



COUNCIL INFORMATION PACKAGE

SUMMARY

OCTOBER 22, 2021

1. **C-321-2021**
Correspondence dated October 16, 2021 respecting a request to fly the Metis flag on November 16, 2021 being Louis Riel Day. (*This request is automatically approved though the Township's Flag Policy and being circulated as information*)
2. **C-322-2021**
Correspondence dated October 19, 2021 respecting a motion from the City of Welland regarding Report TRANS-2021-22 – Update #2 Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy.
3. **C-323-2021**
News Release received from CN – North America's Railroad announcing CEO Jean-Jacques Ruest's Retirement.
4. **C-324-2021**
Correspondence dated October 19, 2021 respecting a resolution of the Township of Larder Lake regarding OHIP Eye Care.

Received October 16, 2021
C-321-2021

Amber Chrastina

Subject: Louis Riel Day

-----Original Message-----

From: noreply@wainfleet.ca [mailto:noreply@wainfleet.ca] On Behalf Of Brian Kon

Sent: October 16, 2021 2:49 PM

To: Amber Chrastina <AChrastina@wainfleet.ca>

Subject: Louis Riel Day

Please celebrate with Niagara Region Métis Council by once again flying the Métis flag at your municipal office on Louis Riel Day.

On November 16th, the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Niagara Region Métis Council acknowledge and celebrate one of Canada's greatest human rights activists, Louis Riel. Yet the full and true story of this man is often misunderstood and misrepresented. In 1870 Riel successfully negotiated the creation of Manitoba as the newest province to join Canada; making Riel a true "Father of Confederation". Yet, as settler expansion continued westward across the prairies, once again standing ground to defend the traditional hunting grounds and homelands of Métis and First Nation people, Riel was arrested, tried and hanged for treason, on November 16, 1885.

As proud citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario, we ask our Niagara City and Town Councils to honour and celebrate Louis Riel by once again flying the Métis flag that was gifted by the local Niagara Region Métis Council on Louis Riel Day in 2017 during the flag raising celebration held at the Niagara Region office. We ask that the flags be honoured on November 16th, and encourage you to consider showing support for the local Métis community by extending the time the flag is displayed for the entire week.

It would be appreciated if you could let me know whether you are able to raise the Métis flag so that we can share the news with our citizens.

Sincerely,
Brian Kon, Senator
Niagara Region Métis Council

Origin: <https://www.wainfleet.ca/Modules/contact/search.aspx?s=TKuD4yg4FrPIUsF46vrzpE5IA5HxQeQuAleQuAl>

This email was sent to you by Brian Kon<kon@sterlingfrazer.com> through <https://www.wainfleet.ca>.



City of Welland
Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Office of the City Clerk
60 East Main Street, Welland, ON L3B 3X4
Phone: 905-735-1700 Ext. 2159 | **Fax:** 905-732-1919
Email: clerk@welland.ca | www.welland.ca

October 19, 2021

File No. 21-13

SENT VIA EMAIL

Niagara Region
P.O. Box 1042
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

Attention: Ann-Marie Norio, Regional Clerk

Dear Ms. Norio:

Re: October 12, 2021 – WELLAND CITY COUNCIL

At its meeting of October 12, 2021, Welland City Council passed the following motion:

“See attached motion”

Yours truly,

Tara Stephens
City Clerk

TS:bl

Enclosure

c.c: - Local Area Municipalities, sent via email



RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 -

MOVED BY: McLeod

SECONDED BY: Richard

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WELLAND receives for information Report TRANS-2021-11 – Update # 2 Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy; and

THAT Welland City Council supports the current levels of Niagara Region Transit service in place and the emergence of on-demand services for smaller municipalities, which do not provide conventional and specialized services; and further

THAT The Triple Majority Vote does not occur until the following updates are forwarded to all municipalities;

a) Update the financial model to reflect Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Inter-Regional Transit operating costs based upon Council approved 2022 Transit Budgets including:

i Assumptions regarding PGT funding (OPTA has forecasted a reduction and Welland has assumed a 25% reduction for 2022 Transit Budget) and ridership levels forecasted to be reduced to 70% pre-COVID.

ii Assumptions regarding Safe Restart Funding.

iii Both items (PGT and SRA Funding) are currently being lobbied by Ontario Public Transit Association (OPTA)

iv Proposed annual lease payments to be made to the City of Niagara Falls for the WEGO Transit Facility

b) Updated 5-year Transit Capital Budgets (2022-2026) for Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Inter-Regional Transit. Transit capital costs and allocation percentages proposed to allocate these costs to lower-tiered Municipalities; and further

c) Updated Capital assets schedules for Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Region summarizing assets including but not limited to revenue fleet, non-revenue vehicles and facilities.

...continued...



RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 -

THAT Report TRANS-2021-15 – Second Update on Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy be circulated to all area municipalities.

COUNCILLORS	YEAS	NAYS
LAROUCHE		
GREEN		
SPECK		
CHIOCCHIO		
MCLEOD		
DIMARCO		
RICHARD		
GRIMALDI		
MASTROIANNI		
FOKKENS		
MOOTE		
VAN VLIET		
MAYOR CAMPION		

CARRIED



LOST



NOT PUT



PRESENTED TO
COUNCIL
OCT 12 2021
CITY OF WELLAND

SPECIAL COUNCIL
OFFICE OF CAO
TRANSIT DIVISION

APPROVALS
DIRECTOR
CFO
CAO

21-13

REPORT TRANS-2021-15
OCTOBER 12TH, 2021

SUBJECT: CITY RESPONSE TO NIAGARA REGION STAFF COMMENTS – INTER REGIONAL TRANSIT – ONE TAXPAYER

AUTHOR: STEVEN FAIRWEATHER, CFO

APPROVING G.M.: STEVE ZORBAS, CAO

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WELLAND receive for information report TRANS-2021-11 – Update # 2 Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy; and further

THAT Welland City Council support the current levels of Niagara Region Transit service in place and the emergence of on-demand services for smaller municipalities, which do not provide conventional and specialized services; and further

THAT The Triple Majority Vote does not occur until the following updates are forwarded to all municipalities;

- a) Update the financial model to reflect Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Inter-Regional Transit operating costs based upon Council approved 2022 Transit Budgets including:
 - i Assumptions regarding PGT funding (OPTA has forecasted a reduction and Welland has assumed a 25% reduction for 2022 Transit Budget) and ridership levels forecasted to be reduced to 70% pre-COVID
 - ii Assumptions regarding Safe Restart Funding
 - iii Both items (PGT and SRA Funding) are currently being lobbied by Ontario Public Transit Association (OPTA)
 - iv Proposed annual lease payments to be made to the City of Niagara Falls for the WEGO Transit Facility
- b) Updated 5-year Transit Capital Budgets (2022-2026) for Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Inter-Regional Transit. Transit capital costs and allocation percentages proposed to allocate these costs to lower-tiered Municipalities and further;
- c) Updated Capital assets schedules for Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Region summarizing assets including but not limited to revenue fleet, non-revenue vehicles and facilities

THAT report TRANS-2021-15 – Second Update on Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy be circulated to all area municipalities.

ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND:

On February 21st, 2017, Report CAO-2017-02 – Niagara Transit Service Delivery and Governance Strategy Report, was presented to Welland City Council (Appendix I). Within this report, Council was asked to support a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was approved by the Cities of Welland, St. Catharines, and Niagara Falls, and Niagara Region. This MOU included the Guiding Principles for Welland's involvement of, and support for, inter-municipal transit. These Guiding Principles were drafted by Welland staff to ensure they would continue to influence Welland's perspective and involvement in the future phases of the inter-municipal transit discussion and include:

- Fiscal responsibility and affordability for the City of Welland. Thus, no negative impacts to the City's tax levy and receipt of provincial gas tax is not negatively impacted.
- Ease of implementation for the City of Welland.
- Operational viability for City of Welland.
- Improving economic development opportunities for the City of Welland.
- Local transit services will not be adversely impacted.
- Respecting existing transit collective agreements in each respective municipality.

On October 21st, 2020, a meeting of the Linking Niagara Transit Committee (LNTC) was held to receive the consultant's report on Niagara Region Transit service strategies and possible governance models. Upon completion of the presentation, the Report was supported in principle by the LNTC, knowing that it still had to be vetted by the twelve local municipalities before moving forward to the Niagara Region Public Works Committee, and then Niagara Region Council for final triple majority approval, strategy acceptance, and governance implementation.

On April 13, 2021, TRANS-2021-01 - Update on Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy was presented to Welland City Council to provide commentary on eleven areas of concern, which would not fully align with the City approved Guiding Principles noted above. The other municipalities also responded to the initial Report to the LNTC and from the entirety of these comments, a revised Governance Strategy was presented to, and approved by the LNTC on June 30, 2021. This revised strategy has centered on three prevailing concerns raised by the majority of municipalities, which are the proposed: Financial Strategy, Commission Board Composition, and Service Standards. It is the intent of Regional staff to collect any further comments to this and that of the June 30, 2021, Report.

On September 7th, 2021, TRANS-2021-11 – Update #2 on Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance was presented to Welland City Council to, again, outline concerns with the revised governance strategy presented by Niagara Region on the same date; as part of their 'Phase 2' and final roadshow presentation.

COMMENTS AND ANALYSIS:

City staff maintain that it would be prudent to delay a Triple Majority Vote into 2023, unless the following items of concern can be addressed by the Niagara Region prior to proceeding with the Triple Majority Vote:

- a) Update the financial model to reflect Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Inter-Regional Transit operating costs based upon Council approved 2022 Transit Budgets including:
 - i Assumptions regarding PGT funding (OPTA has forecasted a reduction and Welland has assumed a 25% reduction for 2022 Transit Budget) and ridership levels forecasted to be reduced to 70% pre-COVID
 - ii Assumptions regarding Safe Restart Funding
 - iii Both items (PGT and SRA Funding) are currently being lobbied by Ontario Public Transit Association (OPTA)
 - iv Proposed annual lease payments to be made to the City of Niagara Falls for the WEGO Transit Facility
- b) Updated 5-year Transit Capital Budgets (2022-2026) for Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Inter-Regional Transit. Transit capital costs and allocation percentages proposed to allocate these costs to lower-tiered Municipalities and further;
- c) Updated Capital assets schedules for Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Niagara Region summarizing assets including but not limited to revenue fleet, non-revenue vehicles and facilities

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

There are many aspects of this Governance Strategy that will have significant consequences on Welland's ability to fully control our costs moving forward. Although this revised Financial Model has modified the single levy to a unique levy for each municipality based on 65% of the net costs based on service hours provided, the lack of Welland representation on the Commission could result in many additional hours of service provided in Welland and the costs associated placed on Welland residents.

The Guiding Principles approved by Welland City Council support a strong level of control over our municipal Transit service levels and ensuring the associated amalgamation costs would have no negative impact to Welland taxpayers. Upon review of funding models, City of Welland staff have concerns that the proposed 'new funding model for Niagara Region Transit will have negative impacts on Welland taxpayers' when compared to the current service delivery model in place for Welland Transit services.

In addition, the movement of capital assets via the Cummings Principle requires discussion as aforementioned. Welland's situation is unique in that it is in the process of designing and constructing a new Transit Operations Facility with federal, provincial, and regional support, and further, owns the Main Street Bus Terminal, which continues to be a tremendous asset to the city.

The Region of Niagara provided Asset Registry information for each municipality. This information provides insight into the asset condition of the bus fleet for each municipality. Based on this information it appears that out of the lower tier municipalities Welland Transit has a bus fleet with a net book value per bus greater than the other municipalities. The transfer of fleet assets utilizing the Cummings Principle would not be in the best interest of Welland residents.

Region of Niagara is growing quickly as a result of development. Legislation allows municipalities to collect from developers the capital costs related to growth to sustain service levels. Within Niagara Region not all lower tier municipalities have enacted a development charge for Transit to fund future growth due to development. Municipalities without a development charge for growth related transit services expansion would need to fund the expansion through the tax rate or some

other sources of funding. Welland has enacted and is collecting a development charge to fund future Transit expansion.

New Transit Operations Facility (75 Federal Road)

Welland City Council has approved a \$15 million budget for the expansion and renovation of the current Operations Facility and a detailed design is proceeding. The City received commitment from senior Niagara Region staff that \$1.32 million was to be included in the Niagara Region 2022 Capital Budget in lieu of the 2021 Capital Budget. In addition, this commitment has not yet been provided to date.

With the uploading of Welland Transit to Niagara Region the City will be transferring to the Region all current and future debenture obligations related to transit. The Transit Operations facility capital budget contains a debenture requirement of \$2,680,000 still to be issued.

OTHER DEPARTMENT IMPLICATIONS:

The transition of Welland Transit from a municipal entity to a component of Niagara Region Transit should relieve the municipality of a number of requirements and responsibilities. If amalgamation occurs, the City will not be required to support Transit for many tasks, including: Finance and Legal oversight, Human Resources guidance, Payroll support, and matters pertaining to Engineering & Planning.

Conversely, the City would not have the same autonomy to utilize the fleet for municipal events, support Council initiatives, and generally be in full alignment with the developments and enhancements being realized within our dynamic community.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Levels of Transit service and representation on the Commission board remain concerns with this latest Governance Strategy model. Although efforts have been made to alter the Commission structure and representation, Welland remains disadvantaged with a single vote, which does not capture the investment Welland has committed to our residents for almost five decades and the dynamic growth of the city.

The transition of personnel and financial resources from the lower tier to Regional government requires greater consideration and the current unsettled climate does not provide a sound baseline platform. The merging of collective agreements will also pose significant challenges and these issues have not been substantively addressed.

The City of Welland is committed to fully supporting the enhancement of public transit services throughout the Niagara Region. Out of an abundance of caution for those who have been hit hard by this pandemic, staff are of the opinion there needs to be further work performed on the ridership modelling, commensurate service levels, and capital investments, which should be undertaken prior to a 2023 implementation date.

It shall be noted, this report does not initiate the triple-majority approval process. It is anticipated that the triple-majority vote will occur after the consultation on this report has been completed and requested responses be incorporated.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix I: TRANS-2021-11 UPDATE #2: ON NIAGARA REGION TRANSIT (NRT) GOVERNANCE STRATEGY
- Appendix II: LNTP-C 5-2021 Niagara Transit Governance – Phase 2 Consultation Results and Triple Majority Initiation
- Appendix III: Proposed Allocation of Future Transit Costs
- Appendix IV: Power Point Presentation

SPECIAL COUNCIL
CORPORATE SERVICES
TRANSIT DIVISION

APPROVALS	
DIRECTOR	
CFO	
CAO	

REPORT TRANS-2021-11
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

SUBJECT: UPDATE #2: ON NIAGARA REGION TRANSIT (NRT) GOVERNANCE STRATEGY

AUTHOR: EDWARD ZAHRA, TRANSIT MANAGER

APPROVING G.M.: STEVE ZORBAS, CAO

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WELLAND receive for information report TRANS-2021-01 –Update # 2 Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy; and further

THAT Welland City Council support the current levels of Niagara Region Transit service in place and the emergence of on-demand services for smaller municipalities, which do not provide conventional and specialized services; and further

THAT Welland City Council defer approval for the proposed Niagara Transit Governance Strategy until 2023 due to the potential negative financial impact to Welland taxpayers; and further

THAT report TRANS-2021-01 – Second Update on Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy be circulated to all area municipalities.

ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND:

On February 21, 2017, Report CAO-2017-02 – Niagara Transit Service Delivery and Governance Strategy Report, was presented to Welland City Council (Appendix I). Within this report, Council was asked to support a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was approved by the Cities of Welland, St. Catharines, and Niagara Falls, and Niagara Region. This MOU included the Guiding Principles for Welland's involvement of, and support for, inter-municipal transit. These Guiding Principles were drafted by Welland staff to ensure they would continue to influence Welland's perspective and involvement in the future phases of the inter-municipal transit discussion and include:

- Fiscal responsibility and affordability for the City of Welland. Thus, no negative impacts to the City's tax levy and receipt of provincial gas tax is not negatively impacted.
- Ease of implementation for the City of Welland.
- Operational viability for City of Welland.
- Improving economic development opportunities for the City of Welland.

- Local transit services will not be adversely impacted.
- Respecting existing transit collective agreements in each respective municipality.

On October 21, 2020, a meeting of the Linking Niagara Transit Committee (LNTC) was held to receive the consultant's report on Niagara Region Transit service strategies and possible governance models. Upon completion of the presentation, the Report was supported in principle by the LNTC, knowing that it still had to be vetted by the twelve local municipalities before moving forward to the Niagara Region Public Works Committee, and then Niagara Region Council for final triple majority approval, strategy acceptance, and governance implementation.

On April 13, 2021, Trans 2021-01 - Update on Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy was presented to Welland City Council to provide commentary on eleven areas of concern, which would not fully align with the City approved Guiding Principles noted above. The other municipalities also responded to the initial Report to the LNTC and from the entirety of these comments, a revised Governance Strategy was presented to, and approved by the LNTC on June 30, 2021. This revised strategy has centered on three prevailing concerns raised by the majority of municipalities, which are the proposed: Financial Strategy, Commission Board Composition, and Service Standards. It is the intent of Regional staff to collect any further comments to this and that of the June 30, 2021, Report.

COMMENTS AND ANALYSIS:

The recommendations collected have been developed by the Governance Steering Committee (GSC), comprised of all thirteen (13) municipal Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) across Niagara. The GSC was created to review and address feedback provided by local area municipalities (LAMs) during the 'Phase 1' consultation roadshow. Based exclusively on Phase 1 feedback, the GSC has recommended significant updates to three primary elements to directly address this input:

Financial Strategy

The recommended financial strategy proposes that all the local municipal transit service budgets be uploaded to the Commission in 2023 to be consolidated with the Region's transit budget and to be assessed to the local area municipalities by way of special levies to be approved annually by the Region. Services levels are different in each municipality; therefore, the Region now proposes that twelve (12) Special Levies be adopted in 2023 versus the initial single levy concept. Each special levy will allocate 65% of 2023 net transit costs based on service hours, with existing Niagara Regional Transit services continuing to be allocated to the special levy based on local share of Region wide assessment. The 2023 estimated Commission baseline service budget will require a 7.3% increase to the Regional Budget with equal and concurrent reductions to Municipal budgets therefore minimizing the net residential impact.

The proposed, revised financial modelling for delivery of Inter-Regional transit requires additional analysis and refinement to include the following:

- a) Impact of future Inter-Regional transit Capital Budget to Welland taxpayers

- b) Assumption regarding transit Operating costs in a post COVID-19 environment. [Current ridership for Welland Transit is approximately 28% of pre-COVID levels]
- c) Impact on Provincial Gas Tax funding and continued commitment from other levels of government on sustainable new sources of funding for transit
- d) The proposed revised transit levy allocation for future Inter-Regional transit operating costs represents a higher tax dollar to Welland taxpayers for delivery of transit services

Commission Board Composition

The initial proposed Governance Strategy recommended a nine (9) member Commission while this second revised strategy recommends a fifteen (15) member board of elected officials with one representative from all local area municipalities, two from Niagara Falls and three from St. Catharines. Also recommended, a governance review shall be undertaken in year three of operation.

As a result, Welland would be limited to the same representation as smaller municipalities such as West Lincoln and Wainfleet, which have never supported public transit systems within their municipalities. This is inequitable, as Welland has supported the provision of public transit services, both conventional and specialized for its residents for almost five decades. This new model 'grouping' Welland with all the municipalities smaller in size does not capture the operational and capital investments Welland Council has continued to make in our community, nor does it account for the evolving growth that Welland continues to realize. Based on the proposed Commission board composition, Welland with ~ 10% of service hours would have the same representation as Wainfleet, West Lincoln and Lincoln with a combined total of 1% of the service hours.

City staff are concerned at the size of this revised Commission Board structure. A fifteen-member Commission is substantive in size and may not be reactive enough to deal with the dynamic growth in our region and the complexities presented with aligning our conventional / specialized services with emerging on-demand services, which will likely be implemented within and between the smaller centres. There is also a need for subject matter experts, as identified by the Niagara Transit Governance Study, to take full advantage of the benefits provided by the Commission.

The proposal states this will be a transitional board, and this is of concern to Welland as future Commission structures and representation may present concerns to the residents of Welland with little input into decisions made, which will concern their public transit services. As the strategy recommends the Commission be of a transitional nature, it would be prudent that the process for reviewing and changing the board be determined prior to a triple majority vote.

Service Standards Strategy

The revised service standards are to be Niagara-wide and detail short-term enhancements (1-3 years) in each community to achieve consistent, equitable access to transit for all Niagara residents, in advance of a longer-term network review planned in year five of the Commission's operation.

There are inequities amongst the twelve municipalities and thus, determining consistent service levels 'Niagara-wide' will present challenges. Although noted within this report,

having subject matter expertise on the Commission Board for matters, such as service standards will prove to be invaluable.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

There are many aspects of this Governance Strategy that will have significant consequences on Welland's ability to fully control our costs moving forward. Although this revised Governance Strategy has modified the single levy to a unique levy for each municipality based on 65% of the net costs based on service hours provided, the lack of representation on the Commission could result in many additional hours of service provided in Welland and the costs associated placed on Welland residents.

The Guiding Principles approved by Welland City Council support a strong level of control over our municipal Transit service levels and ensuring the associated amalgamation costs would have no negative impact to Welland taxpayers. Upon review of funding models, City of Welland staff have concerns that the proposed 'new funding model for Niagara Region Transit will have negative impacts on Welland taxpayers' when compared to the current service delivery model in place for Welland Transit services.

In addition, the movement of capital assets via the Cummings Principle needs further dialogue. Welland's situation is unique in that it is in the process of designing and constructing a new Transit Operations Facility with federal, provincial, and regional support, and further, owns the Main Street Bus Terminal, which continues to be a tremendous asset to the city. Neither St. Catharines, nor Niagara Falls own such transit terminal facilities.

As a result of these financial concerns, staff recommend the current Transit service delivery model be maintained, including current delivery of Inter-Municipal Transit until 2023 to allow for further discussion on the Commission Board representation / composition and more dialogue on the service standards to be implemented within our community for longer range planning and budgeting to ensure Welland taxpayers are not adversely impacted.

New Transit Operations Facility (75 Federal Road)

Welland City Council has approved a \$15 million budget for the expansion and renovation of the current Operations Facility and a detailed design is proceeding. The City received commitment from senior Niagara Region staff that \$1.32 million was to be included in the Niagara Region 2022 Capital Budget in lieu of the 2021 Capital Budget.

New Seaway Mall Transit Hub

The city is working with the Seaway Mall for design/construction of a new transit hub in conjunction with the proposed redevelopment of the Welland Seaway Mall. Currently, discussions are centered at entering a 3-way cost sharing agreement between the City of Welland, the Seaway Mall and the Niagara Region by way of equal division 1/3 per stakeholder. The proposed redevelopment of the Seaway Mall represents a significant economic stimulus and an opportunity to improve Inter-Regional transit.

Review of Fare Structure for Low Income Transit Riders

Manager of Transit is currently undertaking a review of Welland Transit fares and the impact they have to low-income Welland Transit riders. Staff will be reporting back to the current fare structure in October 2021.

OTHER DEPARTMENT IMPLICATIONS:

The transition of Welland Transit from a municipal entity to a component of Niagara Region Transit should relieve the municipality of a number of requirements and responsibilities. If amalgamation occurs, the City will not be required to support Transit for many tasks, including: Finance and Legal oversight, Human Resources guidance, Payroll support, and matters pertaining to Engineering & Planning.

Conversely, the City would not have the same autonomy to utilize the fleet for municipal events, support Council initiatives, and generally be in full alignment with the developments and enhancements being realized within our dynamic community.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Control of service level and representation on the Commission board remain concerns with this latest Governance Strategy model. Although efforts have been made to alter the Commission structure and representation, Welland remains disadvantaged with a single vote, which does not capture the investment Welland has committed to our residents for almost five decades and the dynamic growth of the city.

City staff maintain that it would be prudent that a delay should be considered into 2023, which would allow for greater certainty on the pandemic recovery period prior to implementing large scale transit investments and revisions in the absence of a clearer picture of transit's future and a more settled experience for employees. Upon amalgamation, the new Niagara Region Transit system will include approximately 400 employees. The transition of personnel and financial resources from the lower tier to Regional government requires greater consideration and the current unsettled climate does not provide a sound baseline platform. The merging of collective agreements will also pose significant challenges and these issues have not been substantively addressed.

The City of Welland is committed to fully supporting the enhancement of public transit services throughout the Niagara Region. Out of an abundance of caution for those who have been hit hard by this pandemic, staff are of the opinion there needs to be further work performed on the ridership modelling, commensurate service levels, and capital investments, which should be undertaken prior to a 2023 implementation date.

Subject to approval of the recommendation of this report, the next step will be a second round of consultation with LAM councils. This will provide LAMs an opportunity to review the recommended updates and provide additional input by late August.

Of interest, this report does not initiate the triple-majority approval process. It is anticipated that the triple-majority vote will occur after the consultation on this report has been completed

and any feedback incorporated. The triple-majority approval process is anticipated to occur in Fall 2021.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix I – CAO-2017-02 - Niagara Transit Service Delivery and Governance Strategy Report
Appendix II – Revised Governance Strategy – Niagara Transit

Subject: Niagara Transit Governance – Phase 2 Consultation Results and Triple-Majority Initiation

Report to: Linking Niagara Transit Committee

Report date: Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Recommendations

1. That the Linking Niagara Transit Committee **ENDORSE** the final financial, governance, and service plan strategies recommended by the Governance Steering Committee and that the strategies reflect feedback received through consultations with the local area municipalities and interested parties; and
2. That the Linking Niagara Transit Committee **RECOMMENDS** that Regional Council direct staff to initiate the formal triple-majority approval process for the purpose of creating a regionally integrated transit system.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek a final endorsement of the recommended governance model from the Linking Niagara Transit Committee (LNTC) and to move forward into the formal triple-approval process, which would commence with a Special Meeting of Regional Council this fall and be followed by consideration by each of Niagara's twelve municipalities.
- The move to a single, consolidated transit system will bring dramatic benefits to the residents of Niagara: a single branded system that can take you anywhere in the Region; a single fare; breaking down jurisdictional barriers and connecting communities; supporting GO rail and bus expansion; developing and supporting the economy and job retention and creation; driving tourism and connectivity; improving the environment; reducing traffic congestion; supporting accessibility; and providing better value to the taxpayer.
- LNTC was established in 2017 after unanimous municipal triple majority approval to proceed with the creation of a new governance model for a consolidated transit system, with a mandate to deliver on this vision: to develop and advance a recommended consolidated governance model for Niagara, as well as in the interim, harmonize the operations and policies of the existing transit systems.

-
- Under the direction of the LNTC, the Governance Steering Committee (GSC) has developed a final recommended governance model that includes financial, Board composition, and service strategies.
 - These strategies reflect two rounds of consultation with local municipalities, as well as interested parties from across Niagara.
 - Should triple-majority be achieved, the new transit Commission would begin operation on January 1, 2023.

Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Should future triple-majority approval be achieved, the financial strategy outlined in this report and in *LNTC-C 3-2021* proposes the Region upload the baseline local transit service net expenditure using 2020 budget at \$27.8M and estimated to be \$29.4M in 2023.

The upload to the new Regional Commission will occur in a single year and the budget of the Commission will be apportioned to each of the LAMs using twelve Special Levies, one for each municipality, established by the Region with each year's budget process. Existing NRT service costs transferred to the Commission will continue to be allocated to the Special Levy based on municipal share of Regional assessment and the local transit service costs will be allocated to the Special Levy based on service hours.

The 2023 estimated Commission baseline budget will represent a 7.3% increase to the Regional budget resulting from the local transit service costs being shifted from local area municipalities to the Commission budget, to be levied by the Region. This increase is expected to be offset by equal and concurrent reductions to municipal budgets to minimize the residential taxpayer impact from transit consolidation.

Analysis

Moving Transit Forward

The vision for a single regional transit agency for Niagara is a long-standing one, with a significant series of previous milestones having been achieved dating back well more than a decade.

Recent milestones include the formation of the inter-municipal transit working group in 2015, the Niagara Transit Service Delivery and Governance Strategy Report (*Dillon Report*, 2017), unanimous triple majority approval in 2017 for the Region to move from pilot to permanent operation of inter-municipal transit – along with unanimous municipal approval to proceed to develop a new governance system for a consolidated transit system for all of Niagara, the establishment of LNTC, the 2017 MOU between Niagara's four major transit operators that endorsed a consolidated transit system in principle, and the completion of the Niagara Transit Governance Study (NTGS) in 2020.

Now is the opportunity to take the final step towards the establishment of that consolidated system, one that is anticipated to bring dramatic benefits to the residents of Niagara by:

- ✓ Creating **one unified transit system** for Niagara.
- ✓ Breaking down barriers and **connecting communities**, ensuring all residents in Niagara have access to transit.
- ✓ **Expanding and enhancing service** – with new, longer, and consistent operating hours.
- ✓ **Connecting to GO Transit** as service is expanded and enhanced in the near future.
- ✓ **Supporting business and economic development** by connecting employers with new customers and employees with new opportunities.
- ✓ **Driving Tourism** by connecting people to all the destinations and activities that Niagara has to offer.
- ✓ Connecting **Seniors** to their community – to access services, see family and friends, and maintain independence.
- ✓ Providing access to **Health Care**, and improving social determinants of health.
- ✓ Establishing **one single fare** that takes you anywhere in the Region, with a new payment system.
- ✓ Being **innovative**, using new methods to serve communities like on-demand transit.
- ✓ Having **one schedule**, with one website and one app to help you plan your trip.
- ✓ Creating a more **accessible and equitable** system by ensuring all residents have similar access to service.
- ✓ Supporting the **environment** by reducing greenhouse gas emissions

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- and support future moves to a zero-emission fleet.
 - ✓ Ensuring that **Students and Youth** can get to school, participate in extra-curricular activities, or access a job.
 - ✓ Ensuring it is **funded fairly**, with residents only paying for the service they receive directly.
 - ✓ Delivering **better value for the taxpayer** through the more efficient delivery of service and eliminating duplication.

It is only through the move to one consolidated agency that these outcomes can be achieved.

While significant work has been done to improve, integrate, and coordinate the existing systems in Niagara, consolidation will mean a larger and combined resource pool. This will support efficiencies that cannot be achieved as separate entities duplicating efforts, and which will then be reinvested into the network to enhance service.

The LNTC was expressly established with a mandate to advance a recommended governance model outlining how this consolidation should best take place.

Under the direction of LNTC, the GSC has now arrived at a final financial model, Board composition, and service strategy that represents the overall governance proposal.

Consultation and Engagement

These strategies have been developed originally by the NTGS and through the work of both local and Regional staff such as the area CAOs and Treasurers. They have been refined through two (2) rounds of engagement with local area municipalities (LAMs) as well as outreach to interested parties across Niagara with a mandate that connects to transit.

LAM Phase 2 Engagement

Most recently and as directed by LNTC, the second round of LAM engagement took place over the summer of 2021. This was an opportunity for municipalities to review and provide additional feedback on the revised strategies developed by the GSC in response to the first round of engagement.

Themes that emerged from these latest discussions include:

- **Financial Strategy** - The revised twelve special levy financial strategy was much more favourably received than the previous Regional assessment-based levy model. It now reflects the principle of residents only paying for services they receive and reduces the redistribution of local costs across municipalities.

Concerns continued to be expressed related to: the future cost of transit in some communities; how assets would transfer to the Commission; and, how intergovernmental funding sources such as the Provincial Gas Tax would be considered.

- **Service Standards Strategy** – The new Service Standards Strategy, created specifically in response to Round One municipal feedback, demonstrated to municipalities the types of enhancements they can expect to see in their communities in the future. Feedback on the consolidation proposal related to ensuring that existing levels of transit service were maintained and that some rural municipalities did not support the introduction of local transit into their communities at this time (which is reflected in the service standards strategy).

Additional concerns related to operational challenges with the existing transit systems were also received.

- **Governance Strategy** – The feedback on the revised Commission Board structure, comprised of fifteen elected representatives, was balanced between:
 - Strong support from smaller or medium sized municipalities that were being provided one full-time representative under the revised model; and,
 - Concern from larger municipalities regarding the overall total size of the Board (not growing further), the fully elected composition (vs. public members), and the share or division of representation for communities with higher transit ridership (i.e. St. Catharines/Niagara Falls/Welland).

Councils also identified the need for additional clarification regarding the transitional nature of the Board, and how the external review would be assured.

Appendix 1 provides a further summary of the discussions with each Council and the feedback received.

Interested Party Engagement

Following the LAM discussions, a series of workshops were conducted with interested parties from across Niagara, representing organizations or demographics who either rely on transit or with a mandate that is closely related to transit. Example attendees included members of environmental and accessibility advisory committees, local business leaders and Chambers of Commerce, institutional administrators, and other advocates.

The purpose of these sessions was to ensure that these groups have the latest information regarding the consideration of a consolidated transit system, and that there was an opportunity for feedback and input prior to the finalization of the proposal.

These sessions were organized thematically, covering a wide variety of topics such as the environment, seniors, youth, business and tourism, post-secondary institutions, diversity and inclusiveness, libraries, health services, and accessibility.

A summary of these engagement sessions is provided as Appendix 2.

A separate and additional engagement session with the Presidents of the three Amalgamated Transit Unions was also undertaken, reflecting the vital role their members play and will continue to play, in the delivery of transit in Niagara.

Public Engagement

On September 21, 2021, a jointly-delivered public website was launched at www.movingtransitforward.ca, with information on the proposed move to one consolidated transit system. As a part of the website's function, interested participants are invited to learn more about the initiative and provide feedback on the strategies proposed via a public survey.

The website and survey will be promoted on the LAM engagement platforms such as 'Bang the Table', through print and social media, as well as through existing transit platforms such as via in-vehicle bus advertising and the NRT On-Demand app.

This survey will run until October 3, 2021 and the results included as part of the future triple-majority report to Regional and local councils.

Final Recommended Strategies

The feedback and input received from LAMs and interested parties has been considered by the GSC in the development of the final recommended models for the consolidation of transit in Niagara.

Balancing the feedback received from all municipalities, the GSC has recommended that:

- The revised Financial and Service Strategies presented during Phase 2 LAM engagement be maintained, and that no further changes or modifications are required to address the feedback received; and that
- Minor modifications be made to the Board Composition strategy to strengthen the requirement that the external third-party review take place and to provide a clear timeframe for the conclusion of the transitional Commission Board.

The final strategies are summarized below, having been originally described fully in *LNTC-C 3-2021* as referenced.

These recommendations represent the consensus position of the GSC and in total, compromise the overall governance proposal that is recommended to move forward for consideration as part of a triple-majority vote.

Financial Strategy

The recommended financial strategy proposes that all LAM transit service budgets be uploaded to the Commission in the 2023 budget year, as well as the Region's existing transit budget to be consolidated by the Commission and to be assessed to the local area municipalities by way of special levies to be approved annually by the Region:

- Service levels are different in each municipality; therefore, the Region proposes that twelve Special Levies be adopted in 2023. Each special levy will allocate 65% of 2023 net transit costs based on service hours, with existing Niagara Regional Transit services continuing to be allocated to the special levy based on local share of Region-wide assessment.
- The 2023 estimated Commission baseline service budget will require a 7.3% increase due to the transfer of local transit costs to the Regional budget with expected equal and concurrent reductions to municipal budgets therefore minimizing the net residential impact.

The full Financial Strategy is described in the Financial Considerations section of *LNTC-C 3-2021* and associated Attachments 1 through 4.

Service Standards Strategy

The Service Standards Strategy, provided as Appendix 5 to *LNTC-C 3-2021*, outlines a three-phased approach to the standardization and enhancement of transit service to achieve consistent, equitable access to transit for all Niagara residents:

- Phase 1 – Years 1 & 2 – Standardized Operating Hours Across Niagara
- Phase 2 – Year 3 – Combine Specialized and Demand-Responsive Services
- Phase 3 – Years 4 & 5 – Network Review and Growth

Board Composition Strategy

The GSC has considered feedback from all 12 municipalities regarding the overall size, elected composition, and share of representation of the transitional 15-member Commission Board.

The GSC has recommended that the proposal for a 15-member elected transitional Board proposal be maintained.

This recommendation reflects concerns from municipalities regarding the already relatively large total size of the Board, the impact on other municipalities' equivalent share of representation caused from any further changes, and in keeping with the existing ridership methodology used to determine that compliment.

The proposed composition of the Commission Board was recommended on the basis of two (2) principles:

- That each municipality be provided a minimum of one representative; and
- That extra representation should be considered for the largest three (3) municipalities (St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, and Welland), on the basis of ridership and balancing the total size of the Board.

The proposal of three (3) representatives to St. Catharines, two (2) to Niagara Falls, and one (1) to Welland is reflective of the share of ridership between these three (3) large municipalities, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Transit Ridership and Share of Representation

Municipality	Ridership	Share	Representation	Share
St. Catharines	4,796,246	54%	3	50%
Niagara Falls	3,164,716	35%	2	33%
Welland	989,357	11%	1	17%
Total	8,950,319	100%	6	100%

Therefore, the final GSC recommended Commission Board remains as:

Figure 1 - GSC Recommended Board Structure

Transitional Transit Commission Board	Advisory Board
<p>(15) Total Elected Official Representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (3) St. Catharines • (2) Niagara Falls • (1) Welland • (1) Fort Erie • (1) Grimsby • (1) Lincoln • (1) Niagara-on-the-Lake • (1) Pelham • (1) Port Colborne • (1) Thorold • (1) Wainfleet • (1) West Lincoln 	<p>(20) Total Public Stakeholder Representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (12) Niagara Residents (one per Municipality) • (2) Members representing Accessibility Advisory Committees or other Accessibility Stakeholders • (2) Post-Secondary Representatives (1 student union representative from Brock University and Niagara College) • (1) Member representing Niagara Chambers of Commerce • (1) Senior Issues Stakeholder • (1) Youth Issues Stakeholder • (1) Transit Commission General Manager (ex-Officio)
<p><i>Members recommended by local Councils, appointed by Regional Council.</i></p>	<p><i>Resident members recommended by local Councils, all members appointed by the Transit Commission Board.</i></p>

The external third party review of the Transitional Board will revisit and make recommendations regarding the total Board size, and share of representation, in advance of a permanent Board structure being put in place.

The GSC maintains the position that the establishment of a hybrid governing model remains a preferred outcome for the future permanent Board structure and should be strongly considered during this review.

With respect to concluding the transitional Board structure, to address concerns with ensuring that the review *must* take place, the GSC has recommended that:

- The forthcoming Municipal Transfer Agreements include a formal requirement that the external review examining alternative Board structures will take place and that;
- The conclusion of the transitional Board and establishment of the permanent Board structure will coincide with next municipal election cycle after the creation of the Commission (2026). This linkage will support the change between the transitional and permanent Board structures by providing clear timing for the implementation to occur.

The external review would be completed in advance of this milestone, with its recommendations made to Regional Council for adoption.

Additional information on the Board Composition proposal, including the process for nomination to the Commission and Advisory Boards is contained in *LNTC-C 3-2021*.

Triple-Majority Initiation

Creating one consolidated transit agency in Niagara will require triple-majority approval of a by-law to transfer to the Region the legislative authority to operate both local and intra-municipal transit service in Niagara (the Region having received inter-municipal authority previously in 2017).

Triple majority support consists of:

- A majority of all votes on upper-tier council [Regional Council];
- A majority of all the lower-tier [LAM] councils passing resolutions consenting to the by-law; and

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- The total number of electors in the lower-tier [LAM] municipalities that have passed resolutions consenting to the by-law form a majority of the electors in the upper-tier municipality.

This process will be initiated first at Regional Council at a special meeting, to be scheduled this fall, where it will consider the proposed by-law. This report will also include additional information regarding the transition process to a Commission, seek authority for the negotiation of asset transfer agreements on the basis of a series of principles, and the results of the public survey feedback.

Each of Niagara's LAMs will then be asked to subsequently consider the by-law through the remainder of 2021.

Should triple-majority be achieved, a one-year period would be required to establish the Commission, as laid out in the Transition Plan of the NTGS, and prepare for the assumption of day-to-day operations on January 1, 2023.

Alternatives Reviewed

The NTGS considered a series of alternative governance models for the consolidated transit system, including that of a partial Commission or Regional Division. The Full Commission was recommended on the basis of the level of independence and anticipated benefits arising from a defined budget envelope being set by Regional Council. Additional detail regarding the evaluation of the alternative governance models is contained within the final NTGS report, which was presented as Attachment 2 to *LNTC-C 4-2020*.

Numerous alternative financial models, Board compositions, and service enhancement timelines have been considered throughout the process: both originally within the NTGS and as input and feedback has been received by municipalities. These considerations have included:

- 11 different alternative Special Levy financial models, including ones that considered divisions between conventional and on-demand systems, in addition to the single General Levy originally proposed;
- Alternative Commission Board structures including those that maintained a smaller total Board size; that included public members to retain a hybrid model; that grouped smaller LAMs into rotating seats; and

- Both shorter and longer timelines for the implementation of service enhancements and the external network review.

The original guiding principles of 'Customer Driven', 'Unconventional Solutions', 'Integrated', 'Economically Responsible', and 'Fair' (financial) were used throughout to evaluate alternatives. The final strategies and governance model represent the consensus recommendation of the GSC.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

The proposed consolidation of transit services across Niagara into a consolidated transit entity directly aligns with the Council Strategic Priority: Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning (Objective 3.1) through advancing regional transit and facilitating the movement of people and goods.

Other Pertinent Reports

LNTC-C 3-2021	Niagara Transit Governance - Revised Strategies Reflecting Phase 1 Municipal Consultation
LNTC-C 2-2021	Niagara Transit Governance – Governance Steering Committee Update
LNTC-C 1-2021	Niagara Transit Governance – Detailed Phase 1 Consultation Summary
LNTC-C 6-2020	Councillor Information Request – Niagara Transit Governance – Local Area Municipality Engagement
LNTC-C 4-2020	Niagara Region Transit Governance Study
CAO 8-2017	Niagara Region's Transit Service Delivery and Governance Strategy
LNTC-C 21-2018	Inter-Municipal Transit (IMT) Service Implementation Strategy

Respectfully signed and submitted,

Prepared by:

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GO Implementation Office

Recommended by:

Bruce Zvaniga, P.Eng.
Commissioner of Public Works (Interim)
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This report was prepared in significant consultation with Heather Talbot, Financial & Special Projects Consultant – Financial Management and Planning; the Governance Steering Committee comprised of the CAOs from all thirteen (13) municipalities across Niagara; and reviewed by; Matt Robinson, Director, GO Implementation Office; Helen Chamberlain, Director, Financial Management & Planning/Deputy Treasurer; Todd Harrison, Commissioner of Corporate Services/Treasurer.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Local Area Municipality Feedback Response Tracker – Phase 2
- Appendix 2 Interested Parties Feedback Response Tracker

LNTC-C 5-2021
 Appendix 1 – Local Area Municipality Feedback Tracker
 September 29, 2021

Overview

The second round of Local Area Municipality (LAM) consultation represented an opportunity for input and feedback on the revised financial, governance, and service strategies.

The purpose of this comment tracker is to summarize the input received from each LAM during this consultation period. This feedback is represented by a combination of formal feedback received through recommendations adopted by Councils, commentary provided in local staff reports, and topics raised by Councils during question and answer periods.

Municipality	Comment
Fort Erie	<p>Fort Erie Council received local report <i>CAO-18-2021</i> for information.</p> <p>Discussion at Council around how the financial strategy related to Fort Erie specifically, the role of Provincial Gas Tax funding, and intermunicipal transit links to Fort Erie from Niagara Region Transit (NRT) and the expansion of NRT OnDemand Pilot to Port Colborne to create a new inter-municipal link between Fort Erie and Port Colborne.</p>
Grimsby	<p>Grimsby Council received local report <i>CAO 21-12</i> for information.</p> <p>The current and future role of the NRT OnDemand pilot in Grimsby was discussed, with a focus on ensuring that the on-demand service remains and is expanded in Grimsby under a Commission. This included discussion of how it can be expanded into Hamilton, how It will support GO expansion in the future, as well as what the current and future costs for operating the on-demand system are.</p>

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 Appendix 1 – Local Area Municipality Feedback Tracker
 September 29, 2021

Municipality	Comment
Lincoln	<p>Lincoln Council received local report <i>AD-16-21</i> for information.</p> <p>Through Councillor comments, support was expressed for the revised Governance model providing Lincoln with a dedicated seat, with concern expressed regarding the transitional nature of the board and a suggestion that change be tied to a term of Council. The role of the NRT OnDemand pilot in delivering transit in Lincoln and the need for it to represent value-to-the-taxpayer was highlighted. Further discussion related to the timeframe of future service enhancements, how long-term growth and service levels would be determined, and what long-term growth assumptions were included in the financial model.</p>
Niagara Falls	<p>Niagara Falls council received Regional staff report <i>LNTC-C 3-2021</i> and did not identify any remaining areas of concern with the presented financial, governance, or service strategies.</p>
Niagara-on-the-Lake	<p>Niagara-on-the-Lake Council received for information a report from the CAO on July 26, 2021. In discussion of that report, areas of interest included how future services would be deployed and how the financial strategy related to Niagara-on-the-Lake specifically.</p>
Pelham	<p>Pelham Council first considered and referred report <i>#2021-0127</i> on July 26, 2021 until the Regional presentation on August 23, 2021, which was subsequently received for information. Across these two meetings, feedback focused on how the financial strategy related to Pelham and operational challenges with the existing NRT OnDemand pilot program.</p>
Port Colborne	<p>Port Colborne council received Regional staff report <i>LNTC-C 3-2021</i> and did not identify any remaining areas of concern with the presented financial, governance, or service strategies.</p>

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 Appendix 1 – Local Area Municipality Feedback Tracker
 September 29, 2021

Municipality	Comment
St. Catharines	<p>At the meeting of August 9, 2021, St. Catharines Council received the Regional presentation and report <i>CAO-124-2021</i> and in parallel, requested St. Catharines staff to prepare a subsequent report discussing the concerns expressed by the St. Catharines Transit Commission. That subsequent report (<i>LCS-143-2021</i>) was considered on September 13, 2021.</p> <p>The feedback provided by SCTC is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the board composition be altered to include subject matter experts and provide representation more commensurate with St. Catharines service hours, ridership and financial contribution. • That the Commission and advisory board size be reduced to facilitate a high performing transit system that balances accountability and functionality. • As the strategy recommends the Commission be of a transitional nature, that the process for reviewing and changing the board be determined prior to a triple majority vote. • That the Commission’s administrative structure be properly resourced to function efficiently and effectively. • That a seven-year service level guarantee be established for all existing St. Catharines bus routes. <p>Discussion at St. Catharines’ Council focused on the general themes of: composition of the transitional Commission Board and the necessity of the external review; how the move to a Regional system would benefit St. Catharines; the relationship to GO Rail expansion; asset transfer; and how the financial model related to St. Catharines through topics such as total future costs, PGT funding, service enhancements, and capital reserve funding.</p>
Thorold	<p>Thorold Council received report <i>PWCS2021-70</i> for information. Areas of discussion included how Brock University would be engaged through the process, how expansion of on-demand service into areas such as Rolling Meadows would take place, and how often service levels would be re-examined.</p>

LNTC-C 5-2021
 Appendix 1 – Local Area Municipality Feedback Tracker
 September 29, 2021

Municipality	Comment
Wainfleet	Wainfleet Council considered staff report <i>ASR-002/2021</i> , expressing ongoing concerns with the role that transit plays and value provided in more rural communities.
Welland	<p>Welland Council adopted the recommendations of report <i>TRANS-2021-01</i>, which are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Council of the City of Welland receive for information report <i>TRANS-2021-01 – Update #2 Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy</i>; and further; • That Welland City Council support the current levels of Niagara Region Transit service in place and the emergence of on-demand services for smaller municipalities, which do not provide conventional and specialized services; and further • That Welland City Council defer approval of the proposed Niagara Transit Governance Strategy until 2023 due to the potential negative financial impact to Welland taxpayers; and further • That report <i>TRANS-2021-01 – Second Update on Niagara Region Transit (NRT) Governance Strategy</i> be circulated to all municipalities. <p>Within report <i>TRANS-2021-01</i>, Welland staff identified a series of concerns and requested additional information regarding the proposed strategies. These topics include: future Capital budget considerations; operating costs in a post-COVID-19 environment; treatment of PGT funding; future costs to Welland taxpayers; the share of representation of the Commission Board for Welland; and the application of the Cummings Principle for asset transfer.</p> <p>The concerns identified in the staff report were subsequently reflected in discussion and Q&A with Welland Council. These concerns were subsequently addressed in a project team memo back to Welland Council submitted September 20, 2021.</p>

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Appendix 1 – Local Area Municipality Feedback Tracker
September 29, 2021

Municipality	Comment
West Lincoln	West Lincoln Council received the Regional presentation and report <i>LNTC-C 3-2021</i> , with discussion focusing on current and future decision points for transit, the role of transit in a more rural community and if providing local trips as part of the NRT OnDemand pilot program would represent value to the taxpayer.

LNTC-C 5-2021

Appendix 2 – Interested Parties Feedback Response Tracker

September 29, 2021

Overview

Through September 2021, a series of workshops were conducted with interested parties from across Niagara, representing organizations or demographics who either rely on transit or with a mandate that is closely related to transit. Example attendees included members of environmental committees, accessibility advisory committees, local business leaders, and Chambers of Commerce, large institution administrators, and other advocates.

The purpose of these sessions was to ensure that these groups have the latest information regarding the potential move to a consolidated transit system, and there was an opportunity for feedback prior to the finalization of the proposal.

Through these sessions feedback was received encompassing a wide variety of perspectives, suggestions, and commentary. The major themes that emerged from each session are summarized below.

Session	Comment
Businesses, Economic Development, and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit supports employees getting to-and-from work and as such, it is important that the hours of operation and frequency of service achieve that goal. Extended hours of operation, which support early or late shift times is a particular area for focus. • The transition to a Commission should not change the areas of transit that are currently working well – where specific effort has already been made to support businesses.
Diversity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fully accessible transit system extends beyond the vehicle, including things such as accessible stops and other supporting infrastructure. • Not everyone can use an app or easily read a schedule, alternative options are critical. • Services should be delivered more locally, so there is more familiarity with Niagara from those operating the systems. • The current system has operational challenges, at times arising from a lack of connectivity and different policies between service providers.

LNTC-C 5-2021
 Appendix 2 – Interested Parties Feedback Response Tracker
 September 29, 2021

Session	Comment
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environmentally responsible transit system needs to make connections other modes easy – especially cycling and walking. Need to support using these other modes through multi-modal hubs and good wayfinding. • The Commission should prioritize a move to a zero-emission vehicle fleet.
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit supports not only patient but also employee access to hospitals. • Transit needs to remain accessible to all so that persons are not ‘metric-ed out’ - unable to engage with the system due to their socio-economic status, being un-banked, or any other barriers.
Libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 10% of all patrons use transit to access libraries. • There are opportunities for partnerships between transit and libraries to support greater access. A challenge can be arriving at agreements and ‘knowing who to talk to’.
Post-Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit is critical in supporting student access to Niagara’s post-secondary institutions. • The transition to a Commission should not change routes or systems that are currently working well and that support students.
Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing the system can be a challenge– not all Seniors have smart-phones or may require assistance in navigating the current different systems and schedules. Physical barriers such as distance to stops also exist. • There is a ‘tipping point’ where more and better service will drive more ridership. • The standardization of service is important – in terms of there being ‘one brand’ as well as one set of hours and schedules.

LNTC-C 5-2021
 Appendix 2 – Interested Parties Feedback Response Tracker
 September 29, 2021

Session	Comment
Transportation and Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the performance of the system is measured (key performance indicators – KPIs) will be important in demonstrating success. • Supporting local transit access to the airport will allow passengers to access the Region as a whole. • More connections are required – both between municipalities and to other modes of transportation.
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The transit system needs to support travelling with young children –with regards to both the vehicles themselves, as well as accessing stops (i.e. needing to cross busy streets). • The transit system should support schools – classes using transit for field trips, or students who are at school early or late for extra-curricular activities. • Stops need to be located at convenient locations – in front of schools or other destinations such as community centres.

PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF FUTURE TRANSIT COSTS

Municipality	2021	% of	2021	% of	2021	% of
	Combined Levy	Combined Levy	Approved General Levy	General Levy	Waste Management Levy	Waste Management Levy
Fort Erie	28,263,792	6.34%	25,180,908	6.21%	3,082,884	7.60%
Grimsby	33,142,668	7.43%	30,911,178	7.63%	2,231,490	5.50%
Lincoln	26,311,473	5.90%	24,457,388	6.03%	1,854,085	4.57%
Niagara Falls	93,404,838	20.95%	85,452,258	21.08%	7,952,580	19.60%
NOTL	36,849,738	8.26%	35,091,268	8.66%	1,758,470	4.33%
Pelham	18,556,471	4.16%	17,149,157	4.23%	1,407,314	3.47%
Port Colborne	15,050,476	3.38%	13,008,738	3.21%	2,041,738	5.03%
St. Catharines	117,051,816	26.25%	104,739,824	25.84%	12,311,992	30.35%
Thorold	18,486,792	4.15%	16,750,794	4.13%	1,735,998	4.28%
Wainfleet	6,751,596	1.51%	6,126,102	1.51%	625,494	1.54%
Welland	38,120,686	8.55%	33,587,266	8.29%	4,533,420	11.18%
West Lincoln	13,877,174	3.11%	12,845,724	3.17%	1,031,450	2.54%
TOTALS	445,867,520	100.00%	405,300,605	100.00%	40,566,915	100.00%

12 Special Levy Option (existing capital only)				
	% of Service Hours 2020	2025		
		Yr1	Yr2	Yr3
St. Catharines	44%	0.9	1.8	2.7
Niagara Falls	30%	0.6	1.3	1.9
Welland	11%	0.2	0.5	0.8
NOTL	2%	0.0	0.1	0.2
Port Colborne	2%	0.0	0.1	0.1
Pelham	1%	0.0	0.1	0.1
Thorold	3%	0.1	0.1	0.2
Fort Erie	5%	0.1	0.2	0.3
Grimsby	1%	0.0	0.1	0.1
Lincoln	1%	0.0	0.1	0.1
West Lincoln	0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wainfleet	0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100%	2.2	4.3	6.5
Conventional	85%	1.8	3.6	5.4
Alternative	15%	0.3	0.7	1.1

Inter-Regional Transit Considerations - One Tax Payer

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Steve Zorbas - CAO



Guiding Principals for Inter-Municipal Transit

As per Council approved Report CAO-2017-02, the following guiding principals are to be adhered to prior to and during implementation of regional transit:

- ▶ Fiscal responsibility and affordability for the City of Welland. Thus, no negative impacts to the City's tax levy and receipt of provincial gas tax is not negatively impacted.
- ▶ Ease of implementation for the City of Welland.
- ▶ Operational viability for City of Welland.
- ▶ Improving economic development opportunities for the City of Welland.
- ▶ Local transit services will not be adversely impacted.
- ▶ Respecting existing transit collective agreements in each respective municipality

Asset Registry per Municipality (DRAFT)

Asset Category	Vehicle Count (Conventional & Specialized)	Acquisition Price	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value 12/31/2018	Usefull Life	Net Book Value Estimate 12/31/2020
Niagara Region						
Bus	30	\$19,311,980		\$13,292,539	10	\$10,073,876
St. Catharines						
Bus	85	\$41,464,685		\$16,379,430	12	\$9,468,649
Service Trucks	17	\$2,282,010	\$396,484	\$84,894	6	\$4,664
Land		\$1,182,244	\$682,863	\$142,156	16	\$0
Facilities		\$12,121,576	\$3,521,363	\$8,579,472	22	\$7,493,104
Equipment		\$1,354,904	\$959,405	\$395,499	13	\$231,107
Technology		\$7,324,060	\$3,496,459	\$3,827,601	7	\$2,097,933
Sub-Total		\$65,729,478	\$9,056,573	\$29,409,051		\$19,295,458
Niagara Falls						
Bus	41	\$18,543,814		\$7,161,493	12	\$4,070,857
Service Trucks	15	\$1,121,353	\$788,304	\$333,049	6	\$146,157
Land		\$348,139	\$158,387	\$189,752	32	\$167,993
Facilities		\$1,592,228	\$576,276	\$1,015,952	24	\$883,266
Equipment		\$2,235,936	\$727,890	\$1,508,046	13	\$1,164,810
Technology		\$5,424,938	\$2,859,110	\$2,557,451	7	\$1,081,970
Sub-Total		\$29,266,407	\$5,109,967	\$12,765,742		\$7,515,053
Welland						
Bus	21	\$8,535,000		\$5,338,571	12	\$3,916,071
Service Trucks	6	\$180,000	\$124,000	\$56,000	6	\$26,000
Land		\$2	\$2	\$2	0	\$0
Facilities		\$4,408,218	\$2,165,631	\$2,242,587	21	\$1,828,570
Equipment		\$697,590	\$413,220	\$284,370	6	\$64,657
Technology		\$1,116,545	\$269,798	\$846,746	7	\$629,292
Sub-Total		\$14,937,355	\$2,972,651	\$8,768,277		\$6,464,590

Allocation Methodologies for Transit

12 Special Levy Option (existing capital only)				
	% of Service Hours 2020	2025		
		Yr1	Yr2	Yr3
St. Catharines	44%	0.9	1.8	2.7
Niagara Falls	30%	0.6	1.3	1.9
Welland	11%	0.2	0.5	0.8
NOTL	2%	0.0	0.1	0.2
Port Colborne	2%	0.0	0.1	0.1
Pelham	1%	0.0	0.1	0.1
Thorold	3%	0.1	0.1	0.2
Fort Erie	5%	0.1	0.2	0.3
Grimsby	1%	0.0	0.1	0.1
Lincoln	1%	0.0	0.1	0.1
West Lincoln	0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wainfleet	0%	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100%	2.2	4.3	6.5
Conventional	85%	1.8	3.6	5.4
Alternative	15%	0.3	0.7	1.1

Municipality	2021	% of	2021	% of	2021	% of
	Combined Levy	Combined Levy	Approved General Levy	General Levy	Waste Management Levy	Waste Management Levy
Fort Erie	28,263,792	6.34%	25,180,908	6.21%	3,082,884	7.60%
Grimsby	33,142,668	7.43%	30,911,178	7.63%	2,231,490	5.50%
Lincoln	26,311,473	5.90%	24,457,388	6.03%	1,854,085	4.57%
Niagara Falls	93,404,838	20.95%	85,452,258	21.08%	7,952,580	19.60%
NOTL	36,849,738	8.26%	35,091,268	8.66%	1,758,470	4.33%
Pelham	18,556,471	4.16%	17,149,157	4.23%	1,407,314	3.47%
Port Colborne	15,050,476	3.38%	13,008,738	3.21%	2,041,738	5.03%
St. Catharines	117,051,816	26.25%	104,739,824	25.84%	12,311,992	30.35%
Thorold	18,486,792	4.15%	16,750,794	4.13%	1,735,998	4.28%
Wainfleet	6,751,596	1.51%	6,126,102	1.51%	625,494	1.54%
Welland	38,120,686	8.55%	33,587,266	8.29%	4,533,420	11.18%
West Lincoln	13,877,174	3.11%	12,845,724	3.17%	1,031,450	2.54%
TOTALS	445,867,520	100.00%	405,300,605	100.00%	40,566,915	100.00%



North America's Railroad

NEWS RELEASE

CN ANNOUNCES CEO JEAN-JACQUES RUEST'S PLANNED RETIREMENT

Board Committee to lead global search for successor

MONTREAL, October 19, 2021 – CN (TSX: CNR) (NYSE: CNI) today announced that Jean-Jacques (JJ) Ruest will retire as president and chief executive officer and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Company, effective as of the end of January 2022, or such later time as a successor has been appointed to ensure a flawless transition.

“On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank JJ for his dedicated service to CN over 25 years and as CEO since 2018. He has provided the company and all of our stakeholders with strong and inspired leadership. JJ deferred discussions on his retirement plans in order to see the Company through the potential merger with KCS and closing of the transaction, and the introduction of the strategic plan announced on September 17th, 2021, which is beginning to demonstrate results. We are grateful for his leadership and his exemplary commitment of service to the Company and wish him the all the best in his upcoming retirement.”

Robert Pace, Chair of CN's Board of Directors

“I have been honored to lead CN during my time as chief executive officer, and I am confident that the Company is well positioned to continue to thrive following my retirement. The strength of the Company's management team and Board allow me to announce my planned retirement knowing that the Company we have built will continue to prosper.”

JJ Ruest, President and Chief Executive Officer

The Board has appointed a CEO Search Committee consisting of the following Board members to conduct the global search and make recommendations to the full Board.

Shauneen Bruder Chair of Search Committee and Chair of the Governance, Sustainability and Safety Committee	Retired Executive Vice-President, Operations, Royal Bank of Canada
Justin M. Howell	Senior Investment Manager, Cascade Asset Management Co., asset manager for Cascade Investment, L.L.C.
Robert L. Phillips, Chair of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee	Retired Chief Executive Officer, British Columbia Railway Company

The Hon. Kevin G. Lynch Chair of the Human Resources and Compensation Committee	Retired Vice Chair, BMO Financial Group, and Former Clerk of the Privy Council, Government of Canada
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The Search Committee is working with, Korn Ferry, a leading executive search firm to conduct a global search for Mr. Ruest's successor and will consider all qualified internal and external candidates.

About CN

CN is a world-class transportation leader and trade-enabler. Essential to the economy, to the customers, and to the communities it serves, CN safely transports more than 300 million tons of natural resources, manufactured products, and finished goods throughout North America every year. As the only railroad connecting Canada's Eastern and Western coasts with the U.S. South through a 19,500-mile rail network, CN and its affiliates have been contributing to community prosperity and sustainable trade since 1919. CN is committed to programs supporting social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

Forward-Looking Statements

Certain statements included in this news release constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and under Canadian securities laws, including statements based on management's assessment and assumptions and publicly available information with respect to CN. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve risks, uncertainties and assumptions. CN cautions that its assumptions may not materialize and that current economic conditions render such assumptions, although reasonable at the time they were made, subject to greater uncertainty. Forward-looking statements may be identified by the use of terminology such as "believes," "expects," "anticipates," "assumes," "outlook," "plans," "targets," or other similar words.

Forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause actual results, performance or achievements of CN to be materially different from the outlook or any future results, performance or achievements implied by such statements. Accordingly, readers are advised not to place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. Important risk factors that could affect the forward-looking statements in this news release include, but are not limited to: the duration and effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; general economic and business conditions, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; industry competition; inflation, currency and interest rate fluctuations; changes in fuel prices; legislative and/or regulatory developments; compliance with environmental laws and regulations; actions by regulators; increases in maintenance and operating costs; security threats; reliance on technology and related cybersecurity risk; trade restrictions or other changes to international trade arrangements; transportation of hazardous materials; various events which could disrupt operations, including illegal blockades of rail networks, and natural events such as severe weather, droughts, fires, floods and earthquakes; climate change; labor negotiations and disruptions; environmental claims; uncertainties of investigations, proceedings or other types of claims and litigation; risks and liabilities arising from derailments; timing and completion of capital programs; and other risks detailed from time to time in reports filed by CN with securities regulators in Canada and the United States. Reference should also be made to Management's Discussion and Analysis in CN's annual and interim reports, Annual Information Form and Form 40-F, filed with Canadian and U.S. securities regulators and available on CN's website, for a description of major risk factors relating to CN.

Forward-looking statements reflect information as of the date on which they are made. CN assumes no obligation to update or revise forward-looking statements to reflect future events, changes in circumstances, or changes in beliefs, unless required by applicable securities laws. In the event CN does update any forward-looking statement, no inference should be made that CN will make additional updates with respect to that statement, related matters, or any other forward-looking statement.

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October 19, 2021

To: Premier Doug Ford – doug.fordco@pc.ola.org
MPP John Vanthof - jvanthof-co@ndp.on.ca
Ontario Minister of Health Christine Elliott – christine.elliott@pc.ola.org
Ontario Association of Optometrists – oaoinfo@optom.on.ca

Re: OHIP Eye Care Resolution R2021-425

Please be advised that on September 28, 2021, the Township of Larder Lake Council passed a motion to support the Municipality of Trent Lakes regarding a request to the provincial government to recognize the value that access to quality eye care brings to all Ontarians and to act now to protect it and that the provincial government address the OHIP-insured eye care immediately and to enter into legally-binding negotiations with Ontario Optometrists to fund these services.

Motion 4

Moved by Councillor Paul Kelly, Seconded by Councillor Tom Armstrong.

THAT, Council hereby supports item 6.1 of letters and communications from the Municipality of Trent Lakes regarding a request to the provincial government to recognize the value that access to quality eye care brings to all Ontarians and to act now to protect it; And

FURTHER, that the provincial government address the OHIP-insured eye care immediately and enter into legally-binding negotiations with Ontario Optometrists to fund these services at least to the cost of delivery, prior to any job action taking place; And

FURTHER, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Premier Doug Ford, Ontario Minister of Health Christine Elliot, MPP John Vanthof, the Ontario Association of Optometrists, and to all municipalities in Ontario.

If you have any questions regarding the above motion, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email crystallabbe@larderlake.ca

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Crystal Labbe'.

Crystal Labbe, CAO
cc: Ontario Municipalities

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LARDER LAKE

69 Fourth Avenue, Larder Lake, ON

Phone: 705-643-2158 Fax: 705-643-2311



MOVED BY:

- Thomas Armstrong
- Patricia Hull
- Paul Kelly
- Lynne Paquette

SECONDED BY:

- Thomas Armstrong
- Patricia Hull
- Paul Kelly
- Lynne Paquette

Motion #: 4

Resolution #:

Date: September 28, 2021

THAT, Council hereby supports item 6.1 of letters and communications from the Municipality of Trent Lakes regarding a request to the provincial government to recognize the value that access to quality eye care brings to all Ontarians and to act now to protect it; And

FURTHER, that the provincial government address the OHIP-insured eye care immediately and enter into legally-binding negotiations with Ontario Optometrists to fund these services at least to the cost of delivery, prior to any job action taking place; And

FURTHER, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Premier Doug Ford, Ontario Minister of Health Christine Elliot, MPP John Vanthof, the Ontario Association of Optometrists, and to all municipalities in Ontario.

Recorded vote requested:

	For	Against
Tom Armstrong	✓	
Patricia Hull	—	
Paul Kelly	✓	
Lynne Paquette	✓	
Patty Quinn	✓	

I declare this motion

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carried
<input type="checkbox"/> Lost / Defeated
<input type="checkbox"/> Deferred to: _____ (enter date)
Because:
<input type="checkbox"/> Referred to: _____ (enter body)
Expected response: _____ (enter date)

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest*

Chair: _____

*Disclosed his/her (their) interest(s), abstained from discussion and did not vote on this question.