



**Niagara
Transit**

**General Manager's
2025 Annual Report**

General Manager's Message

On behalf of Niagara Transit, I am pleased to present the 2025 Annual General Manager's Report. It was an exciting year in which we delivered on key priorities and made significant progress towards a more connected, efficient, and affordable transit system for Niagara riders.

Our most significant milestone of the year was the adoption of our Facilities, Strategic Asset, and Service Network 10-Year Master Plan. I want to thank our Board and our staff for their dedication and vision in bringing such a comprehensive and ambitious plan forward. I also want to recognize the community groups, hundreds of members of the public, local stakeholders and all of our riders who contributed to aligning our goals for this next decade with their needs and desires for transit service across Niagara. We have made great progress on transit in Niagara and still have much to do. This plan will guide us towards realizing a truly connected transit network that benefits all Niagara residents.

We also moved to one fare, anywhere - harmonizing fares across the system to open borders across the region to all our riders. Launching the Transit Benefit pass, we are making transit more affordable for those receiving Ontario Works, the Ontario Disability Support Program or for those who meet a low-income threshold.

Additionally, our on-time performance led our industry peers from across Canada, our ridership continued to significantly outpace our budget, and we celebrated the arrival of new vehicles to update our aging fleet and provide efficient and reliable service.

As always, I want to recognize the dedicated staff that make Niagara Transit the great service that it is for our riders. Their hard work and dedication is never taken for granted. They embody our organizational pillars and are the unwavering force that drives us forward.

Service Excellence 

Customer Focus 

Employee Success 

Safety 

Affordability 

The coming year will see continued strides being made for the communities we serve. We will add Sunday and holiday service across our entire network, introduce the Fort Erie community bus, achieve full service coverage in Niagara Falls and enhance our specialized service in St. Catharines and Thorold.

Thank you for your continued support of Niagara Transit. Together we are creating a truly connected community.

Sincerely,



Carla Stout, DPA
General Manager





2025 Board of Directors

Chair Mayor Mathew Siscoe	St. Catharines
Vice-Chair Mayor Wayne Redekop	Fort Erie
Councillor Reg Freake	Grimsby
Councillor J.D. Pachereva	Lincoln
Councillor Joyce Morocco	Niagara Falls
Councillor Maria Mavridis	Niagara-on-the-Lake
Councillor Wayne Olson	Pelham
Councillor Eric Beauregard	Port Colborne
Councillor Dawn Dodge	St. Catharines
Councillor Caleb Ratzlaff	St. Catharines
Councillor Anthony Longo	Thorold
Mayor Brian Grant	Wainfleet
Councillor Leo VanVliet	Welland
Councillor William Reilly	West Lincoln
Regional Chair Jim Bradley	Niagara Region
CAO Ron Tripp	Niagara Region

In memory of Jim Bradley



Niagara Transit is deeply saddened by the passing of Niagara Regional Chair, Jim Bradley. Chair Bradley had an indelible impact on Niagara and was a valued Niagara Transit Commission Board member since its inception. His dedication to our community will be greatly missed.



Mission, Vision and Values

In 2024 the Niagara Transit Board adopted our mission, vision and values. They will guide Niagara Transit now and in the future in all our decision making and planning processes.

Mission

Providing safe, reliable, and sustainable transit service in Niagara.

Vision

Working together towards a more connected region.

Purpose

Helping every person in Niagara experience independence, freedom, and a sense of discovery.

Values

Service Excellence

Safety

Customer Focus

Affordability

Employee Success



2025 Highlights

Niagara Transit's First Master Plan!

2025 saw the adoption of the first 10-year Master Plan in our history. This plan lays out the framework for the needed expansion of transit in Niagara while remaining agile to respond to growth and change as it happens. Every community will benefit from better connectivity, enhanced transit hours, optimized routes, and greater availability.

What will the plan mean for Niagara?

More "One-seat" Journeys

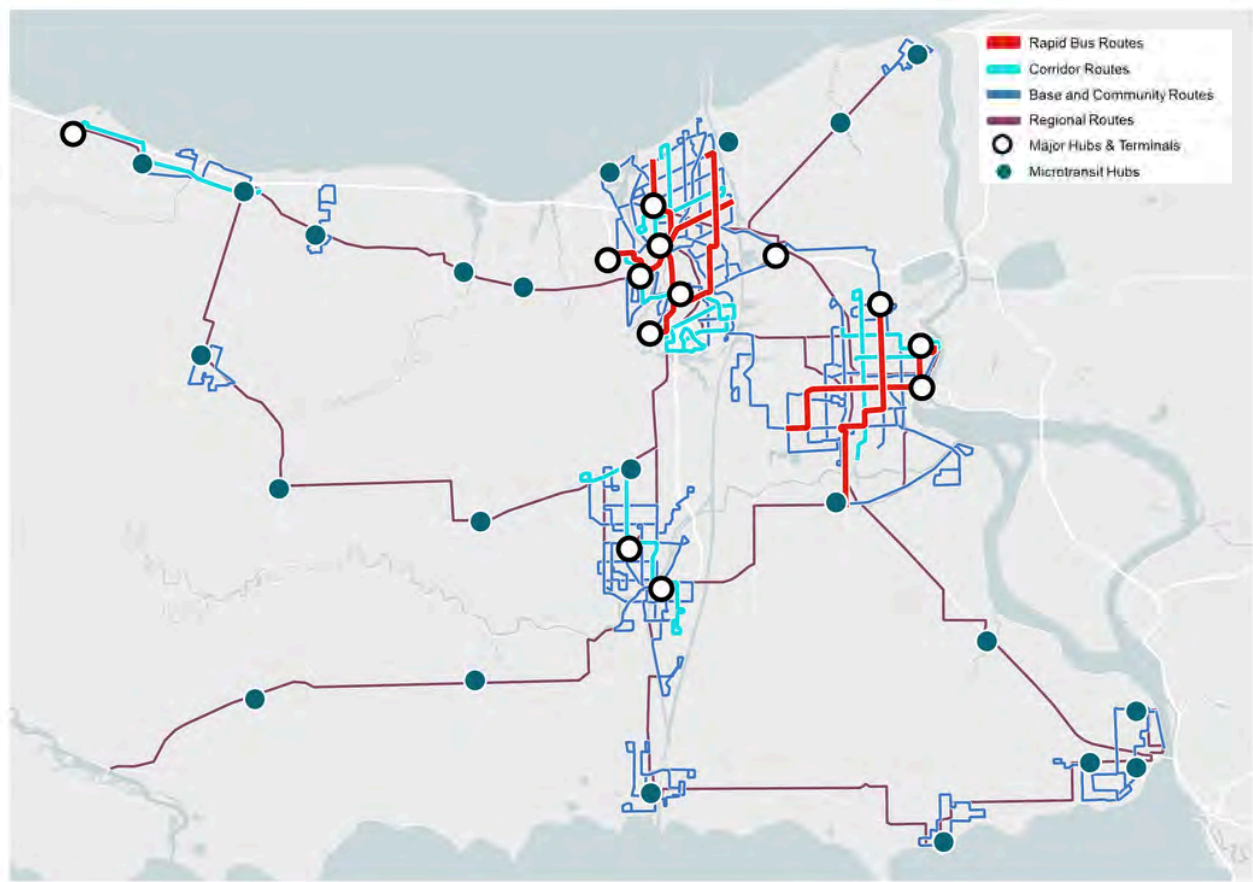
Faster trips

More frequent service

Reduced trip denials on microtransit services

Service enhancement in more marginalized areas

Improved access and service efficiency



[Click for Details](#)

Introducing the Transit Benefit Pass!

Transit is a social service that many individuals and families rely on across Niagara to access basic necessities, employment opportunities, education, healthcare and other critical services. When residents are struggling to make ends meet, one of their most significant costs is transportation. The Transit Benefit Pass was launched at the beginning of July of 2025. 5,176 passes were sold through the program; 3,993 more than the previous discounted pass in the same period in 2024; that's a 338% increase. To be eligible for the pass, residents must be collecting Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, or meet a low income threshold. It is estimated that close to 50,000 people are eligible in Niagara.

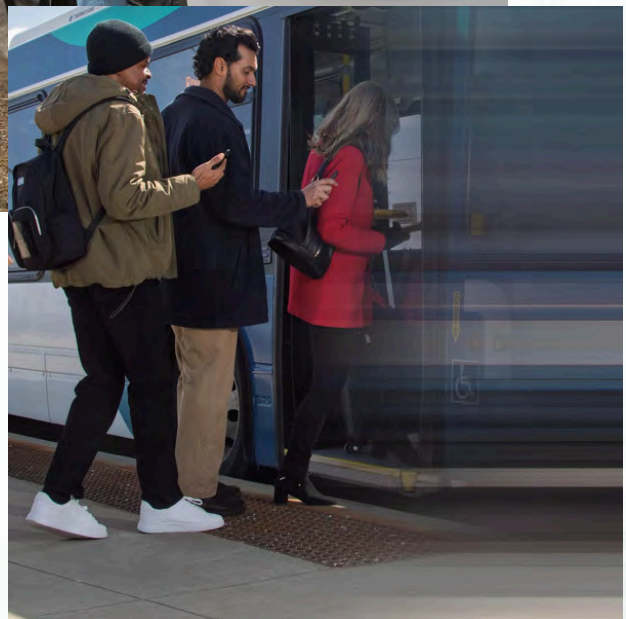


This program would not have been possible without the support of the Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities department at Niagara Region. It is a testament to the power of partnerships between Regional departments and service providers like Niagara Transit that the Benefit Pass was able to be realized and has been such a success. The program is expected to continue its rapid growth in 2026 and have an even greater positive impact on both those who are eligible for the pass and Niagara Transit. The pass is available at 11 locations across Niagara.

[Click for Program Details](#)

Launched Our Consolidated Fares!

One fare... anywhere! This year beginning on July 1st we moved from separate regional and local fares of \$6 and \$3 to a single fare of \$3.50. This change was also reflected in our 10-ride and 31-day transit passes. Niagara residents can now travel anywhere on any of our services for the same affordable price. The move to a single fare was a key strategy proposed during the triple-majority process that amalgamated transit in Niagara. It was identified as an important change in multiple pre-amalgamation studies on both service delivery and governance. Having a single fare simplifies navigating transit for riders, enhancing the overall experience. It addresses inequality and makes the region more affordable for everyone, opening up opportunities for employment, education, residence, and much more. It also reduces operational complexity, simplifying fare collection and reducing administrative work. The simplified structure attracts more riders and in turn supports local businesses and economic development. It will support the continued sustainability of Niagara Transit and increase our ability to plan and implement the new 10-year Master Plan. Additionally, as our staff meet regularly with the Provincial-Municipal Fare Strategy Implementation group, it prepares us for possible future integrations with the Ontario One Fare program and potentially moving to Presto as our fare collection system.



Service Excellence

Continued Strong Conventional Service Delivery and OTP!

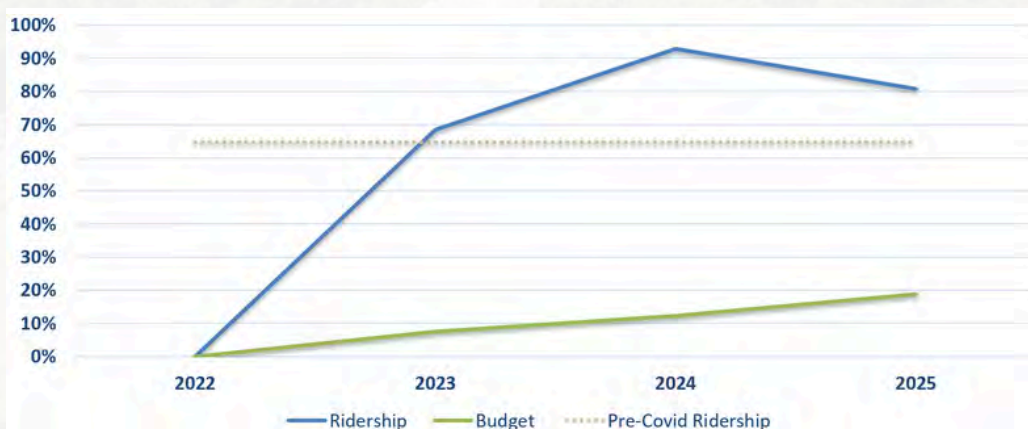
This year we continued our strong, above industry average service on our conventional routes. Our team delivered over 99.9% of every trip scheduled for the year and improved our on-time performance (OTP) to 84% on conventional, and 93% on our commingled service. The average OTP for peer transit services this year in Ontario was 81%. New buses and other service enhancements contributed to another strong year and we plan to continue this trend in 2026!



Ridership Continues to Top 10 Million Trips!

In 2025, post-secondary UPASS ridership was affected by the federal government's decision to limit international student visas. While this led to a reduction of service to Niagara College, increases in non-student ridership meant that Niagara Transit delivered more than 10 million trips again in 2025! While previously, the largest ridership group on transit had been students, regular adult fares have now surpassed student UPASS trips for the second year running, up +11% in 2025. Ridership continues to significantly outpace budget increases, demonstrating that transit is being delivered efficiently and effectively in Niagara. As we work toward realizing the targets within the 10-year Master Plan we expect ridership to continue its strong growth!

Ridership Increase vs Budget Increase Since Amalgamation

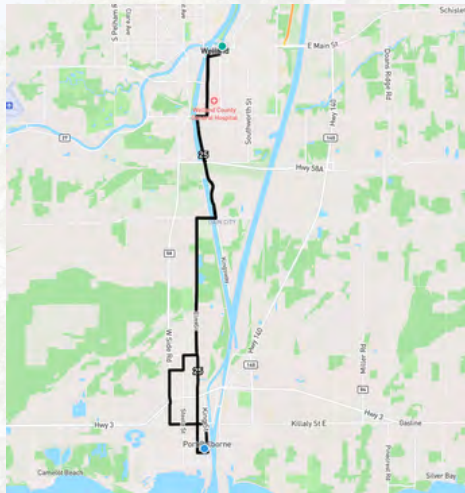


Service Excellence

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New Buses Delivered!

If you think you've seen more buses around your neighbourhoods with our new Niagara Transit branding... you're right! In 2025 we took delivery of 27 new buses. In addition to looking great they replaced aging buses in our fleet and will contribute to better fuel economy, fewer repairs needed and increased uptime. To purchase new buses we utilized important federal and provincial funding to ensure we minimize the cost to taxpayers. Watch out for even more to arrive in 2026!



New Service to Dain City

As part of our efforts to expand conventional service to new areas within our existing resources, this year Route 25, the Port Colborne Link, was re-routed to bring hourly service to residents of Dain City. This connects the area to both Welland and Port Colborne and reduces the area's reliance on our microtransit system. This also frees up capacity for our microtransit in that area and across Welland. This change is an example of our continuous system improvement and what riders can expect as we implement the master plan!

Boosting Reliability

A significant focus this year was improving our reliability. Through new maintenance programs, the introduction of new vehicles, and by reducing absenteeism, we were able to achieve only 444 missed trips out of over 1,165,900 scheduled times a bus departed an NT facility. Our significant downward trend through the year (Q1: 268, Q2: 99, Q3: 38, Q4: 39) means we're looking forward to continued improvement in 2026.



Safety

Introduction of the Safe Driver/Worker Program

In 2025 we were excited to introduce a program to further enhance our commitment to safety. The Safe Driver/Worker Program recognizes individuals within the organization that have had zero preventable collisions, on-board injuries, or preventable claims within the calendar year. It is another way to recognize and promote safe driving and safe practices in all areas of Niagara Transit and will be completed each year moving forward.

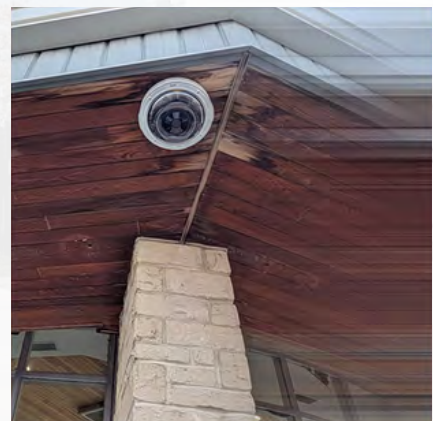


System-Wide Bus Stop AODA Assessment

During the summer of 2025 we completed a full review of our over 1800 bus stops across Niagara to assess their level of provincial accessibility compliance. This was an important step to bringing needed improvements where possible to make Niagara Transit's service more accessible for all residents. Niagara Transit will continue to make improvements in accordance with our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Welland Security Camera Replacement

Surveillance is a key safety tool in the prevention of incidents, being able to respond in a timely manner, and having proper records when they occur. This year we replaced aging cameras at the Welland Terminal that have a clearer, more complete view of the property. They are visible to riders and already appear to be acting as a strong deterrent. It also means we are better able to assist Niagara Regional Police when incidents do occur.

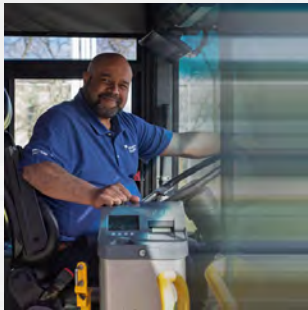


Safety

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Successful 3rd Party Safety Audit

In 2025, Niagara Transit successfully completed an independent health & safety audit conducted by Langlois Safety & Training Consulting Services. The purpose of the audit was to ensure NTC's compliance with all related health and safety legislation, underscoring our continued commitment to a safe and accountable workplace and transit system.

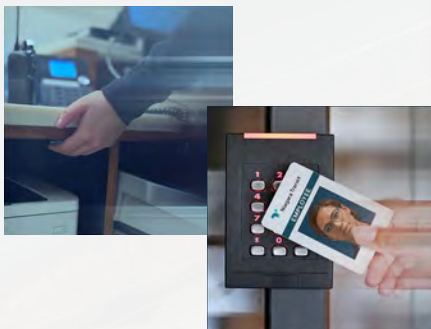
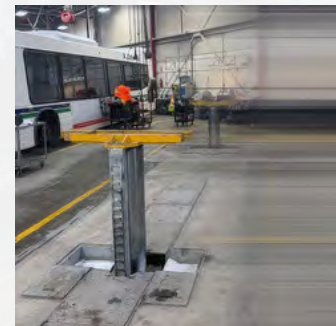


Eliminated Radio Dead Zones

Communications between our bus operators, supervisors and other staff is a critical component of safety. Since amalgamation, areas of the region have had dead zones where operators were out of touch. In 2025 we improved our tower coverage and we now have full coverage of our routes across the region!

Replaced In-Ground Hoists In St. Catharines

Safety at our facilities was improved this year by replacing hoists at our St. Catharines garage. The new hoists protect our fleet maintenance crews by not having workers have to stand near buses while they're being raised, reducing the potential for serious accidents.



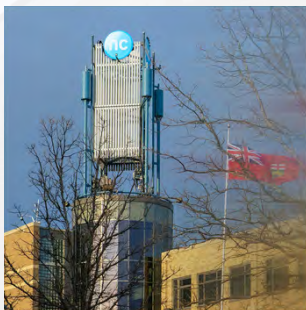
Boosting Safety at Our Facilities

This year we implemented facility upgrades including new panic buttons at the St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Welland terminals. This allows staff to set off an audible alarm and notify Niagara Regional Police to attend the site immediately automatically. We have also added access control and security staff to the Welland terminal.

Customer Focus

Strong Community Engagement

2025 saw Niagara Transit out and active in all our communities across the region. We participated in 92 engagements and presentations to various community groups and stakeholders. This included seniors groups, libraries, student groups, sporting groups and community centres. We also actively attend committee meetings such as Accessibility and DEI committees to gather feedback. We will be back out and visiting your community in 2026!

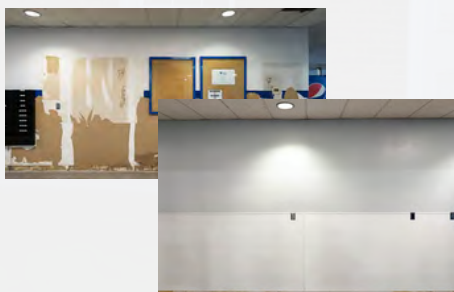


Successful Niagara College Referendum

The Niagara College Student Administrative Council (NCSAC) had an important referendum in 2025 asking students if they still wanted to participate in the UPASS program. Niagara Transit staff worked to educate UPASS riders about what the changes would mean. Students voted overwhelmingly to keep the UPASS program with 84% voting yes!

Completed Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

This year the NTC Board passed our finalized multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP) for 2025-2029. The MYAP will establish a comprehensive roadmap for meeting accessibility, inclusivity, and compliance targets across the organization and for the riding public on Niagara Transit's suite of 100% accessible transit services.



St. Catharines Terminal Facelift

This year we completed a series of needed cosmetic repairs to our St. Catharines Downtown Terminal. Riders will benefit from an improved atmosphere both inside and outside of the building. New programs have been put in place to ensure that the terminal is kept looking its best moving forward!

Affordability

Utilizing Federal and Provincial Funding

The federal and provincial governments play a key role in transit funding. Municipal budgets are limited and creating a comprehensive transit network would not be possible on our own. In 2025 we had exciting announcements about \$93M in ICIP and \$35M in CPTF funding that will be critical for things like capital replacement and needed facility upgrades.



Stabilization Reserve Ahead of Schedule

The stabilization reserve is critical to ensure that any one-time, extraordinary costs or year end deficits can be covered. Recent events like the COVID-19 pandemic have shown how critical it is to plan for unexpected events. Surpluses in our first few years of operation have enabled us to build the stabilization reserve ahead of schedule and ensure that future, unexpected costs are mitigated for riders and taxpayers.

ICIP Funds Transition

In 2025 we obtained NTC Board approval to seek to repurpose funds from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) that had been uploaded from local municipalities as a part of amalgamation. Moving into our fourth year of service, new priorities have been identified and aligning our ICIP funding with these priorities will ensure we are able to deliver on them while keeping local costs down.



Proud Members of the Poverty Reduction Committee

Niagara Transit serves residents from all walks of life. We are proud to take an active role on the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy Steering Committee. Transit is vital for those experiencing poverty, connecting them with employment opportunities, healthcare, social services and enabling participation in their community.

Employee Success

A Focus on Training

Providing training to our employees is critical to their success and the success of the organization. We are always actively training and renewing skills for our operators, supervisors and other staff to ensure we are providing the best service to riders. Training highlights from this year include critical incident stress management and incident note taking for our supervisors. This will help our supervisors excel in these critical areas and assist the employees in their care.



We Brought Back the Bus Roadeo!

This year we reintroduced the Roadeo! It was a fun weekend event for our operators to show off their skills and for staff from across the organization to get together to celebrate our successes. Drivers piloted their bus through a challenging timed course that featured tight turns, narrow straights and pinpoint reversing, scoring points for each section. Congratulations to our winner Mike Horner for taking the bus by the horns!

Performance Assessment Program

Feedback is an important part of the development and career success of all employees. Being completed in 2026 for the 2025 year, Niagara Transit has introduced a performance assessment program for the first time. This will provide non-union employees with an opportunity to highlight their own performance as well as receive structured feedback from their direct supervisor.



Rudolph (The Bus) Came to Town!

Our employees and the communities we serve joined in some Niagara Transit holiday fun this year! We participated in local Christmas parades, bringing the Rudolph bus to visit 9 of our local communities! It was a fun way for our operators and staff to engage with residents across the region and add a little holiday cheer from NT! Rudolph the bus will be coming back to visit in 2026!



What's Next in 2026?

Sundays and Holidays Across the Network!

The most common request we have heard since amalgamation was to add Sunday and holiday service across the network. Previously, regional routes and our microtransit services in many communities only operated Monday-Saturday and not on statutory holidays. We are excited that as of September of 2026 our full network will be available 365 days a year. This was a key pillar of amalgamation and will benefit all our riders, especially those using transit for employment opportunities.



Re-Introducing the Fort Erie Community Bus!

Fort Erie has seen consistently high and growing ridership on our microtransit service. In 2025 we delivered more than 100K trips in Fort Erie. In May 2026, the Route 22 - Fort Erie Link schedule will now run the full day and will be interlined with the newly created Fort Erie community bus route. This will bring consistent service to the areas most frequently visited in town and mean that residents will be able to reach the new South Niagara Hospital without having to change buses.



Advocacy

In 2026 we plan to build on our advocacy through a variety of avenues. We are active members of the Ontario Public Transit Association and Canadian Urban Transit Association and will continue to join their effort to call for more capital and operating support for transit from higher levels of government. We are submitting another round of pre-budget submissions to the federal and provincial government that will outline our priorities for the year. We will also connect with decision makers at events such as the AMO Conference and OPTA's Queen's Park Lobby Day.



What's Next in 2026?

cont'd

Full Transit Coverage for Niagara Falls

When Niagara Transit was amalgamated, there were certain areas that hadn't received transit service previously. Niagara Falls Transit did not have service outside the urban boundary. This meant residents were unable to access areas like Fireman's Park and other community spaces. For 2026, Niagara Falls Council supported the inclusion of all areas of the city and it was included in the budget to begin this year!



Improved Specialized Service in St. Catharines and Thorold

St. Catharines and Thorold have had an increase in demand for our specialized transit service and in 2026 we're improving our capacity to meet it. More space for riders will mean more availability and shorter trips! Look out for our enhanced capacity starting in May!

Additional Supervision in Operations

On-road supervisors are important for safety and customer service. Niagara is a uniquely large land area to cover and requires enough supervisors to be able to cover that area and respond to issues in a reasonable timeframe. This year we will be adding a supervisor to our team to ensure we are able to meet the needs of our growing network!



Entire Fleet Branded

Completing the harmonization of our Niagara Transit branding is an important step we're excited about in 2026. It will be finished across all our vehicles including conventional, microtransit and non-rider vehicles and help increase awareness and understanding that we are now a unified, regional system.



2025 Key Performance Indicators

2025 Efficiencies Highlights



Fleet Role Optimization

Aligned roles and responsibilities to improve productivity, streamline operations and drive continuous improvement



Fare Harmonization

Harmonized fare products and pricing to improve customer clarity and reduce operational complexity



Technology-Enabled Efficiency

Implemented IT helpdesk software to streamline service workflow, and expanded the use of Power BI to automate reporting, and enable timely, data driven decision-making



Group Purchasing & Strategic Sourcing

Achieved cost savings across IT and other commodities by leveraging competitive procurement processes and group purchasing arrangements to capitalize on economies of scale

Reliable and Consistent On-Time Service

Over **99.9%** service delivery.

CONVENTIONAL
84%
Peer average: 81%

93%
MICRO/SPECIALIZED

On-Time Performance of

Ridership Increase vs Budget Increase Since Amalgamation



Cost Per Ride

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Ridership	5.6 million	9.5 million	10.9 million	10.0 million
Cost Per Ride	\$8.06	\$5.57	\$5.22	\$6.04
Cost Per Ride (Excluding Capital Reserve)		\$5.34	\$5.02	\$5.61

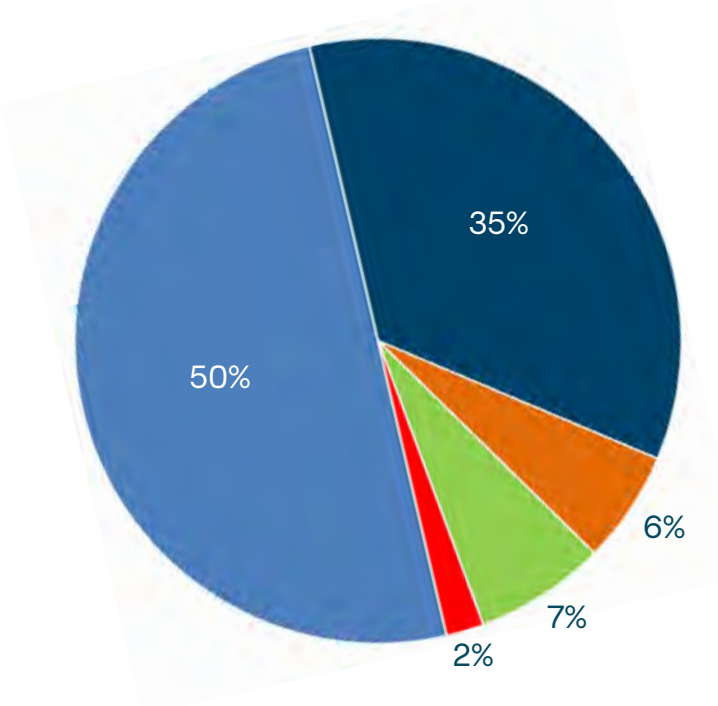
(Blended rate for all transit services)

Niagara Transit Snapshot

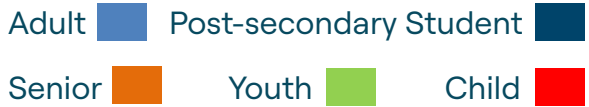
Number of Local Routes	88
Number of IMT Routes	11
2025 Staff *	453
Number of 40' buses	139
Number of 60' buses	22
Average age of 40' bus	6.7
Average age of 60' bus	8.2
Number of specialized transit buses	23
Average age of specialized buses	7
Number of support vehicles	39

*2025 Budgeted Full Time Equivalent staff including temporary staff

Who Rides Our System?



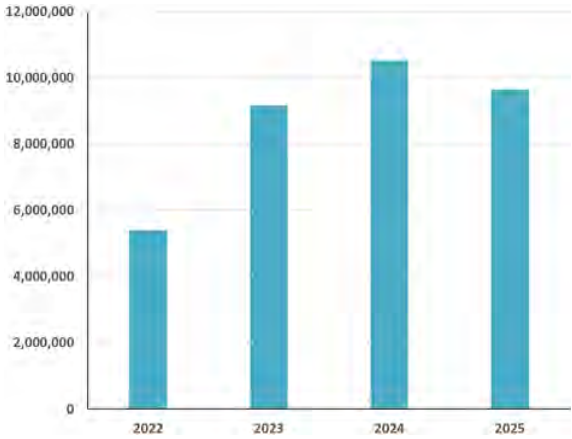
Classification	Definition
Adult	18+
Child	Under 12
Youth	13 to 17
Senior	65+
Post Secondary	Brock & Niagara College



2025 KPI's

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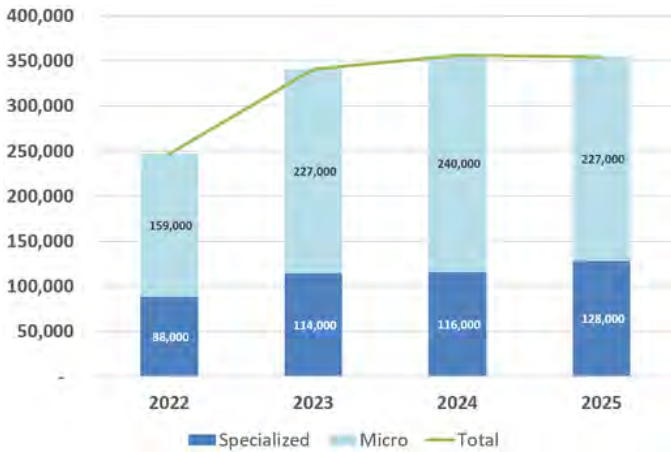
Conventional Ridership



	Ridership Per Revenue Vehicle Hour	Revenue Vehicle Hours Per Capita
2023 Prov. Avg*	21.7	1.2
2024 Prov. Avg*	22.5	1.2
2024 NTC	23.0	1.1
2025 NTC	20.2	1.1

Provincial Average is based on Canadian Urban Transit Association Data. Comparing similar sized Transit Agencies (pop. 100k to 750k)

Specialized and Microtransit Ridership



	Specialized Transit		On Demand Transit
	Ridership Per Revenue Vehicle Hour	Revenue Vehicle Hours Per Capita	Ridership Per Revenue Vehicle Hour ***
2022 Prov. Avg*	1.9	0.2	n/a
2023 Prov. Avg*	2.3	0.2	n/a
2024 Prov. Avg*	2.2	0.2	n/a
2023 NTC	1.7	0.2	2.8
2024 NTC	1.8	0.1	2.9
2025 NTC	2.0	0.1	2.5

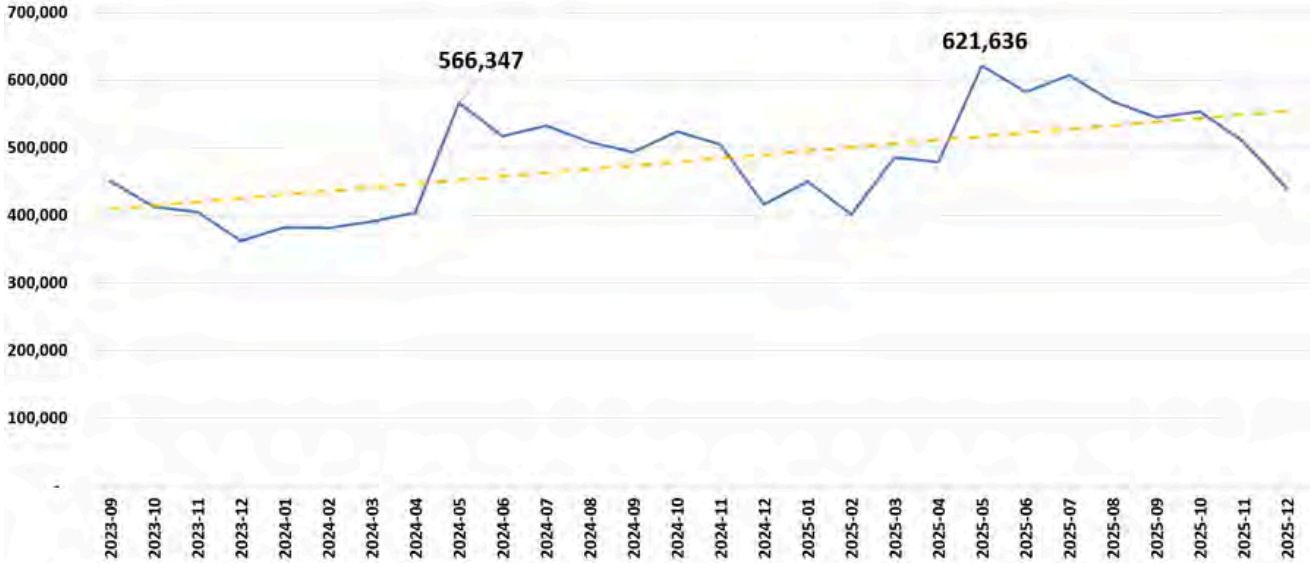
Provincial Average is based on Canadian Urban Transit Association Data Comparing similar sized Transit Agencies (pop. 100k to 750k)

Specialized & On Demand Transit	
Average Time on Vehicle	18 mins
On Time Percentage	93%
Average Distance per Trip	9.4 km
Average Wait Time *	7 mins

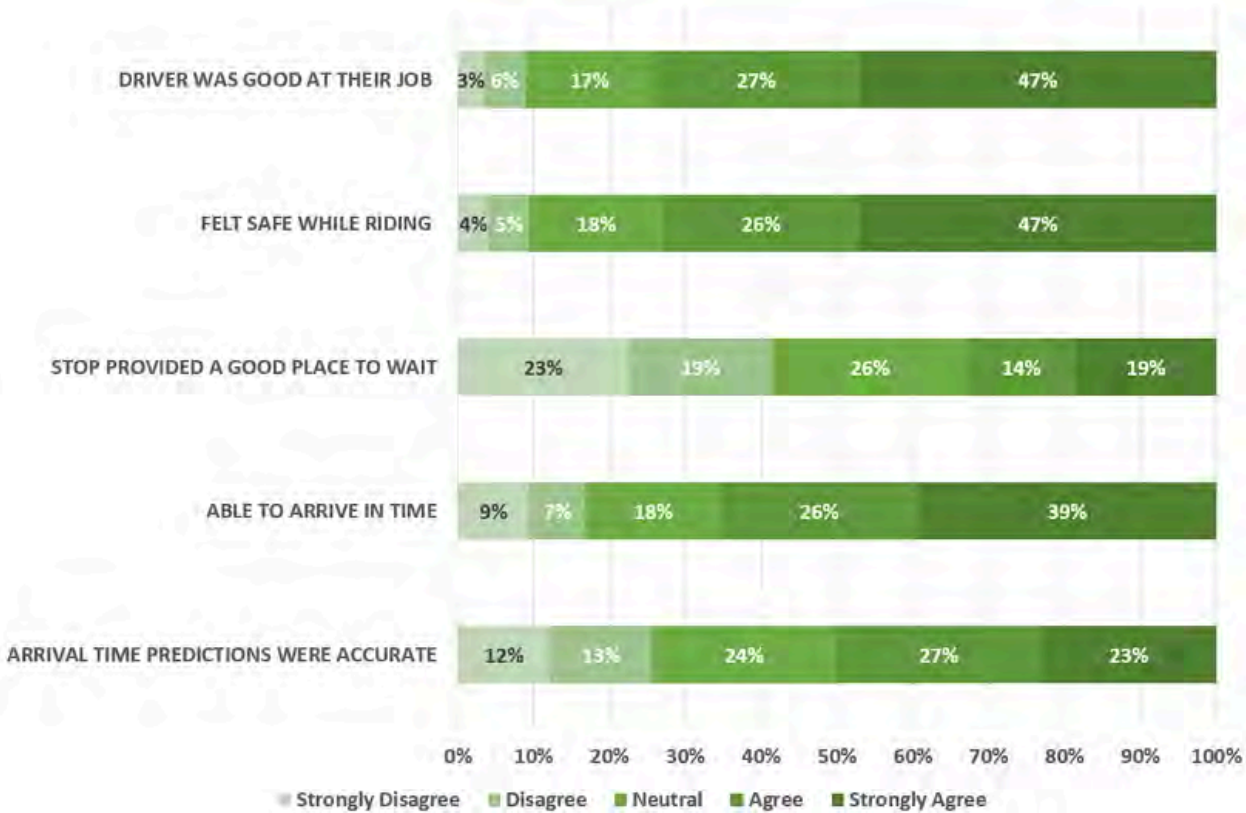
2025 KPI's

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2023 to 2025 Boardings (Non-UPASS)



Rider Safety & Service Survey



2025 Distances Covered

Total Annual Km Driven – Conventional	10,245,686
Total Annual Km Driven - In House Specialized	817,640
Average Annual KM Driven Per Conventional vehicle	63,638
Average Annual KM Driven Per Specialized vehicle	35,550

In 2025...

In total our buses drove 255 times around the earth!

Over 13 times to the moon and back!

Each bus drove an average of 1.5 times around the earth!

Or across Canada 8.5 times!





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