

An abstract graphic featuring a network of interconnected nodes and lines, resembling a molecular or digital structure, set against a dark background. The nodes are represented by circles of varying sizes, and the lines are thin and light gray. The overall composition is modern and tech-oriented.

MOVING TRANSIT FORWARD

**Presentation to Public Works Committee
January 8, 2019**

Agenda

- Overview: Where We've Been
- Successes: What We've Achieved
- Workplan: What's Next
- Moving Transit Forward: Where We're Going
- NST: Growing Ridership



**MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD**

Inter-Municipal Transit (IMT)

- Routes travelling between municipalities
- Primarily provided by Region (non-exclusive)
- 'Hub-to-hub' connections

Niagara Regional Transit (NRT)

- Operates defined IMT service
- Service delivery contracted by Region to Niagara transit providers (WL, STC, NF)



niagara region transit

NIAGARA REGION TRANSIT BACKGROUNDER

NRT is a curb-to-curb public transit service delivering inter-municipal trips between Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Welland, Thorold, Fort Erie and Port Colborne. This service is contracted to the local transit authorities in Welland, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines. NRT vehicles contain a number of accessibility features to accommodate a range of rider needs. Some examples include low floor, kneeling buses, priority and courtesy seating, stop announcement systems and digital destination signage.

NRT achieved three major milestones in 2017: the completion of the **Niagara Transit Service Delivery and Governance Strategy Report**; Niagara Region obtained triple majority which provided it with jurisdiction to transition from a pilot to permanent service provider of inter-municipal transit in Niagara; and a transit MOU was signed between Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Welland and Niagara Region to proceed with work toward an integrated system.

RIDERSHIP:

~500K riders
96% higher than in 2016

using a single mobile platform for all Niagara transit systems

transit

13
fleet vehicles

U-PASS AGREEMENTS:

nc Niagara College Canada +
Brock University

2 link routes
Port Colborne
Fort Erie

8 main routes
40/45
50/55
60/65
70/75

50K REVENUE SERVICE HOURS

NRT SERVICE PARTNERS:

Niagara Falls
St. Catharines
Welland

*contracted service provided by municipalities

CONNECTING MORE PEOPLE TO MORE POSSIBILITIES

Niagara Region

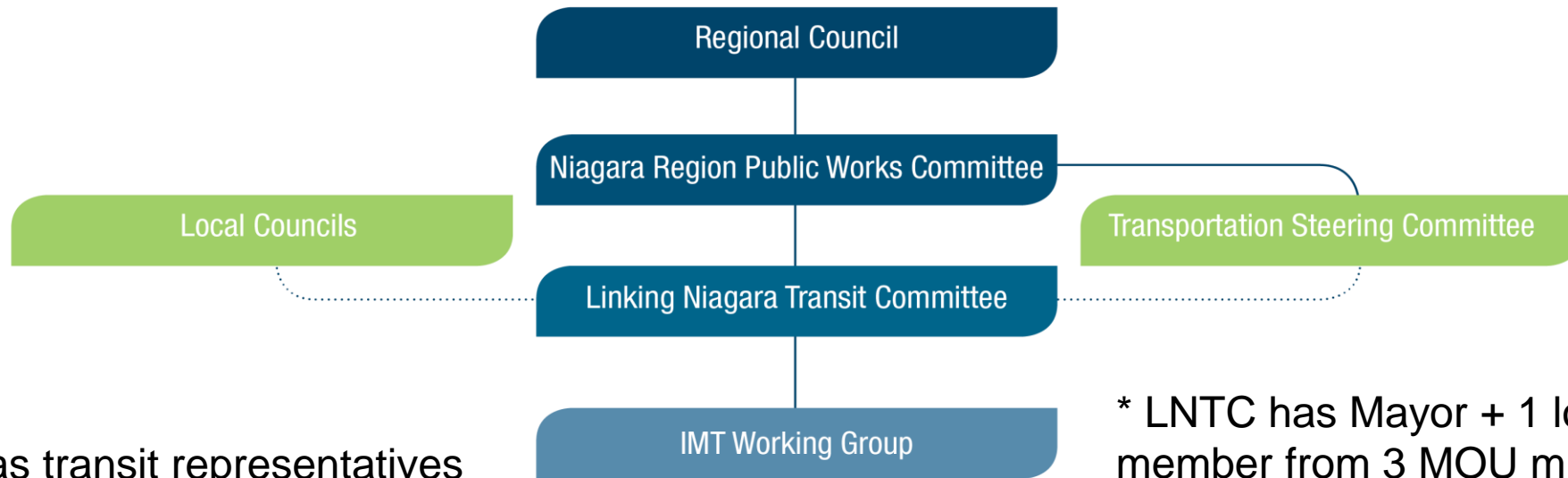
Overview: Where We've Been

Key Inter-Municipal Transit Milestones:

2011-2017	NRT IMT pilot service
Feb. 2017	Niagara Transit Service Delivery and Governance Strategy Report (Dillon Consulting, "Dillon Report")
June 2017	Unanimous 'triple majority' achieved
Dec. 2017	Unanimous transit MOU (STC/NR/NF/WE)
May 2018	Unanimous 3-year ext. of NRT service
Sept. 2018	IMT Service Implementation Strategy



IMT Reporting Structure



* IMTWG has transit representatives from all 13 municipalities

* LNTC has Mayor + 1 local Council member from 3 MOU municipalities + 4 Regional Councillors (10 total members)

Milestones: What We've Achieved

LNTC/IMTWG focus is on numerous customer-facing system improvements:

- 3-year NRT operating extension – now 'permanent' service with triple majority
- Post-secondary student union contracts (U-Pass agreements)
- Sept. 2018 NRT service enhancements
- Single mobile platform for all systems – Transit App
- Common Service Guidelines – consistency/standardization across all systems
- Distinct route numbers to avoid customer confusion
- Backend on/off board technology merger to single provider
- Consolidated after hours customer service provider
- “Moving Transit Forward” – public awareness campaign



MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD



transit

= CONNECTING MORE PEOPLE
TO MORE POSSIBILITIES

DOWNLOAD  IN THE

Hello, Niagara Region

Download **Transit** and become
connected to more possibilities

DOWNLOAD  IN THE

MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD



transit

= CONNECTING MORE PEOPLE
TO MORE POSSIBILITIES

DOWNLOAD  IN THE APP

Hello, Niagara Region

Are you ready for daily **GO Trains**
and **improved Transit**?

MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD

VISIT [NIAGARAREGION.CA/TRANSIT](https://niagararegion.ca/transit) TO LEARN MORE

Niagara  Region

MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD

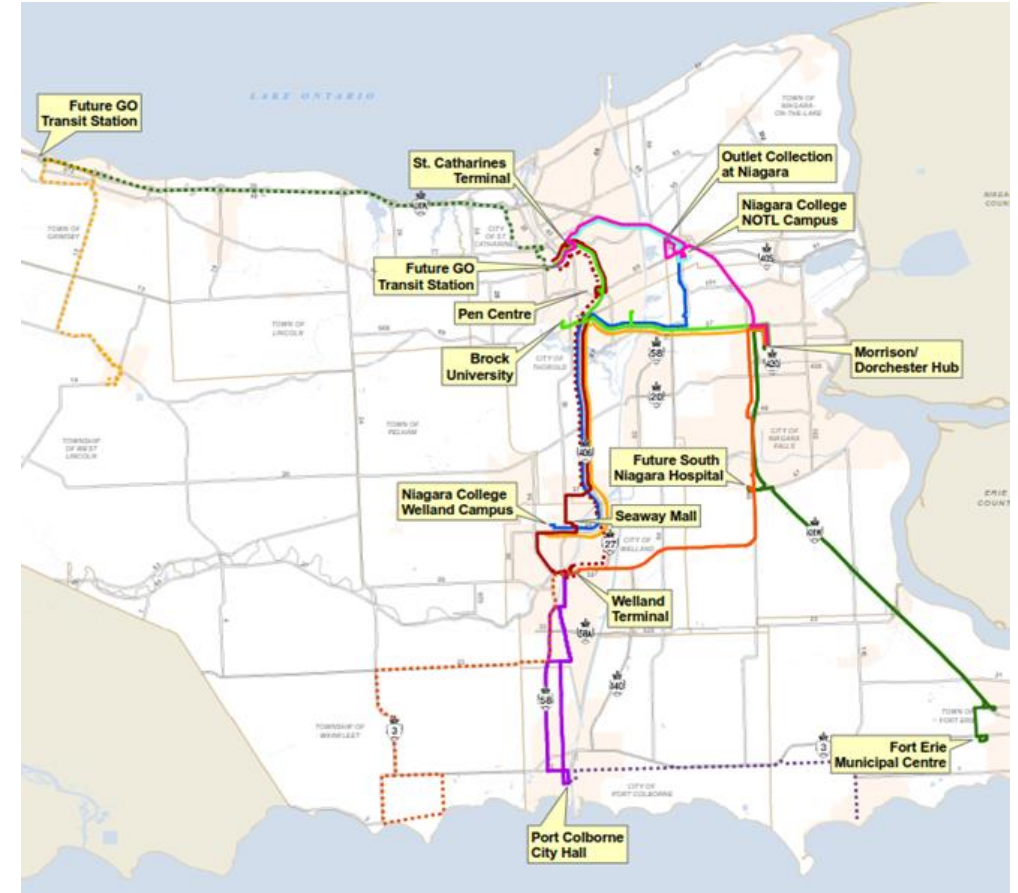
Niagara  Region

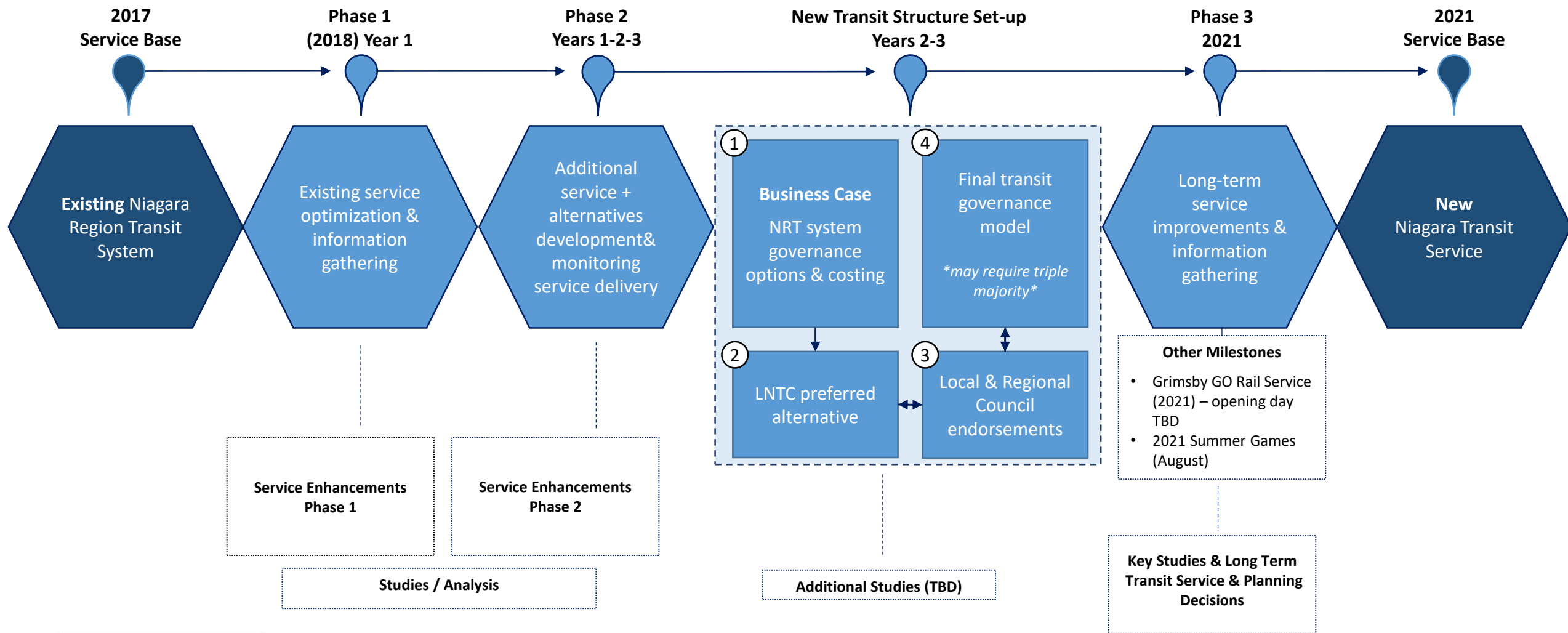
Workplan: What's Next

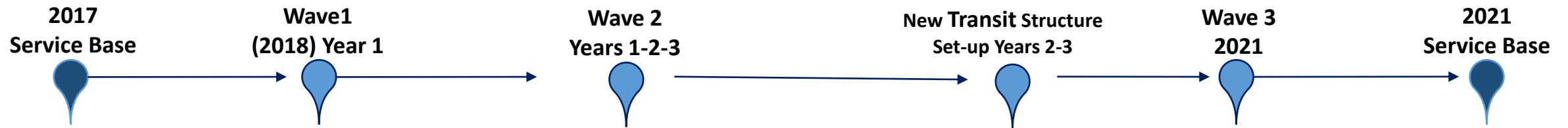
TASK	TIMING
Launch Common Universal Support Person Pass	January 2019
Initiate Specialized Transit Review (9 months)	January 2019
Real-time GPS-enabled fleet go-live	January 2019
Common Fare Strategy	January 2019
Harmonize GTFS data (Google feed for web-based trips)	February 2019
MTO response to PGT operating/consolidation impacts	Q1 2019
Consolidated customer service call centre strategy	Q1 2019
Financial and asset valuation for governance options	End of Q1, 2019
Integrated route map/rider guide	Q2/Q3 2019

Moving Transit Forward: Where We're Going

- Rationalization of duplicate post-secondary routes for efficiency
- Better integration with municipal transit i.e. 30 minute Service, Sunday and Holiday Service
- New Niagara-West IMT link (integration with GO Transit – bus + train)
- New dynamic transit services for low-demand areas
- Improved connections to GO Train service
- Integrated fares and payment technology i.e. mobile ticketing
- New or enhanced amenities, e.g. Wi-Fi, bus shelters







Customer Service Enhancements

Studies/ Analysis

- Uniform customer service policies
- Support person pass
- Single point after-hour call handling

- One Customer Call Centre

- Gas Tax impacts
- Specialized Transit Study
- Branding Strategy & communications approach

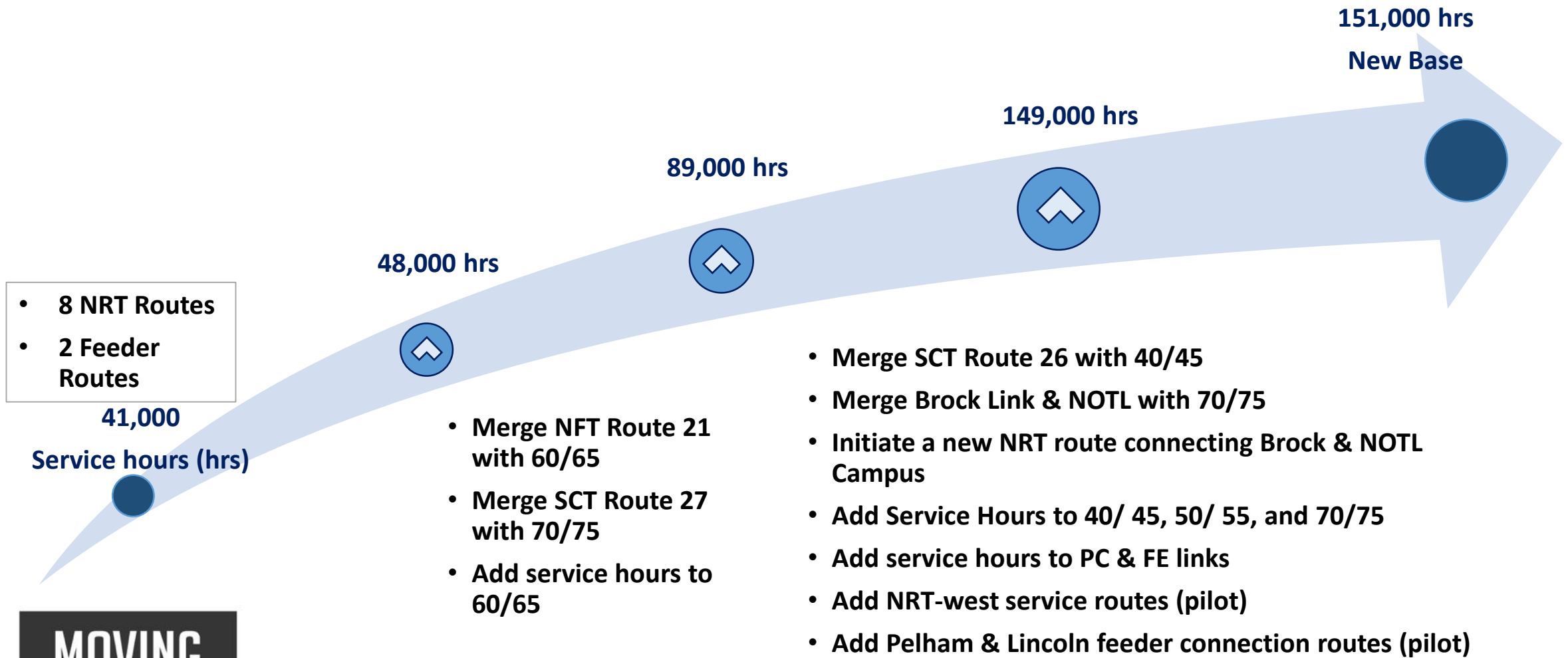
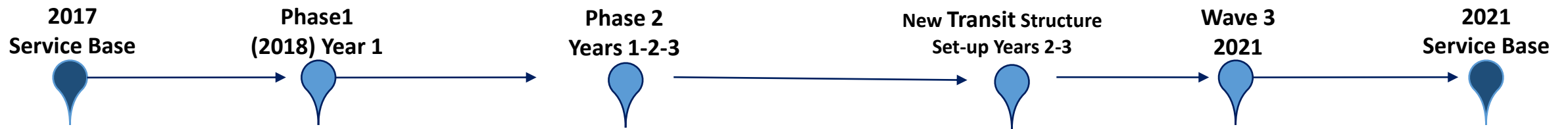
- Transit Assets Inventory Study
- Financial Study/ Operations Study
- Human Resources Study
- Business case development

Governance Decision

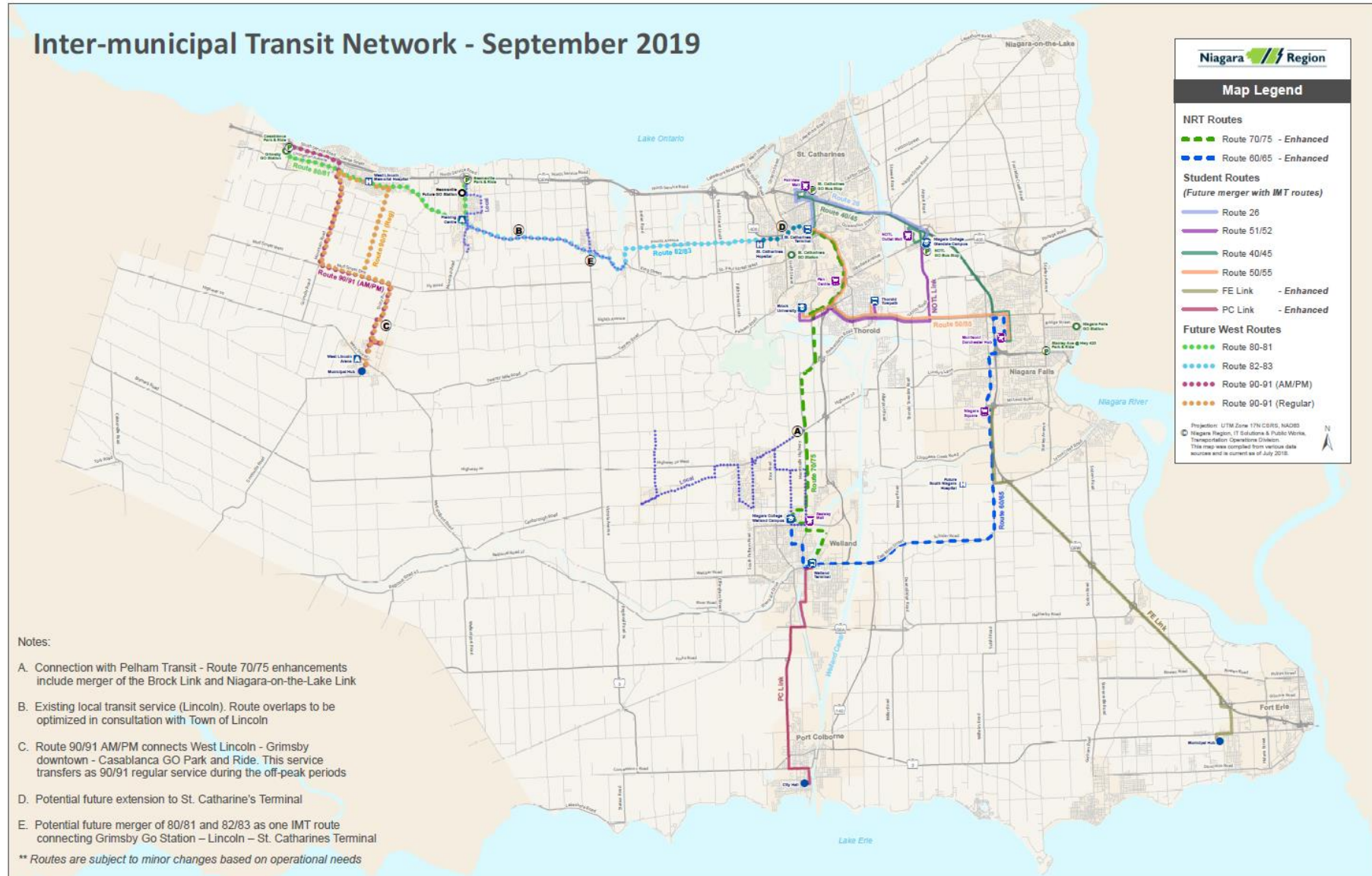
- Additional Studies if Required

- Wave 3 Customer Service Improvements

- 10-Year Strategic Plan
- Fare box integration
- Transit maintenance garage and operations centre
- Transit ITS improvements
- Mobility management initiatives (first & last mile)



Inter-municipal Transit Network - September 2019



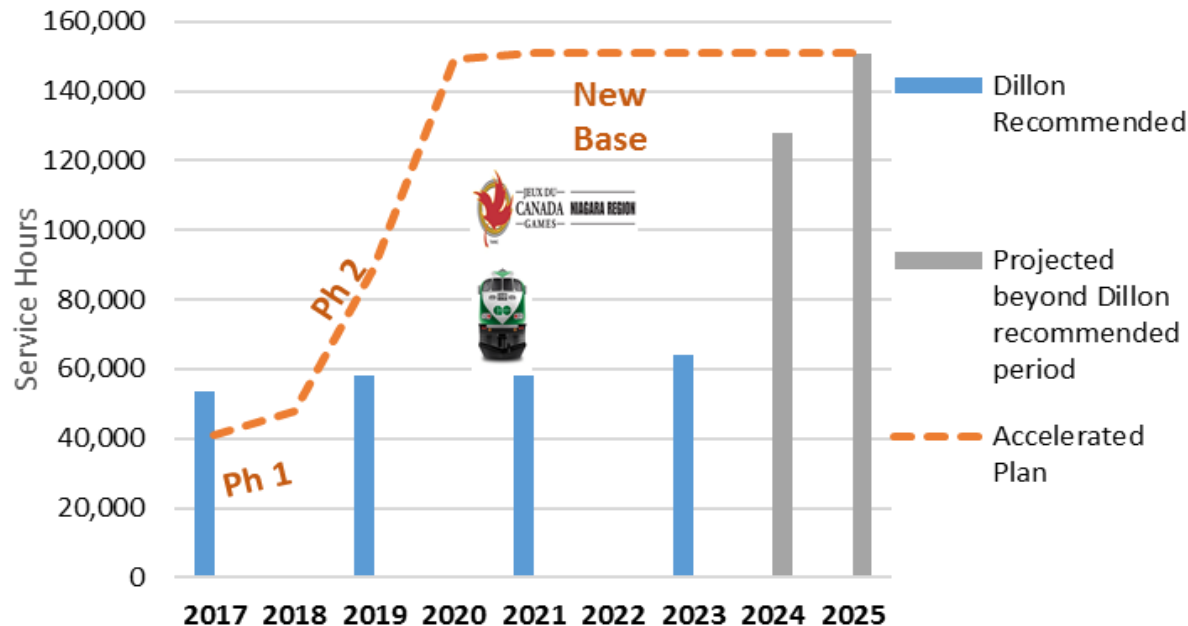
**MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD**

**Inter-Municipal Transit Network Expansion – September 2019
DRAFT**

Niagara Region

An Accelerated Path to Connectivity

Daily GO Train Expansion to Niagara (2021-2023)



LNTC - Transit Coordination and Working Group Deliberations

- 30 minute IMT Mainline Service | Weekend & Holiday Service
- IMT West Niagara Service
- Feeders
- Customer Service improvements
- Business case for governance decision

Post-Secondary Student Union Negotiations

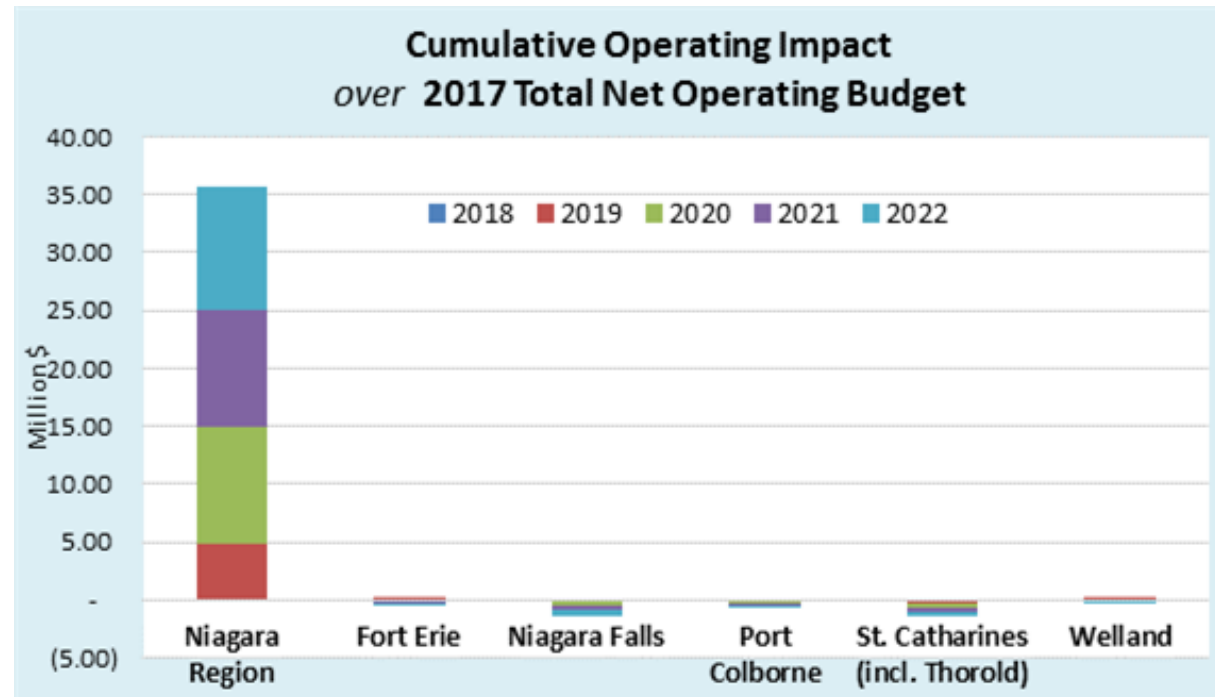
Region Equal Partner in Governance Discussions

**MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD**

Operating Impact: 2018 – 2022 Outlook

By 2022,
Niagara Region
Transit will
require a
budget increase
of **\$11.5M**

Local Transit
savings
5% - 70% for
reinvestment in
Transit



Required
increase to the
general levy
to fund service
enhancements:

1.5% in Year1

plus an
additional

1.53% in Year2

Niagara Region total investment of **\$31.2M Operating** (+\$8.6M Financing /OH)

Local Transit net operating and capital opportunity of **\$4.6M** to be re-invested in local transit
(realized through increased revenues and capital redeployment)

MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD

Capital Impact: 2018 – 2022 Outlook

The estimated five year total NRT capital cost is **\$28.7M**

2018: **\$3.3M** refurbishment of three 40-foot buses, one new 40-foot bus & two 60-foot articulated buses

2019: **\$13.9M** four 60-foot articulated buses, ten 40-foot buses, smartcard farebox, transit stop upgrades and ITS components (mobile ticketing and Wi-Fi)

2020-2022: **\$11.5M** existing fleet lifecycle replacement

Niagara Region Transit does not have sufficient fleet to service existing NRT routes or service expansions

- 20 additional buses are required for proposed service strategy (increasing fleet size from 11 to 31)
 - 10 buses required to replace locally supplied buses on existing IMT routes
 - 10 buses needed for service enhancements and expansions
- Route rationalization/consolidation results in a transfer of PGT from local operators to Region
- Increased NRT fleet will allow local operators to redeploy their fleet to meet pressures for planned local service expansions without incremental capital expenditures

NRT 2019 Budget Strategy

Support regional integration, daily GO Train Service and Economic Development through a separate levy

- \$11.5M Total Operating budget to support NRT service enhancements

2.30% in **Year 1**
*plus an
additional*
0.73% in **Year 2**

2019 Budget Consideration

- Increase of \$7.9M or 2.3% separate levy for operating and capital costs
 - \$3.5 will support the \$13.9M of capital assets in 2019
 - \$2.2M reserve transfer for 2019 and \$1.3M to support debt over 10 years
- Strategy in support of \$214M Council term infrastructure deficit and 2020 long term care home redevelopment pressure requiring consideration of separate levy in excess of inflation

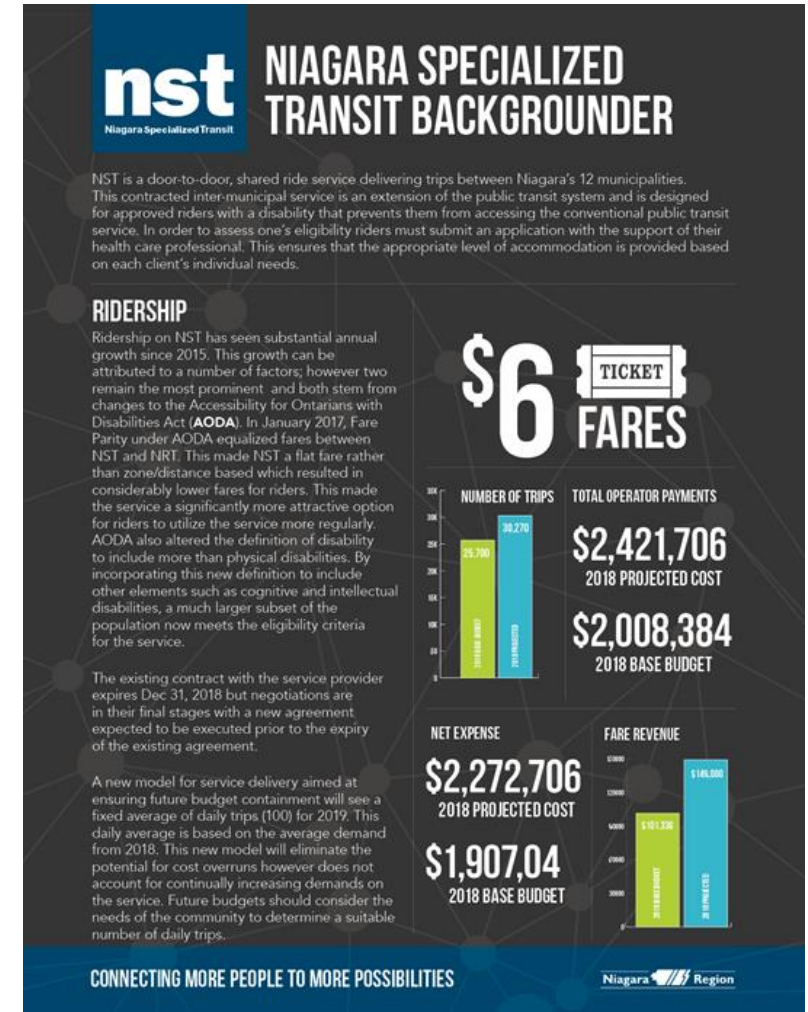
Jurisdictional Comparison – Transit

2016 CUTA Transit Statistics	Durham	Waterloo Region	Hamilton	Current Niagara System	Proposed
Census Population 2011	608,124	507,096	519,949	431,346	431,346
Service Area Population	567,421	452,687	490,673	358,805	427,016
% Population Served	93%	89%	94%	83%	99%
Service Area Size (km2)	405.9	231.3	243	555	555
Full Time Student Population	21,000	52,000	41,000	27,000	
% of Population	3%	10%	8%	6%	
Active Vehicles	186	249	251	147	164
Boardings (conventional + specialized)	12,225,693	27,014,641	29,919,658	9,719,612	-
Ridership (conventional + specialized)	10,372,806	20,047,652	22,232,666	8,851,698	-
Total Direct Operating Expenses	66,445,883	82,213,957	79,135,506	43,323,017	53,925,439
Total Operating Revenues	25,843,151	32,063,197	39,603,830	21,861,798	\$ 23,266,663
Net Operating Costs	\$ 40,602,732	\$ 50,150,760	\$ 39,531,676	\$ 21,461,219	\$ 30,658,777
<i>R/C Ratio</i>	39%	39%	50%	50%	43%

Niagara Specialized Transit (NST)

- Launched in 2006
- Provides accommodations for riders with disabilities – requires application
- Door-to-door IMT trips in Niagara and to Hamilton
- Partnership with DARTS (Hamilton)
- Service levels, ridership and costs have grown exponentially
- Contracted service (currently The BTS Network)
- Specialized Transit Study underway
 - Customer service review
 - Operational review + Demand forecast
 - Governance options + jurisdictional review

MOVING
TRANSIT
FORWARD



NST: Managing Growth, Meeting Demand

2018 Service

- Tracking for 30,000 individual rides
- Estimated total expenditure - \$2.4M
- 2018 ridership exceeding budget capacity at start of Q4 (Sept.)
- Additional funding support (\$500k) required in September to maintain service levels and customer stability
- Council direction for customer service review

2019 Service

- Focus on stability for riders and continuity of service
- Maintain daily 2018 ridership average (100/day or 600/week)
- Requires additional new investment of approx. \$450k to maintain these levels
- 2019 projections do not account for increasing demand

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

MOVING TRANSIT FORWARD

THANK YOU - QUESTIONS?