planning the expansion of the existing facility to accommodate a growth in fleet, the transition to electric vehicles and modernization and upgrades to the driver and administration areas. The planned expansion should be large enough to accommodate the vehicles required to implement the expansion plan, including approximately five additional vehicles in new development areas north of Powerline Road.

Upgrades to existing terminals will also need to be budgeted.

Table 11 shows the existing terminals and proposed transit hubs, and the number of bus bays required at each to accommodate the service plan. The level of infrastructure in each terminal and hub is highlighted in the Transit Facility Classification in **Section 3.6.1**.

Table 11: Proposed Expansion of Terminals and Hubs

Terminals / Hubs	Type	Existing Bays	Required Bus Bays	Required On-Demand Space	Change
Downtown Terminal	Hub	6	3	1	0
Brantford Station	Terminal	0	2	0	2
Lynden Park Mall	Terminal	2	4 to 5	0	2 to 3
Brantford Commons	Terminal	2	3 to 4	1	2 to 3
Southwest Community Centre	Hub	0	2 to 3	0	2 to 3
Sobeys Shellard Lane	Hub	1	2 to 4	1	2 to 5
NWIA	Hub	0	2 to 4	1	2 to 5

Transit hubs can be constructed as long on-street laybys where there is sufficient space to accommodate both an on-demand and fixed-route vehicle. This limits the infrastructure and maintenance costs required for these facilities which are more prevalent within the plan. The terminals are expected to be off-street facilities with multiple bus bays, comfortable customer waiting areas and safe pedestrian connections to the bays. The cost of these facilities is expected to be more costly and must be costed on a case-by-case basis.

8.3 Financial Plan

The operating and capital costs of moving forward with this plan are identified below.

8.3.1 Operating Costs

The 2023 hourly operating rate for both conventional and specialized transit / on-demand transit service was used to estimate the increase in annual operating costs. For conventional service, a rate of $139.59 was used, while for Brantford Lift and on-demand transit, an hourly rate of $107.35 was used. This is an approximate value that does not reflect rising costs of service (e.g., labour and fuel), or non-revenue vehicle hours.

To estimate passenger revenue, the existing average fare of $2.34 was increased to $2.60, reflecting the higher anticipated average fare, and applied to the forecasted ridership (**Section 8.1**).

Table 11 presents the ridership, service hour and financial summary for Brantford Transit conventional transit service, while **Table 12** presents the same information for Brantford Lift/on-demand transit service based on the recommendations noted in this report. All figures are in 2024 dollars and are subject to change as part of detailed service implementation planning.

The increase in service hours on the conventional service is estimated to see an increase in ridership, including ridership per capita (the overall share of transit trips taken compared to other modes). This will also help the City achieve some of its single-occupant vehicle reduction targets.

While ridership will increase, the improved level of service on the conventional service will also see a small reduction in productivity (as reflected by boardings per revenue service hour). This is a typical outcome, as hours required to expand service has an immediate impact, while it takes time for resident travel patterns to change. These additional hours are also required to make the service more attractive. Therefore, having slightly lower productivity is a typical outcome for the system to achieve its ridership growth and sustainability goals.

Table 12: Operating Costs – Conventional Transit

Indicator	Existing (2022-2023[8])	Planned (2029)	Change
Population	108,709	120,771	+12,062
Revenue Service Hours	86,316	173,000	+86,684
Ridership	1,949,802	2,623,000	+675,198
Operating Cost	$10,650,817	$24,088,000	+$13,437,183
Fare Revenue	$2,516,398	$6,821,000	+$4,304,602
Net Operating Cost	$8,134,419	$17,267,000	+$9,132,581
Boardings per Capita	23.61	28.59	+4.98
Boardings per Revenue Service Hour	29.73	20.01	-9.72
Revenue / Cost Ratio	23.6%	28.3%	+4.7%

Table 13: Operating Costs – Specialized Transit

Indicator	Existing	Planned	Change
Registrants	1,927	2,171	+244
Revenue Service Hours	19,300	27,830	+8,530
Brantford Lift Ridership	32,788	36,900	+4,112
On-Demand Ridership	0	38,000	+38,000
Operating Cost	$2,071,855	$2,987,600	+$915,745
Fare Revenue	$85,249	$194,700	+$109,451
Net Operating Cost	$1,986,606	$2,792,900	+$806,294
Boardings per Revenue Service Hour	1.70	2.69	+0.99
Revenue / Cost Ratio	4%	7%	+2%

[8] Population, revenue service hours, ridership, and boardings are from 2023, costs are from 2022

8.3.2 Capital Costs

A high-quality transit service requires a solid foundation of capital assets and infrastructure to make things run smoothly. These assets, like new vehicles, upgraded transit terminals, and bus storage facilities, are crucial for improving the overall efficiency and reliability of the network. By investing in these areas, Brantford Transit can plan for future growth, support increased demand and improve the accessibility of the service.

Table 14 below illustrates the estimated capital costs for vehicle expansion. The cost of one road-ready accessible 40-foot transit vehicle equipped with the information technology systems to retrieve fares, track bus movement and monitor the safety of passengers is approximately $850,000. The cost of an expansion low-floor cutaway vehicle used for both Brantford Lift and on-demand transit service is approximately $200,000.

Capital costs for the expansion of the facility, terminals, bus stops and technology was not included in this summary.

Table 14: Vehicle Expansion Capital Costs

Vehicle Type	Unit Cost	Number	Total Cost
40-Foot Vehicles	$850,000	11	$9,350,000
Cutaway Vehicles	$200,000	0	$0
Total	N/A	11	$9,350,000

9.0 Marketing and Promotion

The significant changes in the transit network described in this plan provides an unparalleled opportunity to attract new transit users, encouraging those who've never taken transit to give the new network a try, and to welcome back Brantford Transit's best customers by inviting them to a new and improved service.

Due to the extent of the changes, it is likely that Brantford Transit will need to undertake a very significant outreach program to ensure that customers – returning and new – are aware of the network changes and how their trips will be changed as a result. In fact, the successful implementation of service changes of this magnitude hinges on clear and effective communication to both staff and members of the public.

To ensure that Brantford residents are clear and even excited about the changes to the network, it is recommended that Brantford Transit work closely with the City of Brantford's Communications Department to ensure the communications are strategic and timed in such a way to build excitement and awareness as network changes roll out.

The following outlines some potential strategies that Brantford Transit could consider raising awareness of the service changes across different target audiences.

Table 15: Communication Approaches

Target Audience	Marketing Approach	Description
Members of Council	Service Change Package	Members of Council are often the first place a concerned resident goes when they have questions. Equip Councillors with a comprehensive document showing: • Summary, rationale and map for proposed route changes • Impact of proposed changes (walking distance, transfer, headway) • Benefits brought by changes • An introduction to on-demand transit, including an overview of how it works. • Changes to polices, including eligibility for Brantford Lift • Anticipated Frequently Asked Questions

Transit Riders	Route Change Summary Booklet	A physical and virtual booklet showing:
		• Reasons and benefits for changes
		• New routings, stop locations, and schedule
		• On-demand transit service
		  ○ Introduction
		  ○ How it works
		  ○ Zone demarcation
		  ○ Transfer locations
		  ○ Instructions of using on-demand mobile app and hotline (after on-demand provider is selected)
		• FAQs

Target Audience	Marketing Approach	Description
Transit Riders	Route and Service Change Webpage	A dedicated webpage introducing the changes, including new schedule, service maps, on-demand transit service educational information, new Brantford Lift policies, and FAQs • A banner linking to the page should be displayed on the top page of Brantford Transit
Transit Riders	Posters	Posters promoting network changes
Transit Riders	Leaflets	Double-sided leaflets promoting network changes distributed by Brantford Transit staff on board transit vehicles
Transit Riders	Bus Stop and Terminal Signage	Signage identifying which new routes will be serving a particular stop, directing passengers to where they can find info on the new routes
Transit Riders	Social Media Posts	Posts promoting network changes with link to a webpage detailing the changes
Transit Riders	Instruction Video	Video introducing changes and how to request an on-demand trip or an integrated trip
Transit Riders	School Notices	School-specific notices detailing changes to routes serving a school and available replacement service
Transit Riders	On-Board Announcements	Announcements informing passengers of the changes and guiding them to online resources detailing changes (can be added to automatic stop annunciation)
Transit Riders	Trip Planner	Online trip planner with General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data embedded

Target Audience	Marketing Approach	Description
Stakeholders	Pop Up Trip Planning Info	Host pop up sessions at key ridership generators (large employers, Conestoga College, and Wilfrid Laurier University [WLU]) or key markets (long-term care homes) to help passengers plan their trips and understand the change.
Non-Transit Users	Radio Ads	Ads informing the public of the changes
Non-Transit Users	Newspaper Notices	Notices promoting the changes and its timeline

Appendix A

Round 2 Engagement Summary

Brantford TRANSIT

Moving Forward

Brantford Transit, reimagined by you.

City of Brantford

Transit Plan

"What We Heard" Round 2 Engagement Memo

September 2024

Photo: Secondarywaltz

Brantford TRANSIT

DILLON CONSULTING

Table of Contents

Figures

Tables

Acronyms

BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CSI	Conestoga Students Inc.
NWIA	Northwest Industrial Area
ODSP	Ontario Disability Support Program

Executive Summary

In Round 2 of engagement for the Moving Forward Plan, the engagement and communications were focused on sharing and receiving feedback on the Draft Brantford Long Term Transit Master Plan. The draft plan was presented to the public, members of council, and other relevant stakeholders to reimagine the network alongside the community.

Feedback was received over a period of several months through various channels. Community Open House events, an online survey, employer interviews and social media have all garnered feedback to help refine the draft plan. Input on topics such as route design, scheduling and service span, the proposed fare structure, customer service and communication, and neighbourhood service adjustments were all received. Brantford Transit, in partnership with Dillon Consulting Limited (Dillon), have worked collaboratively to review the feedback received and refine the draft plan appropriately.

This engagement report will serve to inform the draft transit plan through the identification of key feedback themes from both rounds of engagement. This report also outlines how feedback was used to modify the draft plan and includes how feedback received could help inform future network changes, over the life of this plan and beyond.

Next steps will include the presentation of this engagement report and the final draft of the Moving Forward plan to council. Brantford Transit thanks all those who took the time to share their feedback and appreciates the valuable input provided.

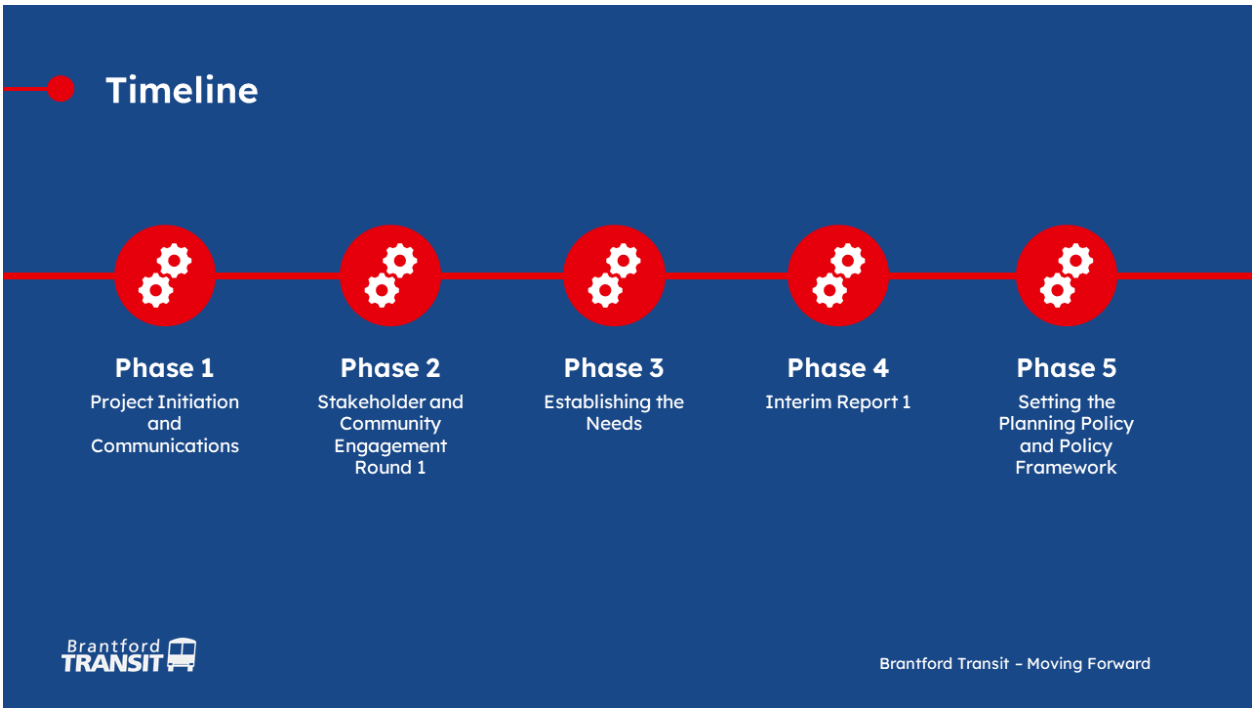
1.0 Introduction

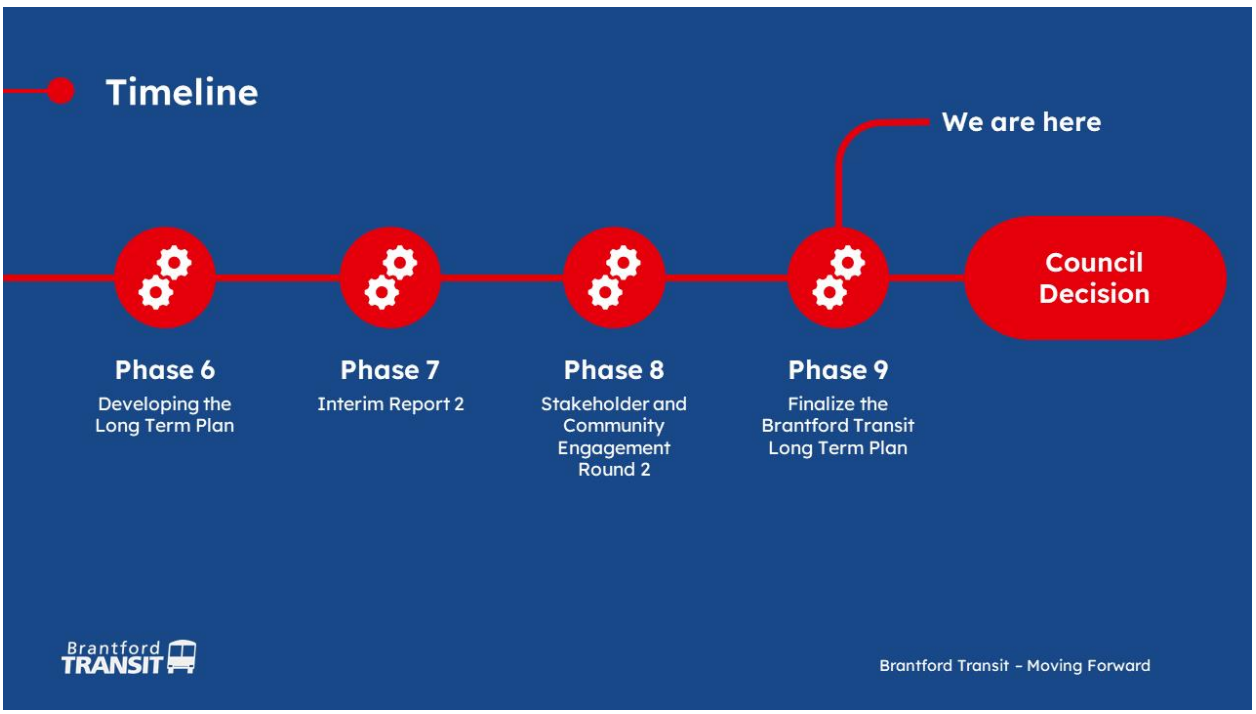
1.1 Background

The City of Brantford, in collaboration with Brantford Transit, is undertaking the Moving Forward project to reimagine the Brantford Transit network. While the City has completed several Transit Master Plans, most recently in 2016, the system has undergone limited change in the past few decades. During this same period, Brantford has since seen a lot of change and growth which has not been reflected enough in the plans. A new Long Term Transit Plan will help to support growth, reflect changes in the transportation landscape (including new technology, perspectives on public transit, and government support), and meet the needs of Brantford Transit users now and into the future.

Dillon Consulting Limited (Dillon), in association with Briteweb, Carpentier Consulting, and O'Hara Aging + Accessibility, were retained to provide consulting services to develop the draft Long Term Transit Plan and coordinate and facilitate the engagement that supports the project. The project took place over nine phases as shown in **Figure 1**. Engagement for Moving Forward occurred in two rounds: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Round 1 (October to December 2023), and Stakeholder and Community Engagement Round 2 (March to June 2024). Round 1 of engagement focused on the higher-level issues that the long-term plan for Brantford Transit will address, whereas Round 2 has focused on receiving specific feedback regarding the proposed service design.

Figure 1: Project Phases





1.2 Purpose of Engagement

The purpose of the second round of engagement was to receive feedback on the draft planned service design and continue to ensure that the draft plan meets Brantford's needs. This includes the routes, operating hours and schedules, bus stops, fares, and any other comments participants felt worthy of inclusion. This round was conducted through several channels to maximize the level of engagement. With the goal of engaging as broad an audience as possible, these activities were designed to ensure that the feedback received will help inform service planning decisions today and into the future.

Figure 2: Moving Forward Public Information Centre, April 18, 2024.

2.0 Round 2 Engagement Activities

Round 2 of engagement took place from March to June 2024. Over the course of the Round 2 engagement period, online survey responses were received, social media advertisements were engaged with, stakeholder meetings were conducted, and additional feedback was received from Brantford Transit staff through more informal community meetings. This section will outline the feedback received and identify how the Moving Forward engagement plan was delivered.

2.1 Communication Materials

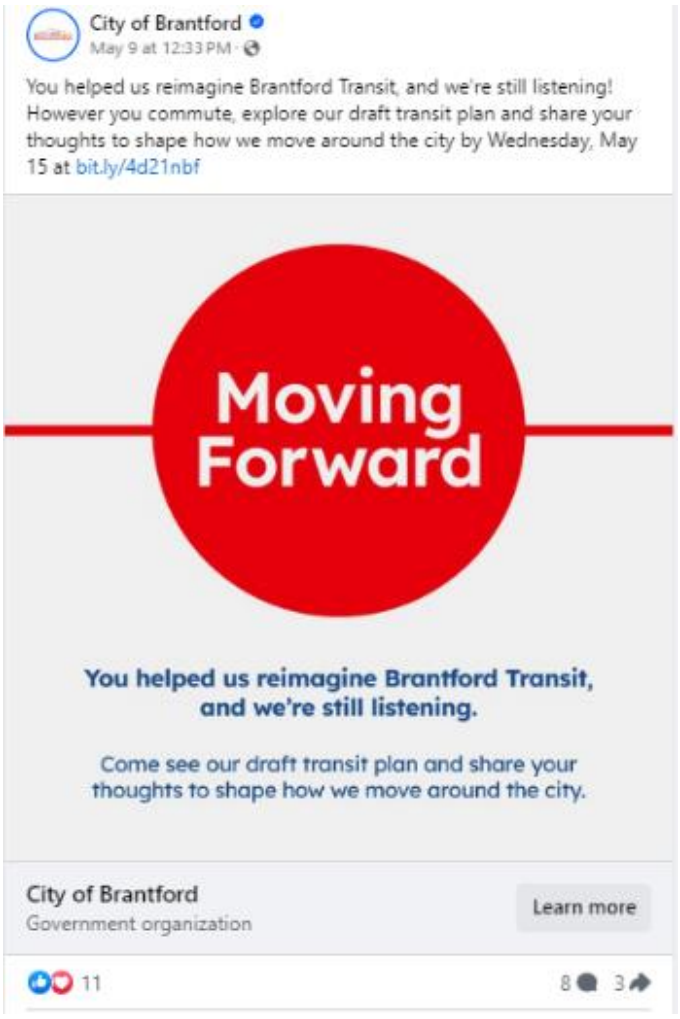
To reach the widest audience, the engagement opportunities were shared with residents through a variety of virtual and in-person methods. The distinct brand identity of the project was maintained to convey that this work was a continuation of work undertaken in the early stages of the project.

2.1.1 Social Media

Social media posts were made through the City of Brantford and Brantford Transit channels, including information on how individuals could reach the survey to submit their feedback. A sample post is shown in **Figure 3**.

The social media posts helped to reach broad audiences of diverse demographics. These channels also helped to communicate last-minute changes, such as when the online survey was extended from the original closing date.

Figure 3: Facebook Post Advertising the Online Survey



2.1.2 Website Notice

On both the Brantford Transit and City of Brantford websites, the survey and draft plan were advertised (**Figure 4** and **Figure 5**). Additional notice was published on the Let's Talk Brantford website, all with links to the online survey. By featuring the project on the Brantford engagement website, it allows for individuals to spontaneously complete the survey if they were already on the website for an unrelated engagement opportunity.

Figure 4: Let's Talk Brantford Webpage Header

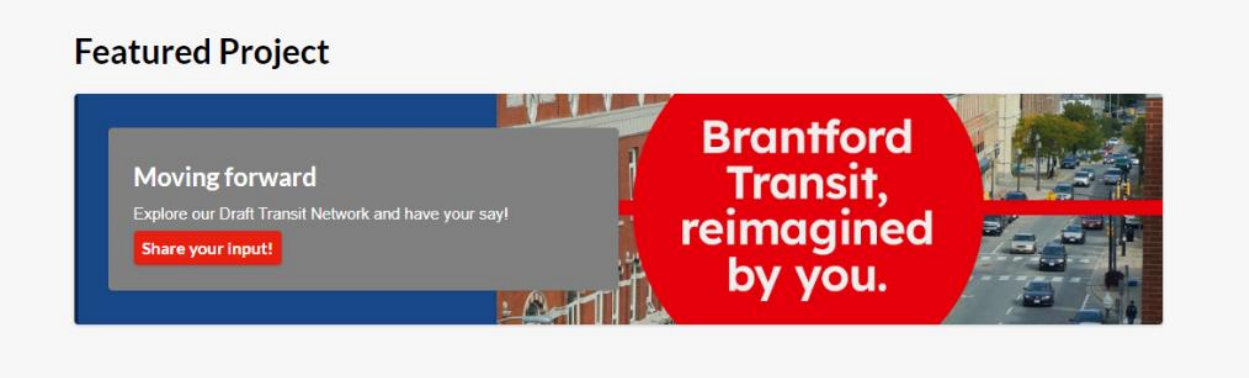


Figure 5: Website Post

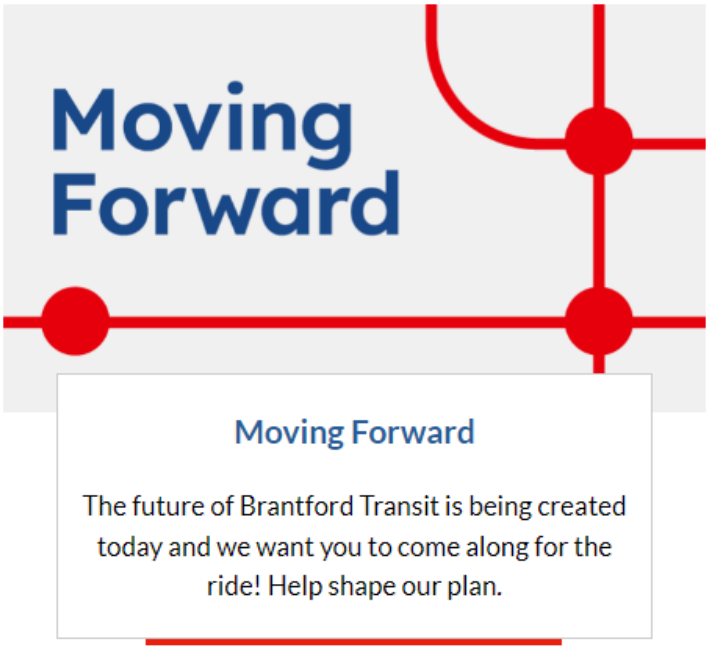
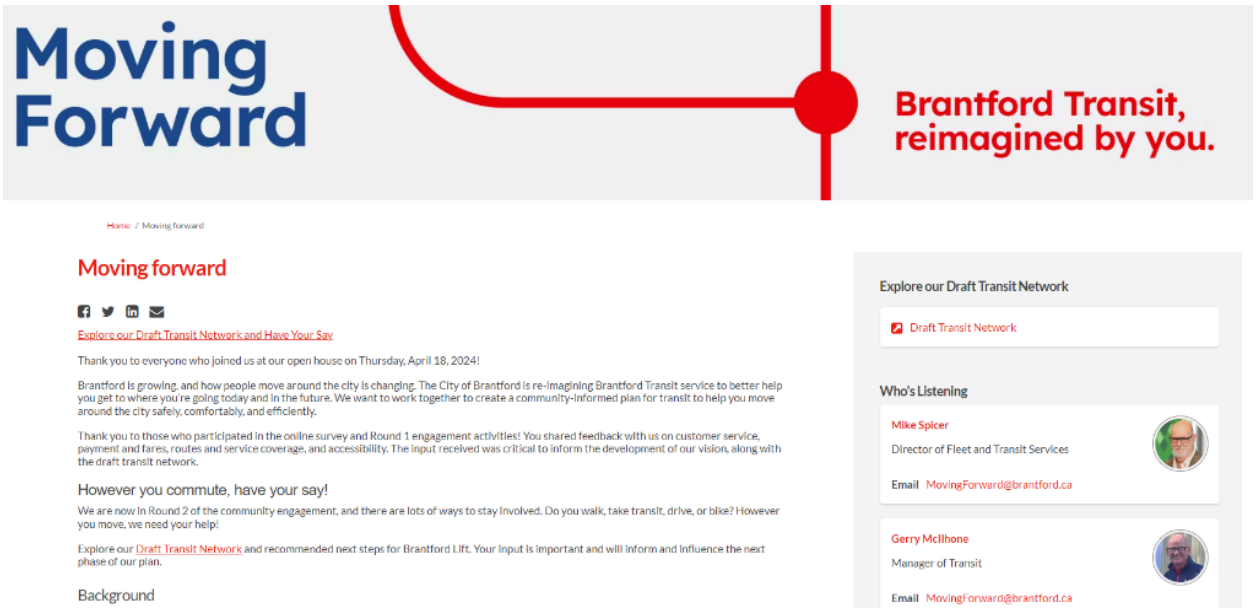


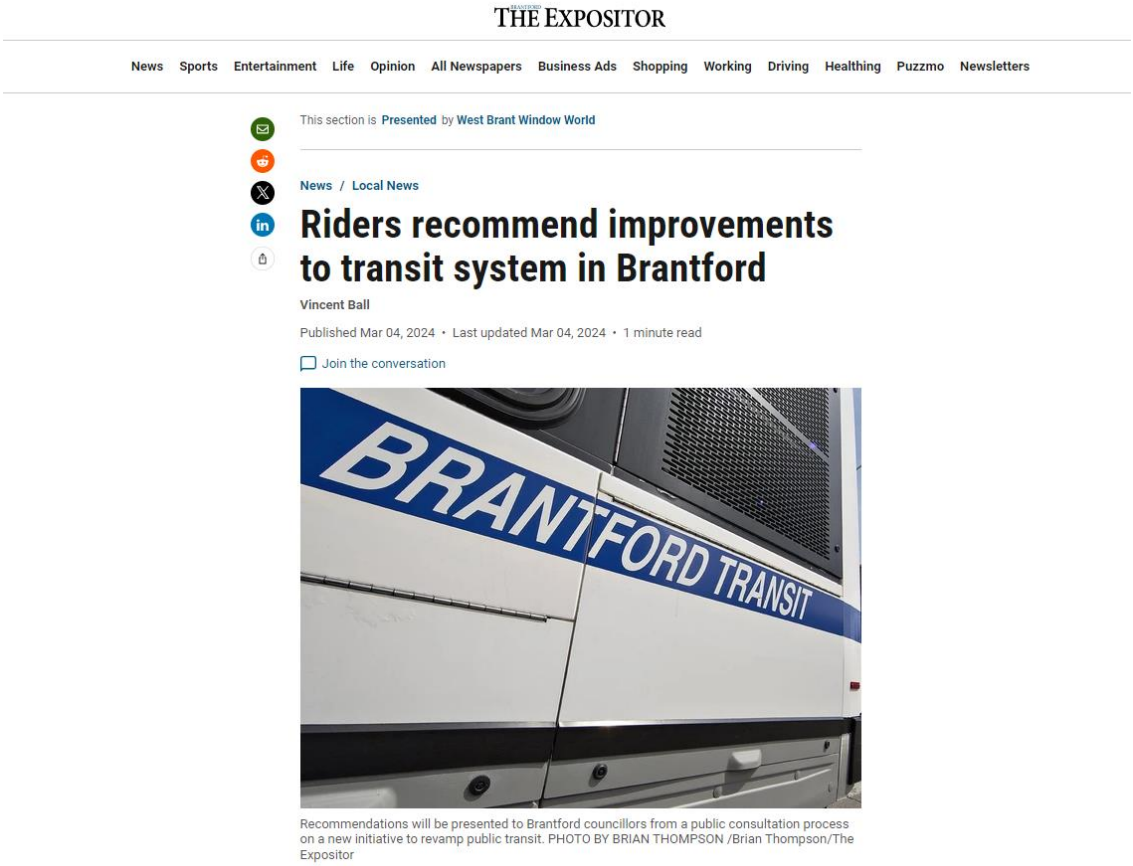
Figure 6: Let's Talk Brantford Project Page



2.1.3 Media Coverage

The engagement opportunities were shared through several well-known, local news sources. The stories detailed topics like why Brantford is undertaking the Moving Forward project, why Brantford is soliciting feedback from residents on the draft plan, and how individuals can submit their feedback. This traditional media coverage helps to fill gaps that would otherwise be left by the social media and website notices and helped to provide notice of in-person engagement opportunities.

Figure 7: News Story Following the Round 1 Engagement Report



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News / Local News

Riders recommend improvements to transit system in Brantford

Vincent Ball

Published Mar 04, 2024 • Last updated Mar 04, 2024 • 1 minute read

Join the conversation

Recommendations will be presented to Brantford councillors from a public consultation process on a new initiative to revamp public transit. PHOTO BY BRIAN THOMPSON /Brian Thompson/The Expositor

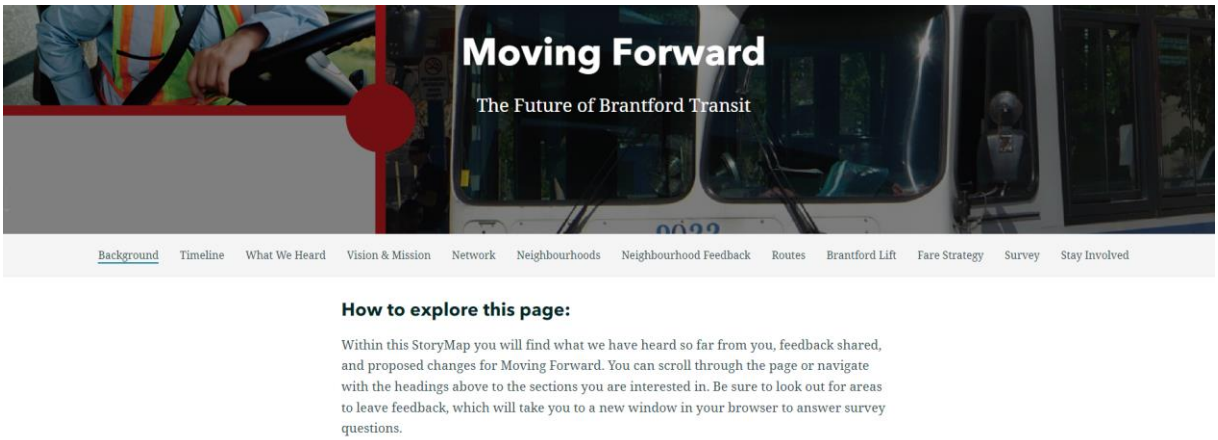
2.2 Engagement Opportunities

To reach as many community members as possible, Round 2 included three primary methods of engagement.

2.2.1 Digital Engagement and Online Survey

The primary source of feedback for this round of consultations was through an online survey created in conjunction with an ArcGIS StoryMaps. The StoryMaps website was created to walk individuals through all aspects of the Moving Forward draft plan, including both service design aspects and other topics like the proposed fare structure, Brantford Lift changes, and the high-level vision and mission of the project.

Figure 8: StoryMaps Navigation Panel



Following each topic, individuals were presented with an opportunity to provide feedback through survey questions on Survey Monkey. This was voluntary, and if individuals felt as though they did not need to provide feedback on the draft plan, they were able to continue forward to the next sections. Independent from the survey responses, this StoryMaps tool helped ensure transparency and for individuals to be well informed on the proposed Moving Forward plan draft.

The survey received 95 total responses across all questions, and feedback was received from a diverse set of comments. Responses covered all aspects of the draft Moving Forward plan, with many providing constructive feedback on how the proposed concepts could be improved upon. Furthermore, many responses reflected significant support of the proposed changes, with many individuals optimistic for the improved and modernized system.

Residents and stakeholders were also able to email the city staff listed on the Let's Talk Brantford site. The team also received a letter from the Conestoga College students' association (Conestoga Students Inc. [CSI]).

Further detail on what we heard is provided in **Section 3.0** of this report.

2.2.2 Open House Engagement

A public open house was held on April 18, 2024, at City Hall from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. The format was a drop-in style open house with informative display panels and interactive activities to gather input on the draft plan. The event was to update individuals on the progress made on the draft plan, share what we heard in Round 1 of the engagement, and to collect input using interactive panels and sticky notes. Staff from Brantford Transit and Dillon Consulting were present to hear what individuals had to say regarding the Moving Forward draft plan and to answer any questions individuals had regarding the project. A summary of feedback is provided in **Section 3.0** of this report.

Figure 9: April 18, 2024, Public Open House

2.2.3 Councillor Meetings

Upon the release of the draft network, Brantford Transit reached out to members of Council to discuss the impact the proposed routing changes would have on transit users in their respective Wards. These informal meetings were held virtually or in person, at the request of the Councillor, and geared towards addressing any questions or comments Councillors had or had heard from members of the public through the engagement process.

2.2.4 Employment Stakeholder Open House

As outlined in the engagement plan, the project team consulted with several employer representatives on May 30 at the Hampton Inn. General feedback from employers indicated they were pleased with the following elements of the plan:

- The increased service to the Northwest Industrial Area (NWIA);
- Consistent service schedules throughout the day;
- More direct routing without the need to transfer for more types of trips;
- Expanded service area in the NWIA; and
- Plans for further expansion as the area grows.

3.0 Round 2: What We Heard

This section will detail how feedback was received and what changes were made to the Moving Forward draft plan based on stakeholder and public engagement.

3.1 Proposed Route Feedback

Table 1: Proposed Route Feedback

Proposed Route	Feedback received	How we will use the feedback
Route 1: King George - Erie	Support for route changes in North Brantford. Request for route extension south to Birkett Lane for the redevelopment occurring at Erie Avenue and Birkett Lane. Request for route to be adjusted to serve Brantford Station, and for Route 13 to serve Brant Street.	Route 1 was designed with the intent to be extended further south should development permit. The feasibility of service to Brantford Station was examined, however this change is not proposed as it would result in a less direct route and other routes already provide this connection.
Route 2: West - Shellard	Support for route via Shellard Lane in West Brant. Request for service closer to Gillespie Drive. Request for service extension to directly serve	Service along Gillespie Drive is currently not proposed as the area is not yet fully developed. Additional service within Shellard is proposed for future study.

Proposed Route	Feedback received	How we will use the feedback
	the Lynden Park Mall and Brantford Commons. Several comments received expressed concerns about the proposed route taking the Veterans Memorial Parkway and Mount Pleasant, with respondents asking for the service direct to downtown via the Lorne bridge.	Service between Lynden Park Mall and Brantford Commons is already served by several routes (21, 22, and 23) proposed in the draft plan. The draft plan was subsequently adjusted to instead bring Route 2 directly across the Lorne Bridge, with service along Mount Pleasant partially maintained through Route 13.
Route 3 Echo Place	Support for route changes in North Brantford. Request for a route change within downtown. Instead of backtracking to Brant, continue eastbound via Queen or King streets.	Feedback noted. Route has been revised to travel via King Street downtown, when departing eastbound from the Bus Terminal.
Route 12: Holmedale - Mayfair	Concerns regarding the removal of service from North Park, southwest of Charing Cross Street. This was specifically for seniors who reside in the community who are currently able to utilize both Route 4A and 4C.	A stop at Eastbourne would bring service 350 metres of North Park. Additionally, it is proposed for Route 13 to use Dundas instead of Terrace Hill to improve coverage.

Proposed Route	Feedback received	How we will use the feedback
Route 13: Blackburn – Northwest Industrial Area	Request for service closer to McLaren Avenue/Blackburn Drive, and along Anderson Road.	Anderson Road will be covered by proposed Routes 2 and 13.
Route 15: Cainsville	Support for proposed route changes. Suggestion that route should travel via Colborne Street East to better serve local businesses.	Feedback noted.
Route 16: Hardy-Fairview	Support for connection to NWIA via Fairview.	Not Applicable

No specific feedback was received regarding Routes 11, 14, 17, and 18.

3.1.1 On-Demand Transit Zone Feedback

The draft plan included six proposed On-Demand Transit zones:

- North Holmedale;
- West Brant;
- Oakhill;
- Tutela Heights;
- Oriole; and
- East Ward.

Some of the feedback was a reluctance to change from a fixed-route service to an On-Demand service. Following feedback from respondents and improved coverage thanks to route design changes, the draft plan now includes two On-Demand service zones.

- On-Demand Zone A: Oakhill; and
- On-Demand Zone B: Tutela Heights.

3.2 Neighbourhood Specific Feedback

Feedback was received regarding service in specific areas and neighbourhoods across the city.

Table 2: Neighbourhood Specific Feedback

Area	Feedback Received	How we will use the feedback
West Brant Neighbourhood	Feedback received supported proposed service in West Brant. Participants appreciated the directness and coverage of routes. Concerns regarding the directness of Route 2. Requested that the route travel directly downtown via Lorne Bridge.	Route 2 will travel directly to downtown via the Lorne Bridge. While not currently feasible, future service improvements to coverage and access will result from the continued growth of the area.
North Brantford Neighbourhood	Concerns about the loss of service along several streets. Support for the increased route directness and new connections. Concerns about service along Kent Road.	Kent Road service has been restored through an adjusted Route 12. This route will bring individuals directly to Brantford Commons and North Holmedale via Downtown, Brantford Station and the Brantford Bus Terminal.

Area	Feedback Received	How we will use the feedback
	Desire for more direct routes and express routes for faster travel times.	
Echo Place / Cainsville Neighbourhood	Concerns about the coverage of service in the Cainsville area.	Route 15 will improve bus service to Cainsville through standardized service hours, direct routings, and good connections to the wider Brantford Transit network.
Central Brantford Neighbourhood Feedback	Some comments received shared concerns regarding existing services. Others had concerns regarding the removal of service on certain streets, including Clarence Street and North Park Street.	Service within Central Brantford has been improved to ensure that both network and corridor needs are being met. This includes ensuring that routes operate in a direct fashion to reduce operational delays.
Eagle Place Neighbourhood	Suggestions regarding the proposed Route 14 included a preference for service along Salisbury, Pontiac, and Marlene. One comment asked whether service is being planned with the development near Birkett Lane and Erie Avenue in mind. Concerns that on-demand service could potentially	To improve coverage and connections in the neighbourhood, Routes 1 and 14 have been revised. Route 1 will now terminate at the Woodland Cultural Centre, travelling from Erie Avenue via Ninth Avenue. Route 14 has also been rerouted in the neighbourhood to maintain service on

Area	Feedback Received	How we will use the feedback
	be insufficient for the proposed Mohawk-Greenwich redevelopment.	Salisbury and to improve connections to downtown. Route 14 will also now serve the East Ward area via Murray Street, maintaining fixed-route service in this neighbourhood instead of on-demand service.
Northwest Industrial Area Neighbourhood	Feedback for the NWIA included requests for improved connections, more direct routes and earlier or later service to accommodate shift workers.	Service to the NWIA will be improved in the draft plan through additional routes and extended service hours. This will improve access to the NWIA from all areas of the city.
Future Service Area	No feedback received.	

3.3 Fare Structure Feedback

Generally, responses indicated that individuals were supportive of the proposed changes to the fare structure. Individuals appreciated the simplicity of the proposed new system and support mobile phone payment options. Some concerns shared by respondents included:

- Accessibility of the mobile payment options. Some riders do not use mobile phones, or service can be unreliable in the areas of the city that they live.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the elimination of paper tickets that are used by social agencies to ensure the safe travel of their

clients, who are often of vulnerable demographics. This includes specific feedback from Margot's Place, and outreach mission of St. Andrew's United Church, where over 75% of their clients are transit users. It was requested for continued access to 2-way bus tickets, as it is infeasible to offer large numbers of preloaded rides due to their limited budget.

- Some respondents asked for fare integration with other transit agencies, such as GO Transit and VIA Rail, and said Brantford should utilize the PRESTO card system. This includes access to the new 'One Fare' fare integration program.
- Some affordability concerns were shared, especially for low-income individuals, those on Ontario Works, or individuals covered under the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).
- Ensure there is no interruption or impact to U-Pass users through the transition to new fare technology and examine the future potential of PRESTO card integration.

3.4 Rider Experience Feedback

Comments were received from Brantford Transit users regarding the overall rider experience, including customer service, trip planning, accessibility and overcrowding of vehicles. Some respondents mentioned how they wished Brantford had more transit priority, such as bus lanes, to make their trips faster and more reliable.

Comments were also received regarding bus stop infrastructure, including improved bus shelters and amenities. This includes bus stop lighting and heated bus shelters.

Feedback was received from the Conestoga College Students' Association stating that extended 30-minute frequencies to 10:00pm would greatly improve service for student riders. This is because night classes extend beyond 9:00pm.

3.5 Brantford Lift Feedback

Limited feedback was received regarding the proposed changes to Brantford Lift operations. Some feedback regarding the service was requesting improved operator training to ensure individual accessibility accommodations are being incorporated into the draft plan.

3.6 Other Feedback Received

3.6.1 Brant County Service

Many comments were received regarding requests for improved connections between Brantford and neighbouring population centres in Brant County The most frequent request was for service to Paris. Fixed-route service is being explored as a replacement for the Brant Transit on-demand service between Paris and Brantford.

Further requests were received for transit service to St. George, Burford, and the Brantford Municipal Airport. These requests have been noted and received for future service planning. Notably, one such request came from Conestoga Students Inc, the students' association of Conestoga College.

3.6.2 Higher Order Transit

Several comments received suggested looking at higher-order transit options, whether rail-based transit (such as trams) or bus rapid transit (BRT). This is not within the scope of this current plan, but as the city continues to grow in the long-term, it will be important to look at potential rapid transit initiatives to help move people reliably. Peer transit systems should be used to help inform any future higher-order transit investment and planning.

3.6.3 Improved connections to GO Transit

Comments were received that requested service to better meet early morning GO bus trips for regional travel. Some of these needs should be accommodated thanks to expanded and standardized hours of service. The City of Brantford is also undertaking the study of GO Train service to improve connections to the wider regional transit network.

3.6.4 Feedback from Conestoga Students Inc.

The students' association of Conestoga College, representing over 3,000 students in Brantford, wrote a letter in support of the proposed Brantford Transit plan.

"Overall, CSI (Conestoga Students Inc.) supports the Draft Transit Network and system redesign for Brantford Transit. The proposed improvements address key aspects of transit, including direct route options, expanding service areas, frequency, and cost-aspects that not only drive current rider satisfaction, but also new riders into the system."

4.0 Conclusion and Next Steps

Brantford Transit and Dillon Consulting appreciate the individuals and organizations who took their time to provide thoughtful, useful, and constructive feedback on the draft Long Term Brantford Transit Plan. This feedback has been critical to ensuring that resident's needs are being met by Brantford Transit. Numerous changes to the draft plan resulted from participant feedback, and moving forward, Brantford Transit will continue to communicate with residents regarding next steps in the implementation of the proposed draft transit plan.

This plan will be considered by Brantford City Council on Tuesday, September 3rd, 2024. The draft plan, if adopted, would then be implemented subject to planning resource availability.