



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA  
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
AGENDA

AAC 5-2019

Thursday, November 14, 2019

1:30 p.m.

Campbell East (CE) 102

Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell East

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON

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	Pages
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST</u>	
3. <u>PRESENTATIONS</u>	
3.1 <u>Specialized Transit in Niagara - Recommendations - A Way Forward</u> Steve Wilks, Project Manager, IBI Group	2 - 25
4. <u>DELEGATIONS</u>	
5. <u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u>	
6. <u>CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u>	
6.1 <u>AAC 04-2019</u> Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes September 17, 2019	26 - 28
7. <u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>	
8. <u>NEXT MEETING</u> The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 28, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room 4.	
9. <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend or participate in meetings or events, please contact the Accessibility Advisor at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 (office), 289-929-8376 (cellphone) or [accessibility@niagararegion.ca](mailto:accessibility@niagararegion.ca) (email).

# Specialized Transit in Niagara

## Recommendations *A Way Forward*



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# Specialized Transit Study Scope

## Established Municipal Specialized Transit Systems



### Transit systems (hybrid)

- Lincoln Transit (U-Link)
- Niagara-on-the-Lake Transit
- Pelham Transit

### Transit systems under contract

- Thorold
- Port Colborne

### No transit service

- Grimsby
- West Lincoln
- Wainfleet

# Presentation Outline

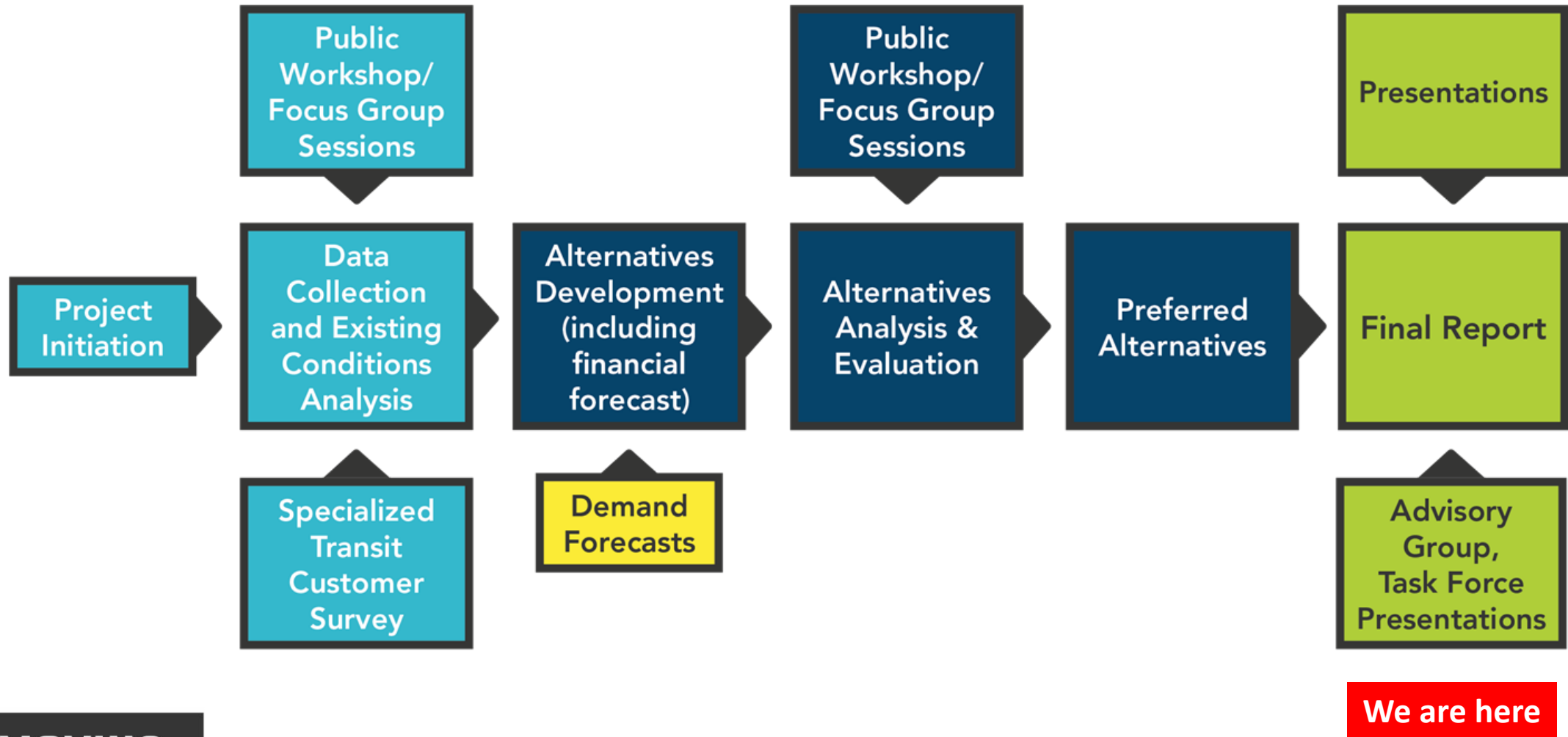
- Recap:
  - Study Objectives
  - Work Plan
  - *What We Heard* – Stakeholder Consultation & Survey Results
  - Common Industry Practices
  - Guiding Principles
  - *Imagine Possibilities* – Opportunities
- Recommendations – *A Way Forward*
- Next Steps

# Study Objectives

- Opportunities to maximize use of existing resources
- Increase efficiencies in service delivery through policy review and development
- Project future specialized transit travel demand
- Develop a recommended approach to best meet community's mobility needs – *A Way Forward*



# Work Plan





# What We Heard

- Favourable view of drivers & staff
- Difficulty booking a trip – tedious including need to call multiple agencies (municipal & regional travel)
- Poor on time performance (or don't show up)
- Excessive travel times
- Inconsistent eligibility criteria & processes
- Residents of communities without specialized transit (West Niagara) – feel disadvantaged

## Extensive Outreach/ Consultation/Survey Research:

- AAC
- IMTWG
- LNTC
- Niagara Health
- PICs
- Agencies/organizations representing older adults/disability community
- Specialized Transit Customer Survey



# What We Heard (cont.)

- Need for accessible paths of travel to use accessible fixed route transit

## Most Requested Improvements

- Online trip booking and payment
- Extended service hours
- Phone alert upon vehicle arrival
- Ride-hailing/same day service (may be prepared to pay premium fare)

# Common Industry Practices

- Key Functional Areas

## **Funding & Oversight**

- determines budget & other resource levels
- planning & service monitoring

## **Eligibility & Certification**

- centralized, others left to service provider
- standardized criteria, range of processes

## **Reservations & Scheduling**

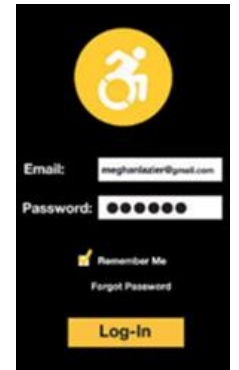
- takes trip requests
- allocates drivers & vehicles to meet needs
- common use of computerized scheduling

## **Service Delivery**

- core service - buses & vans & use of supplemental services (sedans, vans)
- in-house & contract operations

# Common Industry Practices

- Next-Generation Mobility:
  - **Supplemental services** – taxis, transportation network companies (TNCs), microtransit
    - Address peaking, late evenings & weekends
  - **Technology**
    - Computerized scheduling & dispatch
    - Vehicle locating & communication (AVL/ MDTs)
    - IVR – broadcast vehicle arrivals, etc.
    - App +/-or web portal – registration, trip planning, reservations, confirmations, cancellations
    - Mobile payment



# Common Industry Practices

- **Community Collaboratives / Entrepreneurial Partnerships:** Coordinated Human/Social Service Transportation (& other community-based agencies & organizations)
- **Greater link/integration with fixed-route transit services**
  - Range of incentives & policies address demand/mobility management opportunities.
  - Accessible paths of travel.
  - Integrated trip planning & fare payment.



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# Guiding Principles – *An Eye on the Future*

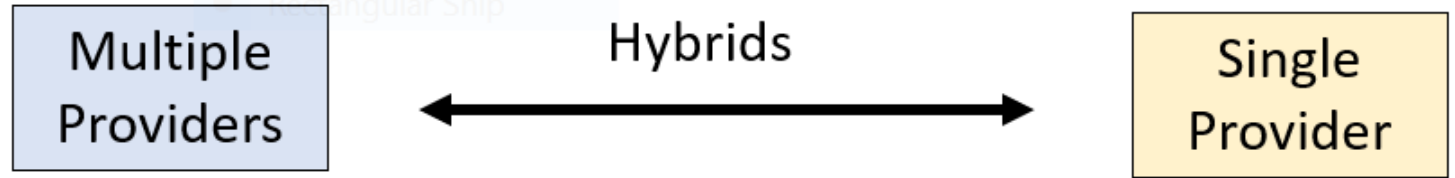
## A Preferred Approach Designed To:

- **Preserve the integrity** of the Region's specialized transit services for those with no alternative
  - **Maximize benefits from investments** made in accessible fixed route transit & provide flexible mobility options
  - **Compliance with AODA** (& universal design)
  - **Be fiscally responsible and accountable**
- Maximize use of existing resources
  - Increase efficiencies in service delivery
  - Enhance the customer experience
  - Leverage use of technology



# *Imagine Possibilities* – Opportunities

## Delivery Models



Models – to address core functional areas:

1. Eligibility & Certification
2. Trip Reservation & Scheduling
3. Dispatch/Trip Management
4. Service Delivery

# Recommendations – Eligibility and Certification

1. Process be centralized under a single entity.
2. A single application form be used by all specialized transit operators.
3. Application form - available on-line and ability to complete & submit.
4. Remove the requirement for validation by a health care professional.

DRAFT – for discussion

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## NIAGARA SPECIALIZED TRANSIT APPLICATION FORM

*Specialized Transit* is a pre-booked, shared-ride, origin to destination service for persons with a permanent or temporary physical disability and/or intellectual challenge/cognitive disability.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call

<insert contact>

<insert phone number>

### HOW TO APPLY FOR THE SPECIALIZED TRANSIT PROGRAM:

- Please return the completed application to <insert agency - TBD>.
- <insert agency - TBD> will notify you of your eligibility. If we require additional information, you may be requested to come in for an interview and/or an in-person assessment to provide us with more information about your disability and the reason(s) you require this service.
- All information on this application form will be kept confidential.
- Failure to completely fill out the application will delay the application process.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Middle)
2. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Apt) (Street)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(City or Town) (Postal Code)
3. Daytime Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
TTY/TDD Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ (For Hearing Impaired)
4. Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
YY/MM/DD

Niagara Specialized Transit Application Form



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# Recommendations – Eligibility and Certification (cont.)

5. In-person assessments be introduced as part of this process.
6. Applicants certification reflect categories of: *unconditional*, *temporary*, and *conditional (trip-by-trip)*.
7. Re-certification every 5-years



**Unconditional:** disability prevents use of conventional transit

**Temporary:** temporary disability

**Conditional:** disability where environmental or physical barriers limit their ability to consistently use conventional transit

May be denied requests to persons who have temporary or conditional eligibility if conventional transit is accessible and the person has the ability to use it.

# Recommendations – Reservations & Scheduling

1. The reservations/trip request and scheduling functions be centralized under a single entity.
2. Enable registrants to make reservations/trip requests by telephone, app and/or web-portal (*One-Call/One-Click* capability).
3. Scheduling (route optimization, allocation of resources) to use state-of-the-art, commercially available software with a robust scheduling algorithm.

# Recommendations – Policies, Procedures, and Performance Metrics

1. Governing entity develop a robust set of policies, procedures and performance metrics.

Policies and procedures to include but not be restricted to:

- Advance booking requirements
- Cancellations and no-shows
- Scheduling windows
- Fare policy

Advance discussions focused on community collaboratives (e.g., Niagara Health)

Performance metrics to reflect industry norms regarding key performance indicators (KPIs) including requirements for service monitoring, contract compliance and CUTA reporting.

# Recommendations – Service Delivery

1. Core specialized transit services – comparable to level of service as currently provided by the aggregate of the municipal and regional specialized transit providers.
2. Use of supplemental taxis and/or transportation network companies (TNCs) - during times of day, days of week, areas of service, or ‘overflow’ capacity (when the deployment of hourly service would not meet prescribed performance metrics).
3. Supplemental services, as described above, be used to accommodate future travel demand/expansion of specialized transit services.

Supplemental services to be contracted on a per trip bases and hence, only pay for services consumed and may include subsidized same-day service.

# Recommendations – Greater Link/Integration with Fixed-Route Transit Services

1. Apply *conditional/trip-by-trip* eligibility

*Conditional* - where conditions can be determined (e.g., seasonal, climate/weather, topography, accessible paths of travel, proximity of trip origin/destination to fixed-route service, transit hubs, etc.).

2. Develop incentives and policies to address travel/mobility demand management strategies

*Strategies* include: travel/mobility training, fare policy, trip discovery/planning capabilities, etc.

# Recommendations – Same-Day Pilot Program

1. Through partnerships with taxi and/or transportation network companies (TNCs) provide subsidized, app-based (including trip request, tracking, and mobile payment) trips to specialized transit registrants.
  - Establish parameters including maximum per trip subsidy/distance and use of fare policy to influence travel behaviour.
  - For those who may not have a Smart device and/or the unbanked, ensure the provision of a call-centre and ability for trip payment by alternate means.



# Recommendations – Technology

1. Technology enhancement that include:
  - a. Real-time passenger information including the broadcast (text message or telephone call) of vehicle arrivals.
  - b. Self-service capabilities through an app and/or web portal to address registration, trip planning, reservations, confirmations and cancellations.
  - c. Mobile (cashless) payment.



# Implementation Plan

## Within context of *Transit Governance Study*

### Near-Term (0 - 2 years)

- Harmonizing application form
- Centralized eligibility & certification process
- Development of policies, procedures, and performance metrics
- Centralized scheduling
- Expanded use of supplemental services
- Same-Day Pilot Program

### Mid-Term (2 - 5 years)

- Technology – real-time info., self-serve capabilities, cashless payment
- Greater integration with fixed-route transit

# Next Steps

- Finalize financial forecasts
- Presentation of Recommendations to LNTC (Linking Niagara Transit Committee)
- Draft & Final Report – November/December 2019

# Key Contacts



**Kumar Ranjan – Project Manager**  
**[kumar.ranjan@niagararegion.ca](mailto:kumar.ranjan@niagararegion.ca)**



**Steve Wilks – Project Manager**  
**[swilks@ibigroup.com](mailto:swilks@ibigroup.com)**



A network diagram with dark grey nodes and lines on a dark grey background, transitioning to a teal background at the bottom.

# MOVING TRANSIT FORWARD



November 2019

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**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA  
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
OPEN SESSION**

**AAC 04-2019  
Tuesday, September 17, 2019  
Committee Room 4  
Niagara Region Headquarters  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold ON**

Committee: Councillor Ip (Chair), G. Eden (Vice-Chair), I. Greaves, L. Hay, B. Kon, H. Matthews, C. Peddle, V. Sparling, C. Theal

Absent/Regrets: T. Hore, D. Whipple (Vice-Chair)

Staff: A. Apfelbaum, Manager, Business Licensing and Enforcement, K. Ranjan, Go Implementation Project, Transportation Lead, K. Lotimer, Legislative Coordinator, T. McClellan, Building Services Manager, Community Services, C. Mustard, Real Estate Coordinator, S. Murphy, Accessibility Advisor, C. Perreault, Web Communications Coordinator, G. Szaszi, Capital Works Technician, Niagara Regional Housing, K. Whittard, Clinical Team Manager, Public Health

Others: M. Ferrusi, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, T. Morden, Niagara Regional Police

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Ip called the meeting to order at 1:41 p.m.

**2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

**3. PRESENTATIONS**

**3.1 Specialized Transit in Niagara**

Steve Wilks and Antonio Gittens, IBI Group, provided information respecting Specialized Transit in Niagara. Topics of the presentation included:

- Work Plan Status/Update
- Specialized Transit in Niagara Region - Existing Conditions
- What We Heard - Stakeholder Consultation & Survey Results
- Key Issues & Challenges
- Imagine Possibilities - Opportunities
- Concepts - A Preferred Approach - An Eye on the Future

**4. DELEGATIONS**

There were no delegations.

**5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**5.1 AAC-C 5-2019**

2020 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Dates

Moved by H. Matthews

Seconded by L. Hay

That Memorandum AAC-C 5-2019, dated September 17, 2019, respecting 2020 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Dates, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendation **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the Accessibility Advisory Committee meetings **BE HELD** on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. on the following dates:

January 28, March 24, June 23, August 11 and October 6, 2020.

**Carried**

**6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

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

AAC 03-2019

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

June 25, 2019

AAC Terms of Reference

Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference approved by Regional Council on August 15, 2019

**Carried**

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

**7.1 Taxi Service - Fort Erie**

Angelo Apfelbaum, Manager, Business Licensing and Enforcement, provided an overview of the Business Licensing and Enforcement division of the Region. Mr. Apfelbaum advised that the modernization of the Taxi Licensing and Transportation Services by-laws will be commencing in the fall and the Business Licensing and Enforcement division will be asking Committee members for feedback/input.

**8. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 28, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room 4.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

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Councillor Ip  
Committee Chair

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Kelly Lotimer  
Legislative Coordinator

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Ann-Marie Norio  
Regional Clerk