

A background graphic featuring a network of interconnected nodes and lines, resembling a molecular or digital structure. The nodes are represented by small circles, and the lines are thin, connecting the nodes in a complex web. The overall color scheme is dark gray with teal accents.

# **MOVING TRANSIT FORWARD**

**CONNECTING MORE PEOPLE TO MORE POSSIBILITIES**

# Niagara Specialized Transit

## PW 53-2020



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**Niagara**  **Region**

# Niagara Specialized Transit (NST)

- Hours of Operation – 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday to Saturday
- Shared-ride, pre-booked subset of Niagara Region's transit services designed to provide inter-municipal transportation options to those riders who may require additional levels of accommodation
- The service was created at a time before conventional transit vehicles were mandated to have accessibility features such as wheelchair ramps/lifts, priority seating, and audio/visual announcement systems

# Service Levels – Statistics

Details	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2018 Actual	Var \$ 2019A vs 2019B FAV/(UNFAV)	Var % 2019A vs 2019B FAV/(UNFAV)	Explanation
# of Trips	31,200	28,680	30,057	(2,520)	(8%)	Renegotiated contract terms
Operator Payments	\$2,212,918	\$1,987,695	\$2,627,753	\$225,223	10%	
Fare Revenue	\$(132,600)	\$(120,670)	\$(151,123)	\$(11,930)	(9%)	
Net Expense	\$2,080,318	\$1,867,024	\$2,476,630	\$213,294	10%	

# NST Timeline – 2006 - 2015

## 2006-2015

- Service Delivered by The Red Cross
  - Fleet owned and maintained by Niagara Region

## 2015

- Contract awarded to The BTS Network after competitive bid process (RFP)
  - Fleet owned and maintained by Service Provider

# NST Timeline - 2017-2018

- Changes in AODA (i.e. fare parity, operating hours = conventional transit) lead to significant ridership growth (PW 51-2017)
- As a direct result, NST operating budget grew substantially year over year to accommodate spike in ridership
- Program still ran over-budget despite increases/program changes
- High Trip Threshold provision from Agreement met – triggering renegotiation (PW 40-2018)
- NST Operational Review + Specialized Transit Study began as part of Niagara Transit Governance Review (LNTC 9-2018)

# NST Timeline - 2019

- Amending Agreement Authorized by Council (PW 40-2019)
  - New terms provide greater control and oversight thus resolving the budget crisis
  - Two-year agreement with option to extend four times (1 year per extension)
  - Strategically intended to align contract termination with future (potential) governance transition
- Specialized Transit Study recommends service improvements (PW 39-2019)
  - Remove need for applications
  - Allow same day booking
  - Enable online booking and payment
  - Co-mingling of riders (specialized and conventional)
- NRT OnDemand authorized by Council (PW 60-2019)



# NST Timeline - 2020

- COVID-19
  - Delays Niagara Transit Governance Study decision to 2021
  - Delays launch of NRT OnDemand from April to August
  - Delays implementation of fare payment technology to 2021
- NRT OnDemand Pilot launches August 17
  - Service includes recommendations from Specialized Transit Study
  - Service expansion into Niagara-on-the-Lake launches November 23

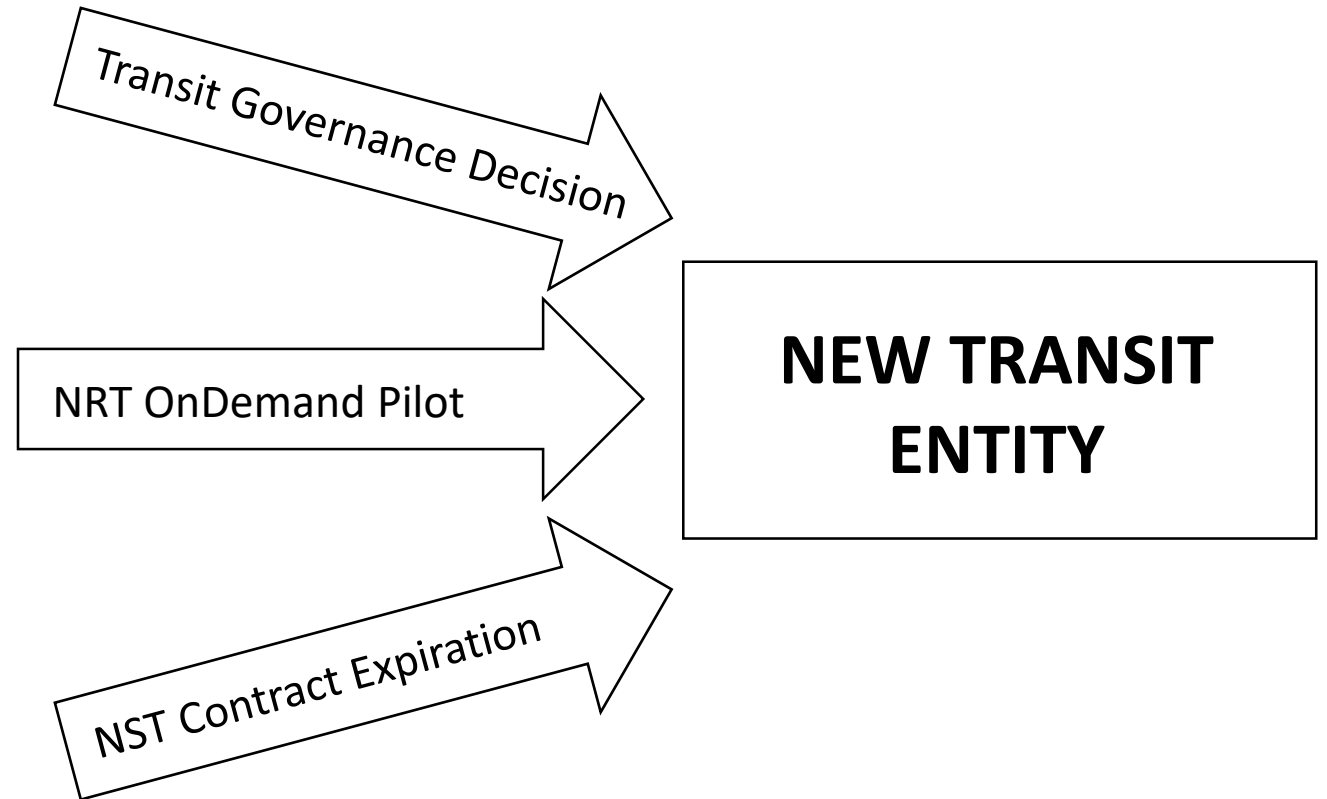


# Creating Social & Transit Equity

- NRT OnDemand Pilot testing co-mingling of riders (mobility challenged and conventional users on the same service)
- Accessibility advocates long desire co-mingling to break down social and equity barriers
- Early NRT OnDemand results showing significant positive results
- If successful, would eliminate need for separate specialized division
- Vision is to enable a single service to meet social, financial and rider experience expectations employing a fully accessible fleet, booked and paid for with web-based, customizable profiles, using on-demand, co-mingled service delivery for all rural or underserved areas of Niagara

# Achieving Strategic Alignment

Renew NST Amending Agreement per terms previously approved (PW 40-2019 & PW 53-2020) to allow transit governance decision/ transition, NRT OnDemand pilot and NST contract expiry to strategically align



# Questions?

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