

Date: December 15, 2025

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	Pages
A. Information Reports	
1. DSD-12-2025 Proposed Conservation Authority Amalgamation	1
2. WWE-M01-2025 Consultation Notice – Long Point Region Source Protection Plan Amendment	6
B. Miscellaneous Correspondence	
1. Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board Correspondence Regarding Year End (2025) Financial Report and Proposed 2026 Budget	8
2. Ministry of Transportation Correspondence Regarding Changes to Speed Zones on Highway 3, Canfield	15
3. Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response Correspondence Regarding the Emergency Modernization Act	19
C. External Committee Minutes and Correspondence	
1. Grand River Conservation Authority	
1. Correspondence Regarding Summary of General Membership Meeting - November 28, 2025	21
2. Correspondence Regarding Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities	22
2. Long Point Region Conservation Authority	
1. Correspondence Regarding Board of Directors Meeting Minutes - November 5, 2025	35

2.	Correspondence Regarding Board of Directors Budget Meeting Minutes - November 13, 2025	43
3.	Resolution Regarding Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities	47
3.	Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority	
1.	Resolution Regarding Federal Program Changes - 2 Billion Trees	50
2.	Resolution Regarding Board of Directors 2026 Meeting Schedule	55
3.	Resolution Regarding Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities	61
4.	Grand Erie Public Health Board	
1.	Correspondence Regarding Grand Erie Board of Health Minutes - October 15, 2025	77
D.	Correspondence and Resolutions from Other Municipalities and Organizations	
1.	City of Welland	84
	Correspondence Regarding Reforms to Bail, Sentencing, and Parole Provisions and More Stringent Use of National Sex Offender Registry	
2.	Kettle Creek Conservation Authority	119
	Resolution Regarding Conservation Authority Consolidation	
3.	City of Brantford	121
	Resolution Regarding Professional Activity Day at Schools on Municipal Election Day	

Haldimand County

Report DSD-12-2025 Proposed Conservation Authority Amalgamation For Consideration by Council on December 15, 2025



Objective:

To provide Council with an overview of the potential implications of proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act.

Recommendations:

THAT Report DSD-12-2025 Proposed Conservation Authority Amalgamation be received as information.

Prepared and Respectfully submitted: Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager, Development Services

Approved: Michael Di Lullo, MPA, CMM III, Chief Administrative Officer

Executive Summary:

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) is proposing changes to the Conservation Authorities Act that would result in consolidation of the Province's 36 conservation authorities into 7 larger, watershed based regional conservation authorities. Rationale for the changes includes creating efficiencies (reduced duplication), economic growth (streamlining of permits) and consistency (in systems, processes). The changes proposed raise a number of concerns in the areas of loss of local expertise and responsiveness; municipal funding and oversight; and, decision-making and governance. These concerns have been shared by Haldimand staff as part of their participation in a series of MECP-facilitated workshops.

Background:

On October 31, 2025, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) announced the Government's intention to introduce legislation which, if passed, would amend the Conservation Authorities Act to create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency – a provincial board-governed agency – to provide centralized leadership, efficient governance, strategic direction, and oversight of Ontario's conservation authorities.

Another key action announced by the Minister and the Chief Conservation Executive is the plan to consolidate the Province's 36 conservation authorities into 7 larger, watershed based regional conservation authorities (CAs) that continue to align with watershed boundaries. Haldimand, which is presently part of 3 CAs (Grand River, Long Point Region, Niagara Peninsula), would be split into two regional CAs as follows:

- Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority– covers southwestern Ontario watersheds draining into Lake Erie, including the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) and Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA); and

- Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority– extends along the western Lake Ontario shoreline from Niagara through Halton and Peel, including the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA).

The Province has stated that the proposed changes to the conservation authority system are intended to reduce duplicative administrative costs, free-up resources for frontline conservation, and better align conservation authorities' services with provincial priorities on housing, the economy, infrastructure and climate resilience.

Per the Province, the regional conservation authorities would continue to focus on managing natural hazards and watershed health, and the focus of their work to protect people and property from the risks of flooding and other natural hazards will not change. The regional conservation authorities would continue to fulfill provincially mandated programs such as drinking water source protection under the Clean Water Act, regulating development and other activities in areas at risk of natural hazards like flooding and erosion (e.g., floodplains, shorelines, watercourse and wetlands), flood forecasting and warning, and managing their lands and recreational trails so that Ontarians have access to local natural areas and outdoor activities. Further, regional conservation authorities would continue to provide municipal and other watershed programs and services set out under the Conservation Authorities Act, such as tree planting, data collection, restoration and other integrated watershed management activities that enhance the resilience of local watersheds and educate and engage local communities.

Notwithstanding all the services and functions that would remain the same, there are a variety of things that would change, and for which there is a level of concern amongst CAs and municipalities. This report is intended to provide a brief overview of the key areas of uncertainty and concern to assist Council in understanding some of the potential implications for Haldimand.

Analysis:

Over the past several weeks, staff have participated in a number of consultation sessions facilitated by the MECP. While it is acknowledged that there needs to be some change to the CA system – in particular to create more consistency and predictably for development review and permit processes across watersheds and improved accountability from some CAs – it is clear from the consultation that the changes, as proposed, could have a number of significant impacts. The main concerns that have been raised – which have been expressed by Haldimand staff as part of their consultation participation include: the loss of local expertise and responsiveness; municipal funding and oversight; and, decision-making and governance. These concerns are detailed below.

Loss of local expertise and responsiveness

From a staff perspective, the most significant changes could come in the realm of relationships, service quality, depth of local knowledge and access to staff. More specifically, the following are matters of concern:

Distant bureaucracy

Amalgamation could create a larger, more remote bureaucracy that is less accountable and responsive to the specific needs of local watersheds, municipalities, businesses, and communities.

Loss of local knowledge

Staff who have deep, localized knowledge of specific watersheds might be replaced by a less nimble, regional or provincial structure. One specific concern is how local expert knowledge will be accessed

throughout all phases of emergency management when dealing with flooding disasters – like those that have been experienced in Haldimand.

One-size-fits-all approach

There are concerns that a single approach may not be suitable for the unique environmental needs of different watersheds.

Disruption

The restructuring could disrupt existing strengths and partnerships that exist and high-performing conservation authorities. Similarly, the strong relationships that have been built with local CAs (which includes all 3 in Haldimand) would be at risk, as would the collaborative approaches to project review and problem resolution that have become expected and more routine.

Customer service/reduced service quality

The overall accessibility (phone, email, site meetings) and responsiveness of CA staff could be diminished leading to delays and frustrations in project review and approval processes.

Municipal funding and oversight, decision-making and governance

From a staff perspective, the most significant changes could come in the realm of the loss of control of how Haldimand funds are spent, a weakened municipal voice, centralization of power, and the creation of complex structures and large boards. More specifically, the following are matters of concern:

Disconnect between funding and control:

There are concerns that municipalities will be required to fund a new provincial agency but will have limited / no formal say in its oversight or how funding contributions are utilized, creating an "accountability gap".

Erosion of local voice:

The model could weaken the voice of local municipalities and could lead to regional priorities overriding local needs. In Haldimand's case, we could be 'competing' with priorities being pushed by larger municipalities, in particular in the Western Lake Ontario regional CA (Peel, Halton).

Centralized power:

A top-down approach could strip local authorities of autonomy and replace collaboration with provincial directives that may prioritize development over conservation.

Loss of local governance:

There is a distinct potential that merging authorities will reduce local representation and accountability, creating a disconnect between decision-makers and the communities they serve.

Increased complexity:

Some believe the proposed structure will make housing and infrastructure approvals more cumbersome rather than faster/streamlined, due to the new, larger bureaucracy. Builders, farmers, and property owners rely on timely, locally informed permitting and advice. Centralizing these functions could create bottlenecks rather than efficiencies. Further, local developers and property owners value direct access to CA staff who have been instrumental in finding creative solutions to complex challenges. Planners and engineers also depend on being able to discuss designs with local experts — not teams / experts that could be located hours away.

Large, unwieldy boards:

The new system could result in extremely large boards that are impractical to manage effectively. In recent years, there have been shifts in the other direction – reduced board sizes – with demonstrated benefits. The local example is the NPCA which reduced its board membership in 2022 from 21 to 11 which has resulted in more efficiently run meetings, more streamlined decision processes, etc. Under the proposed model, decisions affecting communities could be made by a board representing anywhere from 40 to 80 municipalities, diluting accountability and transparency.

Summary

The above information is a summary representation of the most problematic aspects of the proposed CA consolidation. The simple solution to these concerns would be to leave things as they are. This message has been expressed to the MECP by way of the on-going consultation sessions. As companion to that, the consolidation model could be replaced with new legislation that serves to direct all CAs to adopt processes, policies, tools, etc. that would align with the goals of the Province. While the Province is listening, it is not expected that status quo, or legislation-in-lieu-of consolidation, will be the end result. Assuming that to be the case, it has been suggested – including from Haldimand staff – that a phased approach could be taken. Specifically, smaller CAs that are less stable, not high-performing, and lack finances to support expertise and resources, could be consolidated as a first phase. Their consolidation under a regional CA model could help to facilitate the sharing of resources, develop partnerships in procurement, and assist with creation of more efficient, consistent and transparent processes – in other words, meet many of the objectives of the Province that many of the larger, well-resourced and high performing CAs are already doing (i.e. those in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area). This approach would also allow the Province to assess the effectiveness of the regional CA model in less-impactful ways.

Staff will update Council as the MECP's road map becomes clearer. Should things move forward on the current course, with little to no changes in the proposed structure, full implementation is not expected until 2027 given the large amount of work that must precede the establishment of the new regional CAs.

Financial/Legal Implications:

There are no direct financial implications from this report. Should an amalgamation take place in future years, there could be potential impacts on tax-supporting operating budgets. As this situation continues to develop, the amount of what those impacts might be will become clearer.

Stakeholder Impacts:

Not applicable.

Report Impacts:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

References:

1. [Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities \(ERO 025-1257\)](#)

Attachments:

1. None.

Haldimand County

Memorandum WWE-M01-2025 Consultation Notice – Long Point Region Source Protection Plan Amendment

For Consideration by Council on December 15, 2025



To: Mayor Bentley and Members of Council
From: Phil Wilson, Manager, Water and Wastewater Engineering

Recommendations:

THAT Memorandum WWE-M01-2025 Consultation Notice – Long Point Region Source Protection Plan Amendment be received.

Objective:

The purpose of this memo is to notify Council of consultation currently taking place by the Grand River Source Protection Authority (GRSPA) as the lead authority in the Lake Erie Source Protection Region, regarding proposed changes to the Long Point Region Source Protection Plan under Section 36 of the Clean Water Act, 2006.

Background:

The Long Point Region Source Protection Plan (LPRSPP) is a document that contains policies to protect sources of drinking water against existing and future drinking water threats prescribed in the Clean Water Act, 2006 within the Long Point Region watershed.

The original LPRSPP came into effect in 2016 and since this time has undergone amendments in 2019 and 2020, to reflect evolving technical and policy needs. The LPRSPP is again being updated to ensure technical information is up to date and conforms with the current 2021 Technical Rules (December 3rd, 2021) under the Clean Water Act, 2006. Amendments also include updates to drinking water system descriptions, risk and threat assessments, mapping, and water quality issues evaluations.

Analysis:

Proposed amendments to the Source Protection Plan under this Section 36 update include:

- New and revised policies to:
 - Align with the MECP's 2021 Technical Rules;
 - Address the new Ontario Regulation 137/25;
 - Add annual reporting requirements for the MECP;
 - Address implementation challenges identified by municipal staff; and
 - Better align with existing regulatory processes.
- Creation of a new Plan-wide policy chapter, which removes policies directed at provincial ministries and other agencies from municipal chapters for consolidation into fewer policies.
- New policies for the prescribed threat of liquid hydrocarbon pipelines.

Draft updated sections of the Source Protection Plan and Assessment Report can be found in hard copy at the Haldimand County Administration Building or online at the reference noted below.

Public consultation is being conducted in accordance with O. Reg. 287/07. All comments received will help inform the final documents submitted for provincial approval.

Proposed changes to the LPRSPP may affect how certain activities are managed within vulnerable areas and may impact municipal responsibilities under the Plan. Haldimand staff had input into amendments directly associated with Haldimand County's source protection policies and are currently reviewing the rest of the document to understand any impacts.

Comments are being accepted until December 19th, 2025 and can be submitted to:

Stacey Bruce
Source Protection Program Coordinator
Lake Erie Source Protection Region
519-621-2763 ext. 2303
sbruce@grandriver.ca

References:

1. <https://www.sourcewater.ca/source-protection-areas/long-point-region-source-protection-area/>

Attachments:

1. None.



Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board
Haldimand County Administration Building
53 Thorburn Street South
Cayuga, ON NOA 1E0

November 24, 2025

VIA EMAIL

Mayor Bentley and Members of Council
Haldimand County
53 Thorburn Street South
Cayuga, ON NOA 1E0
clerk@haldimandcounty.ca

Dear Mayor Bentley and Members of Council:

RE: Report HDB-02-2025 Year-End Financial Report (2025) and Proposed 2026 Budget

Please be advised that on October 23, 2025, the Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board adopted the following resolution:

1. THAT Report HDB-02-2025 Year-End Financial Report (2025) and Proposed 2026 Budget be received;
2. AND THAT the draft 2026 Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board budget, with a net levy of \$36,860, be approved as presented, with Haldimand County responsible for \$33,720 and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation responsible for \$3,140;
3. AND THAT this motion be forwarded to Haldimand County and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Councils for inclusion in their respective 2026 budget deliberations.

Report HDB-02-2025 Year-End Financial Report (2025) and Proposed 2026 Budget is enclosed for your reference.

Sincerely,

for Lorne Boyko

Chair

psbadministration@haldimandcounty.ca

LB/tc

cc Chad Curtis, Municipal Clerk

Enclosure

Haldimand County

Report HDB-02-2025 Year-End Financial Report (2025) and Proposed 2026 Budget

For Consideration by Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board on October 23, 2025

Objective:

To provide the Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board with a summary of 2025 financial activity, highlight key spending trends, and present the proposed 2026 budget.

Recommendations:

1. THAT Report HDB-02-2025 Year-End Financial Report (2025) and Proposed 2026 Budget be received;
2. AND THAT the draft 2026 Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board budget, with a net levy of \$36,860, be approved as presented, with Haldimand County responsible for \$33,720 and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation responsible for \$3,140;
3. AND THAT this motion be forwarded to Haldimand County and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Councils for inclusion in their respective 2026 budget deliberations.

Prepared by: Tracey Cassidy, Board Administrator

Executive Summary:

In accordance with legislative requirements, the Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board (the Board) is required to prepare and submit an annual budget to its participating communities. This report outlines the Board's financial activity for 2025 and presents a proposed operating budget for 2026.

As 2025 was a transitional year and the Board was not yet operating for the full calendar year, complete financial data is not currently available. As such, the 2026 budget recommendation is to maintain current funding levels, with only minor adjustments for inflation. This will allow time to better assess actual spending over a full year before considering changes for 2027.

Details of expenses are included in Attachment 1, and reserve information in Attachment 2.

Background:

The *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA) came into effect on April 1, 2024, replacing the *Police Services Act, 1990*. Under the new legislation, the governance structure for communities policed by the Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.) transitioned from individual Police Services Boards to unified Detachment Boards, which now operate at the detachment level rather than by municipality.

The Haldimand O.P.P. Detachment Board governs policing matters for both Haldimand County and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN).

Section 71 of the CSPA requires the Board to prepare an annual estimate of its operating costs and submit that estimate to its participating communities, including a breakdown of each party's share.

Remuneration for Council and Community appointees is determined and paid by their respective Councils. The Provincial appointee's remuneration, governed by Section 7 of Ontario Regulation 135/24 under the CSPA, is not funded by the Province and has historically been covered by Haldimand County.

The 2025 fiscal year represented a transitional period for the Detachment Board, as it was not operating with a full annual complement. As a result, complete year-to-date actuals are not available at the time of this report.

In light of this, and aside from standard inflationary adjustments, it is recommended that the 2026 operating budget remain consistent with 2025 levels. This approach will allow time to monitor actual expenses under a full year of operation and re-assess budget requirements for the 2027 fiscal year.

Analysis:

Due to the transitional nature of 2025 and a shortened planning timeline, full year-end actuals were not available at the time this report was prepared. However, based on available financial data, total expenditures for 2025 are projected to be approximately \$25,514, compared to a revised budget of \$36,860, resulting in an anticipated year-end surplus of \$11,346. Spending across most categories remained within or under budget.

The Donations and Gifts line was slightly overspent by \$4, with actual spending totaling \$1,354 against a budget of \$1,350. Insurance costs remained stable, with the Board paying \$3,888 for the annual premium, just under the \$4,000 allocated. Memberships and association fees totaled \$4,795, which is marginally over the budget of \$4,780, due to new fee structures based on property counts within the detachment area.

Meeting expenses were low, with \$104 spent out of the \$250 budget. Travel expenses totaled \$1,034, which is \$366 under budget; however, final year-end totals are still pending. Professional development expenses were \$4,348, well below the \$9,590 budget, as not all Board members attended the annual Ontario Association of Police Services Boards (OAPSB) conference.

The Board did not allocate any sponsorship funds in 2025, leaving the full \$1,000 budgeted amount unspent. This balance may still be used in 2025 should the Board wish to support local events or initiatives aligned with its mandate.

Budget Planning Considerations for 2026

The proposed 2026 budget remains unchanged, with a total of \$36,860, which will allow the Board to operate at full capacity for a full year. Maintaining the existing budget level provides flexibility to respond to actual costs as they arise and to assess longer-term spending patterns ahead of the 2027 budget cycle.

Cost-sharing responsibilities will remain the same in 2026, with Haldimand County responsible for \$33,720 and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation responsible for \$3,140, based on the current proportional allocation. This arrangement will be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to reflect actual participation and associated costs.

The Board is encouraged to use 2026 as a full operating year to establish clearer financial trends, which will support more refined budgeting and potential adjustments in future years, particularly for 2027.

The following budget considerations are highlighted for 2026:

1. Donations/Gifts Budget and Process

In 2025, the Board donated the full \$1,000 allocated for donations/gifts to a single organization. As there are currently no formal guidelines in place for the disbursement of donations, it is recommended that the Board maintain the \$1,000 budget line in 2026, and consider establishing clear parameters for

donations. These could include eligibility guidelines, timing of requests, and an approval process, while still allowing for discretion at the Board level.

2. Insurance Charges

Insurance premiums have remained consistent and within budget for both 2024 and 2025. Coverage is coordinated through the OAPSB, and any changes to rates would be determined through that process. It is recommended that the Board retain the \$4,000 budget line for insurance in 2026.

3. Professional Development

In 2025, the professional development budget was underutilized, with actual expenditures of \$4,348 against a budget of \$9,590, due to partial attendance at the annual OAPSB conference and the Board not operating at full complement for the full year.

For 2026, the OAPSB Spring Conference and AGM will be held in person from May 31 to June 2, 2026, at The Brock Niagara Falls – Fallsview. As this location is closer in proximity compared to the 2025 event, it may result in lower travel and accommodation costs.

Additionally, recent changes to Haldimand County's Council Eligible Expense Policy 2025-06 (see Reference 3) have removed per diem allowances, further reducing expected reimbursement amounts.

Under the policy:

- Mileage claims must be based on travel from a member's normal workplace, excluding personal trips.
- Meal expenses are capped at \$75 per day (before taxes), broken down as \$15 for breakfast, \$20 for lunch, and \$40 for dinner.
- Accommodation should be moderate, and only standard room rates are eligible.
- All claims must include original itemized receipts and must be submitted within 60 days.

It is recommended that the Board maintain the existing professional development allocation for 2026. A full year of operations will allow the Board to monitor actual participation and expenditures, enabling more accurate forecasting for 2027.

4. Reserve Fund

As of the latest update, the Board's reserve fund holds a balance of \$9,008.10 (see Attachment 2). Due to legislative changes, former funding sources—such as unclaimed property and auction proceeds—are now directed to general policing funds and are no longer available to the Board. Any future reserve contributions would need to be approved through the municipal budget process. It is recommended that the Board establish a clear purpose for the reserve fund (e.g., one-time training or special initiatives), subject to Council approval if additional contributions are required.

This refined approach to the 2026 budget supports sound financial management while allowing the Board to operate with flexibility and transparency during its first full year. A review of year-end outcomes in 2026 will help inform adjustments for the 2027 budget and beyond.

Financial/Legal Implications:

As outlined above, the proposed net levy budget for 2026 is \$36,860.

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation will be responsible for the professional development and travel expenditures for their appointed members. This amount would total \$3,140. Haldimand County will be responsible for all other expenditures which would total \$33,720. This will be reviewed annually to ensure appropriate cost sharing.

Stakeholder Impacts:

Upon approval by the Board, the proposed 2026 budget will be submitted to Haldimand County and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Councils for consideration as part of their respective budget deliberation processes.

Please note that the final 2026 budget may vary, as it will be reviewed and potentially adjusted by each Council during their budget cycles prior to approval.

Report Impacts:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

References:

1. [*Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019.*](#)
1. [Ontario Regulation 135/24.](#)
2. [Haldimand County Council Eligible Expense Policy 2025-06.](#)

Attachments:

1. Proposed 2026 Budget.
2. Reserve Fund.

Haldimand County

2025 Haldimand O.P.P.

Detachment Board

	2024	2024	2024	2025	2025	2025	2026
	YTD	Revised	Variance	YTD	Revised	Variance	Proposed
	Actuals	Budget		Actuals	Budget		Budget
EXPENDITURES:							
General Activity							
Salaries & Wages							
Honoraria	8,935	13,200	4,265	9,778	13,200	3,422	13,200
Employee Benefits							
Part-Time Stat Benefits	186	690	504	213	690	477	690
Materials							
Donations/Gifts		1,000	1,000	1,354	1,350	(4)	1,350
Promotional/Event Supplies		350	350				
Insurance	3,888		(3,888)	3,888	4,000	112	4,000
Memberships & Assoc	3,456	3,700	244	4,795	4,780	(15)	4,780
Meeting Expenses	80	150	70	104	250	146	250
Travel Expenses	1,784	1,000	(784)	1,034	1,400	366	1,400
Professional Development	6,038	4,250	(1,788)	4,348	9,590	5,242	9,590
Grants & Donations							
Sponsorship		750	750		1,000	1,000	1,000
NET LEVY (surplus) / deficit	24,367	25,090	723	25,514	36,860	11,346	36,860

POLICE RESERVE FUND**Purpose of Reserve Fund:**

The Police Reserve Fund is used to finance policing related activities as approved by the Haldimand County Police Services Board. The Police Reserve Fund is for the sole use of the Police Services Board, to be used at their discretion.

[Back to Overall Summary](#)

	2022	2023	2024	2025
	<u>ACTUALS</u>	<u>ACTUALS</u>	<u>ACTUALS</u>	<u>ACTUALS</u>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Opening Balances, January 1	<u>7,931.75</u>	<u>8,138.78</u>	<u>8,262.73</u>	<u>9,008.10</u>
Sources of Funds:				
Proceeds from unclaimed property/beer bottle returns/property disposal (object 9110)	26.70	329.40	147.95	
Interest	180.33	294.55	364.11	
Proceeds from On-line Auction (object 9720)			233.31	
	<u>207.03</u>	<u>623.95</u>	<u>745.37</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Source of Funds	<u>207.03</u>	<u>623.95</u>	<u>745.37</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Use of Funds:				
Request to draw from reserve per board		500.00		
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>500.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Uses of Funds	<u>0.00</u>	<u>500.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Closing Balance, December 31	<u>8,138.78</u>	<u>8,262.73</u>	<u>9,008.10</u>	<u>9,008.10</u>

Ministry of Transportation**Ministère des Transports**

Regional Director
West Region

Directeur régional
Région Ouest

4th Floor
659 Exeter Road
London ON N6E 1L3

4^e étage
659 chemin Exeter
London ON N6E 1L3

Tel: 519 873-4335

Tél : 519 873-4335

December 8, 2025

Kris Franklin, Manager – Engineering & Capital Works
Haldimand County Administration Building
53 Thornburn St. S.
Cayuga, ON N0A 1E0
kfranklin@HaldimandCounty.on.ca

Dear Kris Franklin:

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has amended Regulation 619 of Revised Regulations of Ontario 1990: SPEED LIMITS under the *Highway Traffic Act* on Highway 3 at the east and west limits of the community of Canfield in the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk.

These regulatory amendments are required to comply with the latest Ontario Traffic Manual Book 5 guidelines, as well as the findings from a speed study review conducted earlier in July 2025. New 70 km/h speed zones on Highway 3 will be added at the east and west limits of Canfield for about 500 and 533 metres respectively. Additionally, the existing 50 km/h speed zone will be extended further east by about 68 metres and further west by 7 metres.

Please see the enclosed diagrams for more details.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Ousama Shebeeb, Head of Traffic Engineering by phone at (289) 219-2514, or by email at Ousama.Shebeeb@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey Gladdy', with a stylized, cursive script.

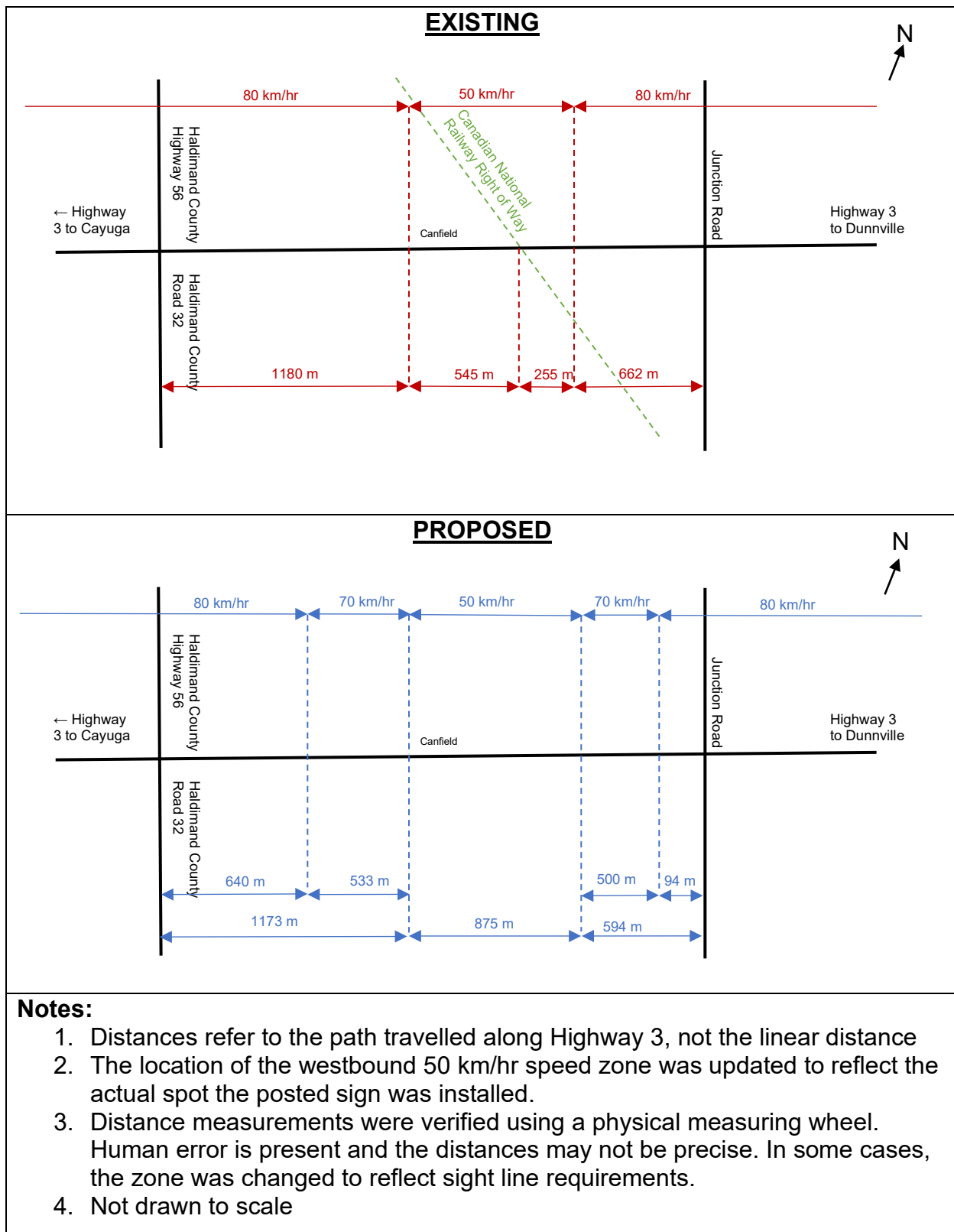
Geoffrey Gladdy
Regional Director, West Region

Enclosure: Location Diagram – O. Reg. 619 HWY 3 Canfield

- c. Susan Nichol, Director, Design and Engineering Branch
 Tyson Haedrich, General Manager – Engineering & Capital Works Haldimand County

Location Map – Highway 3 at Canfield in the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk





Ministry of Emergency Preparedness
and Response

Office of the Minister

438 University Ave., 14th Floor
Toronto ON M5G 2K8

Ministère de la Protection civile
et de l'Intervention en cas d'urgence

Bureau de la ministre

438, av. University, 14^e étage
Toronto ON M5G 2K8



DATE: December 9, 2025

MEMORANDUM TO: Heads of Council

SUBJECT: Emergency Management Modernization Act Achieves Royal Assent

Dear Heads of Council:

I am pleased to let you know that on December 3rd, 2025, the Government of Ontario's *Emergency Management Modernization Act, 2025*, which amends the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA) received Royal Assent.

The EMCPA is Ontario's framework for managing emergencies and defines the authority and responsibilities of the province, municipalities and specific individuals in emergency management.

From ice storms to flooding and wildland fire, the risks facing communities have grown in scale and impact. That's why under the leadership of Premier Ford, Ontario has urgently modernized its legislation to reflect the rapidly changing landscape of emergencies.

The amendments we have made enable a more effective, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management and ensures response plans are tailored to local needs. Key changes now include:

- Clarifying the role of the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response as the provincial lead and one-window contact for coordinating emergency management activities.
- Outlining Ontario Corps as a key provincial emergency resource and capability that can be deployed to supplement local resources to support municipalities, when requested. (An emergency declaration is not required to request provincial support.)
- Strengthening Ontario's commitment to facilitating coordination among municipalities by implementing the joint emergency programs and plans for two or more municipalities.

The legislation will be implemented in phases, with future regulations to support it. Future work will enhance municipal emergency management by providing flexibility for programs based on local needs and capacity. Upcoming regulations will also clarify the process for municipal emergency declarations under the Act to ensure accountability.

Ongoing dialogue and collaboration with municipalities and emergency management partners will be key as the ministry continues engagement to inform future work related to these amendments.

On a personal note, it was a pleasure to meet with many of you this summer, including at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference to discuss Ontario's emergency management modernization. The feedback we received has been instrumental in shaping these legislative amendments.

Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to protect Ontario. I hope to see you at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association Conference in January. Your commitment to emergency management makes a difference, and I look forward to moving this important work forward with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jill Q', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Honourable Jill Dunlop
Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response

cc: Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Robin Jones, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario



Grand River Conservation Authority

Summary of the General Membership Meeting – November 28, 2025

To GRCA/GRCF Boards and Grand River watershed municipalities - Please share as appropriate.

Action Items

The Board approved the resolutions in the following reports as presented in the agenda:

- GM-11-25-104 - Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257: Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities
- GM-11-25-103 - Financial Summary
- GM-11-25-105 - 2025 Reserves
- GM-11-25-108 - Asset Management Software Request for Proposals Results
- GM-11-25-110 - Lower Conestogo River Floodplain Mapping Update

Information Items

The Board received the following reports as information:

- GM-11-25-112 - Chair's Report
- GM-11-25-102 - Cash & Investment Status
- GM-11-25-106 - 2026 Per Diems and Honorariums
- GM-11-25-107 - 2026 Complimentary Membership Passes
- GM-11-25-109 - GRCA Hydrogeological Technical Reviews
- GM-11-25-111 - Current Watershed Conditions

Correspondence

The Board received the following correspondence:

- Halton Region - State of Aggregate Resources in Halton Region
- John Kemp - Update on Giant Hogweed
- B Southerland - Bill 68, Schedule 3, Conservation Authorities Act

Source Protection Authority Correspondence & Action Items

The General Membership of the GRCA also acts as the Source Protection Authority Board.

- Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks - Amended Minister's Order
- SPA-11-25-01 - Proposed Changes to the Clean Water Act and Regulations
- SPA-11-25-02 - Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee Member Appointment

For full agendas and reports, and past minutes, please refer to our [Board meeting calendar](#). The minutes of this meeting will be posted on following approval at the next meeting of the General Membership.

You are receiving this email as a GRCA board member, GRCF board member, or a Grand River watershed member municipality. If you do not wish to receive this monthly summary, please respond to this email with the word 'unsubscribe'.



Administration Centre: 400 Clyde Road, P.O. Box 729 Cambridge, ON N1R 5W6

Phone: 519-621-2761 Toll free: 1-866-900-4722 Fax: 519-621-4844 www.grandriver.ca

December 2, 2025

Clerks' Office and Members of Municipal Council
Haldimand County
53 Thorburn St. S.
Cayuga ON N0A 1E0

Re: Bill 68: *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)* and the Proposed consolidating the 36 Conservation Authorities

Dear Grand River watershed Municipal Councils,

On October 31, 2025, the Province of Ontario announced its intention to create a new provincial agency, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to provide leadership and coordination across Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. These changes have now been enacted through Bill 68: *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)*, which has received Royal Assent. As a result, the Conservation Authorities Act has been amended to formally establish the OPCA. Under this new framework, the OPCA will oversee governance, strategic planning, performance standards, and centralized permitting for all Conservation Authorities, led by a provincially appointed board.

On November 7, the Province also proposed consolidating the 36 Conservation Authorities into seven large regional authorities. While this proposal aims to address capacity gaps and improve consistency, it also poses several risks, including the potential loss of local priorities, watershed-specific expertise, and meaningful municipal input. Larger regional structures will distance decision-making from the local context, partnerships, and on-the-ground knowledge that have long supported effective watershed management. Their scale also raises concerns that diverse watershed needs may be overshadowed, local priorities diluted, and long-standing municipal relationships weakened. The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) encourages municipalities to submit comments to the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) before the December 22, 2025 deadline.

The Province has indicated that these reforms aim to address long-standing challenges in the current system, including inconsistent capacity, outdated processes, and variability in permitting and service delivery. The GRCA acknowledges these challenges and supports efforts to improve consistency, efficiency, and technical capacity across Ontario.

On Friday, November 28, the GRCA Board of Directors met to formalize the organization's comments to the Province regarding both the creation of the new provincial agency and the proposed consolidation of the 36 Conservation Authorities into regional bodies. These comments reflect the GRCA's key concerns and recommended path forward.

The GRCA has identified several critical considerations to support a successful transition:

1. Scale of the Proposed Regional Model

The proposed regions are significantly larger than current watershed-based frameworks. This expansion of the proposed size could create new challenges, such as distance from local

issues, slower decision-making, and difficulty maintaining local relationships; therefore, finding a balanced approach is essential. Smaller, regionally focused watershed models, such as the current Source Protection Regions, are proven regional models that demonstrate how a balanced governance structure can achieve consistency and efficiency without sacrificing local responsiveness. By operating within manageable geographic areas, such as the Source Protection Regions, CAs can ensure that services are tailored to the unique environmental, social and economic characteristics of each watershed, while still benefiting from shared resources and standardized processes

2. Protection of Local Knowledge, Assets, and Investments

The GRCA maintains significant watershed-specific infrastructure, reserves, and land assets built through decades of watershed investment. Key concerns include the potential redistribution of well-developed GRCA reserves to support capital needs in other watersheds that have not made comparable investments, and the risk that the GRCA's mature and efficient infrastructure maintenance program could be weakened if resources become centralized or redirected. Clear assurances are required to ensure these resources remain dedicated to the watershed communities they were intended to serve.

3. Governance, Accountability, and Municipal Representation

The GRCA Board has significant concerns about the governance structure of the OPCA. The agency will report to a provincial ministry and be governed entirely by provincially appointed board members. At the same time, conservation authorities, and therefore municipalities, will be required to fund all or a portion of the agency's operations through the existing levy/apportionment process. This means that municipalities may ultimately contribute all or a significant share of OPCA's budget without having any meaningful role in shaping its governance, priorities, or strategic direction.

Additional clarity is also needed regarding the governance responsibilities of the new Regional Conservation Authority Boards. A strong Regional Conservation Authority Board must balance local accountability, fair representation, and operational efficiencies.

The GRCA supports modernization of the Conservation Authorities system but recommends a right-sized regional model more closely aligned with existing Source Protection Regions. This approach would advance provincial objectives for consistency and efficiency while preserving the strengths of watershed-based decision-making, municipal collaboration, and local responsiveness.

The GRCA Board has requested that this background information be shared with watershed municipalities along with a request for your support for the GRCA's concerns and proposed alternate model. A sample resolution for your consideration for submission is as follows:

"WHEREAS the Government of Ontario recently approved Bill 68, which establishes the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Ontario is proposing the consolidation of the province's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities, including the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), which will be amalgamated amongst eight current authorities to become part of the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority (LERCA);

AND WHEREAS the 38 municipalities within the GRCA watershed boundaries today and the 81 municipalities that are proposed to make up the LERCA in 2027 will be levied to fund both the regional conservation authority as well as the provincial conservation agency;

AND WHEREAS the new organizations will result in the degradation of local governance, local fiscal accountability, local service delivery, local environmental focus and unprecedented funding by local municipalities of both a large regional authority and a provincial agency;

AND WHEREAS the GRCA Board of Directors has responded to Bill 68 and the proposal for Conservation Authorities consolidation with a constructive and thoughtful alternative that retains local governance, local service delivery, local environmental focus and local fiscal accountability while responding constructively to the Government of Ontario's concerns about accountability, planning and responsiveness;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Chief Conservation Executive meet GRCA representatives to review the GRCA alternative proposal to Conservation Authorities consolidation;

AND THAT the Minister and the Chief Conservation Executive seriously consider the GRCA proposal for conservation authorities as it enunciates a path forward that will address the Government's concerns most democratically and productively;

AND THAT this motion be circulated to the Premier of Ontario, Minister of Environment, Conservation & Parks, Chief Conservation Executive and local Members of Provincial Parliament for their information and action, where appropriate."

The GRCA will continue to monitor the implementation of Bill 68 and the ERO proposal and will keep municipalities informed as additional details become available. The GRCA has already submitted its formal comments to the Province based on the Board-approved positions summarized above. A copy of the GRCA's comprehensive response to the ERO posting is attached for your reference.

If you have questions or would like a presentation to Council, please reach out to Samantha Lawson, CAO, at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Challinor II", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Challinor II, Chair
Grand River Conservation Authority

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-11-25-104

Date: November 28, 2025

To: Membership of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257: Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-11-25-104 Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257: Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities be received as information.

Summary:

On October 31, 2025, Ontario announced its intent to modernize the Conservation Authorities system, including the introduction of Bill 68 to create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA), a new provincial body intended to strengthen coordination and oversight. Shortly afterward, the Province released a proposal to consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into seven larger regional bodies. Under this proposal, the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) would become part of the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, an area covering approximately 25,000 km² and 81 municipalities. The Environmental Registry posting invites feedback on proposed boundaries, governance structures, transition processes, and approaches to maintaining strong municipal and community relationships throughout the transition.

The GRCA Board recognizes the value in modernizing the current system and supports efforts to enhance consistency, improve permitting, modernize technical standards, and strengthen coordination across Ontario. A more cohesive framework has the potential to address long-standing capacity gaps and provide clearer expectations for municipalities, the development sector, and the public. However, the Board remains concerned that the scale of the proposed regional consolidation may be too large to preserve the strengths that have historically made watershed management successful in Ontario. Effective watershed governance relies on strong connections to local needs, priorities, and knowledge, which in turn guide natural hazard management, shape infrastructure decisions, and strengthen watershed health, stewardship programs, and community partnerships. A region spanning 81 municipalities risks weakening local accountability, distancing decision-making from watershed-specific realities, and diluting the local focus that is foundational to effective watershed management. Moreover, if municipalities are expected to continue funding conservation authority operations, including the new regional structures and potentially the OPCA, municipalities will require a strong governance model that ensures meaningful municipal input, influence, and direction on watershed issues.

The GRCA further notes that consolidation at this scale could impact long-standing watershed investments, including approximately \$1 billion in flood management infrastructure and 50,000 acres of conservation lands that have been managed in alignment with watershed priorities for decades. Maintaining the direct link between funding, local decision-making, and watershed needs is essential to sustaining this work.

The Board believes the Province's modernization goals can still be achieved more effectively through a refined, right-sized regional model aligned with the scale of existing Source Protection

Regions. Such an approach would strengthen province-wide consistency and capacity while preserving meaningful municipal involvement and ensuring that watershed management continues to be guided by the local priorities, expertise, and partnerships that have long supported effective conservation across Ontario.

Report:

On October 31, 2025, the Province of Ontario issued a news release announcing its intent to create a new provincial agency to provide leadership and coordination for Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. The stated aim of the agency is to improve consistency, accountability, and efficiency across the conservation authorities system, particularly in the areas of permitting, planning, and watershed management.

On November 6, the Province introduced Bill 68: *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)*. Schedule 3 of the Bill proposes amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* that would enable the establishment of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA). Under the proposed framework, the OPCA would oversee the governance framework of the new regional conservation authorities, exercise authority over their operations, and recover costs and expenses through apportionment to those authorities. The agency would also be responsible for assessing, reporting on, and providing direction regarding regional finances, strategic planning, performance standards, and centralized permitting, as well as advising the provincial government on the progress of regional authorities. Governance of the OPCA would rest with a provincially appointed board of 5 to 12 members. Bill 68 has passed First Reading and is currently in its Second Reading, with Royal Assent anticipated in short order.

On November 7, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) posted a proposal on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) seeking feedback on proposed boundaries and criteria to consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into seven regional conservation authorities, organized primarily along watershed boundaries. The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) is proposed to be included in the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority. This Regional Conservation Authority will consolidate the following conservation authorities: Essex Region, Lower Thames, St. Clair Region, Upper Thames River, Kettle Creek, Catfish Creek, Long Point Region, and the Grand River. The area of this Regional Conservation Authority is approximately 25,000km² and includes 81 municipalities; no upper-tier municipalities are listed. The posting also contains five consultation questions relating to the transition into regional conservation authorities, governance considerations, and approaches to ensure strong relationships with municipalities and communities within the new structure. The ERO posting is open for public comment until December 22, 2025.

The Chair and the CAO have attended meetings with provincial staff and the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) to discuss the proposed OPCA and the associated ERO posting. The Chair and the CAO also participated in a recent special meeting of the Conservation Ontario Council on Schedule 3 of Bill 68 and the ERO posting to gain a clearer understanding of the perspectives and approaches of other conservation authorities and Conservation Ontario. The Province hosted a webinar for Conservation Authorities to highlight key components of the ERO proposal and answer questions. In addition, the GRCA's Conservation Authorities Act Ad-hoc Committee met to review the proposed legislative amendments and the ERO posting and provided direction to staff in preparing the comments outlined below.

ERO Questions and Responses

1. What do you see as Key Factors to support a successful transition and outcome of the regional conservation authorities consolidation?

A new regional conservation authority must be grounded in the fundamentals that ensure effective watershed management, which include:

- protecting life and reducing property damage from flooding and erosion;
- supporting municipal partners, the development community, and landowners with timely, reliable service;
- enhancing the economic, environmental, and community health of the watershed;
- providing meaningful opportunities for people to connect with nature; and,
- continually evolving as an organization to meet the demands of a rapidly growing region

Maintaining this clear, locally informed focus will be essential for the success of any new regional conservation authority. The following suggestions are some considerations to support a successful transition:

- I. Development of a Transition Plan: There needs to be a clear, phased transition plan to help avoid any service disruptions during the transition process. This plan must provide a detailed roadmap that clearly outlines timelines, milestones, and phasing. During this transition phase, the province will need to clearly identify roles and responsibilities during the “in-between” period when multiple similar but distinct organizations are merging. Communication of this plan must also be shared with regional watershed municipalities and other interest holders, such as the development/homebuilders' sectors, the agricultural sector, and other groups that require approvals or receive deliverables from various programs and services. This level of planning is essential because the proposed boundaries represent major watershed restructuring and the merging of multiple complex organizations, which requires coordinated efforts that cannot be rushed. A longer implementation timeline would ensure that these issues are fully considered and addressed. In addition, phasing in the required standards, guidelines, and directives across all conservation authorities before consolidation could provide greater stability. This phased approach would avoid multiple significant changes occurring at the same time, reduce the risk of disruptions to program delivery, and create conditions for a more effective and successful consolidation process.
- II. Retention of Local Knowledge and Staff Expertise: Retaining staff and preserving local watershed knowledge is critical to the success of the new regional conservation authorities. This knowledge is rooted in a deep understanding of historic and current land uses, cultural connections to watersheds, and the community values, needs, and stewardship priorities that shape local decision-making. Effective watershed management depends on integrated expertise in hydrology/hydraulics, natural hazards, ecology, creating connections to the watershed features and planning, as well as familiarity with the unique conditions of each sub-watershed. Conservation authorities depend on strong, established partnerships with a wide range of local groups and interest holders, including municipalities, community and stewardship organizations, private landowners, farmers, and the development industry, to deliver their programs and services effectively and address new or emerging watershed challenges. These partnerships are crucial for navigating complex regulatory frameworks, accessing funding programs, and advancing projects that provide both environmental and economic benefits. Preserving this network, and the staff who hold this knowledge, is vital during consolidation, as experienced personnel carry the institutional memory and trust that communities depend on. Staff retention ensures continuity, protects decades of cultivated relationships, and supports a smooth transition that maintains both service quality and community confidence in the new regional authority.
- III. Comprehensive Communication Strategy: A clear and well-coordinated communication strategy will be essential to support the transition from individual watershed-based

authorities to larger regional conservation authorities. This strategy must provide timely and accessible information on the new regional boundaries, updated points of contact, any changes to permitting or operational processes, and how municipal relationships and responsibilities will function throughout the transition period. Its success will depend on province-wide, consistent messaging that reinforces shared objectives while also incorporating region-specific details and local implementation examples to maintain familiarity and trust. Early outreach to municipalities, Indigenous communities, landowners, agricultural groups, developers, and other key interest holders will help set expectations and reduce uncertainty. A variety of communication tools, such as dedicated transition webpages, FAQs, newsletters, continued access to the province's interactive boundary maps, direct email briefings, and social media updates, can ensure information is accessible and tailored to different audiences. Personalized engagement, including town halls, small-group stakeholder meetings, and one-on-one conversations with municipal representatives, will provide opportunities to address region-specific questions and reinforce local connections. Establishing clear escalation pathways, contact lists, and creating a transition-specific regional service desk will further support clarity. Together, these measures will help create a consistent, transparent, and responsive communication approach that builds confidence and supports a smooth transition to the new regional watershed model.

Another key factor to consider during the transition to amalgamation is protecting watershed reserves, infrastructure, and land assets. Many watershed municipalities and the GRCA are concerned about how their locally funded reserves, land assets, and long-term capital programs will be treated within an amalgamated structure. Strong assurances are needed to ensure that assets built over decades through local investment are not diverted to support unrelated regional priorities.

The GRCA owns approximately \$1 billion in floodplain infrastructure, supported by an efficient maintenance and capital renewal program and healthy reserves intentionally built to support lifecycle and risk-management needs. In addition, the GRCA owns approximately 50,000 acres of land, including conservation areas, ecological lands, water management properties, and other lands, each acquired and managed in accordance with long-standing watershed-specific priorities.

In an amalgamation or consolidation into a larger regional entity, strong protective measures are required to ensure that the GRCA's resources and assets are maintained in ways that continue to support long-standing watershed priorities. Key concerns include the potential redistribution of well-developed GRCA reserves to support capital needs in other watersheds that have not made comparable investments, and the risk that the GRCA's mature and efficient infrastructure maintenance program could be weakened if resources become centralized or redirected. GRCA watershed municipalities have emphasized that the GRCA's 50,000 acres of land must receive the same level of stewardship attention as existing infrastructure and financial reserves, including the protection of passive recreation trails that hold significant local value. Long-standing conservation and land management priorities, along with the community benefits provided by these local trails, must remain stable under any regional model. Protective measures must also ensure that resources for flood protection, capital renewal, and land management remain dedicated to the watershed where they originated, and that high-performing programs are not required to subsidize deferred maintenance in less-resourced areas. Additional concerns relate to the possibility that reduced local decision-making authority could limit the ability of municipalities and the GRCA to safeguard the intent and priorities attached to these important assets. These concerns can be mitigated by establishing clear financial and reserve-protection policies, maintaining watershed-level tracking of revenues and expenditures, creating transparent and equitable capital prioritization frameworks, preserving local advisory roles through watershed-based committees, and ensuring that land,

infrastructure, and reserve management practices respect existing infrastructure needs, stewardship commitments, and long-standing community investments.

A further consideration is the amalgamation of organizations with separate supporting foundations; in such cases, ensuring the integrity of fundraising is critical. Donors often prefer to support initiatives at the watershed or community scale, where the impacts of their contributions are visible and tied to local priorities. A regionalized model risks diluting this connection, potentially affecting donor engagement and revenue. To maintain donor confidence, an amalgamated structure must include mechanisms to preserve watershed-based fundraising and reporting, and publicly acknowledge donors in ways that reflect the specific locations/projects they choose to support rather than treating all contributions as part of a single regional fund.

2. What opportunities or benefits may come from a regional conservation authority framework?

Consolidating conservation authorities into a regional framework can create more consistent permitting practices, technical standards, and service levels across municipalities, reducing the variation that currently exists between the 36 agencies. A unified structure also supports stronger alignment with provincial expectations through shared permitting systems, common GIS platforms, and standardized public portals that modernize service delivery and improve accessibility.

Consolidation can also lead to a more equitable distribution of resources, giving smaller or rural municipalities access to specialized expertise that may have been limited by local budgets or staffing. Larger organizations are generally better positioned to secure federal or provincial funding for broader, high-impact projects.

The administrative framework in place at larger organizations also provides an opportunity for efficiency, as they have subject matter experts who perform dedicated internal service roles. These roles can be leveraged in consolidation to provide dedicated attention to organizational compliance, such as health and safety legislation, and risk management.

The size of each regional unit is a very important consideration. Consolidating too many areas into one very large authority can create new challenges, such as distance from local issues, slower decision-making, and difficulty maintaining community relationships; therefore, finding a balanced approach is essential. A regional model can still support strong local representation and responsiveness when designed thoughtfully. Municipal priorities can be maintained through governance structures that include voices from all participating municipalities, supported by sub-regional offices and advisory committees that keep decision-making connected to local needs. Harmonizing policies and fee structures can be done collaboratively, providing opportunities for municipalities and interest-holder groups to help shape fair and consistent standards for the region. Setting clear service expectations, such as defined response times, local points of contact, and accessible public information, helps to ensure that a larger agency remains responsive and reliable.

Greater consistency across policies, standards, and processes also creates a more stable operating environment for municipalities, developers, and the public. When expectations are predictable (clear permitting requirements, uniform fees, and consistent timelines), people can plan with more confidence. By using its (proposed) authority to create directives that support these elements, the OPCA can further reinforce this predictability and clarity. This stability strengthens customer service because staff use the same tools and guidance across the region, reducing confusion and delays. Ultimately, consistent service delivery helps ensure that watershed communities receive the same level of support regardless of their size or location, provided the regional units are scaled in a way that supports both efficiency and meaningful local engagement.

3. Do you have suggestions for how governance could be structured at the regional conservation authority level, including suggestions around board size, make-up and the municipal representative appointment process?

A successful governance model for the new regional conservation authorities must balance local accountability, fair representation, and operational efficiency. In regions with very large numbers of municipalities, such as the proposed Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, which would include at least 81 municipalities, a one-member-per-municipality board is unrealistic and would make strategic decision-making extremely difficult. A streamlined, revised Board of Directors is therefore essential.

A revised Board structure should be small enough to function strategically while still representing the diversity of the watershed. A board of approximately 25–30 members, similar to the Board of Directors for the GRCA, could achieve this balance if seats are allocated proportionally by population and geography and with regard to financial contribution. To avoid concentration of influence, no single municipality should be able to dominate board decisions. The new Board should contain elected officials only. Shorter board terms could be introduced to promote shared leadership, especially in cases where several municipalities are represented through a single grouped seat. At the regional level, the Board would retain independent responsibility for the budget, hearings, staffing decisions, policy approval, and overall governance authority.

To maintain strong local accountability while keeping the main board streamlined, the governance model should incorporate a clear subcommittee and advisory structure. Local Watershed Advisory Committees could be established for each major watershed or sub-basin (e.g., Grand, Thames, St.Clair, etc), composed of municipal councillors and/or citizen appointees. These committees would provide advice for local context on program policy, advise on watershed-level programs and services, and offer input on budget priorities. Additional advisory committees at either regional or watershed scale could be created based on local needs, such as agricultural advisory groups or home-builder liaison committees. Given the presence of approximately seven First Nations within the proposed regional area, an Indigenous Advisory Circle would support meaningful engagement and ensure that Indigenous perspectives are incorporated respectfully and consistently into decision-making.

Under a consolidated Conservation Authority framework, the governance model should:

- Maintain a small, strategic, and efficient board.
- Ensure strong local and watershed-specific input through subcommittees and grouped representation.
- Provide fair, transparent representation across the jurisdiction.
- Protect the voices of rural, agricultural, and small municipalities.
- Ensure that local program priorities (e.g., Wastewater Optimization, Rural Water Quality Programs, etc.) continue to be addressed.
- Deliver consistent, predictable, and accountable decision-making across the jurisdiction.

This structure supports efficiency and coordination while preserving meaningful local input. It helps ensure that the new conservation authority can operate effectively at a larger scale without compromising its responsiveness to the communities it serves.

The relationship between the Regional Conservation Authority Board and the OPCA is not clearly defined in the proposed model, and this lack of clarity may have significant implications for governance effectiveness. If the OPCA operates as a highly centralized umbrella board with substantial authority over regional conservation authorities, the independence and responsibility traditionally held by regional boards could be greatly reduced. A diminished governance role would make it far less likely that qualified individuals (both municipal representatives and, if permitted, citizen appointees) would be willing to serve on regional boards, as the scope for meaningful decision-making and local accountability would be substantially constrained. Clear

articulation of roles and authorities will be essential to avoid undermining board capacity, local engagement, and accountability.

4. Do you have suggestions on how to maintain a transparent and consultative budgeting process across member municipalities within a regional conservation authority?

A transparent and consultative budgeting process for a larger regional conservation authority requires a clear, consistent, and accessible approach that supports all participating municipalities, regardless of size or capacity. Establishing a standardized multi-year budget framework can improve predictability and help municipalities plan their own budgets effectively.

A transparent apportionment formula based on criteria such as assessment value, population, and portion of watershed area located within municipalities is currently used and could be used moving forward. Where portions of municipalities are in different conservation authority jurisdictions, consideration could be given to geo-referencing property tax assessment roll numbers so that the apportionment calculation is based on current value assessment (CVA) in a watershed rather than the percentage of geographical area applied to the municipality's total CVA.

To maintain meaningful local input within a large region, a Municipal Budget Advisory Committee could be established as a sub-committee of the Regional Board, and could include membership from the local watershed advisory committees, including both rural and urban municipality representation. Additionally, sub-regional or watershed-based consultation meetings could be held to ensure that local priorities and capital needs are considered in budgeting decisions. Budget documents should be publicly available, written in clear language, and shared/consulted on early enough to align with municipal budget cycles. Offering multiple engagement opportunities, for example, presenting at councils when requested, providing virtual workshop sessions, soliciting written feedback, and conducting one-on-one briefings, ensures that any municipality, regardless of size and location, can participate fairly in the process. Finally, reporting back on municipal input, producing accessible annual financial reports, and clearly and consistently distinguishing between Category 1, 2, and 3 program and service costs, revenues, and grant funding all reinforce transparency and accountability.

5. How can regional conservation authorities maintain and strengthen relationships with local communities and stakeholders?

Regional conservation authorities can maintain and strengthen relationships with local communities and interest-holders by staying deeply connected at the local municipal level, even as they operate on a broader scale. The size of each regional authority is critical: if the conservation authority becomes too large, municipalities risk being under-represented, and their specialized watershed needs, such as agricultural programs/issues, drinking water management, localized flooding concerns, or unique outdoor experiences and priorities, can become diluted within a large administrative structure. Municipalities want assurance that scaling up will not cause their distinct issues to be overshadowed by larger population centres or to become a lesser priority due to the increased diversity of issues and competing interests that will inevitably exist within a much larger jurisdiction. A balanced, right-sized regional framework preserves this visibility and ensures that local concerns remain central to decision-making.

Maintaining watershed offices, expertise in local issues and knowledge, ability to maintain on the ground presence, and consistent points of contact ensures that residents, businesses, farmers, and municipalities can easily access staff who understand their watershed's specific conditions and community priorities. With the proposed size of regional conservation authorities, establishing local watershed-specific advisory committees ensures that decisions are grounded in local knowledge and that specialized concerns are effectively addressed.

Finally, ensuring service delivery remains responsive, through timely permitting, accessible staff, and clear pathways for raising concerns, helps communities feel heard and supported during and after the transition to a regional model. A thoughtfully sized regional authority can achieve the benefits of consolidation while still preserving the visibility, voice, and specialized needs of every watershed and municipality.

Additional Comments

The GRCA is providing additional comments on the proposed OPCA and offering an alternative regional consolidation model that we believe will effectively address the Province's concerns while preserving strong local engagement and watershed-focused decision-making.

Modernizing Conservation Authorities While Preserving Local Responsiveness

The Board recognizes and respects the Province's concerns regarding the current state of Conservation Authorities. Over time, the conservation authority system has become fragmented, with varying levels of capacity, outdated processes, and inconsistencies in service delivery. Individual conservation authorities also face significant disparities in size and resources, with some lacking access to modern tools, technology, and technical expertise needed to deliver certain programs and services effectively, as well as the capacity to support evidence-based decision-making. We acknowledge that these capacity gaps mean some conservation authorities face challenges in sustainably delivering the full range of programs and services expected of them. Modernization is needed, and there is clear value in creating a permitting system that is further streamlined, more transparent and predictable, and better able to support economic growth, reduce delays, and protect watershed communities. Likewise, reducing duplication, adopting consistent standards, and leveraging shared technology and internal services are sensible and necessary steps toward strengthening Ontario's overall watershed management framework. From this perspective, consolidation can help address real issues by improving coordination, enhancing efficiency, and enabling more reliable service delivery across the province.

At the same time, the GRCA Board has significant concerns that the proposed regional model is too large in scale to be effective. While consolidation can help address capacity challenges, overly expansive regions risk weakening the very principles that have made watershed-based management successful. The Grand River watershed is a notable example. Established in 1934, the Grand River Conservation Commission, one of the founding organizations of today's GRCA, has long demonstrated that effective watershed management relies on strong collaboration with municipal partners and on programs designed to meet watershed-specific needs and issues. This locally grounded approach has allowed decisions to be informed by practical, locally based knowledge and supported by strong, responsive relationships with the municipalities and communities most directly affected. For example, the Grand River watershed has a network of flood-management infrastructure, including multipurpose reservoirs, dikes, and flood-control berms. These structures form an integrated system operated and maintained through close collaboration between the GRCA and watershed municipalities. Sustaining this partnership is essential to ensuring the effective operation and upkeep of flood-management infrastructure, as well as protecting lives and reducing property damage caused by flooding and erosion. A regional structure that is too broad may unintentionally distance decision-making from this essential local context. It can also reduce meaningful municipal participation, which is vital to maintaining public trust and effective environmental stewardship across Ontario.

Smaller, regionally focused watershed models, such as the current Source Protection Regions, are a proven regional watershed model and demonstrate how a balanced governance structure can achieve consistency and efficiency without sacrificing local responsiveness. This scale aligns well with having one effective governance board over multiple organizations, science-based watershed boundaries, and support for coordinated planning among municipalities. It also helps maintain decision-making at a scale where local knowledge and community involvement

remain strong and effective, while accounting for the need for grouped CAs to share and manage technical resources. The current number of Source Protection Regions in Ontario is 19. By operating within manageable geographic areas, they ensure that services are tailored to the unique environmental, social, and economic characteristics of each watershed, while still benefiting from shared resources and standardized processes.

In summary, the GRCA Board agrees that modernization is needed and that consolidation, when appropriately scaled, can address real capacity and consistency issues. However, a balanced approach that enhances efficiency without eroding local engagement is essential. A refined model aligned with the scale and logic of existing source water protection regions would better meet provincial objectives while preserving the strengths of Ontario's long-standing watershed-based planning and management system. Consideration could also be given at this stage to whether a Provincial Agency would be required to support and implement this model.

Assessing the OPCA: Benefits, Risks, and the Importance of Local Oversight

The GRCA Board recognizes the Province's intention in establishing the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to modernize the conservation authority system in a way that supports timely development and local infrastructure projects, while strengthening the essential role conservation authorities play in managing watersheds and protecting communities from floods and other natural hazards. These goals are both important and necessary. A system that delivers services more consistently, transparently, and predictably will benefit municipalities, developers, and communities alike, particularly as Ontario continues to grow and climate-related risks intensify. The GRCA Board agrees that modernization is needed and supports efforts to enhance both efficiency and environmental protection across the province.

The creation of the OPCA aims to provide centralized leadership, efficient governance, and strategic direction for all conservation authorities. In principle, this offers several clear advantages: a coordinated provincial body can help ensure faster, more consistent permitting and provide the oversight needed to align conservation authorities with modern standards and best practices. By strengthening core watershed management functions and focusing on natural hazard protection, the OPCA has the potential to reinforce the foundational mandate of conservation authorities. This direction is appropriate, as communities across Ontario depend on timely, science-based decisions to address increasing flood risks, aging infrastructure, and complex development pressures.

The OPCA will also lead several key modernization initiatives, including developing a single digital permitting platform, standardizing service delivery through province-wide performance expectations, and supporting updated floodplain mapping to ensure decisions are grounded in the best available data. These initiatives have the potential to significantly improve customer service, reduce delays, and enhance consistency across the province. Likewise, centralized data systems and modern tools can help staff make better, evidence-based decisions. Streamlining processes and reducing duplication are logical steps toward a more efficient and reliable permitting system.

The agency will also oversee the implementation of a regional, watershed-based consolidation of conservation authorities. The GRCA Board understands the rationale for consolidation, addressing disparities in size and capacity, modernizing outdated processes, and ensuring that all conservation authorities can meet provincial expectations. With stronger tools, shared technology, and enhanced technical resources, many of the conservation authorities will indeed be better positioned to deliver high-quality services. Ensuring that updated maps, hydrologic modelling, and modern data platforms are available across Ontario is essential support to help provide consistent natural hazard management.

The GRCA Board is concerned about the proposed governance structure of the OPCA. As currently designed, the agency will report to a provincial ministry and be governed entirely by

provincially appointed board members. At the same time, conservation authorities, and therefore municipalities, will be required to fund all or a portion of the agency's operations through existing levy/apportionment processes. This means that municipalities may ultimately contribute all or a significant share of the OPCA's budget without having any meaningful role in shaping its governance, its priorities, or its strategic direction. For municipalities that rely heavily on conservation authority guidance for land-use planning, hazard management, infrastructure development, and emergency response, this creates a disconnect between financial responsibility and decision-making influence.

Not only would this be a precedent-setting method for funding a provincial agency, it also establishes a system in which municipalities help fund a provincial agency but have no formal avenue to participate in its oversight, which raises significant concerns about accountability, responsiveness, and the long-term alignment of provincial direction with local needs. The scale of the proposed regional conservation authority consolidation model amplifies these concerns. Larger regional conservation authorities risk limiting opportunities for local input and reducing the nuanced, watershed-specific decision-making that has historically made conservation authorities effective.

The GRCA Board acknowledges the Province's desire for greater consistency, efficiency, and alignment across conservation authorities and supports these goals. This could be achieved under the current model through additional regulations and verifying compliance at all conservation authorities, or it could be achieved through the actions of the new agency. Regardless, modernization efforts must maintain a strong connection to local priorities, local expertise, and municipal perspectives. Achieving the right balance between centralized oversight and meaningful local involvement will be key to ensuring the OPCA strengthens watershed management across Ontario while preserving the collaborative principles that have long underpinned successful conservation work in the province.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the GRCA Board supports the Province's goal of modernizing Ontario's conservation authority system and acknowledges the value of enhancing consistency, efficiency, and technical capacity throughout the province. The Board has emphasized the importance of a thoughtful, well-planned transition, the preservation of local knowledge and municipal relationships, and the need for a governance model that ensures accountability to the municipalities that will both rely on and will continue to fund the new system. While consolidation offers meaningful opportunities, the scale of the proposed regional structure and the governance framework of the OPCA present risks that could weaken local responsiveness and watershed-based decision-making. A more balanced, right-sized regional model, grounded in strong municipal involvement and science-based watershed boundaries, would better achieve the Province's objectives while maintaining the strengths, partnerships, and community trust that have defined conservation authority work in Ontario for decades.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Submitted by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer



LONG POINT REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes of November 5, 2025
Approved December 3, 2025

Members in attendance:

Dave Beres, Chair	Town of Tillsonburg
Doug Brunton, Vice-Chair	Norfolk County
Shelley Ann Bentley	Haldimand County
Robert Chambers	County of Brant
Michael Columbus	Norfolk County
Ed Ketchabaw	Municipality of Bayham/Township of Malahide
Tom Masschaele	Norfolk County
Debera McKeen	Haldimand County
Jim Palmer	Township of Norwich
Chris Van Paassen	Norfolk County
Peter Ypma	Township of South-West Oxford

Regrets:

None

Staff in attendance:

Judy Maxwell, General Manager
 Aaron LeDuc, Manager of Corporate Services
 Leigh-Anne Mauthe, Manager of Watershed Services
 Saifur Rahman, Manager of Engineering and Infrastructure
 Jessica King, Social Media and Marketing Associate
 Nicole Sullivan, HR Coordinator/Executive Assistant

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m., Wednesday, November 5, 2025.

2. Additional Agenda Items

Chris Van Paassen proposed an addition to the agenda in regards to the Ontario government announcement.

A-112/25

Moved by C. Van Paassen

Seconded by D. McKeen

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors add the Ontario Government Announcement on Conservation Authorities under New Business as item 10 G to the November 5, 2025 agenda.

Carried

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

3. Approval of the Agenda

A-113/25

Moved by J. Palmer

Seconded by P. Ypma

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors approves the agenda as amended.

Carried

4. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

a) Board of Directors Meeting October 1, 2025

Robert Chambers made an amendment to the minutes to include the acknowledgement of Rainey Weisler's last board meeting and the welcoming of Ed Ketchabaw.

Dave Beres officially welcomes Ed Ketchabaw to the LPRCA Board of Directors.

A-114/25

Moved by T. Masschaele

Seconded by M. Columbus

THAT the minutes of the LPRCA Board of Directors meeting held October 1, 2025 be adopted as amended.

Carried

6. Business Arising

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

7. Review of Committee Minutes

A-115/25

Moved by C. Van Paassen

Seconded by E. Ketchabaw

THAT the minutes of the Audit & Finance Committee meeting held October 24, 2025 be adopted as circulated

Carried

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

8. Correspondence

None

9. Development Applications**a) Section 28 Regulations Approved Permits (L. Mauthe)**

Leigh-Anne Mauthe presented the approved permits report.

A - 116/25

Moved by S. Bentley

Seconded by P. Ypma

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors receives the staff approved Section 28 Regulation Approved Permits report dated November 5, 2025 as information.

Carried

10. New Business**a) General Manager's Report (J. Maxwell)**

Judy Maxwell provided a report summarizing operations in October and provided a few recent updates on forestry and watershed tours with community partners, Environmental Registry of Ontario postings that Conservation Ontario staff are coordinating comments for, and an update on Forestry operations.

Peter Ypma asked staff about the tops of trees after a timber harvest. Judy Maxwell informed the Board that LPRCA standards the tops are cleaned up. LPRCA has fuelwood contracts for cleanup of the tops and operations are monitored by forestry staff. These contractors are all insured, sign a contract with LPRCA, pay a fee, and are monitored by forestry staff.

Mike Columbus asked if the federal government budget announcement and the cut to the tree planting program will affect LPRCA's tree planting. Judy Maxwell informed the Board that as of now there is no change to LPRCA's tree planting, the funding agreement with Forest Canada is in place until 2029.

Dave Beres asked staff to provide an update on the Boardroom renovations. Judy Maxwell informed the Board that the ceiling tiles and lights were all replaced and completed this week, and the rest of the updates will be completed by mid-January.

Doug Brunton asked staff about LPRCA's lease on the building. Aaron LeDuc informed the Board that LPRCA has four terms of five years with an option for a 5th term, and that this lease started in 2018.

A-117/25

Moved by S. Bentley

Seconded by J. Palmer

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors receives the General Manager's Report for October 2025 as information.

Carried

b) 3rd Qtr. Financial Report (A. LeDuc)

Aaron LeDuc presented the report.

Jim Palmer asked staff to clarify the large surplus that is shown in the report. Aaron LeDuc informed the Board that due to the seasonality of a large portion of LPRCA's revenue, there is generally an uptick on surplus in the 2nd and 3rd Quarters, but the surplus will slim down by the end of the year when other expenses are finalized and amortization is included.

A-118/25

Moved by M. Columbus

Seconded by D. McKeen

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors receives the Q3 Financial Report – September 30, 2025 for the fiscal year up to and including September 30, 2025 as information.

Carried

c) Tangible Capital Asset Draft Policy (A. LeDuc)

Aaron LeDuc presented the report.

Chris Van Paassen asked staff for an explanation on the tangible capital asset policy and how LPRCA accounts for sources of financing and accounting entries. Aaron LeDuc explained that the tangible Capital Asset Policy is how LPRCA accounts for financial assets and how LPRCA will account for the assets in the financial statements versus how the Authority acquires tangible capital assets.

A-119/25

Moved by T. Masschaele

Seconded by C. Van Paassen

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors approves the Draft Tangible Capital Asset Policy as presented.

Carried

d) Draft Investment Policy (A. LeDuc)

Aaron LeDuc presented the report.

Ed Ketchabaw asked staff to clarify if the review period is annually as the staff report or every five years as stated in the policy. Aaron LeDuc informed the Board that the review cycle is every five years, and the staff report was an error.

A-120/25

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

Moved by J. Palmer
 Seconded by M. Columbus

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors approves the Draft Investment Policy as presented.

Carried

e) Administration Review Policy for Permits (L. Mauthe)

Leigh-Anne Mauthe presented the report and draft policy after the deferral from the last Board meeting.

Chris Van Paassen thanks the staff for deferring the report and speaking to others on the subject. Chris Van Paassen disagreed with the staff report recommendation and provided comments.

Robert Chambers and Mike Columbus supported the staff recommendation and both provided comments, and agrees with staff that members of the Board being the reporting officer would constitute a conflict of interest.

A-121/25

Moved by R. Chambers
 Seconded by M. Columbus

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors approve the Administration Review Policy for Permits required under Section 12 of Ontario Regulation 41/24 as presented.

Carried

f) Prescription/Operating Plans – Casselton & Earl Danylevich (J. Maxwell)

Judy Maxwell delivered the report.

Jim Palmer asked staff if the forestry prescription reports are always this complicated. Judy Maxwell informed the Board that the plans are based on a developed template, but that each tract is individually surveyed and analyzed by forestry staff as the tracts can vary drastically.

A-122/25

Moved by C. Van Paassen
 Seconded by T. Masschaele

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors approves the prescription/operating plans for the Earl Danylevich Tract at 1290 Charlotteville West Quarter Line of Charlotteville Township, and the Casselton Tract at 811 Charlotteville Road 2 of Charlotteville Township.

Carried

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

**g) Ontario Government Announcement regarding Conservation Authorities
(Addition)**

Dave Beres read his remarks on the Ontario Government announcement about the creation of a new agency — the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) — which will oversee all Conservation Authorities across the province. This new agency is intended to provide centralized leadership, streamline governance, and modernize the permitting process through a single digital platform and provincewide performance standards. As part of this initiative, the current 36 Conservation Authorities will be reorganized into seven watershed-based regions. As of now, it is speculated that Essex Region CA, Lower Thames Valley CA, St. Clair Region CA, Kettle Creek CA, Catfish Creek CA, Upper Thames River CA, Grand River CA and Long Point Region CA will combine to make Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority. Public consultation is expected to begin in spring 2026, involving municipalities, Indigenous communities, stakeholders, and residents. Implementation of changes outlined in the OPCA legislation will begin following the October 2026 municipal elections, with changes rolling out in 2027. Dave Beres reiterated that there is no change to LPRCA's current operations. It is business as usual. LPRCA Board and Staff remain fully committed to delivering the high-quality programs and services to the communities — from water quality monitoring and public safety to watershed health initiatives throughout the Long Point Region.

Shelley Ann Bentley asked broadly if there was any recourse at the moment for members to dispute the amalgamation and remain Long Point Region Conservation Authority, as the speculated region is a massive area and does not support the community as the CA's do now.

Dave Beres stated that Conservation Authorities will give their input on the amalgamation when the registry opens.

Ed Ketchabaw asserted that LPRCA Board should not just accept this announcement. There are many unanswered questions, like what is the purpose of this? What can be gained by amalgamating? What is the financial outcome? And what is the goal of the province? Not time to agree until more questions are answered.

Doug Brunton has great concern with where the amalgamation is going, as past amalgamations of other government agencies have been problematic. There is concern with the blending of LPRCA's finances with other organizations and the loss of the reserves that should be utilized in the community and not spread across such a large region. Doug Brunton reiterated his concern with the community places and spaces like Lee Brown Marsh and Backus Heritage Conservation Area.

Tom Masschaele agrees with previous Board members, and adds that the results of amalgamation and centralization do not usually work out for the smaller groups who are in a good financial position, as LPRCA is in. Efficiency in this case, seems it may mean the spreading of LPRCA's assets.

Chris Van Paassen agrees that LPRCA is not ready to concede on this announcement completely and Board and staff should communicate and do homework to push back now

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

with ministers and other partners. The MPP for Haldimand-Norfolk and Oxford may be receptive to LPRCA. Saving money by going bigger has not worked in the past.

Robert Chambers asked if Ontario was the only province with Conservation Authorities, and inquired how the other provinces handle the work of Conservation Authorities, was the work downloaded to the municipalities in those provinces.

Mike Columbus wondered about the government's statement on "no job losses" as it seems very hard to imagine there will be no job losses and how can the Board handle this.

Judy Maxwell informed the Board that legislation to create the agency should be coming in the next few weeks to hopefully give more direction. There is much that needs to be considered, but hard to do with no direction or concrete plan from the province.

Doug Brunton asked staff if the 2026 budget is set, and if community projects can be pushed forward for 2026. Judy Maxwell indicated that the Board can approve projects outside of the budget.

Jim Palmer asked staff about the province representative that was advertised for LPRCA. Judy Maxwell informed the Board that the position was advertised, and other CAs received an agricultural representative, but LPRCA has not and may not have one appointed now.

Dave Beres asked Board members to forward their concerns to Judy Maxwell to be reviewed.

A-123/25

Moved by E. Ketchabaw

Seconded by M. Columbus

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors receives the update on the Ontario government Announcement regarding Conservation Authorities as information.

AND

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors direct staff to circulate the remarks from the Chair and the Media Release to the Board of Directors.

Carried

11. Closed Meeting

None

Next meeting: November 13, 2025, Budget Meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

Dave Beres
Chair

Judy Maxwell
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

/ns

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus, Ed Ketchabaw, Tom Masschaele, Debera McKeen, Jim Palmer, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma



LONG POINT REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Budget Meeting of November 13, 2025
Approved December 3, 2025

Members in Attendance

Robert Chambers, Chair	County of Brant
Dave Beres, Vice-Chair	Town of Tillsonburg
Shelley Ann Bentley	Haldimand County
Doug Brunton	Norfolk County
Michael Columbus	Norfolk County
Debera McKeen	Haldimand County
Chris Van Paassen	Norfolk County
Ed Ketchabaw	Municipality of Bayham/Township of Malahide

Regrets:

Peter Ypma	Township of South-West Oxford
Jim Palmer	Township of Norwich
Tom Masschaele	Norfolk County

Staff in attendance:

Judy Maxwell, General Manager
 Aaron LeDuc, Manager of Corporate Services
 Leigh-Anne Mauthe, Manager of Watershed Services
 Saifur Rahman, Manager of Engineering and Infrastructure
 Jessica King, Marketing & Social Media Associate

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m., Thursday, November 13, 2025.

2. Additional Agenda Items

Chris Van Paassen put forth a motion to add a closed session.

A-124/25

Moved by C. Van Paassen
 Seconded by D. McKeen

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors adds a closed session meeting under Budget Overview Presentation as item 4 B to the November 13, 2025 Budget agenda.

3. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None were declared.

4. Budget Overview Presentation

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus,
 Tom Masschaele, Jim Palmer, Debera McKeen, Ed Ketchabaw, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

A) Budget Overview Presentation

The Manager of Corporate Services provided a general overview of the 2026 draft budget.

At the last Audit and Finance Committee meeting on August 8, 2025, the Committee provided staff direction to prepare a budget with a maximum 4.0% target increase on the levy. The 2026 Draft Budget was presented with a 0% or \$0 municipal levy increase. The operating levy increased by 0.02% or \$500 and the capital levy decreased by 0.32% or \$500. A special levy to Norfolk County of \$260,000 is required for the Sutton Dam Structure Design and Removal and Vittoria Dam projects in 2026.

The following reports were reviewed and discussed:

1. Draft Consolidated Operating Budget
2. Draft Consolidated Budget Summary
3. Draft Municipal Levy Consolidated
4. 5-year Summary by Municipality of Levy Apportionment

The Current Value Assessment Apportionment for 2025 and 2026 were presented and discussed. The assessment data was provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry based on O. Reg. 402/22 (Budget and Apportionment).

*L. Mauthe and S. Rahman left
Closed session began at 10:02 a.m

B) Closed Session

A-125/25

Moved by C. Van Paassen
Seconded by M. Columbus

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors does now enter into a closed session to discuss:

- Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including employees of the Authority.

The Board reconvened in open session at 10:24 a.m.

*L.Mauthe and S.Rahman returned to the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

5. 2026 Budget Package

Operations:

The Managers reviewed each of their department(s) draft budgets, action plans, projects, and staffing requirements.

Capital:

The 2026 total for capital spending is budgeted at \$1,199,455 requiring \$157,000 from the general levy, \$157,000 from the Current Year Surplus, \$246,575 from the User Fee Reserve, \$160,600 Prior Year Capital, \$135,000 Provincial Grants, \$83,280 from Unrestricted Reserve and \$260,000 Special Levy from Norfolk County.

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus,
Tom Masschaele, Jim Palmer, Debera McKeen, Ed Ketchabaw, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

The following reports were reviewed and discussed:

1. One-Year 2026 Draft Capital Budget
2. Five-Year 2026 Draft Capital Budget

Maintenance work and necessary repairs for public safety are continuing on the major water control structures. Three projects are planned for 2026 totaling \$435,000, Sutton Dam Structure Design and Removal, Vittoria Dam Design and Implementation, and Deer Creek Dam Public Safety Boom.

Two Watershed Services projects are planned for 2026 totaling \$120,000; Flood hazard mapping of Nanticoke Creek and flood and erosion hazard mapping of Upper Big Creek.

Other works include gate replacement, updated signage, and repairs on Authority lands, parking lots and fencing upgrades, Backus Maintenance Barn demolition and replacement, Backus Heritage Site building demolitions, Backus Grist Mill full structural review, Backus CA cabin replacement, Haldimand CA and Norfolk CA water system upgrades, and the purchase of playground equipment for Backus Heritage CA and Haldimand CA. Annual computer upgrades, and vehicle and equipment replacements.

6. General Manager's Report and Budget Recommendations

A-126/25

Moved by E. Ketchabaw

Seconded by S. Bentley

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors approves the following recommendations regarding LPRCA's 2026 Draft Operating and Capital budgets:

THAT the draft 2026 operating budget of \$6,370,228 requiring \$2,238,181 of general levy representing an increase in the general levy of 0.02% or \$500;

AND

THAT the draft 2026 capital budget of \$1,199,455 requiring \$157,500 of general levy representing a decrease in the general levy of -0.32% or \$500;

AND

THAT the draft 2026 capital budget includes a special levy of \$260,000 for Norfolk County;

AND

THAT the total general municipal levy of \$2,395,181 requiring an increase of 0.00% or \$0.00 overall compared to 2025 be circulated to member municipalities for review and comment;

AND

THAT staff be directed to present the Draft 2026 Budget to member municipalities when

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus,
Tom Masschaele, Jim Palmer, Debera McKeen, Ed Ketchabaw, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma

requested.

Carried

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

Dave Beres
Chair

Judy Maxwell
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

/jk

FULL AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Shelley Ann Bentley, Dave Beres, Doug Brunton, Robert Chambers, Michael Columbus,
Tom Masschaele, Jim Palmer, Debera McKeen, Ed Ketchabaw, Chris Van Paassen, Peter Ypma



**Long Point Region
Conservation Authority**

Long Point Region Conservation Authority
4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, Ontario N4G 0C4

Phone: 519-842-4242
Fax: 519-842-7123
Toll free: 1-888-231-5408
conservation@lprca.on.ca
www.lprca.on.ca

December 5, 2025

Re: Bill 68 Schedule 3 and LPRCA Board Resolution Re: ERO No. 025-1257

On October 31, 2025, the Province of Ontario announced Bill 68: *Plan to Protect Ontario Act* including Schedule 3 amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act*. On November 6, 2025, [Bill 68](#), was introduced and on November 25, 2025, Bill 68 was passed establishing the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) and the transition to a regional watershed-based framework for authorities in Ontario. The new agency is expected to provide leadership, governance, strategic direction and oversight of all conservation authorities (CAs) in Ontario. The announcement was made without prior consultation with CAs, municipal partners or staff who possess decades of local knowledge.

On November 7, 2025 the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) No. 025-1257 consultation on the proposed consolidation, boundaries, governance, and budgeting was posted suggesting 36 CAs be consolidated into 7 regional CAs. It is proposed that the Long Point Region Conservation Authority will amalgamate with 7 other CAs forming the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority (LERCA), encompassing 81 municipalities which dilutes local representation. This stands in contrast to LPRCA's current governance model, which ensures strong local representation and accountability to its participating municipalities. No evidence-based analysis has been provided by the province to justify the transition to these large regional entities. This leaves many key questions unanswered such as what the funding model is for the OPCA, the governance model for the new proposed regional CAs and whether Long Point Region's municipalities will have fair local representation.

In the ERO, the Ontario Government has stated that the current system of 36 separate conservation authorities is fragmented with each CA following different standards, fees and levels of staffing and technical capabilities which has led to unpredictable and inconsistent turnaround times for approvals creating uncertainty and delays for builders, landowners and farmers seeking permits. With the OPCA guidance and support, meaningful modernization and a digital e-permitting platform can occur in the current 36 conservation authorities without the need for consolidation.

The LPRCA Board of Directors acknowledges and supports the Province's goals of improved efficiency, consistency and fiscal responsibility in conservation delivery; however, the LPRCA Board of Directors does not support the proposed "Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority" boundary configuration outlined in the ERO No. 025-1257. The LPRCA Board of Directors requests the Ministry further evaluate the proposed boundaries and to engage directly with affected municipalities and CAs to establish a reduced geographic scope.

The Board of Directors discussed Bill 68 Schedule 3 which established the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency and the proposed Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority at its December 3, 2025 meeting and passed the attached motion.

The LPRCA Board of Directors encourages our member municipalities and partners to carefully evaluate the province's proposal and provide comments through the [ERO No. 025-1257 Proposed boundaries for regional consolidations of Ontario's Conservation Authorities](#) by the closing date December 22, 2025.

Local community-based watershed management needs to stay in the hands of local municipalities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Beres". The script is cursive and fluid.

Dave Beres
Chair, Long Point Region Conservation Authority

Attached: LPRCA Board Resolution ERO No. 025-1257

LPRCA Board Resolution ERO No. 025-1257

WHEREAS the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted Environmental Registry Notice No. 025-1257 (“Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities”), proposing to reduce Ontario’s 36 Conservation Authorities to seven regional Conservation Authorities under the oversight and direction of the new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency and the updated *Conservation Authorities Act*; and

WHEREAS under this proposal, the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) would be merged into a new “Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority” together with the: Essex Region CA, Lower Thames Valley CA, St. Clair Region CA, Upper Thames River CA, Kettle Creek CA, Catfish Creek CA, and Grand River CA, forming a single organization stretching from Windsor, through London, Brantford and north of Waterloo region; and

WHEREAS the Board acknowledges and supports the Province’s goals of improved efficiency, consistency and fiscal responsibility in conservation delivery, but find that the proposed “Lake Erie Region CA” configuration would create a geographically vast and administratively complex entity, joining municipalities throughout the province with little watershed connection; dilute local accountability and municipal partnership; generate substantial transition costs, including human resources integration, governance restructuring, IT migration and policy harmonization that would divert resources from the front-line service delivery making it hard for applicants to obtain local advice, resolve issues or expedite housing and infrastructure approvals that support the Province’s agenda; and

WHEREAS LPRCA works with its member municipalities, the Province and partners to be fiscally responsible while ensuring the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources within the Long Point Region watershed including limiting levy increase to municipalities while modernizing its programs and services and aligning them with provincial guidance and neighboring CAs and will continue to do so. Meaningful modernization can occur with the current watershed-based governance framework; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT LPRCA Board of Directors does not support the proposed “Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority” boundary configuration outlined in the Environmental Registry Notice No. 025-1257; and the Board instead requests that the Ministry further evaluate the proposed boundaries and to engage directly with affected municipalities and Conservation Authorities to establish a reduced geographic scope for consolidation that better reflects established relationships and enhances cost-efficient delivery of integrated watershed management, grassroots connections and local understanding; and

THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (CA Office), local members of Provincial Parliament, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Rural Ontario Municipalities Association, all municipalities and CAs within the proposed Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, Ontario’s Chief Conservation Executive and Conservation Ontario.



November 24, 2025

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

City of Hamilton
Haldimand County
Regional Municipality of Niagara
Local Area Municipalities

RE: Federal Program Changes – 2 Billion Trees

At the NPCA's Full Authority Meeting held on November 21, 2025, the following resolution was passed:

Resolution No. FA-125-2025

Moved by: Robert Foster

Seconded by: Brian Grant

WHEREAS the existing commitment through 2 Billion Trees to NPCA's *Trees for All* program is affirmed through to 2028;

WHEREAS NPCA has entered into agreements with partners across the watershed to enhance natural canopy through the *Trees for All* program;

WHEREAS tree planting initiatives provide vital community benefits by sequestering carbon, enhancing biodiversity and natural habitats, improving human health and well-being, and creating opportunities for

THAT Report No. FA-55-25 RE: Federal Program Changes – 2 Billion Trees **BE RECEIVED**;

AND FURTHER THAT Report No. FA-55-25 RE: Federal Program Changes – 2 Billion Trees **BE CIRCULATED** to partner and local area municipalities for information.

CARRIED

A copy of Report No. FA-55-25 has been attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Melanie Davis
Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Federal Program Changes – 2 Billion Trees

Report No: FA-55-25

Date: November 21, 2025

Recommendation:

WHEREAS the existing commitment through 2 Billion Trees to NPCA's *Trees for All* program is affirmed through to 2028;

WHEREAS NPCA has entered into agreements with partners across the watershed to enhance natural canopy through the *Trees for All* program;

WHEREAS tree planting initiatives provide vital community benefits by sequestering carbon, enhancing biodiversity and natural habitats, improving human health and well-being, and creating opportunities for civic engagement;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report No. FA-55-25 RE: Federal Program Changes – 2 Billion Trees **BE RECEIVED**;

AND FURTHER THAT Report No. FA-55-25 RE: Federal Program Changes – 2 Billion Trees **BE CIRCULATED** to partner and local area municipalities for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of Directors of changes to the federally-funded 2 Billion Trees program and inform municipal partners of resources readily available to subsidize tree planting initiatives through NPCA's *Trees for All* program.

Background:

NPCA is a demonstrated leader and tree planting subject matter expert as developed through restoration programming. *Trees for All* provides project management support while securing external funding to reduce expenses for participating landowners and organizations. Under the program, tree planting projects require an extensive year-long implementation cycle that will benefit from confirmed partnerships and formal service

commitments. Increased financial incentives, demand, and local tree planting ambitions further support a collaborative approach in the Niagara Peninsula watershed that leads to effective tree planting program delivery that achieves shared goals and objectives.

O. Reg. 686/21: Mandatory Programs and services identifies tree planting and other restoration endeavors as either non-mandatory Category 2 or 3 programs and services. These services are either conducted collaboratively through levy neutral cost-sharing approaches, via fee-for-service at the request of a municipality, or as determined and recommended by the Conservation Authority to further the purposes of the *Conservation Authorities Act* as in the recommended agreement for services.

O. Reg 687/21: Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services under the *Conservation Authorities Act* stipulates that agreements are required for Programs and Services under Categories 2 and 3.

Lower-tier municipalities in Niagara Region, which are not levied for CA services, can enter into Agreements of Services on a fee-for-service basis when a local municipality wishes to procure NPCA to deliver services that are not procured through the Region.

Trees for All is a multi-year, high-volume tree planting program built on a cost-sharing approach designed for public and private lands in both urban and rural areas within the Niagara Peninsula watershed. NPCA, on behalf of a broad local partnership, has successfully secured funding from the federal 2 Billion Trees program and its aggregators (Forests Canada and Tree Canada) as well as several other third-party sources and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation (NPCF) to deliver *Trees for All*.

Discussion:

On November 4, 2025, the *2025 Budget: Building Canada Strong* was tabled in the House of Commons and passed its third reading on November 17, 2025. The budget includes targeted savings and program changes, including any additional commitments to 2 Billion Trees.

Pre-existing contribution agreements will continue to be honoured without interruption, including NPCA's agreement that is in place until 2028. There are no anticipated changes to NPCA's *Trees for All* program related to the modification of the federal government's 2 Billion Trees program. When the contribution agreement expires, any uncommitted funds would be returned.

NPCA has agreements in place with many of our local area municipalities and partner agencies for services provided through *Trees for All* and have been actively engaged in the program to enhance tree canopies in their communities. To date, municipal partners have also offered over 200 public properties that could accommodate tree plantings and **13** community tree plantings were hosted with municipal and agency partners throughout 2025.

NPCA continues to leverage Conservation Ontario's partnership with Tree Canada in the National Greening Program to subsidize bareroot stock-oriented planting projects with private landowners. Funds have also been secured through the Ontario Power Generation's Regional Biodiversity Fund and the Royal Bank of Canada to bring tree planting initiatives to the community.

NPCA will continue to work closely with NPCF to leverage funding opportunities in the environmental sector that will further support tree planting initiatives in the Niagara Peninsula watershed.

Financial Implications:

The financial implications of this initiative were outlined in Report No. FA-45-24 which was presented to the Board in September 2024.

Trees for All is funded, in part, through a Contribution Agreement with Natural Resources Canada which outlines the financial contributions and deliverables to March 31, 2028. If financial impacts change, NPCA Staff will update the Board, as appropriate.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 1.1: Support evidence-based decision-making for climate-resilient watersheds and shorelines.

Goal 1.3: Restore and enhance natural habitat, water resources, and forest cover.

Goal 4.2: Foster relationships with the community, non-government organizations, businesses, agriculture, industry, and academic institutions for collective outcomes and impact.

Goal 6.1: Ensure responsible, sustainable, and sound fiscal practices.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Report No. FA-45-24 RE: Trees for All Update

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Melanie Davis, M.A.
Manager, Office of the CAO & Board

Reviewed by:

Original Signed by:

Natalie Green, M.Sc., PMP
Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer



November 24, 2025

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

City of Hamilton
Haldimand County
Regional Municipality of Niagara
Local Area Municipalities

RE: Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule

At the NPCA's Full Authority Meeting held on November 21, 2025, the following resolution was passed:

Resolution No. FA-124-2025

Moved by: Brian Grant

Seconded by: Albert Witteveen

THAT Report No. FA-52-25 RE: Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule **BE RECEIVED;**

AND THAT Appendix 1 to Report No. FA-52-25 RE: Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule **BE APPROVED;**

AND THAT the meeting schedule be **BE PUBLISHED** on NPCA's website for public information;

AND FURTHER THAT the meeting schedule **BE CIRCULATED** to participating and local area municipalities.

CARRIED

A copy of Report No. FA-52-25 and associated appendices has been attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Melanie Davis
Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule

Report No: FA-52-25

Date: November 21, 2025

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-52-25 RE: Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT Appendix 1 to Report No. FA-52-25 RE: Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule **BE APPROVED**;

AND THAT the meeting schedule **BE PUBLISHED** on NPCA's website for public information;

AND FURTHER THAT the meeting schedule **BE CIRCULATED** to participating and local area municipalities.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to establish the NPCA Board of Directors' 2026 meeting schedule for internal business planning purposes and promoting public awareness of the meeting schedule for the upcoming year.

Background:

In 2024, staff consulted with the Full Authority Board to incorporate feedback in the development of the 2025 Meeting Schedule, resulting in Full Authority Meetings being scheduled at 10:00a.m. to accommodate changes in travel requirements related to the relocation of Full Authority meetings to the Administrative Office in Thorold, ON.

At the February 21, 2025 Full Authority Annual General Meeting, the Full Authority Board adopted the revised NPCA Administrative By-Law, providing increased flexibility for the scheduling of meetings.

Discussion:

The 2026 Meeting Schedule has been prepared to avoid overlapping with statutory holidays, days of significance, and organizational initiatives, such as the Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival.

While Full Authority Board meetings have typically been held on the third Friday of each month, it has been common practice to shift the meeting date depending on scheduling demands. To provide a consistent timeline for internal workflow processes, it is recommended that Full Authority meetings be held on the fourth Friday of each month, except for December, due to holiday closures.

Governance Committee meetings will continue to be scheduled immediately following the Full Authority meetings throughout 2026, or as needed at the Committee Chair's discretion. Additional Governance Committee meetings have been recommended to ensure the Committee is engaged in developments regarding the proposed transition to regional conservation authorities and the establishment of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency.

Finance Committee meetings are scheduled to align with NPCA's Audit and Budget approval timelines. Public Advisory Committee meetings will be held in March, May, and November, and continue to be scheduled on Tuesdays at 5:00p.m.

Financial Implications:

There are no new or additional financial implications posed by adoption of the Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule as presented.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 5.2: Improve internal operations and processes

Goal 5.3: Provide high standards of customer service

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix 1: NPCA Board of Directors' 2026 Meeting Schedule and Calendar

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Melanie Davis, M.A.
Manager, Office of the CAO & Board

Reviewed and Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer / Secretary – Treasurer

January

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 Full Authority Board Meeting
 Public Advisory Committee
 Statutory Holiday / Office Closure

 Governance Committee, following Full Authority
 Finance Committee

Full Authority Board Meetings

Friday, February 27 – **Annual General Meeting**

Friday, March 27

Friday, April 24

Friday, May 22

Friday, June 26

Friday, July 24

Friday, September 25

Friday, October 23

Friday, November 27

Friday, December 18

Note: there will be a Source Protection Authority Board meeting scheduled for February 27, 2025 to coincide with the Full Authority Board meeting.

Committees of the Board

Finance Committee Meetings

Wednesday, April 15

Wednesday, July 15

Wednesday, September 16

Governance Committee Meetings

Friday, March 27

Friday, May 22

Friday, July 24

Friday, September 25

Friday, November 27

Public Advisory Committee Meetings

Tuesday, March 10

Tuesday, May 12

Tuesday, November 17



December 5, 2025

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

RE: NPCA Position on the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities

Please be advised that at the NPCA's Special Meeting held on December 5, 2025, the following resolution was passed:

Resolution No. FA-131-2025

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Brian Grant

WHEREAS the municipalities of the Niagara Peninsula watershed agreed to form the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority in 1959 under the *Conservation Authorities Act* to protect people, property, farmland and natural resources through watershed-based decision making informed by local science and knowledge, and municipal representation;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Government has amended the *Conservation Authorities Act* through Bill 68 "Plan to Protect Ontario (Budget Measures)" that allows for establishing the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to oversee the transition to Regional Conservation Authorities, and direct the strategic direction, finances, and operational activities of the new Regional Conservation Authorities, imposing additional costs on municipalities to fund the Agency via fees levied on the new Regional Conservation Authority;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted Environmental Registry Notice No. 025-1257 ("Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities"), proposing to reduce Ontario's 36 conservation authorities to 7 regional entities as part of a broader restructuring;

AND WHEREAS under this proposal, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority would be consolidated into a new "Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority" together with the Hamilton Conservation Authority, Halton Region Conservation Authority and Credit Valley Conservation, forming a single organization extending along the western Lake Ontario shoreline from Niagara through Halton and Peel, encompassing urban and rural watershed that support the Greater Toronto-Hamilton corridor;

AND WHEREAS the proposed "Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority" is to span approximately 4,900 square kilometres and serve 28 municipalities comprised of nearly 2 million people, thereby risking local representation and the delivery of locally-focused programs and services;

AND WHEREAS the participating municipalities lying within NPCA's jurisdiction fund approximately 52% of the annual operating budget of NPCA through municipal levies, compared to the annual provincial transfer payment of approximately 0.5%;



December 5, 2025

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
 Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
 905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

AND WHEREAS in September 2018, the Auditor General of Ontario published their report on the Special Audit of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, with 20 recommendations to the conservation authority and 4 recommendations to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to improve governance, operations, policies and processes to strengthen the delivery of programs and services, which have been fully implemented by Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, who is committed to continuous improvement;

AND WHEREAS NPCA has consistently met provincial permitting review standards 96% of the time;

AND WHEREAS watershed municipalities benefit from having conservation authority staff available locally that know our watersheds, municipal staff, communities, Indigenous community representatives, developers, consultants, and environmental non-government agencies;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved:

THAT the NPCA Board of Directors (“the Board”) does not support the proposed “Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority” boundary configuration outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257 as the proposal lacks sufficient justification, would significantly diminish local governance, and fails to recognize the effectiveness and efficiencies already achieved within existing watershed-based models; and

AND THAT the Board affirms that large-scale regional consolidation is unnecessary, would introduce substantial transition costs, and would divert resources away from frontline watershed programs.

AND THAT the Board further asserts that restructuring at this scale would erode local decision-making, weaken municipal accountability, and disrupt long-standing community partnerships that are central to delivering responsive watershed management;

AND THAT the Board urges the Province to strengthen centralized standards, resources, and communication rather than undertaking broad structural amalgamation and to provide sustainable, predictable provincial funding across conservation authorities—particularly where gaps exist—to enable local conservation authorities to advance ongoing digitization and systemization work that has already resulted in improved efficiency and consistency in recent years;

AND THAT the Board requests that the Ministry engage meaningfully and collaboratively with affected municipalities, conservation authorities, and local First Nations before advancing any consolidation, to ensure that any changes reflect both local needs and the practical realities of implementation;



December 5, 2025

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

AND THAT the Board believes that the Province's proposed new online permitting portal can be implemented within the existing conservation authority framework without requiring structural amalgamation;

AND THAT this resolution be included as part of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation submission to the Environmental Registry of Ontario and forwarded to Niagara Region, the lower-tier municipalities within Niagara Region, City of Hamilton, Haldimand County, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Six Nations of the Grand River, Niagara Peninsula Source Protection Committee, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Conservation Ontario, local area MPPs, and all Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

CARRIED

A copy of the submission for NPCA Comments on ERO #025-1257 has been attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Melanie Davis
Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

cc: Leilani Lee-Yates, Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer



3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
 Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
 905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

December 5, 2025

Public Input Coordinator
 MECP Conservation and Source Protection Branch
 300 Water Street North Tower, 5th Floor
 Peterborough, ON
 K9J 3C7
 Canada

Sent Via Email: ca.office@ontario.ca

RE: Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257 – Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed boundaries and criteria for the regional consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities (CAs). On Nov. 27, 2025, Bill 68, *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No.2)* received Royal Assent and the amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* allow for the establishment of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA). It is our understanding the OPCA is intended to:

- Streamline and standardize service delivery by setting clear, province-wide performance standards;
- Support the consistent application of provincial standards for assessing, managing and mitigating flood risks across Ontario, including managing centralized data, updated floodplain mapping and overseeing improved maintenance of CA-managed infrastructure like dams, to manage flood and other natural hazards;
- Develop a single, digital permitting platform to provide a faster, more predictable approvals process and improved customer service, while maintaining high environmental standards;
- Develop clear performance goals of CAs to report on annually to support continuous improvements; and
- Oversee the implementation of a regional watershed-based consolidation of CAs, following consultation with the public, municipalities, and other partners including Indigenous communities.

Further, on November 7, 2025, the Province posted a policy proposal to consolidate Ontario’s 36 CAs into seven Regional Conservation Authorities (RCAs) on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) and is seeking feedback on proposed boundaries and the criteria applied to inform the proposed boundaries, with a deadline of December 22, 2025. The seven proposed RCAs are Lake Erie RCA, Huron-Superior RCA, Western Lake Ontario RCA, Central Lake Ontario RCA, Eastern Lake Ontario RCA, St. Lawrence RCA, and Northeastern Ontario RCA.

Under this proposal, NPCA would fall under the Western Lake Ontario RCA, along with Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA), Conservation Halton (CH) and Credit Valley Conservation (CVC). The boundaries of the Western Lake Ontario RCA extend along the western Lake Ontario shoreline from Niagara through Halton and Peel, encompassing urban and rural watersheds that support the Greater Toronto-Hamilton corridor. The RCA is primarily based on the western portion of the Northern Lake Ontario and Niagara River Secondary Watershed.



3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
 Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
 905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

The proposed Western Lake Ontario RCA would also include the Niagara Peninsula Source Protection Area, Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region and Credit Valley Source Protection Area (which belongs to the Credit Valley – Toronto and Region – Central Lake Ontario Source Protection Region).

NPCA staff and Board of Directors appreciate the engagement sessions organized by Todd McCarthy, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Hassaan Basit, Chief Conservation Executive, and MECP staff to provide further information on the provincial proposal and role of OPCA. NPCA senior leadership has engaged with NPCA and municipal staff and reached out to Indigenous partners (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), Six Nations of the Grand River, and Niagara Region Métis Council) to inform them of the provincial proposal and how we may continue to work together during any transition process. NPCA was circulated comments prepared by MCFN staff, dated Dec. 1, 2025, and we agree with and support their comments and concerns.

While we support the proposed provincial investments in technology, standardization and modernization, the proposed RCA framework would create complexities and risks to local municipal representation and decision-making, local expertise, and delivery of programs and services. Given the proposed criteria and boundaries for the RCAs and the uncertainties and risks associated with the proposal, the NPCA does not support the proposed RCA framework. Comments and concerns related to the proposal are highlighted below. Detailed responses to the questions included in the ERO posting are provided in Appendix I. NPCA Board of Directors Resolution FA-131-2025 is appended as Appendix II.

Justification for a Regional Conservation Authority Framework

While it is understood that OPCA and the proposed RCA framework are intended to help get shovels in the ground faster on building homes and other local infrastructure projects while strengthening the vital role CAs play in managing watersheds and protecting communities from floods and natural hazards, CAs have not benefited from reviewing any assessments or analyses that have determined the need to restructure Ontario's current CA framework. With the various amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the standardization of regulated areas and development permit requirements through *Ontario Regulation 41/24*, CAs have been responsive to implement legislative changes and improve policies and processes through a coordinated approach.

For the NPCA and stemming from the 2018 Auditor General of Ontario report of the NPCA, we have undertaken tremendous work over the last several years to improve our governance, operations, policies and processes to strengthen the delivery of programs and services. NPCA has implemented all 20 recommendations within the Auditor General report and is focused on continuous improvements through updating planning and permitting policies, updating corporate policies, developing new guiding strategies, enhancing procedures, and implementing other modernization initiatives, including investments in software and data management. We have set an example for how CAs can implement best management practices and we remain committed to improving the delivery of our programs and services for the health and well-being of our local watersheds and communities.

Currently, NPCA is meeting provincial government set timelines for issuing development permits 96% of the time and continues to coordinate with municipal partners and developers while taking a solutions-focused approach to improving service delivery. We have invested in a permit management system, CityView, and will soon launch an online portal for permit submissions and tracking. We have also been investing in creating new and updated floodplain mapping as well as maintaining our online regulation mapping and open data



3350 Merrittville Hwy. Unit 9
 Thorold Ontario L2V 4Y6
 905.788.3135 | info@npca.ca | npca.ca

portal. For NPCA, it would be more beneficial to have clearer goals and guidelines that are evidence-based to drive further modernization and streamlining than restructure the CA framework. With the current CA framework in place, OPCA could provide added value by coordinating future enhancements across the CAs.

Governance of Regional Conservation Authorities

The proposed Western Lake Ontario RCA would cover approximately 490,000 ha of land and a population of nearly two million people. The new regional watershed-based boundaries would include portions of five upper-tier municipalities (Niagara, Halton, Peel, Dufferin and Wellington), three single-tier municipalities (Hamilton, Haldimand, and Toronto), and 25 lower-tier municipalities. Currently, the four governing Boards of Directors include a total of 53 members. While all four CAs offer similar watershed-based programs and services, they are scaled to unique local community needs and watershed management objectives.

The Niagara Peninsula watershed alone spans over 242,000 ha of land, includes 15 municipalities with approximately 480,000 residents. The watershed encompasses approximately 90 km of the Lake Erie shoreline, approximately 50 km of the Lake Ontario shoreline, the Niagara River, portions of the Niagara Escarpment, and the northernmost range of the Carolinian Life Zone. The Welland Canal supports cargo shipping between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, bypassing the Niagara Escarpment and Niagara Falls.

There are nearly 5,000 km of watercourses in NPCA's watershed jurisdiction that are part of three major drainage basins: Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and the Niagara River. Numerous streams, rivers, and creeks, such as Twelve Mile Creek and Twenty Mile Creek, flow into Lake Ontario, while the Welland River and other tributaries drain into the Niagara River, a critical waterway connecting the two Great Lakes. The Lake Erie basin includes the southern portion of the watershed, with its own network of smaller streams and wetlands. Together, these interconnected water systems form the hydrological foundation of NPCA's jurisdiction.

In general comparison to the three other CAs within the proposed Western Lake Ontario RCA, the NPCA has the largest watershed jurisdiction with the least number of staff, and smallest operating budget. In terms of land holdings, NPCA and CVC have a similar size of CA-owned lands, followed by CH and then HCA with the largest land holdings. With the two Great Lakes Shorelines, the NPCA jurisdiction represents the largest length of coastal shorelines and communities.

For the Western Lake Ontario RCA, going from the current combined oversight of 53 Board representatives to anything less will be challenging and risks losing diverse voices at the table. It is difficult to understand how the RCA Board would result in more efficient decision-making with less costs incurred by funding municipalities. Further, the functional separation from local communities risks the 70-80 years of relationships and trust that have been built up in each CA watershed.

Consolidation of Assets and Liabilities

Each CA is an independent corporate entity that manages its own budgets, expenditures, reserves, infrastructure and landholdings. Further, each CA within the proposed Western Lake Ontario RCA has its own Foundation, which are also independent corporate entities with the focused mandates of raising funds for the projects and programs of their CAs.

As independent corporations, the four CAs within the Western Lake Ontario RCA have their own internal financial processes and systems, contracts with banking institutions for financial and investment services, and financial assets and liabilities (e.g. debt servicing). The process to consolidate assets and liabilities of the four CAs and their Foundations would be complex and lengthy. A cost-benefit analysis and legal review of such a merger should be completed before any consideration of implementing an RCA framework.

Amalgamating landownership and land management will be equally complex. Legal instruments such as land titles, surveys, easement agreements, etc. will need to be reviewed in detail, and the costs and legal implications assessed prior to any CA consolidation.

Further, CAs are actively increasing self-generated revenues through sources such as user-fees, plan review and permit fees, facility rentals, annual park passes, camping, and external grant funding to decrease reliance on municipal levies. Operating and Capital Budgets to deliver watershed programs and services are established based on the performance of self-generated revenues. Should the Provincial Government move forward with an RCA framework, any self-generated revenues, municipal levies and financial assets must be committed to the jurisdiction from which they were collected.

Costs to Regional Conservation Authorities and Municipalities

NPCA is concerned that the proposed RCA framework will result in increased costs incurred by the RCAs and their municipal funding partners. The OPCA funding model allows a provincial agency to charge back fees to RCAs for providing support services to implement agency directives and can cost apportion operating costs to RCAs. Before the OPCA is established, a cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken to demonstrate that there will be no increased costs incurred by CAs and their funding municipalities and specify the value-added services of the Agency.

Costs associated with consolidation would include without limitation, legal services, harmonizing HR systems and policies, harmonizing salaries and benefits, integrating IT and GIS services, harmonizing services and delivery processes, equipment and facility upgrades, communications and marketing, additional debt service to cover costs, and increased levies. While some costs would be one-time transition related costs, others will be ongoing costs to maintain operations and infrastructure of the larger corporation.

The participating municipalities within NPCA's jurisdiction (Niagara, Hamilton and Haldimand) fund approximately 52% of the annual operating budget of NPCA through municipal levies, compared to the annual s. 39 natural hazard provincial transfer payment of approximately 0.5%. The remaining revenues are obtained through self-generated program revenues (27%), federal grant funding (6.5%), provincially funded programs such as Drinking Water Source Protection Program and the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (3%), and other sources through cost-sharing programs and fundraising efforts (11%). NPCA's increased self-generated revenue efforts has resulted in a decreased reliance on municipal contributions since 2021. NPCA's ability to generate additional revenues or increase dependence on municipal levies to cover costs incurred resulting from the transition to an RCA framework will be very limited and resources would be diverted away from front-line natural hazard and watershed management programs that support local communities.

As noted, we support and welcome renewed provincial investment in CAs to enhance process improvements, IT transformations and modernization efforts. It is recommended that the province immediately reassess the s. 39 natural hazard transfer payments to provide sustainable, predictable provincial funding across conservation

authorities—particularly where gaps exist—to enable local CAs to advance ongoing digitization and systemization work that has already resulted in improved efficiency and consistency in recent years.

Risks to Delivery of Local Watershed Programs and Services

With the additional administrative oversight of the OPCA, RCA Boards representing larger and more diverse communities and potentially complex budgeting processes, there is a serious concern that our dedicated expert staff will be unable to deliver the same quality of programs and services that our communities expect. The NPCA recommends that the province pause any further implementation of OPCA and consideration of an RCA framework, and instead assess the use of legislative, regulatory and incentive tools that are already available to achieve the desired standardization and modernization of CAs.

Should the Province decide to move forward with the RCA framework, it will be imperative that existing staff complements be maintained, and RCAs can fill roles that will enable the continuation of current programs and services, to ensure continuity of front-line services without disruption, including commitments under agreements with our member municipalities. It is worth noting that the NPCA is a unionized work environment. The Collective Agreement between the NPCA and OPSEU Local 212 expires at the end of 2025 and bargaining is expected to begin in the Spring of 2026.

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in discussions with the Minister, Chief Conservation Executive, and MECP staff and provide constructive input to ensure that any future framework continues to address the unique needs of our watersheds and achieves an effective balance between watershed protection and housing goals.

Should further amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and related regulations to implement OPCA and the RCAs be proposed, we would welcome the opportunity to provide further comments related to policy reform.

Sincerely,



John Metcalfe
Chair, NPCA Board of Directors



Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

What do you see as key factors to support a successful transition and outcome of regional conservation authority consolidation?

Theme	Comments
Preserve and Promote Local Institutional Knowledge	<p>A transitional framework that incorporates and promotes the involvement of CA front-line staff is essential to ensure localized expertise and input is built-in from the beginning. To maintain and enhance service delivery there must not be any job losses during and post-transition to an RCA framework.</p> <p>Position needs and skills may be specific in each CA based on the local watershed objectives, and as such, the mandate for the structure and/or design of roles must be maintained at the local CA level.</p>
Preserve Municipal Governance and Decision-Making	<p>Consolidation of CAs poses risks to local, grassroots initiatives, it is imperative that local presence is maintained and strengthened to keep our communities informed throughout transitional phases.</p> <p>To further preserve local decision-making, transparency and clear delineations of authority of the OPCA and RCAs need to be established and communicated effectively.</p>
Phasing Transitional Periods with a focus on Standardization before Amalgamations	<p>Many areas of focus proposed for the OPCA (i.e. province-wide permitting platform and digital innovations) are initiatives that could be established across conservation authorities under their current structures.</p> <p>Software and standard processes can be CA lead and be prioritized, followed by amalgamations with existing local CA Boards in place to oversee their own amalgamations.</p> <p>Preventing transformation saturation will ensure these priority initiatives are implemented efficiently and successfully.</p>
Consider alignment of Source Protection Boundaries	<p>Source Protection Regions were identified as a key factor in establishing proposed boundaries for regional conservation authorities.</p>

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

Theme	Comments
	<p>The proposed regional consolidation has the Niagara Peninsula Source Protection Authority merge with the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region and the Credit Valley Source Protection Area (which belongs to the Credit Valley – Toronto and Region – Central Lake Ontario Source Protection Region). The Niagara Peninsula is the only standalone Source Protection Authority included in the Western Lake Ontario RCA along with two Source Protection Regions.</p> <p>If the regional consolidation of the conservation authorities proceeds as proposed, there are several potential upcoming changes to the Source Protection Program as a result.</p> <p>Some of these potential changes could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of 19 Source Protection Regions/Areas down to 7 to match the proposed regional conservation authorities. • Subsequent reduction of 19 Source Protection Committees down to 7. • Restructuring of Source Protection Committees and their member allocations. • Consolidation of Source Protection Plans and Assessment Reports. • Source Protection Plan policy review and restructuring. <p>Should the Province proceed with a RCA framework, it is recommended that the boundaries of the RCAs align with the boundaries of the 19 Source Protection Regions/Areas.</p>
Clear Communication and Collaboration on Transition Frameworks	Engaging appropriate staff from RCAs through targeted working groups would ensure subject matter experts co-develop components of transitions that relate to their work.

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

What opportunities or benefits may come from a regional conservation authority framework?

Theme	Comments
Provincial investments to enhance conservation authority operations while maintaining recognition of unique watershed characteristics / challenges	There are opportunities to enhance conservation authority operations with consistent policies and procedures while maintaining recognition for the diversity of landscapes across Ontario. However, enhancements can be coordinated through the OPCA under the current CA framework.
Investing in and empowering CA strengths through a standardized framework.	<p>Ensuring CAs have access to similar expertise and resources across Ontario is welcomed, but priority should be given to implementing changes where CAs have identified demonstrable need.</p> <p>Given that CAs currently meet Provincial Government legislated permit review timelines 90% or more of the time, the proposed changes would likely result in diminishing returns for the taxpayer. The benefits, therefore, would come from avoiding the many risks of moving quickly without evidence of needed changes and real measurements.</p>
A provincially sponsored integrated watershed management program	Provincial guidance and sponsorship of the next generation of integrated watershed management programs is welcomed to support economic and environmental resilience across Ontario, and conservation authorities are uniquely positioned to deliver these programs alongside their natural hazard mandate. There is an opportunity to reduce long-term costs by preventing flood damage, erosion, and infrastructure failures while protecting property values by maintaining healthy watersheds and greenspaces that attract growth in the community. It remains unclear how an RCA framework would be more beneficial than coordinating integrated watershed programs through the OPCA under the current CA framework.

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

Do you have suggestions for how governance could be structured at the regional conservation authority level, including suggestions around board size, make-up and the municipal representative appointment process?

Theme	Comments
Ensure Board composition of RCAs accounts for the vast complexities and size of jurisdictions	<p>Current governance structures rely on population and property value-based approaches to determine municipal representation on Boards that would not capture the needs of the larger RCA watershed. This would result in the largest municipal jurisdictions having disproportionately low rates of representation.</p> <p>Under the proposed RCA structure, it is imperative that governance models reflect the size of jurisdictions served to ensure that all urban and rural areas are appropriately represented on the Board.</p> <p>A “one-size fits all” approach may not work. It is recommended that the OPCA consult with the municipalities within each RCA to determine the best formula/methodology for ensuring local representation balanced with ensuring efficiency of the Board.</p> <p>A set of core competencies should be developed to ensure RCA Board members have the desired experience and expertise to make local decisions related to CA mandates and responsibilities. Further, the Ministry or OPCA should provide a Board orientation and training session for each term of service.</p>
Municipal appointments must be maintained	<p>Participating municipalities provide substantial levy support to conservation authorities and should maintain their autonomy to appoint their allotted number of board members. In addition to elected official appointments, citizen and Indigenous community representation should be included.</p> <p>With changes to the <i>Planning Act</i> regarding removal of planning responsibilities from upper-tier municipalities there is an opportunity to explore how to best align RCA governance with local municipal planning responsibilities.</p>

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

Theme	Comments
Consider transitional supports for newly established RCA Boards	<p>If RCA Boards are enacted after the 2026 municipal election, new Board members will be facing a plethora of information as they join a Board for brand-new institutions.</p> <p>The Province should explore establishing transitional supports to ensure newly established RCA Boards have institutional knowledge readily available for a pre-determined transitional period.</p> <p>This could include: extending current board terms for 2 years to support the RCA, appointing staff and/or Indigenous representatives</p>
Maintain local watershed offices with independent delegated authority to serve local communities	<p>The current CA offices should remain as local watershed offices with delegated responsibilities from the RCA Boards to ensure the continuous delivery of local programs and services, such as permit approvals, procurement and contract approvals, recruitment and management of staff, executing agreements and binding the authority, and preparing operating and capital budgets.</p> <p>Senior leadership of local offices could coordinate across the RCA through staff committees and report to the RCA Board or Committees, such as an Executive Committee, Governance Committee, or Finance Committee.</p> <p>The option to form public advisory committees or ad-hoc committee at the local level should remain.</p> <p>Equally important to maintain are the current local CA Foundations and their Boards who connect with donors and the community to raise funds to directly support the work of CAs. Foundations are a key source of revenue for non-mandatory programs and services, and have built community trust and confidence over several decades. Foundations must continue to operate without disruption.</p>

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

Do you have suggestions on how to maintain a transparent and consultative budgeting process across member municipalities within a regional conservation authority?

Theme	Comments
Prioritize Municipal Engagement in Budget Development	<p>A transparent and consultative budgeting process should clearly outline the scope of services and timelines for delivery, with measurable outcomes that are co-developed to meet the unique needs of participating municipalities.</p> <p>Maintain meaningful local representation directly in the budget process so that each local CA has clear input and influence, and local priorities drive levy discussions.</p> <p>Respecting local special levies/funding and municipal service agreements so that locally funded initiatives—such as land acquisition, land management, trail maintenance, restoration projects, or capital works—remain under local control and cannot be redirected without municipal consent.</p> <p>Using a clear, standardized regional budget framework in which each local CA develops its own budget in alignment with local municipalities, and these are then consolidated at the regional level for transparency and oversight.</p>
Consolidation-related Costs must be funded by the province.	<p>NPCA has made significant investments in software, systems and process improvements in recent years. It would be unreasonable for municipal partners to shoulder the cost of Agency-directed initiatives without involvement in the decision-making process.</p> <p>It is recommended that the OPCA fully fund the transitional costs and not download those costs to the municipalities who fund CAs. Costs related to lost opportunity and investments made by CAs should be accounted for and supported by the OPCA. Further, it is recommended that there is an annual audit of OPCA performed, versus the initial 3-year reporting schedule.</p>

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

Theme	Comments
Funds generated by watershed jurisdictions must be retained in their communities	<p>Participating municipalities need to be consulted on any changes and remain confident that the apportionment model is sustainable and equitable.</p> <p>Any self-generated revenues and financial assets rolled into newly established RCAs must be committed to the jurisdiction they were collected from.</p> <p>Ensuring full disclosure and due diligence on assets, liabilities, capital obligations/asset management for all local CAs before any apportionment or levy model is adopted.</p>

Appendix I – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Comments on ERO #025-1257

How can regional conservation authorities maintain and strengthen relationships with local communities and stakeholders?

Theme	Comments
Proactive engagement and awareness initiatives is critical to mitigate risks of disconnection with communities	<p>Locally relevant communications and brand identities are at risk of being lost; communication must be consistent and proactive to ensure interested parties stay informed.</p> <p>There are concerns that RCAs would erode long-standing working relationships that have enabled the collaborative, grassroots approach that underpins NPCAs programs and services.</p> <p>A very cautious implementation process that engages with local communities and interested parties would reduce risk and disruption of programs and services.</p>
Co-development of Transitional Period Phases	<p>Implementation of the transition to RCAs will require a resource shift to focus on consolidating organizational structures, municipal relationships, financial systems, software, and internal processes, pulling resources away from providing programs and services to the communities CAs serve.</p> <p>Co-developing these transition periods will enable CAs and participating municipalities to determine what priorities would best serve their communities now, and how they will get there.</p> <p>It is recommended that the current Board structures for each local CA office remains as is and the amalgamation of Boards is formulated and lead by the local Board representatives. This would provide a sufficient transition period at which time the new RCA Boards would take effect after the 2030 municipal elections. This would mitigate operational disruptions and build trust and confidence in the new governance model.</p>
Ensure responsive representation and accessible staff remain in the communities they serve	Local offices, staff, and programs are essential for timely permitting, service delivery, and effective stewardship. Delivering on community needs is at risk without a known local presence.

GRAND ERIE

PUBLIC HEALTH

GRAND ERIE BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES

Wednesday, October 15, 2025 9:30 AM

Boardroom 422/Hybrid

194 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, ON

Members Present:

Amy Martin, Norfolk County (virtual)
 John Bell, Brant County
 Shelley Ann Bentley, Haldimand County
 Michael Bodnar, Provincial Appointee
 Susan Brown, Provincial Appointee (virtual)
 Kim Huffman, Norfolk County (virtual)
 Maria Kinkel, Provincial Appointee
 Joy O'Donnell, Provincial Appointee (virtual)
 Rose Sicoli, City of Brantford

Staff Present:

Dr. Jason Malenfant, Medical Officer of Health
 Sarah Page, Chief Executive Officer
 Michelle Regan, Chief Nursing Officer
 Sarah Titmus, Director, Public Health (virtual)
 Brad Stark, Director, Finance
 Katie Greene, Director, Human Resources
 Robyn Mitchell, Manager, Human Resources
 Gary Williams, Director, Communications & Strategic Initiatives
 Alexey Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards
 Hilary Wren-Atilola, Director, Healthy Communities
 April Parkinson, Executive Assistant (Recorder)
 Nicole Chambers, Board Clerk & Privacy Officer

1. Call to Order

Chair A. Martin called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. Conflict of Interest

Chair A. Martin reminded members to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, if applicable. Member S. Bentley declared a conflict of interest regarding in-camera agenda item 8.2: Confidential Investigation Discussion.

3. Additions to/Approval of Agenda

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That the October 15, 2025 Board of Health agenda be approved, as presented.

Carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. September 17, 2025 Board of Health Meeting Minutes

4.2. September 17, 2025 Board of Health In-Camera Meeting Minutes – Confidential

Moved By: Member J. O'Donnell

Seconded by: Member S. Brown

That the following Board of Health minutes, be approved:

- September 17, 2025 Board of Health Meeting Minutes
- September 17, 2025 Board of Health In-Camera Meeting Minutes – Confidential

Carried.

Member R. Sicoli joined the meeting at 9:32 a.m.

5. Standing Reports & Business Arising from Previous Minutes

5.1. Report from the Medical Officer of Health

Dr. J. Malenfant presented his report, “Building Trust, Openness and a Positive Culture” as provided in the agenda. Key updates included the draft of new Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) effective January 2026 and the declaration of the end of the provincial measles outbreak as of October 6, 2025. The launch of the new Grand Erie Public Health brand is scheduled for November 20, 2025.

Members asked questions regarding the status of the recording of meetings, as well as the effect from the revised OPHS from an organizational perspective. It was noted that the contents are confidential as directed by the Ministry. Direction was provided to the MOH to provide a confidential draft for Board to review in-camera.

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That Item 5.1, Report from the Medical Officer of Health be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

6. New Business & Program Reports

6.1. Community Health Profile Report

A. Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards, presented the report as outlined in the agenda. He noted that the organization is developing a dashboard to visually summarize the data contained within the report.

Members engaged in discussion and posed questions regarding various health trends and areas of concern, including high rates of lung cancer in non-smokers, tobacco consumption, respiratory illnesses, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), food insecurity and low levels of physical activity. Questions were raised about the relationship between injury rates and workplace safety, as well as the programs offered by GEPH to address issues such as food insecurity.

Discussion also addressed potential opportunities for the Board to collaborate with existing organizations, including the Canadian Mental Health Association's Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) and local Indigenous health units. Members further inquired about possible links between geography and rates of cancer and other adverse health outcomes.

Additional concerns highlighted by Members included maternal mental health, postpartum depression, vaping, Lyme disease, falls and alcohol consumption.

Moved By: Member J. O'Donnell
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That Report 2025-056, Community Profile Report, be received for information; and that staff be directed to reformat the report to include a visual presentation of the data, and to return the revised report to the Board of Health for the purpose of priority setting.

Carried.

Member S. Brown left the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

6.2. Program Harmonization and Balanced Scorecard Report

H. Wren-Atilola, Director, Healthy Communities and A. Babayan, Director, Foundational Standards presented the report as outlined in the agenda. Members inquired about succession planning, staff morale, program and wage harmonization, and the optimization of processes related to fleet, travel and procurement. It was noted that the original intent of the Board was to re-invest any cost savings. Members noted that GEPH should recognize regional differences and adapt programs accordingly.

In response to a Member's inquiry regarding the primary challenge in the harmonization process, H. Wren-Atilola noted that phase one is currently underway. She emphasized that engaging with people is the most significant challenge, as they are central to the process and it must be done right the first time. Meaningful engagement takes time, and transparency and communication remain essential throughout.

Member S. Brown returned to the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Moved By: Member K. Huffman
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That Report 2025-057: Program Harmonization and Balanced Scorecard Report: Progress Update be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

7. Financial Report

7.1. 2026 Operating Budget Report

B. Stark, Director, Finance, presented the 2026 Budget for Grand Erie Public Health for consideration and approval. Members inquired about salary harmonization and merger-funded positions. It was noted that the 2026 budget is contingent on current programming – if the new OPHS may alter our provision of services which may have a result on our staffing level.

Members recommended that B. Stark highlight Schedule D, which presents a valuable summary of the cost savings, to the municipal partners when presenting the budget.

Moved By: Member R. Sicoli
Seconded by: Member S. Bentley

That that the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health receives Report 2025-057: Grand Erie Public Health 2026 Budget for informational purposes, and approves the 2026 budget for Grand Erie Public Health;

And further that a 3-year pro forma budget for the years 2026 to 2028 that represents the operating position of Grand Erie Public Health, excluding merger or transition supports and levy harmonization funding, and including best predictions for salary harmonization scenarios, be provided to the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health for consideration no later than November 30th, 2025;

And further that staff be directed to identify reoccurring savings on the upside of \$500,000, that can take place by fiscal year 2027, to be provided to the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health for consideration no later than March 31st, 2026;

And that staff be directed to table any decisions regarding service level and program additions, enhancements or changes requiring Board approval until the Board of Health for Grand Erie Public Health has considered the new strategic plan and has set priorities and further direction; and,

And that a copy of this motion be provided to the Councils of the City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County and Norfolk County.”

Carried.

The Board of Health recessed at 11:32 a.m. and reconvened at 11:42 a.m.

8. In Camera Session

Moved By: Member K. Huffman
Seconded by: Member M. Bodnar

That the Grand Erie Board of Health meeting move In Camera at 11:42 a.m. to consider the following:

8.1. Confidential Employment Matter

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees; and Section 239(2)(d) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to labour relations or employee negotiations.

8.2. Confidential Investigation Discussion

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.

8.3. Confidential Legal Matters

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees; and Section 239(2)(d) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to labour relations or employee negotiations.

8.4. Confidential Legal Matters

Pursuant to Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, as the matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees; and in accordance with Section 1.6(d) of the Board of Health Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Policy, as the matter pertains to the right to appeal to imposed sanctions.

Carried.

The Board of Health convened in Closed Session at 11:42 a.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 12:36 a.m.

Chair A. Martin noted that staff were to proceed in accordance with the direction provided in Closed Session, and that there were four motions which resulted from Closed Session.

Moved By: Member R. Sicoli
Seconded by: Member J. O'Donnell

That staff proceed as directed in Closed Session regarding Item 8.1 Confidential Employment Matter.

Carried.

Moved By: Member R. Sicoli
Seconded by: Member J. Bell

That the Board acknowledge receipt of the Integrity Commissioner's report for Haldimand County, prepared by D.G. Boghosian and dated September 8, 2025;

And that in accordance with Section 1.6(a) of the *Grand Erie Board of Health Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Policy*, the Board issue a formal written

reprimand and request that Member S. Bentley provide a written apology to the Grand Erie Board of Health, to be received prior to November 19, 2025;

And that the Integrity Commissioner's report be published on the Grand Erie Public Health website for public access.

Carried.

Moved By: Member M. Kinkel
Seconded by: Member J. Bell

That Report 2025-053: Confidential Legal Matters (Employment) be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

Members J. O'Donnell and K. Huffman left the meeting at 12:24 p.m. and did not return.

Moved By: Member J. Bell
Seconded by: Member R. Sicoli

That following a review of an investigation concerning a breach of the Grand Erie Board of Health Code of Conduct, the Board of Health affirms its decision of July 16, 2025, to bar Member D. McCreary from participating in all Board of Health and committee meetings until further notice, and to request that Member McCreary submit his resignation in writing within thirty (30) days; and, should the Board not receive his resignation within that timeframe, staff be directed to prepare and issue correspondence to the City of Brantford requesting the recall and replacement of the appointment;

And further that the Board direct staff to formally notify the Member's appointing body, the City of Brantford, of this decision and to provide all official correspondence and relevant documentation pertaining to the matter.

Carried.

9. Correspondence

Moved By: Member M. Bodnar
Seconded by: Member J. Bell

That the Board receive Member Bodnar's report dated Sept 16, 2025 for informational purposes;

And that staff be directed to assist in the completion of the Board Skills Matrix questionnaire.

Moved By: Member S. Brown
Seconded by: Member M. Bodnar

That the remainder of the correspondence included in the agenda package be received for informational purposes.

Carried.

10. Questions/Announcements

Nothing to report.

11. Future Agenda Items

The following items will be considered at the November 19, 2025 Board of Health Meeting:

- Facilities Master Plan
- Oral Health Program Update
- Environmental Health Program Update
- Healthy Growth & Development Program Update
- Board of Health Procedural By-law

12. Next Meeting Date

The next regular Board of Health meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2025. The following meeting scheduled for December 17, 2025, will take place at the Call of the Chair.

13. Adjournment

Moved By: Member M. Kinel
Seconded by: Member S. Brown

That the Board of Health meeting be adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

Carried.

'Original Signed By'
 Chair

'Original Signed By'
 Board of Health Clerk



COUNCIL INFORMATION PACKAGE

Friday, September 5, 2025

	Pages
1. Letter from the City of Welland re: Call for Reforms Following Heinous Crime in Welland.	2 - 5
2. City of Port Colborne re: Support "Elect Respect" Campaign.	6 - 6
3. Letter from Niagara Transit re: NT Q2 2025 Statistics.	7 - 29
4. Letter from the Town of Cobalt re: Firefighter Certification Requirements.	30 - 31
5. Letter from the City of Brantford re: Advocacy for Provincial Scrap Metal Legislation and Bail System Reform, 2025.	32 - 33
6. Letter from the Township of Southgate re: Resolution of Support - City of St. Catharines - Elect Respect Pledge.	34 - 35



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
FRANK CAMPION**

60 East Main Street,
Welland, Ontario
L3B 3X4
Phone 905-735-1700
Fax 905-735-1543

September 4, 2025

The Right Honourable Prime Minister Mark Carney
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Re: Call for Reforms Following Heinous Crime in Welland

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

On behalf of the City of Welland, I write to you with a heavy and aggrieved heart following the recent brutal sexual assault of a three-year-old child in our community. This appalling act has shaken the community to its core, leaving families devastated and our entire city demanding swift and decisive action to ensure such an atrocity can never happen again. While no legislation can undo the profound trauma inflicted, this horrific crime demands that we confront the shortcomings of our justice system in protecting society's most vulnerable. I therefore urge your government to take immediate and decisive action by considering:

- **Reform to bail and sentencing provisions** to ensure that individuals charged with, or convicted of, violent sexual crimes, especially when involving minors, face stricter consequences, with no opportunity for early release in cases of extreme brutality.
- **Elimination of parole for heinous offences of this nature**, ensuring that offenders serve their full sentences without exception.
- **More stringent use and enforcement of the National Sex Offender Registry**, with mechanisms to better protect communities by ensuring timely awareness of offenders residing in their midst.

Canadians must have absolute confidence that our justice system places public safety—especially the protection of children—above all else. Communities like Welland cannot and should not live under the shadow of legislative or enforcement gaps that risk allowing such offenders to strike again. Mr. Prime Minister, I must impress upon you that strengthening these protections at the national level is not so much a request, but a collective responsibility that must be met without delay. Our residents, and indeed all Canadians, demand the assurance that every possible measure is being taken to safeguard our children.

This is an urgent call to action, and I expect your government's leadership to match the gravity of this moment. I stand ready to work with you in advancing the decisive reforms our communities so desperately need.

Sincerely,



Frank Campion
Mayor

C.c.: Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
Honourable Gary Anandasangaree, Minister of Public Safety
Fred Davies, Member of Parliament



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
FRANK CAMPION**

60 East Main Street,
Welland, Ontario
L3B 3X4
Phone 905-735-1700
Fax 905-735-1543

September 4, 2025

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Re: Call for Reforms Following Heinous Crime in Welland

Dear Premier Ford,

On behalf of the City of Welland, I write to you with a heavy heart following the recent brutal sexual assault of a three-year-old child in our community. This devastating act has shocked and horrified our residents, leaving families shaken and demanding urgent action to ensure such a tragedy is never repeated.

While no legislation can erase the trauma inflicted, this horrific crime compels us to reflect on the inadequacy of our current justice system in protecting the most vulnerable. Specifically, I urge your government to consider:

- **Reform to bail and sentencing provisions** to ensure that individuals charged with, or convicted of, violent sexual crimes face stricter consequences, with no opportunity for early release in cases of extreme brutality.
- **Elimination of parole for heinous offences of this nature**, ensuring that offenders serve their full sentences without exception.
- **More stringent use and enforcement of the National Sex Offender Registry**, with mechanisms to better protect communities by ensuring timely awareness of offenders residing in their midst.

Canadians must be confident that our justice system prioritizes public safety above all else, and particularly the safety of children. Communities like Welland cannot bear the weight of knowing that gaps in legislation or enforcement might allow such offenders to harm again.

Premier Ford, I ask for your leadership in strengthening these protections at the national level. Our residents, and indeed all Canadians, deserve to know that every measure possible is being taken to safeguard our children.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you and your government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Frank Campion', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Frank Campion
Mayor

C.c.: Honourable Doug Downey, Attorney General
Sam Oosterhoff, Member of Provincial Parliament



PORT COLBORNE

Legislative Services

Municipal Offices: 66 Charlotte Street
Port Colborne, Ontario L3K 3C8 • www.portcolborne.ca

T 905.228.8031 F 905.834.5746
E charlotte.madden@portcolborne.ca

September 3, 2025

Sent via Email: Ann-Marie.Norio@niagararegion.ca

Ann-Marie Norio
Office of the Regional Clerk, Niagara Region
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way,
P.O. Box 1042
Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

Dear Ms. Norio:

Re: City of Port Colborne Supports the Resolution from the Niagara Region, Niagara Regional Council regarding “Elect Respect” Campaign

Please be advised that, at its meeting of August 26, 2025 the Council of The Corporation of the City of Port Colborne supported the resolution from Niagara Regional Council regarding the “Elect Respect” Campaign.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Madden
City Clerk

cc: Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Ontario's Big City Mayors
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Local Members of Parliament
Local Members of Provincial Parliament
Niagara Regional Police
Ontario Provincial Police
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Local Area Municipalities



September 2, 2025

Mayor and Council
City of Welland
60 East Main St.
Welland, ON
L3B 3X4

Dear Mayor Campion and Council,

I am pleased to provide the 2025 Q2 statistics from our commingled services. We provide this data to our Board, Regional Council, and local municipalities on an ongoing basis. Building on the outcomes and observations reported in Q1, this update highlights ridership trends, operational insights, and service developments specific to the second quarter of 2025.

During Q2 2025, the commingled service provided a total of 65,171 trips. This represents a 3% increase compared to the 2023 baseline data, though a 12.7% decrease relative to the same period in 2024. In comparison to Q1 2025, which realized a total of 70,856 trips, Q2 serviced approximately 435 fewer trips per week on average. While seasonality may be a factor, the presence of user trip denials suggests the demand exists.

Specialized transit ridership totaled 11,039 trips, representing a 4% increase over the RFP baseline and a 19.4% decrease compared to Q2 2024. However, due to the comingled integrated service, registered specialized customers were able to book 2,581 local microtransit trips reflecting an increase in accessibility. Microtransit accounted for 51,551 trips, excluding the 2,581 provided to registered specialized transit users. Combined there were a total of 54,132 microtransit trips booked which represents a 2% increase over the RFP data and an 11% reduction compared to Q2 2024. In comparison to Q1 2025, which realized a 9.3% growth over the RFP data, Q2 only realized a 2% growth over the RFP data.



For further information, please see the [full report](#) presented at the August 26, 2025 meeting of the Niagara Transit Commission.

Thank you for your ongoing support of transit. Together we're continuing to create a truly connected, barrier free Niagara.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'C Stout'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Carla' and the last name 'Stout' clearly distinguishable.

Carla Stout
General Manager, Niagara Transit

Overall NT+ Service Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

Number of Passengers

89,414

Number of Trips

79,887

Number of Accessible Trips

12,988

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

928

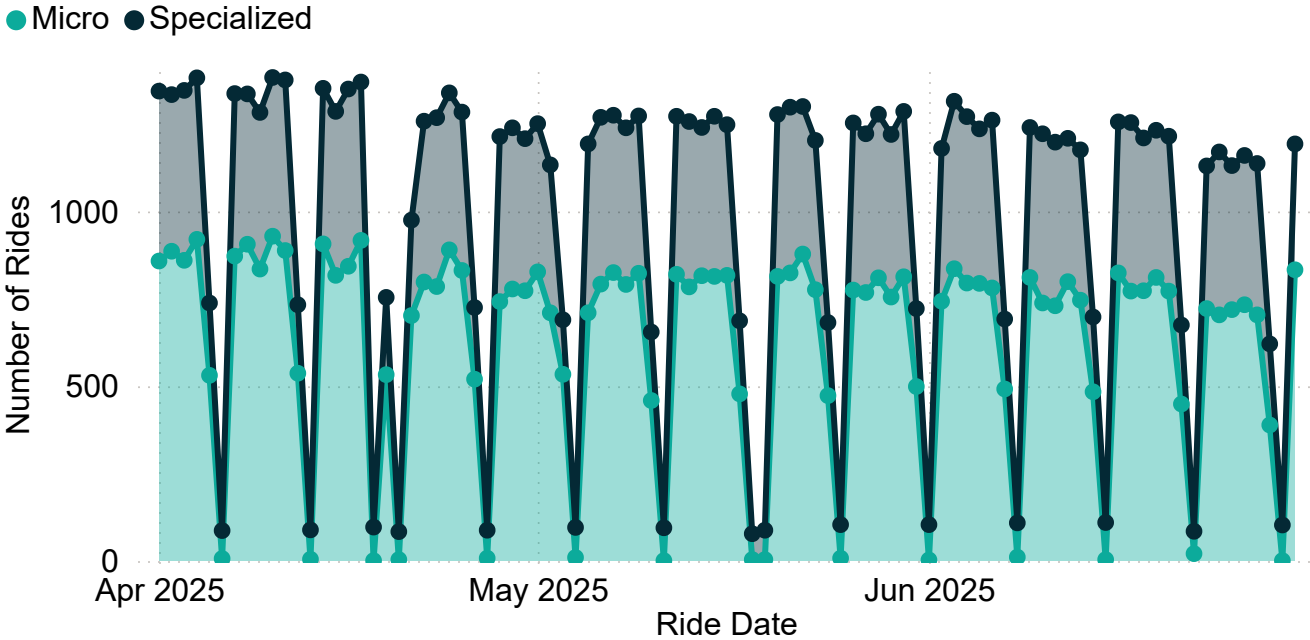
Average Direct Distance (km)

9.51

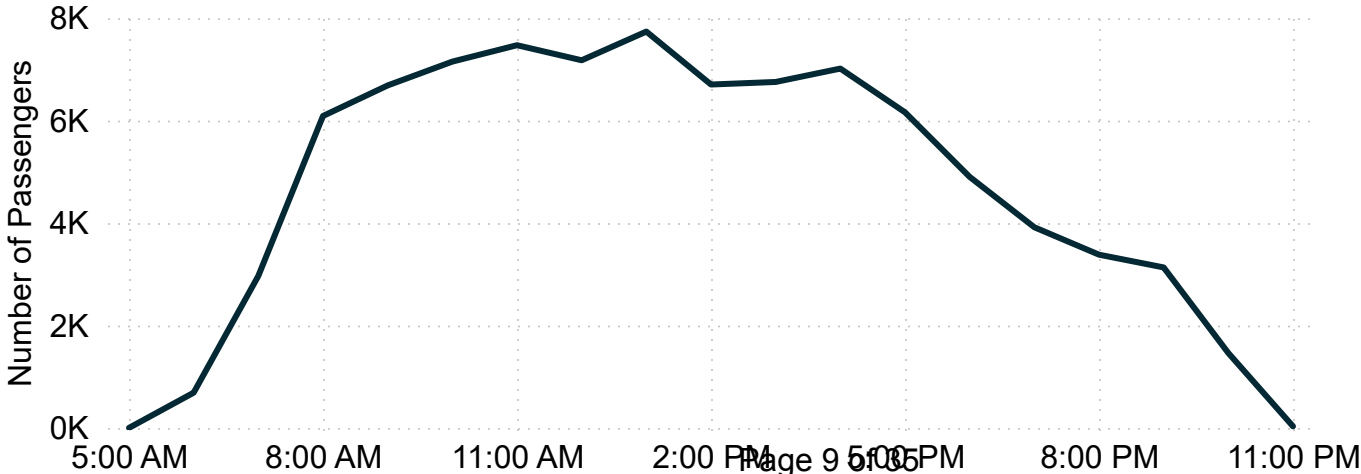
Average Time On-Board (min)

17.97

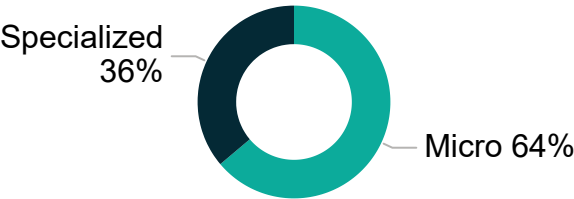
Daily Ridership



Peak Hours



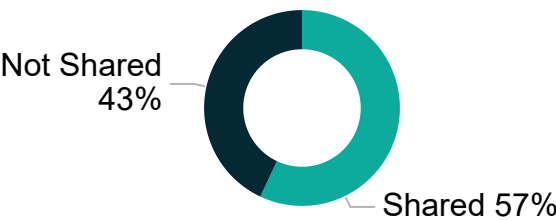
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	3081	13874	16955
App	29510	29501	59011
Subscription		3921	3921
Total	32591	47296	79887

Overall NT+ In-House Service Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

21,237

Number of Trips

18,023

Number of Accessible Trips

7,304

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

68

Average Direct Distance (km)

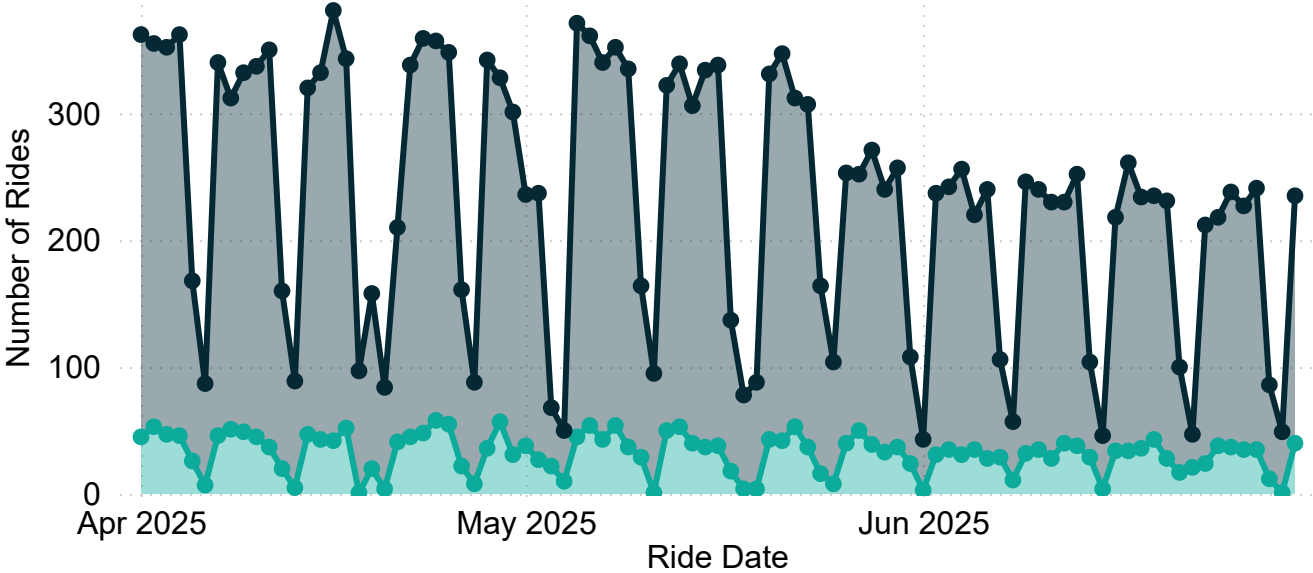
5.12

Average Time On-Board (min)

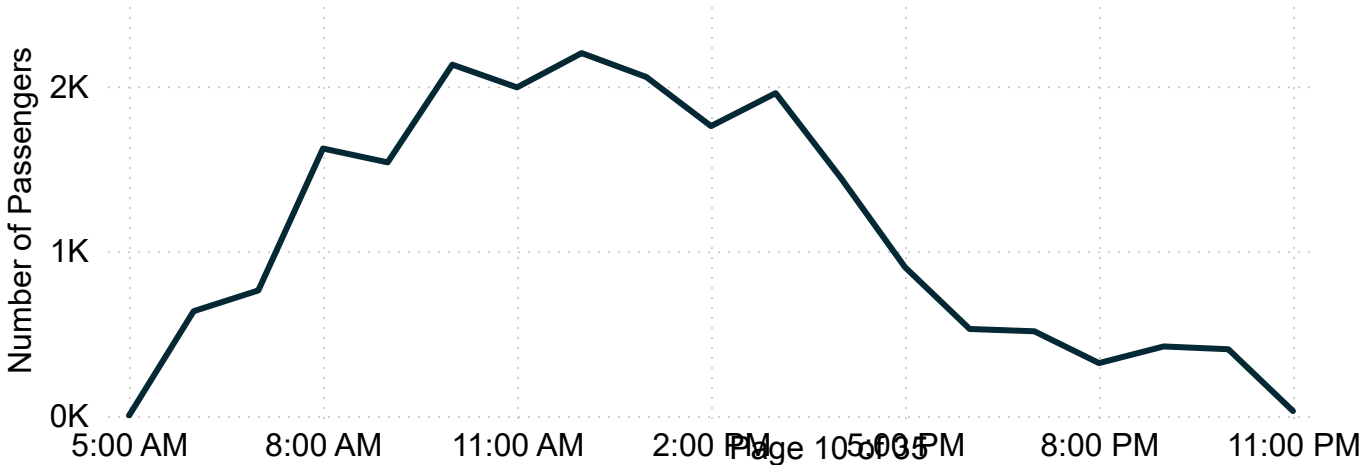
17.67

Daily Ridership

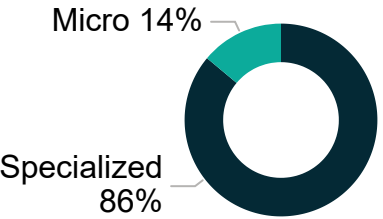
● Micro ● Specialized



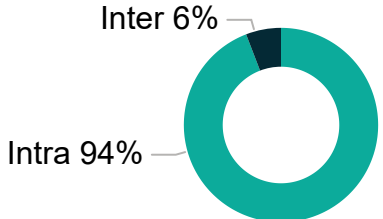
Peak Hours



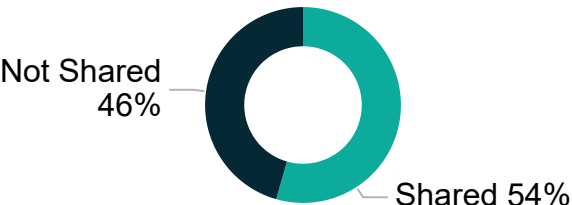
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	1005	7719	8724
App	2596	6138	8734
Subscription		565	565
Total	3601	14422	18023

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Niagara Falls

Number of Passengers

3,816

Number of Trips

3,311

Number of Accessible Trips

1,180

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

(Blank)

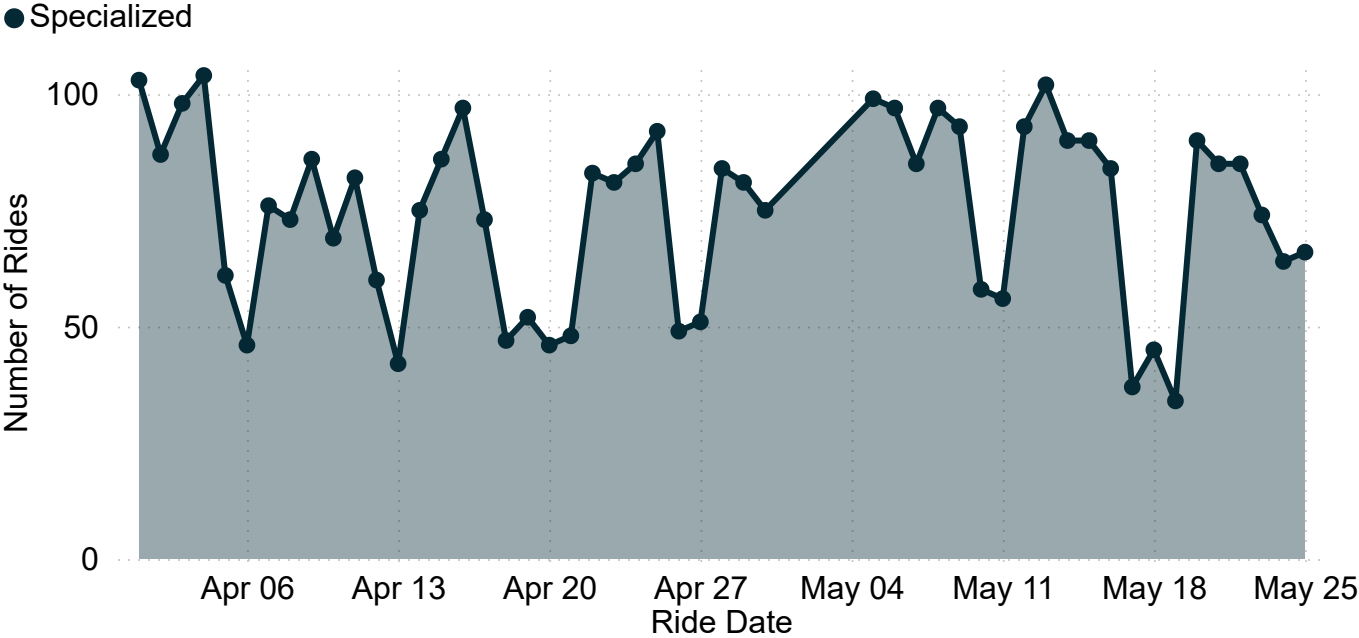
Average Direct Distance (km)

5.07

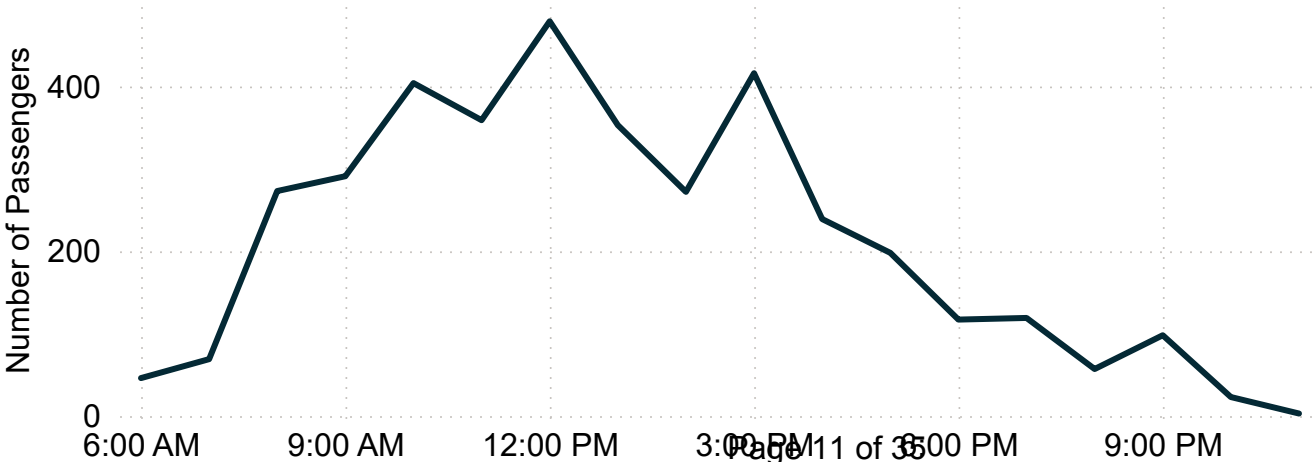
Average Time On-Board (min)

17.65

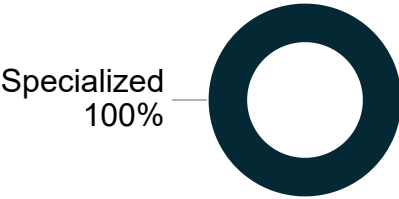
Daily Ridership



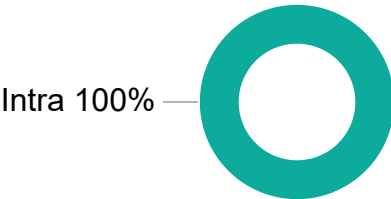
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	281	1534	1815
App	344	587	931
Subscription		565	565
Total	625	2686	3311

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - St. Catharines

Number of Passengers

9,640

Number of Trips

7,795

Number of Accessible Trips

3,515

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

3

Average Direct Distance (km)

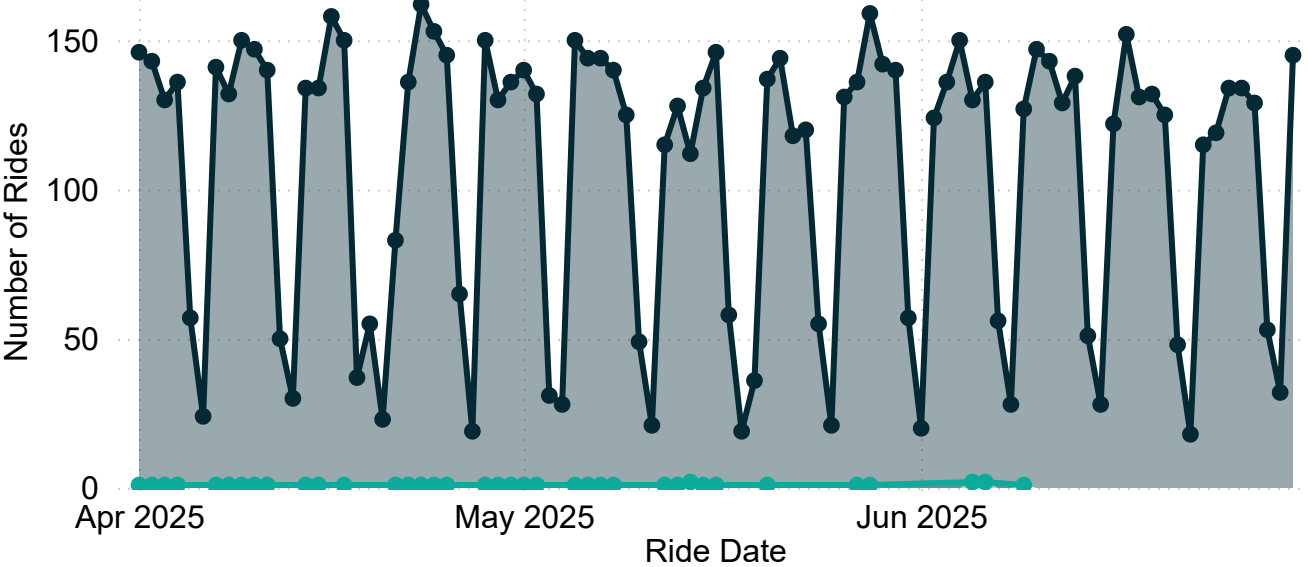
5.10

Average Time On-Board (min)

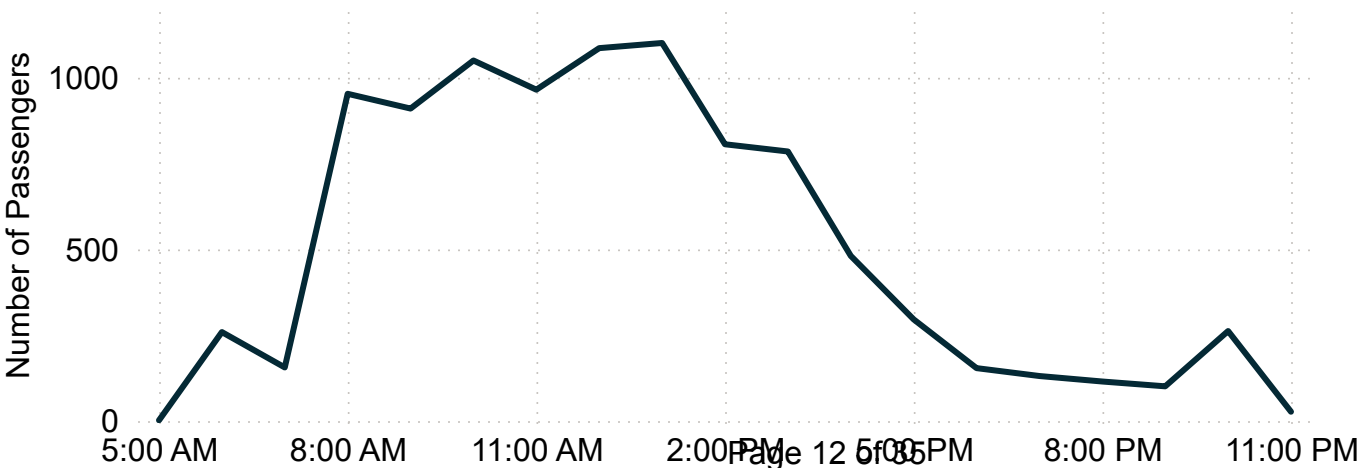
18.77

Daily Ridership

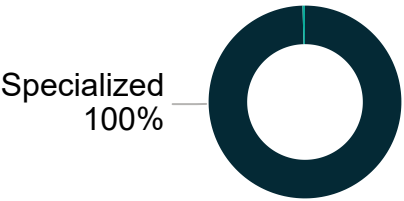
Micro Specialized



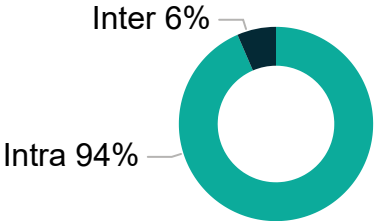
Peak Hours



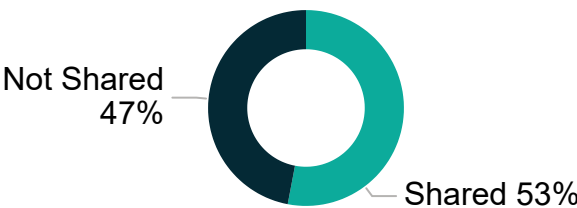
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	444	3555	3999
App	554	3242	3796
Total	998	6797	7795

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Thorold

Number of Passengers

649

Number of Trips

599

Number of Accessible Trips

399

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

(Blank)

Average Direct Distance (km)

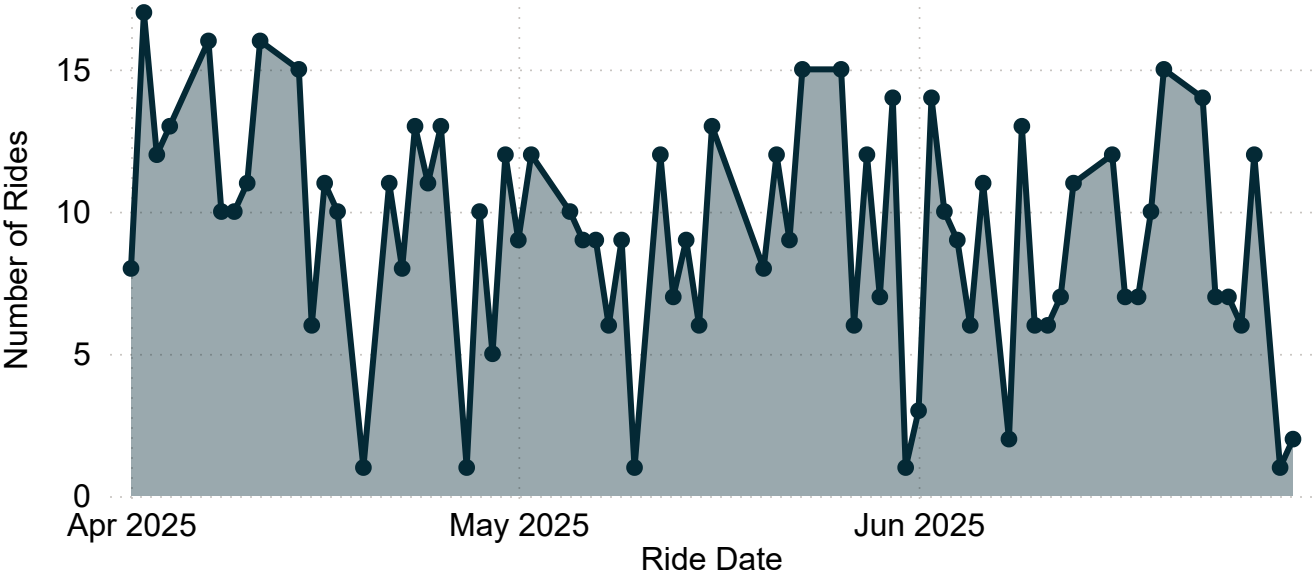
8.06

Average Time On-Board (min)

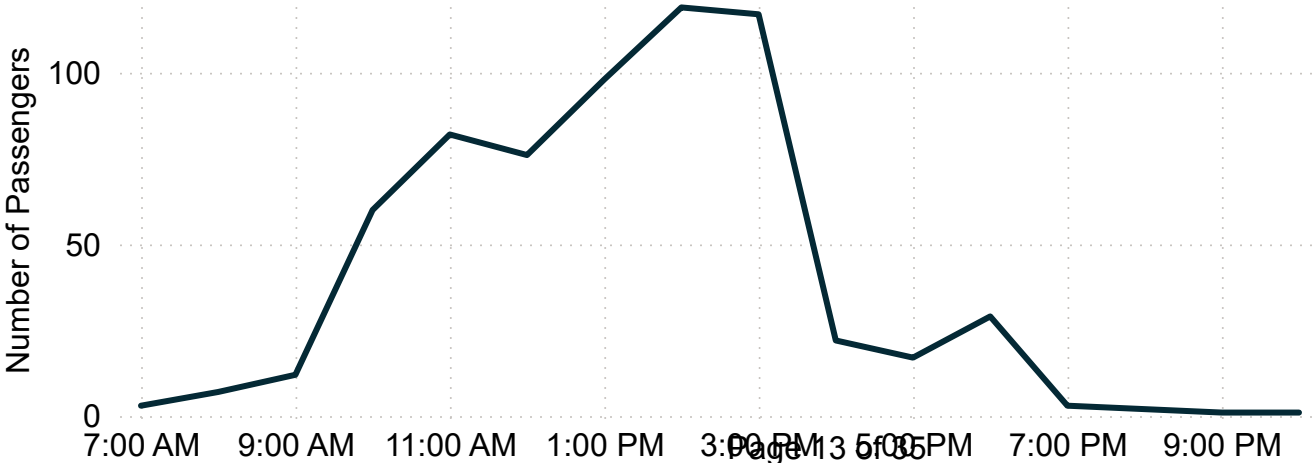
22.29

Daily Ridership

● Specialized



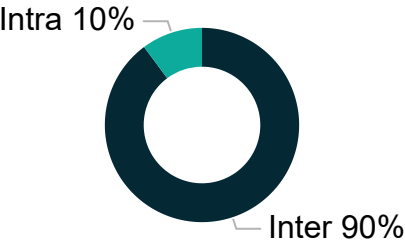
Peak Hours



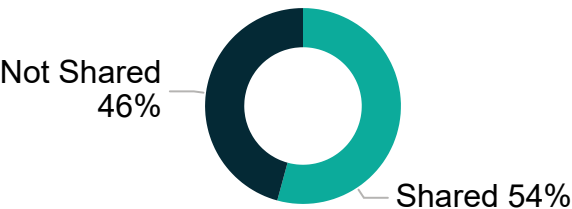
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	18	178	196
App	37	366	403
Total	55	544	599

Overall NT+ In-House 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Welland

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

7,116

Number of Trips

6,309

Number of Accessible Trips

2,206

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

65

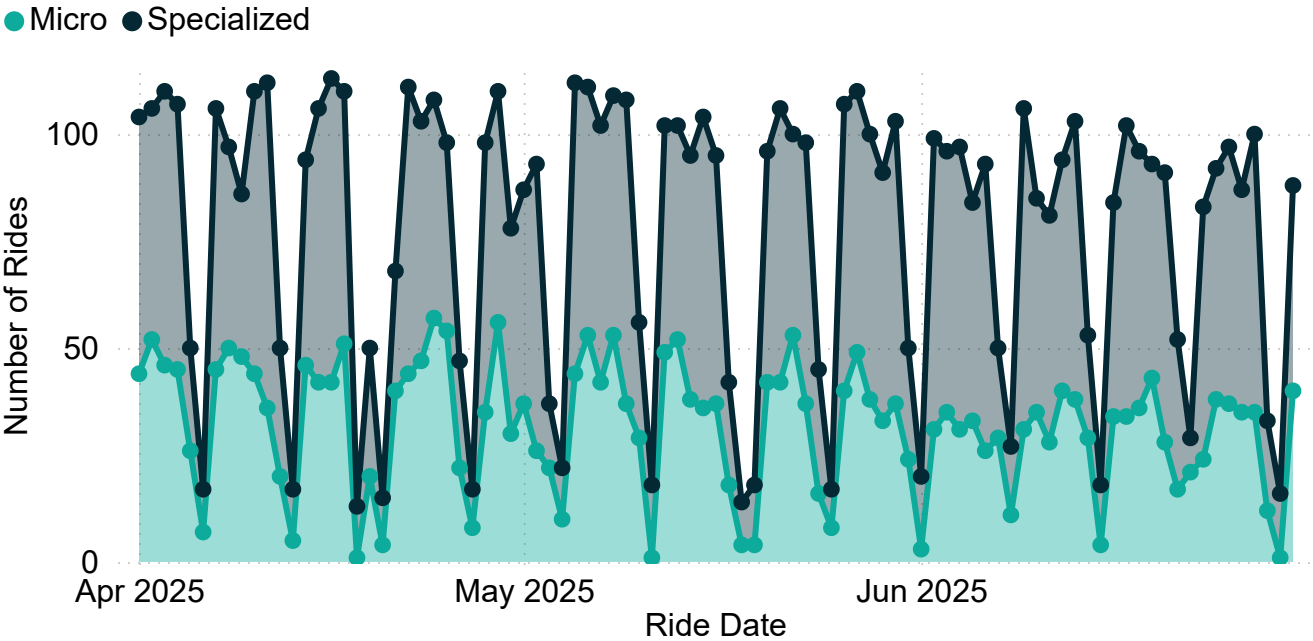
Average Direct Distance (km)

4.88

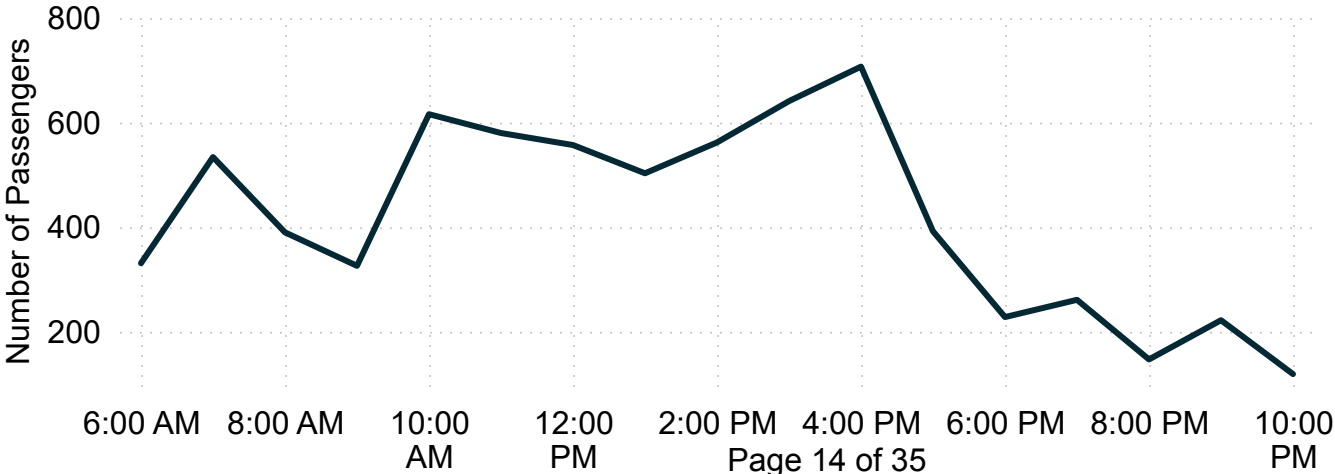
Average Time On-Board (min)

15.86

Daily Ridership



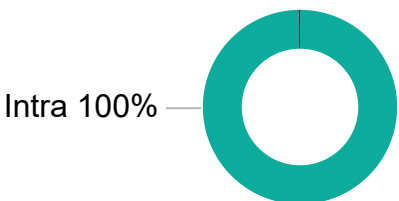
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	262	2449	2711
App	1661	1937	3598
Total	1923	4386	6309

Overall NT+ (Contract) Voyago Service Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

65,171

Number of Trips

59,223

Number of Accessible Trips

4,766

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

860

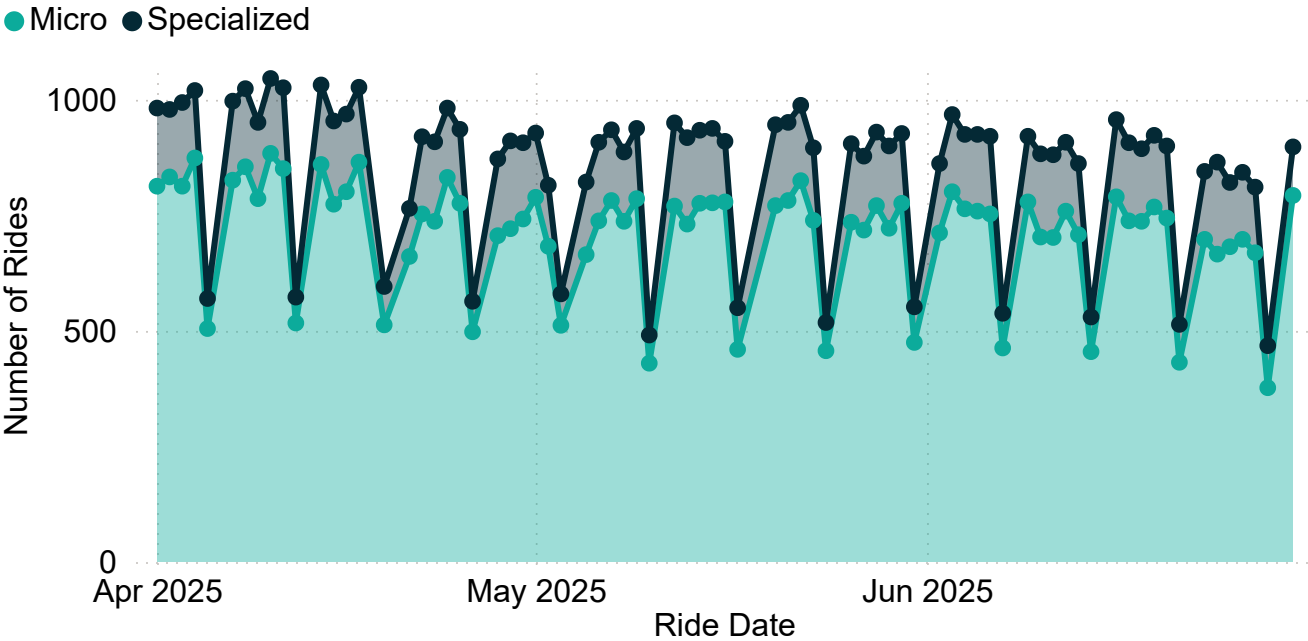
Average Direct Distance (km)

11.06

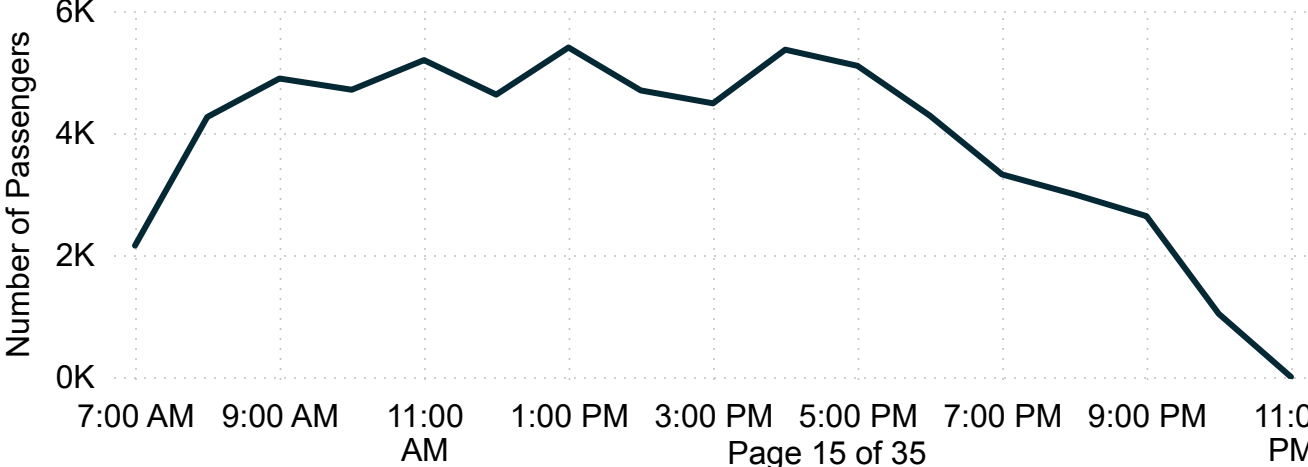
Average Time On-Board (min)

18.13

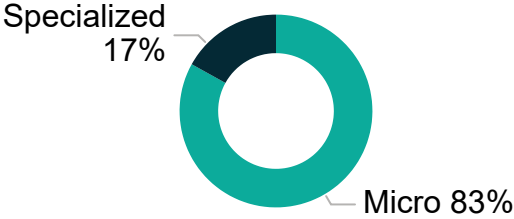
Daily Ridership



Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	1775	4988	6763
App	26558	22960	49518
Subscription		2942	2942
Total	28333	30890	59223

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Fort Erie

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

24,406

Number of Trips

21,314

Number of Accessible Trips

1,042

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

409

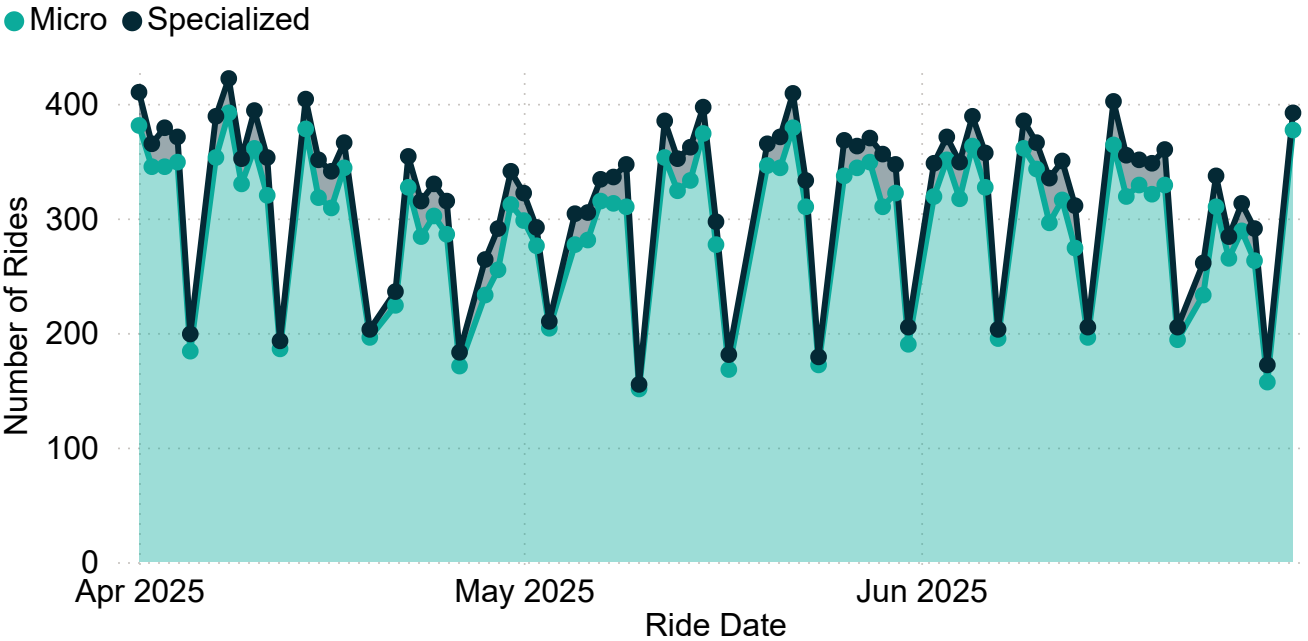
Average Direct Distance (km)

8.05

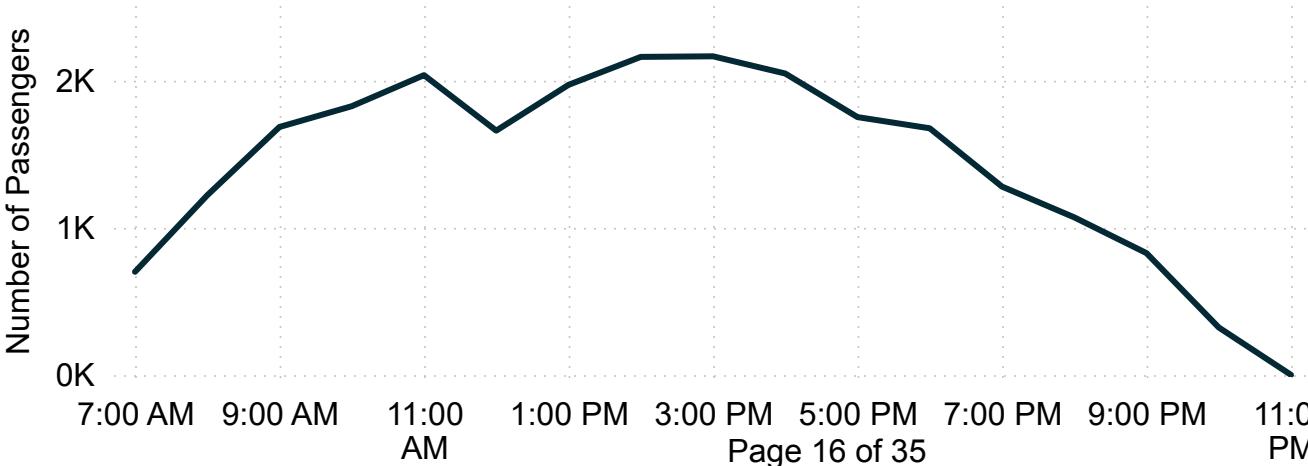
Average Time On-Board (min)

14.34

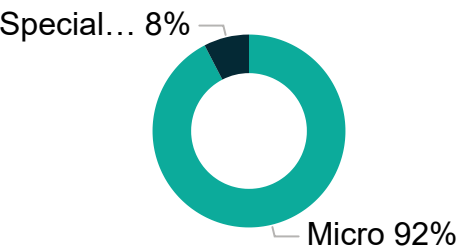
Daily Ridership



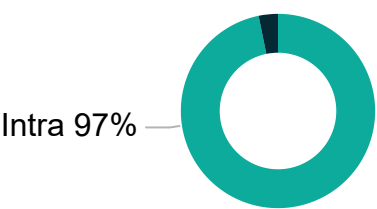
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	1027	1250	2277
App	12131	6334	18465
Subscription		572	572
Total	13158	8156	21314

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Grimsby

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

6,255

Number of Trips

5,910

Number of Accessible Trips

186

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

108

Average Direct Distance (km)

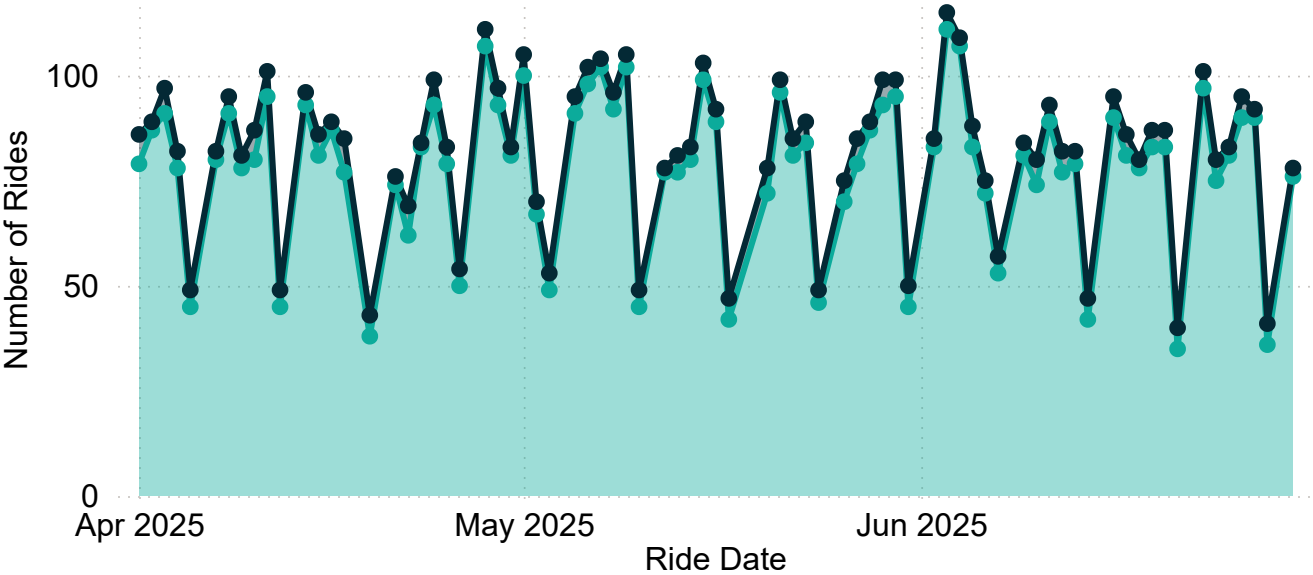
9.77

Average Time On-Board (min)

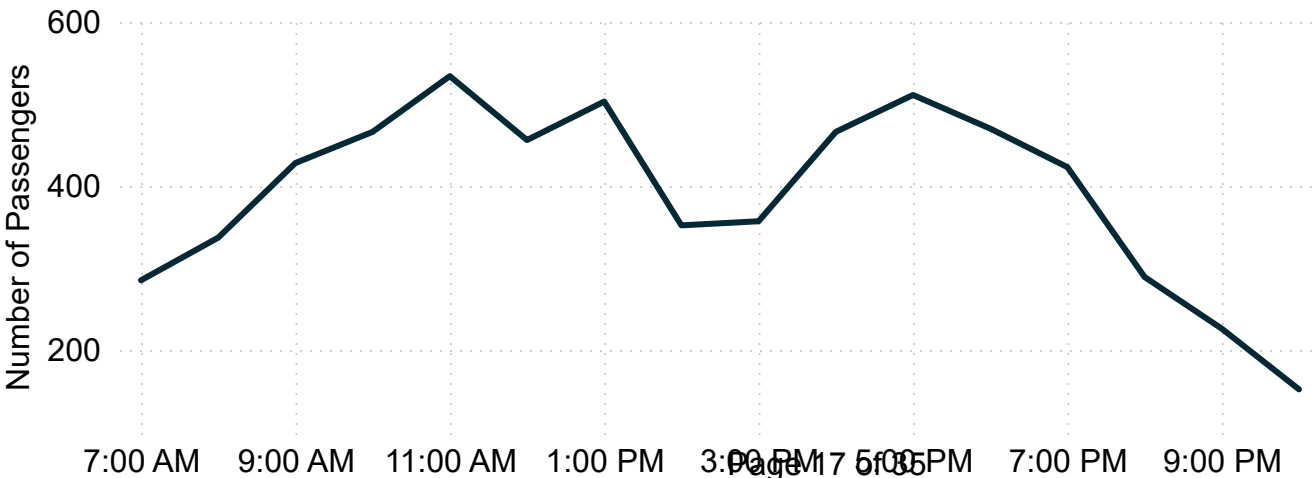
15.89

Daily Ridership

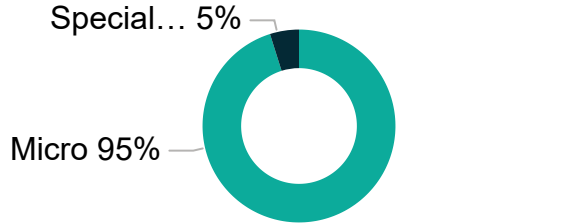
Micro Specialized



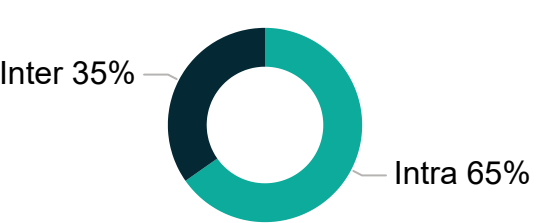
Peak Hours



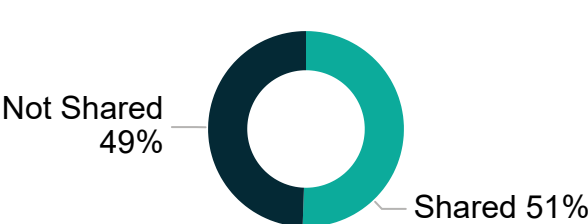
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	138	229	367
App	2510	2859	5369
Subscription		174	174
Total	2648	3262	5910

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Lincoln

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

5,856

Number of Trips

5,520

Number of Accessible Trips

241

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

117

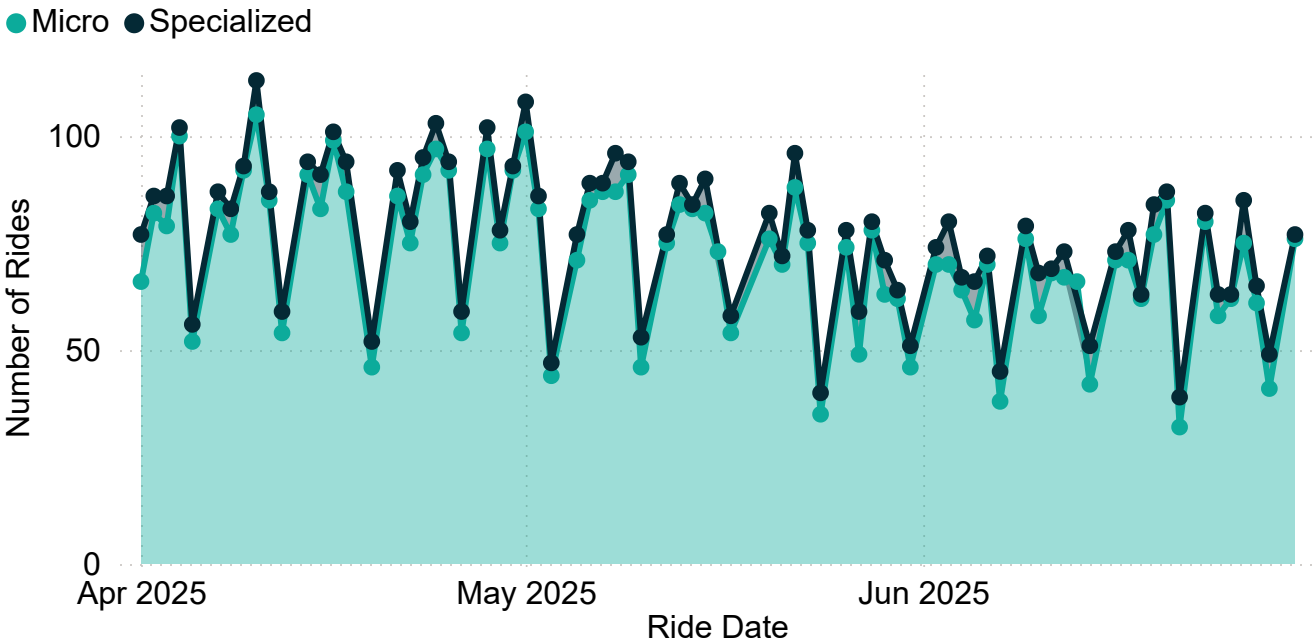
Average Direct Distance (km)

12.04

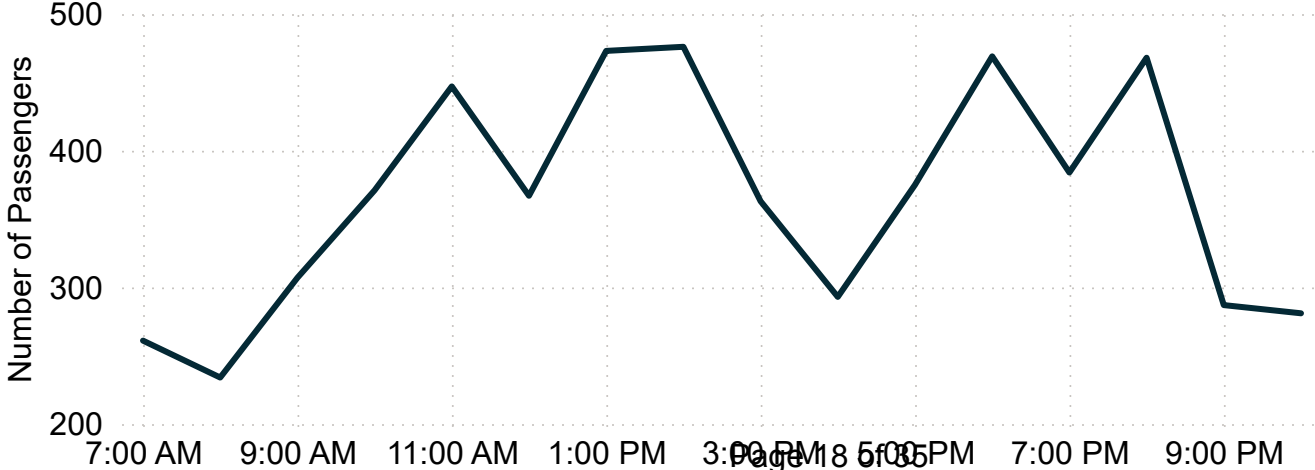
Average Time On-Board (min)

18.29

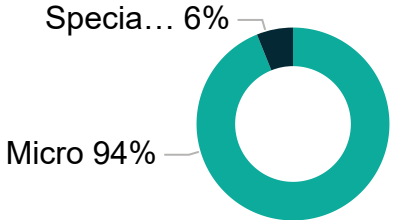
Daily Ridership



Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	89	219	308
App	2390	2704	5094
Subscription		118	118
Total	2479	3041	5520

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Niagara Falls

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

2,125

Number of Trips

1,859

Number of Accessible Trips

724

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

2

Average Direct Distance (km)

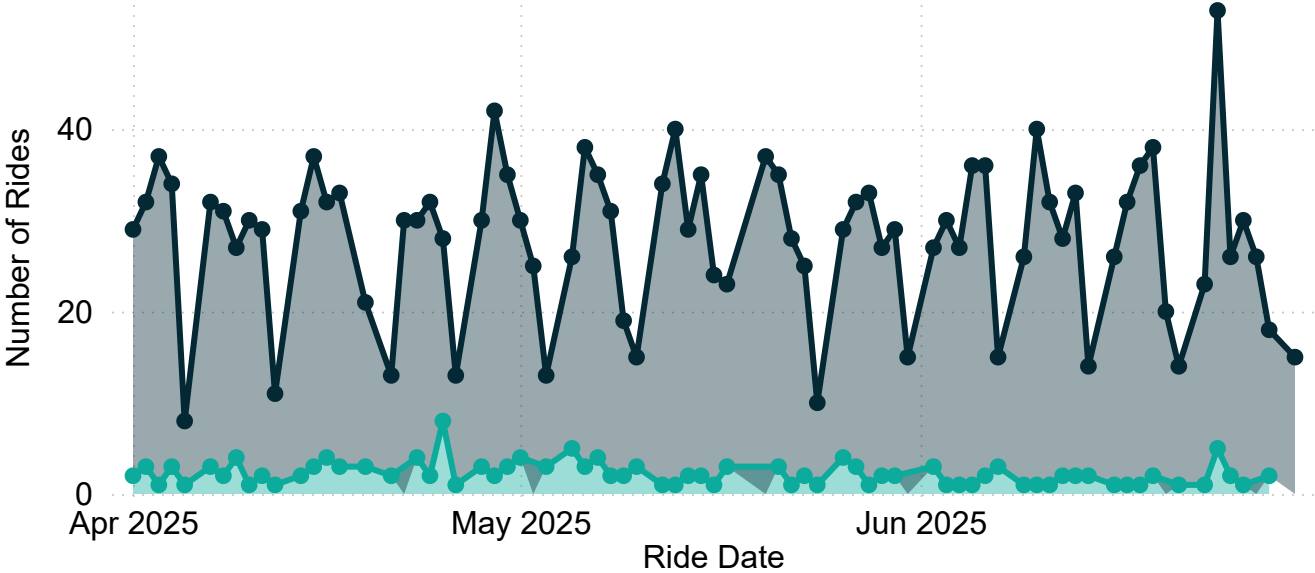
21.41

Average Time On-Board (min)

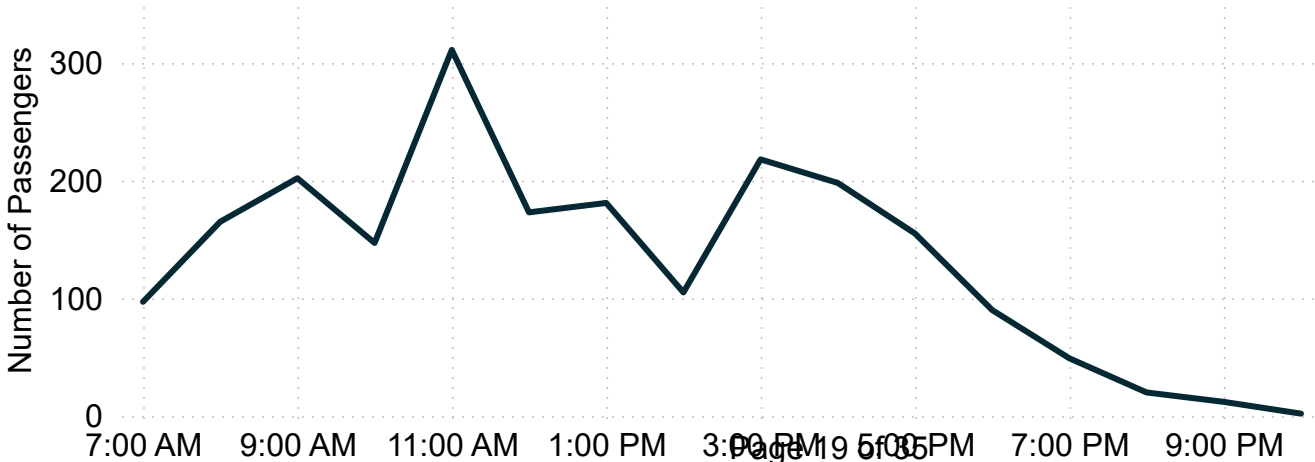
34.16

Daily Ridership

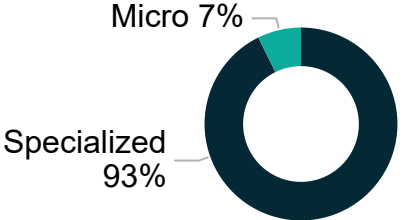
● Micro ● Specialized



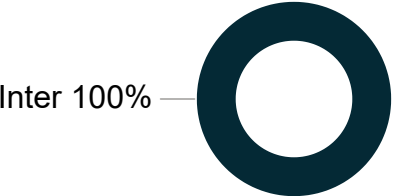
Peak Hours



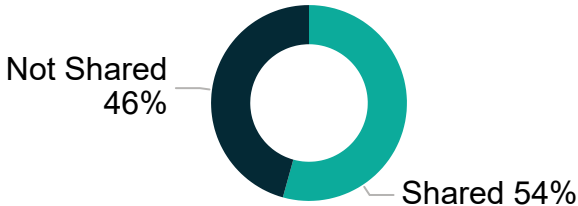
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	23	766	789
App	112	478	590
Subscription		480	480
Total	135	1724	1859

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Niagara-on-the-Lake

Number of Passengers

12,212

Number of Trips

11,536

Number of Accessible Trips

242

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

132

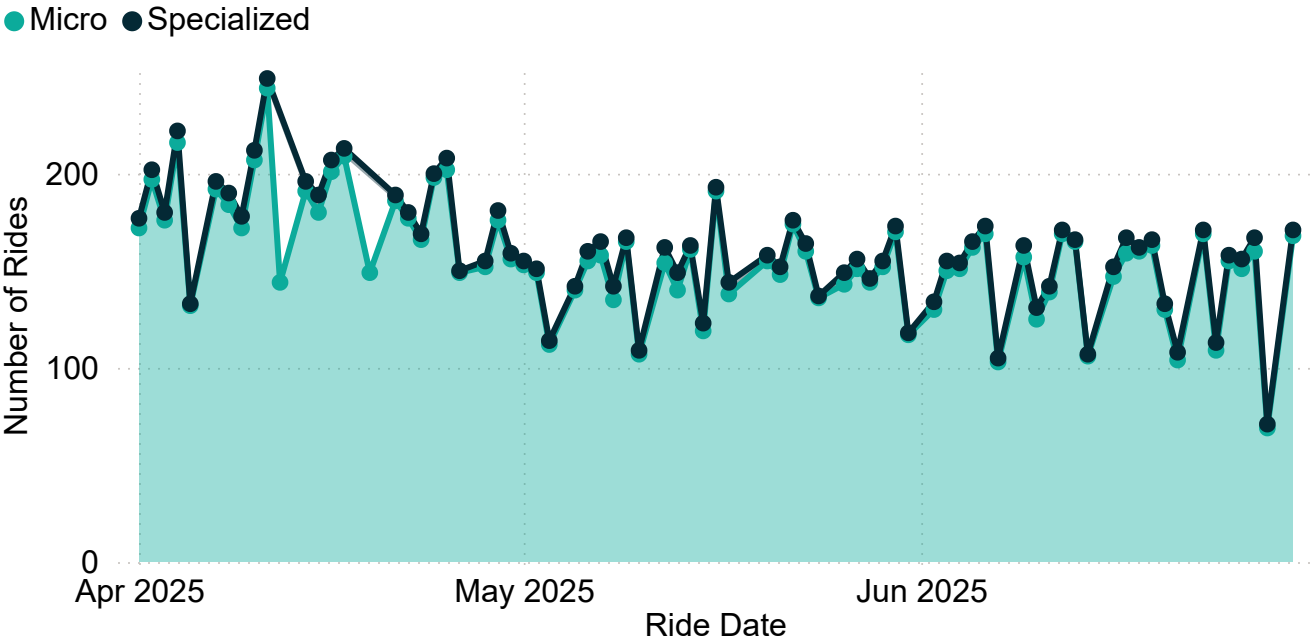
Average Direct Distance (km)

10.00

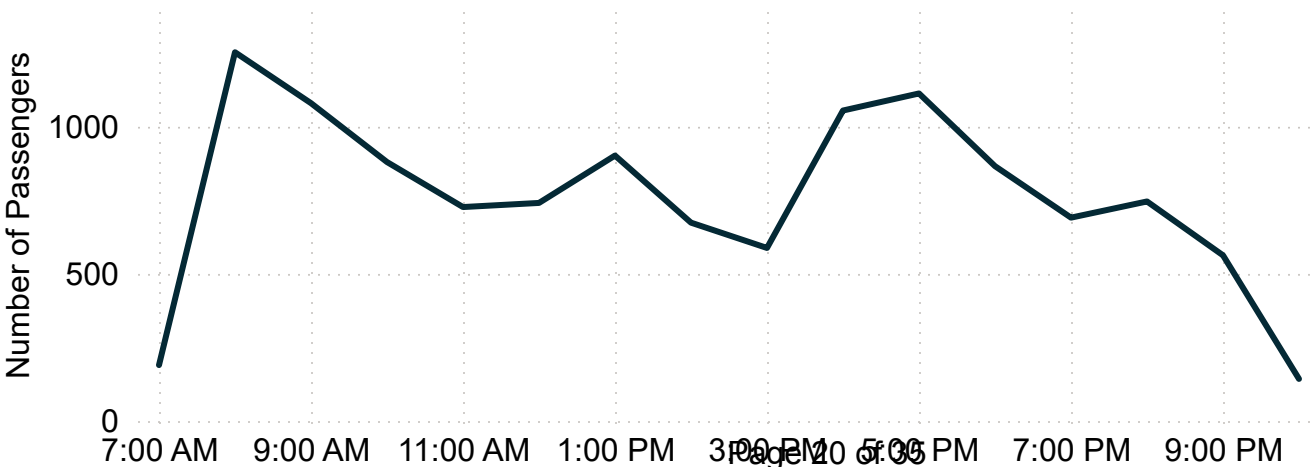
Average Time On-Board (min)

17.80

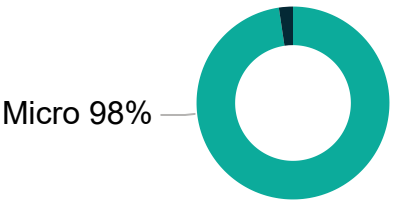
Daily Ridership



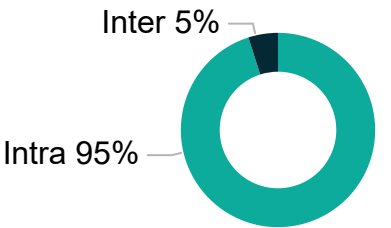
Peak Hours



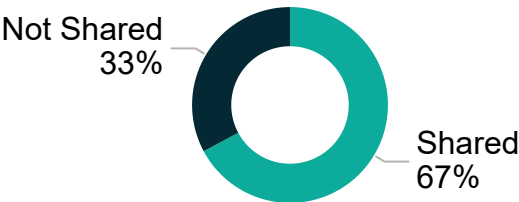
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	110	164	274
App	6100	5081	11181
Subscription		81	81
Total	6210	5326	11536

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Pelham

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

1,458

Number of Trips

1,400

Number of Accessible Trips

214

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

51

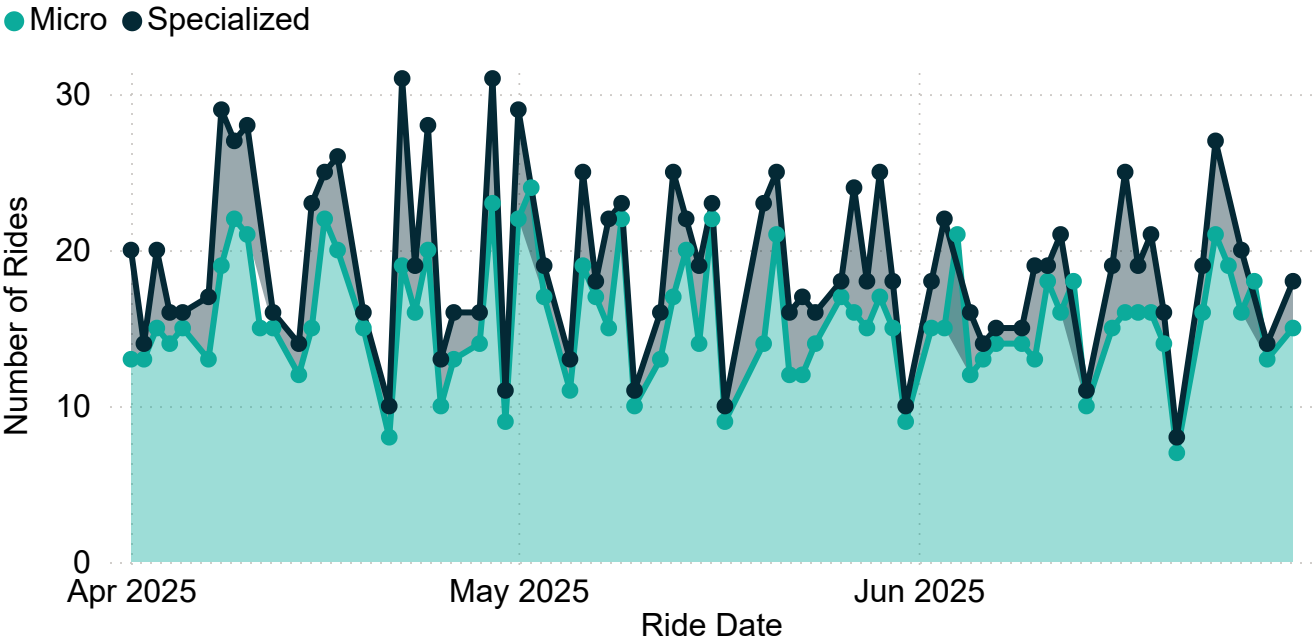
Average Direct Distance (km)

12.25

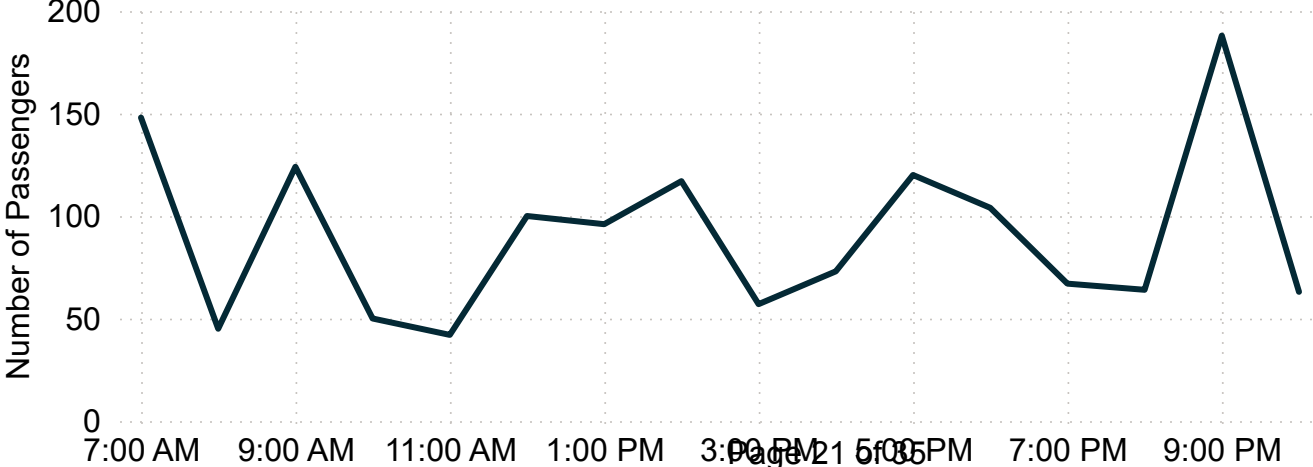
Average Time On-Board (min)

19.27

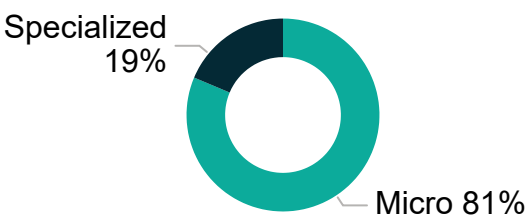
Daily Ridership



Peak Hours



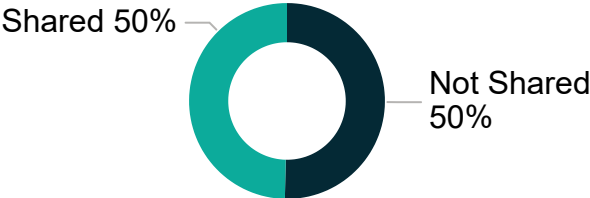
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Subscription		126	126
App	480	579	1059
Agent	36	179	215
Total	516	884	1400

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Port Colborne

Number of Passengers

3,976

Number of Trips

3,546

Number of Accessible Trips

190

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

21

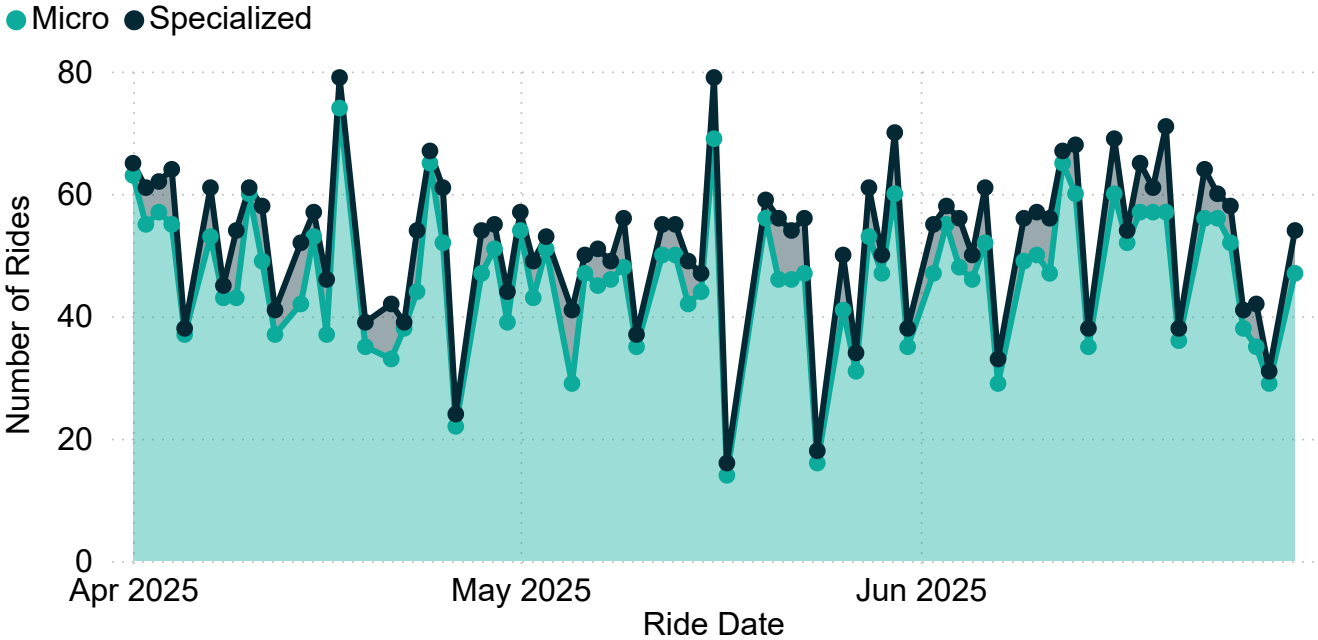
Average Direct Distance (km)

6.05

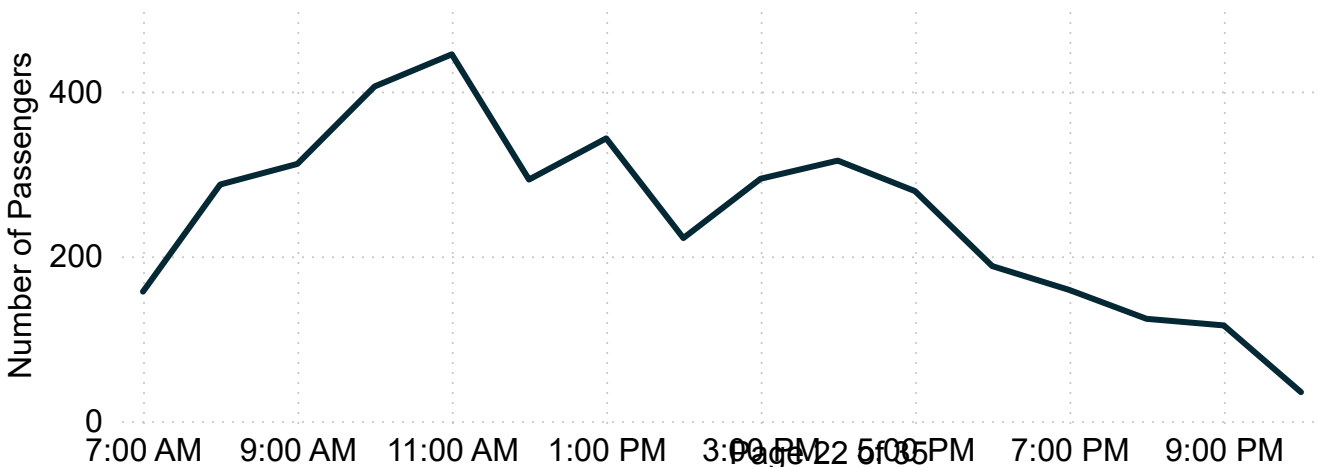
Average Time On-Board (min)

11.43

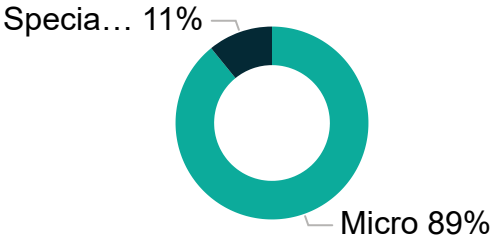
Daily Ridership



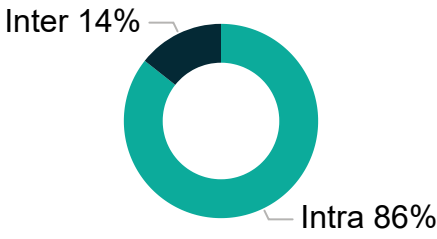
Peak Hours



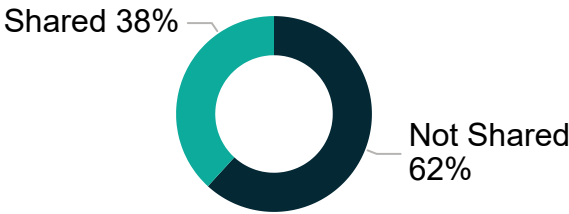
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	193	317	510
App	1976	817	2793
Subscription		243	243
Total	2169	1377	3546

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - St. Catharines

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

4,250

Number of Trips

3,947

Number of Accessible Trips

750

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

9

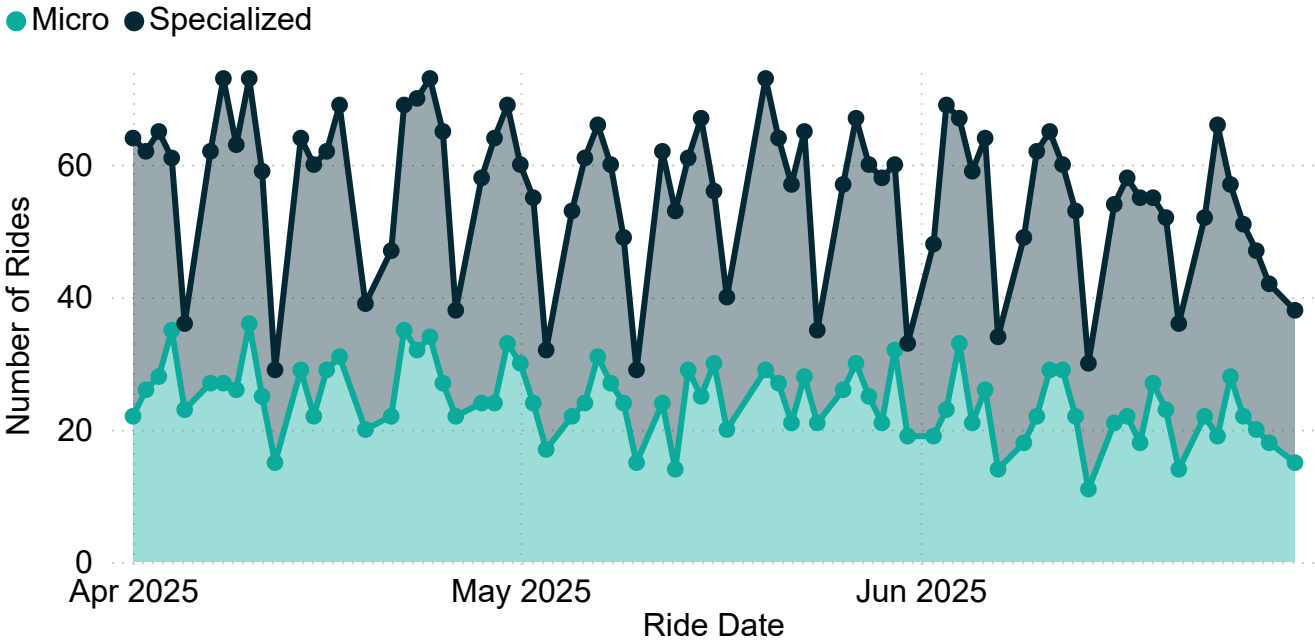
Average Direct Distance (km)

21.67

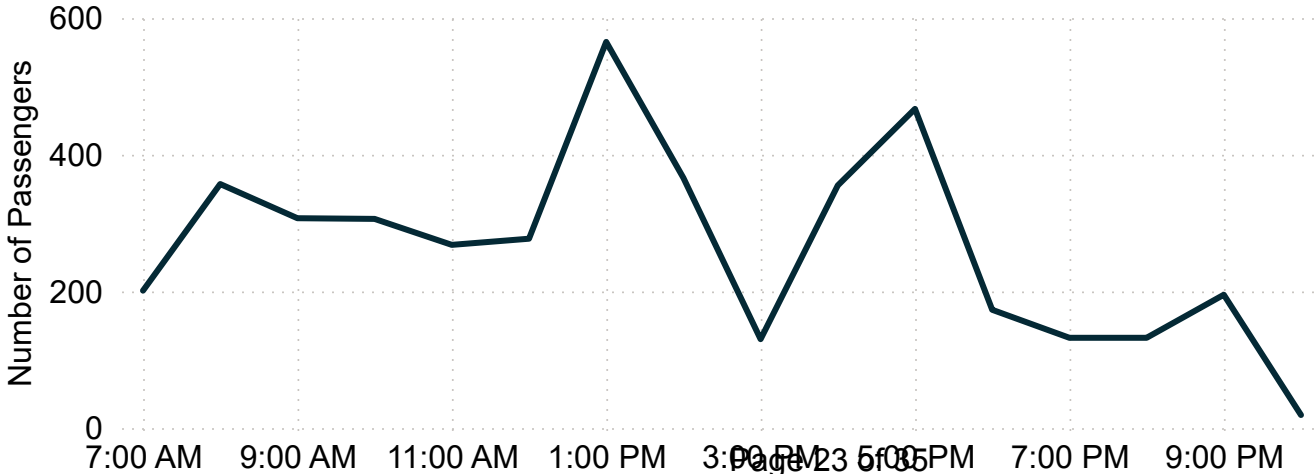
Average Time On-Board (min)

29.75

Daily Ridership



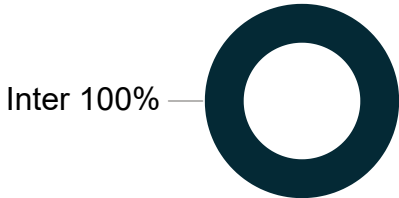
Peak Hours



Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	82	791	873
App	412	2205	2617
Subscription		457	457
Total	494	3453	3947

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Thorold

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

1,187

Number of Trips

1,002

Number of Accessible Trips

432

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

(Blank)

Average Direct Distance (km)

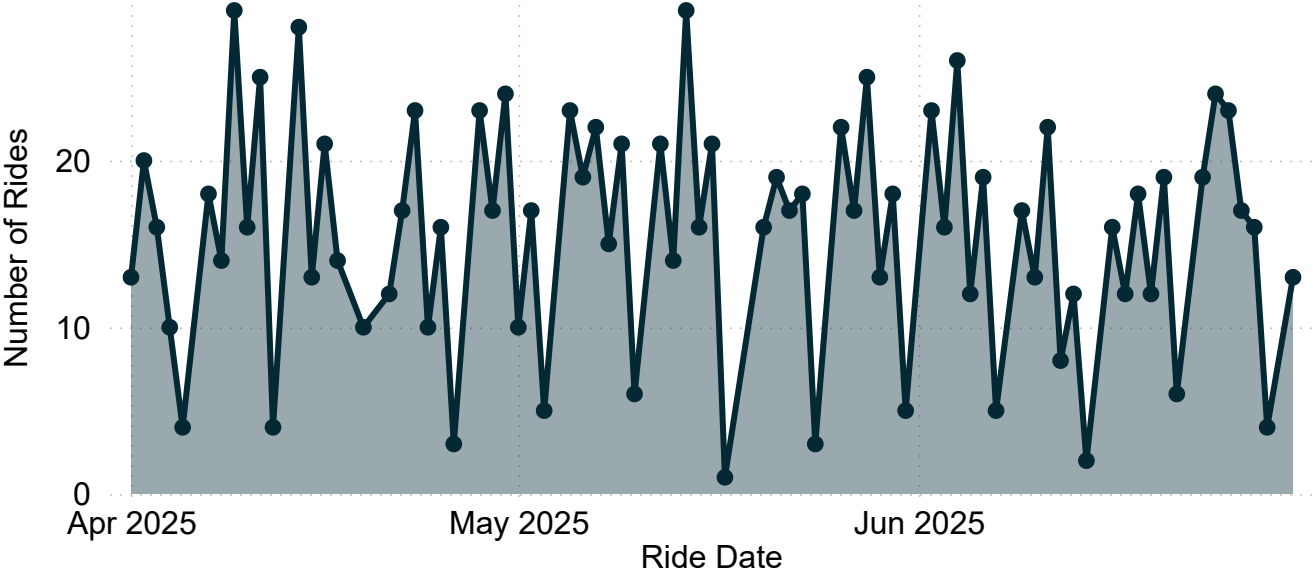
11.15

Average Time On-Board (min)

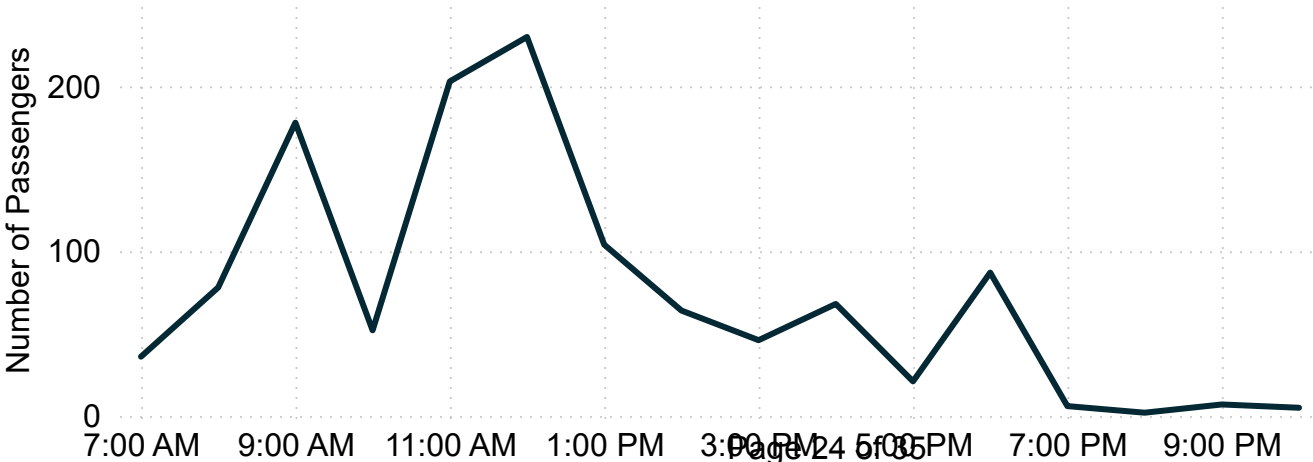
21.65

Daily Ridership

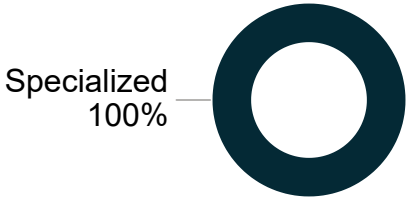
● Specialized



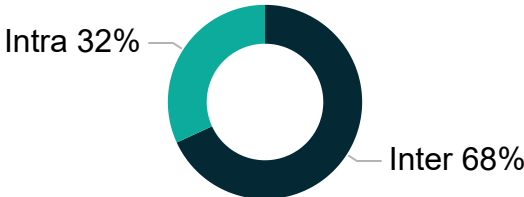
Peak Hours



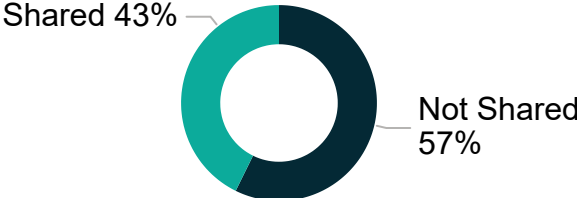
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	31	356	387
App	12	458	470
Subscription		145	145
Total	43	959	1002

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Wainfleet

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

213

Number of Trips

203

Number of Accessible Trips

37

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

1

Average Direct Distance (km)

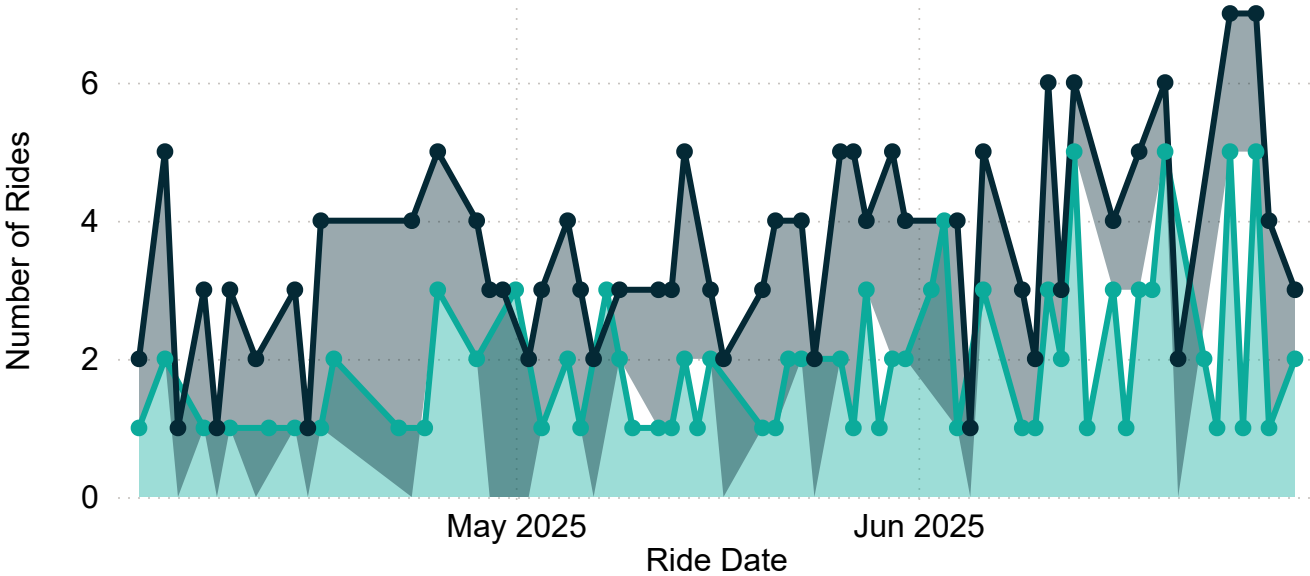
22.45

Average Time On-Board (min)

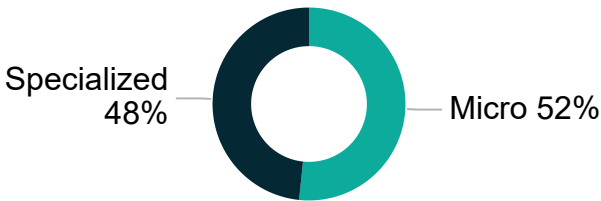
27.63

Daily Ridership

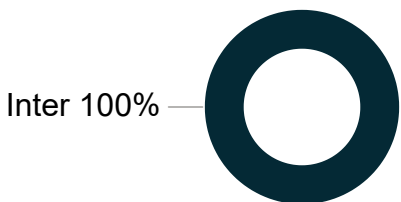
● Micro ● Specialized



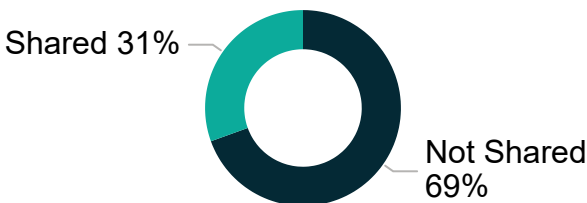
Service Type



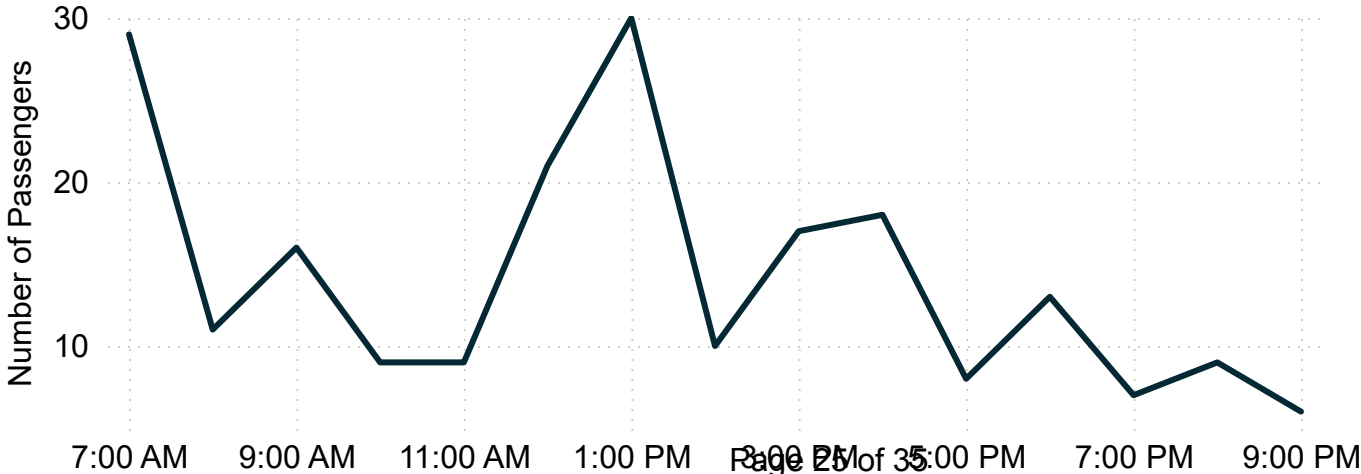
Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Peak Hours



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	3	48	51
App	26	123	149
Subscription		3	3
Total	29	174	203

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - Welland

Power BI Desktop

Number of Passengers

2,482

Number of Trips

2,284

Number of Accessible Trips

690

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

4

Average Direct Distance (km)

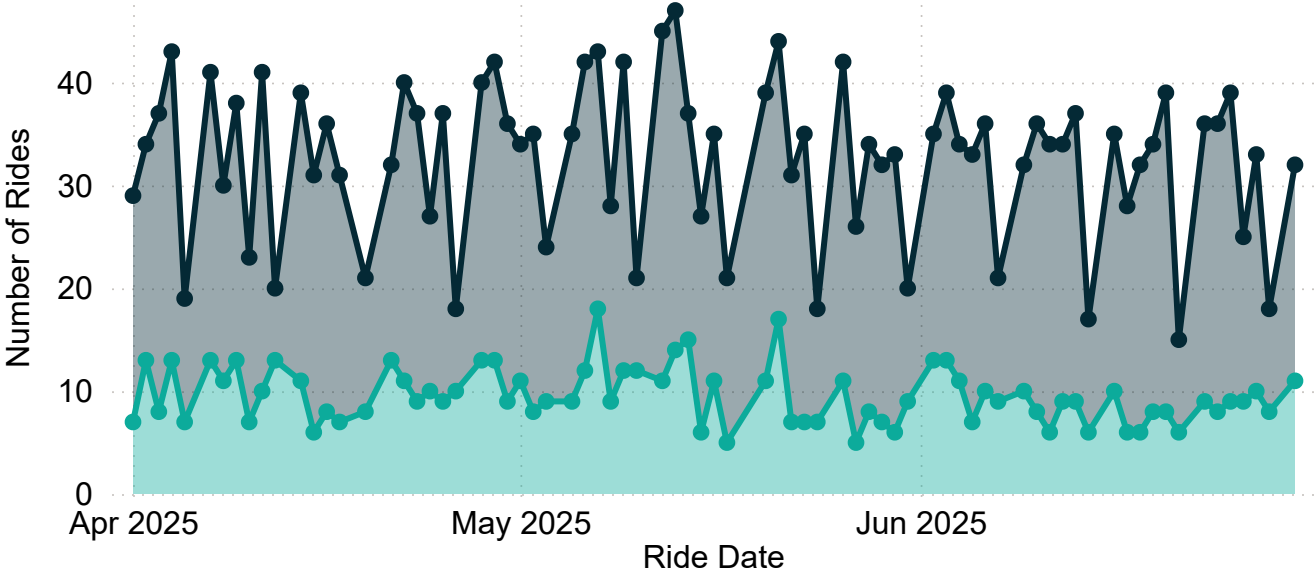
20.58

Average Time On-Board (min)

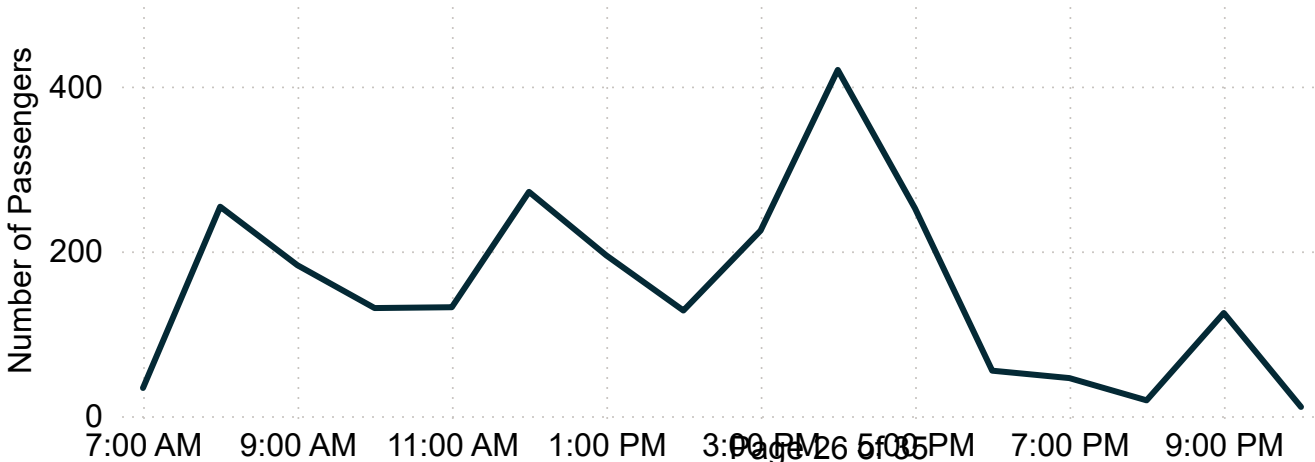
31.18

Daily Ridership

Micro Specialized



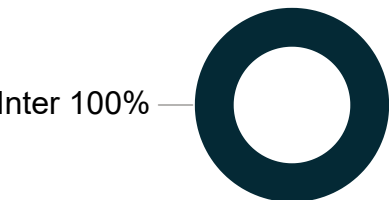
Peak Hours



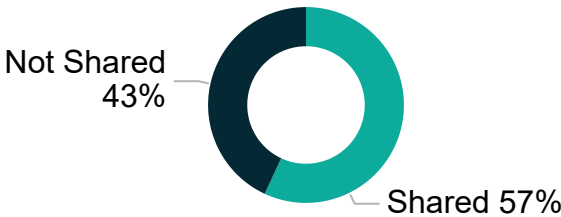
Service Type



Trip Type



Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	30	601	631
App	250	860	1110
Subscription		543	543
Total	280	2004	2284

NT+ (Contract) Voyago 2025 (Q2) Service Metrics - West Lincoln

Number of Passengers

715

Number of Trips

675

Number of Accessible Trips

8

Number of Micro Trips with an Accessibility Device

6

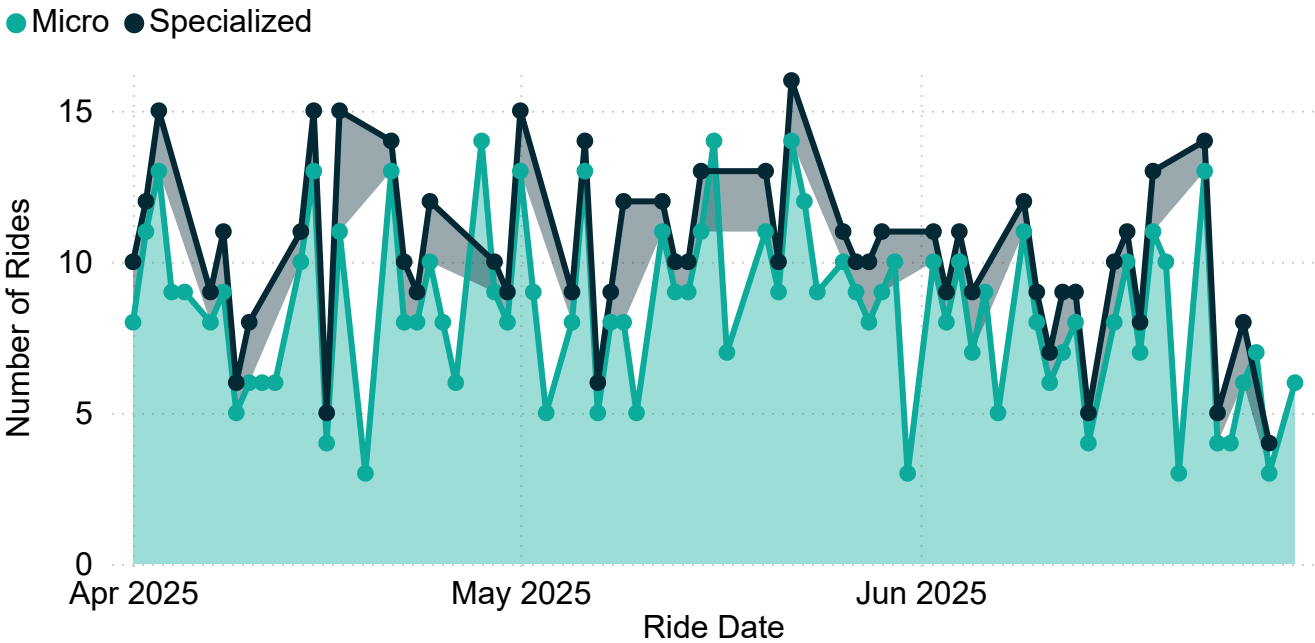
Average Direct Distance (km)

23.63

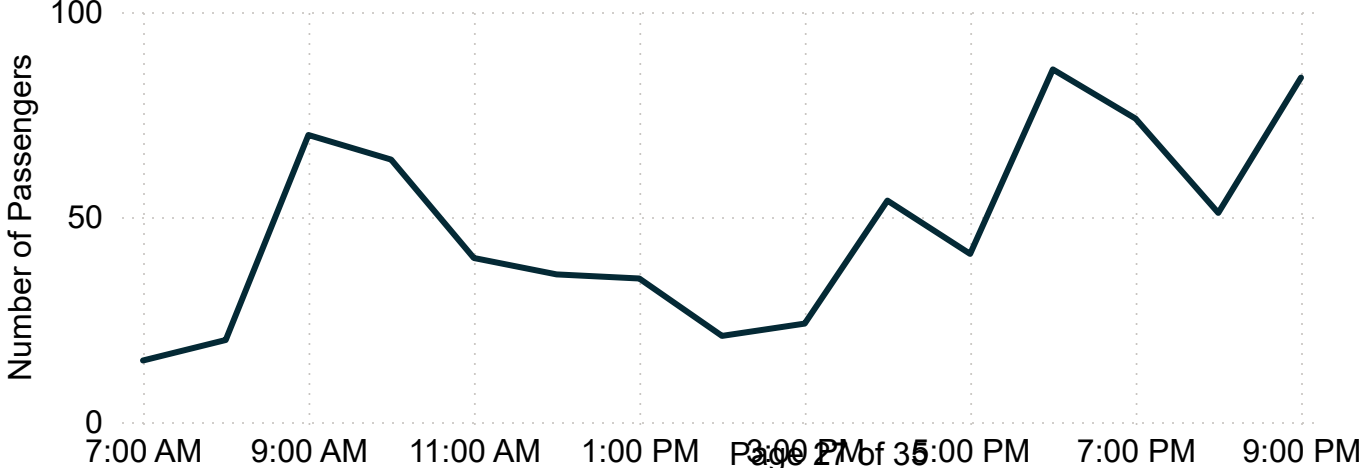
Average Time On-Board (min)

29.33

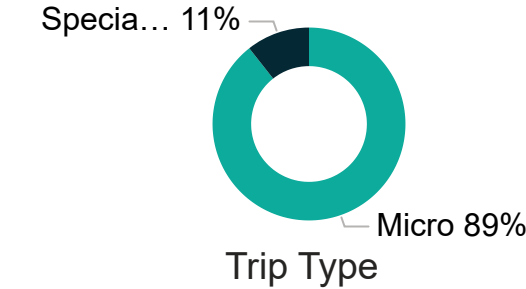
Daily Ridership



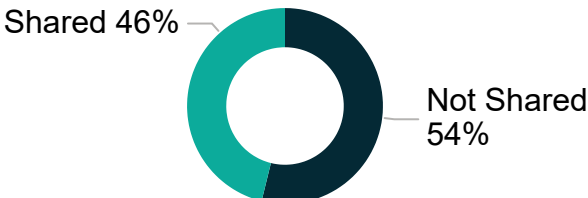
Peak Hours



Service Type



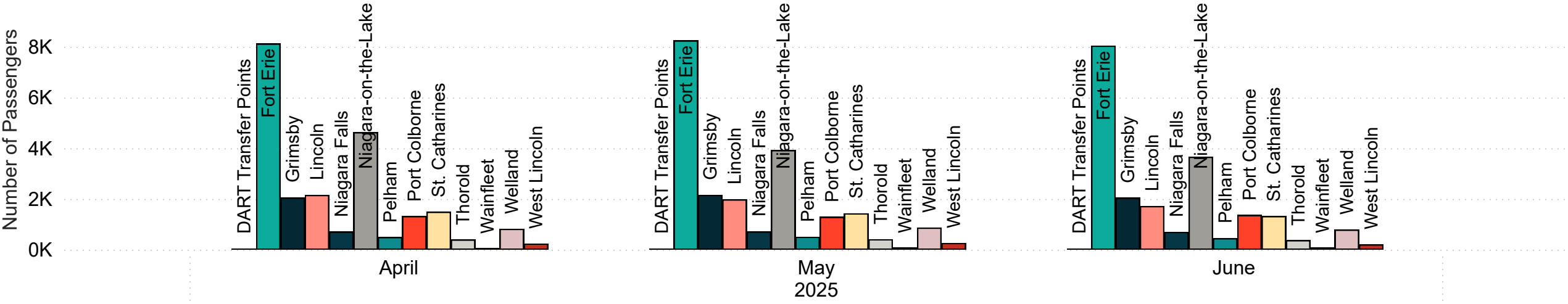
Trip Utilization



Booking Method	Day Of	Pre-Booked	Total
Agent	12	48	60
App	159	456	615
Total	171	504	675

Overall NT+ (Contract) Voyago Trip Origin Metrics - 2025 (Q2)

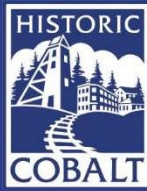
Ridership By Trip Origin



Origin Municipality	DART Transfer Points	Fort Erie	Grimsby	Lincoln	Niagara Falls	Niagara-on-the-Lake	Pelham	Port Colborne	St. Catharines	Thorold	Wainfleet	Welland	West Lincoln	Total
DART Transfer Points		7	1		8				10			10		36
Fort Erie	7	23624			219	4		108	135	30		279		24406
Grimsby			4082	1119	6	1	29	12	755	3	3	52	193	6255
Lincoln			1058	2770	17	13	71	9	1554	21	1	127	215	5856
Niagara Falls	9	181	6	19		236	21	11	803	202	12	622	3	2125
Niagara-on-the-Lake		5		16	393	11610	18		126	36	1	5	2	12212
Pelham		3	47	70	18	19	464	6	226	32	10	554	9	1458
Port Colborne		116	11		12		8	3405	17	6	60	335	6	3976
St. Catharines	8	116	726	1387	795	188	201	17		296	14	353	149	4250
Thorold		30	3	21	207	42	32	4	358	378	16	92	4	1187
Wainfleet			3	4	11		12	25	7	22		122	7	213
Welland	10	247	21	179	600	6	516	327	367	92	74		43	2482
West Lincoln			178	233	1	5	9	6	167	50	7	59		715
Total	34	24329	6136	5818	2287	12124	1381	3930	4525	1168	198	2610	631	65171

Glossary

- **Agent Booking Method** - Rides that are booked by phoning in and speaking with a customer service representative
- **App Booking Method** - Rides that are booked by using the Niagara Transit Plus application on a mobile device
- **Average Direct Distance** - The average distance in kilometres it would take to drive directly from origin to destination without any stops
- **Average Time On-Board** - The average time a passenger is spending on-board the vehicle
- **Day of Booking Type** - Rides that are booked on the same day of use
- **Inter Trip Type** - Rides that travel from one municipality to another, crossing municipal boundaries
- **Intra Trip Type** - Rides that stay within the municipal boundary in which the trip originated
- **Micro Daily Ridership** - Number of passengers taking micro transit trips per day
- **Micro Service Type** - Number of trips that are using the micro transit service
- **Number of Accessible** - Number of trips that are using either the micro or specialized transit service that are accessible, where the passenger is using a mobility device
- **Number of Micro Trips with Accessible Device** - Number of trips using the micro transit service that are accessible, where the passenger is using a mobility device
- **Number of Passengers** - Total number of passengers that have completed trips
- **Number of Trips** - Total number of trips being completed
- **Peak Hours** - Hours of the day that have the highest demand for ridership
- **Pre-Book Booking Type** - Rides that are booked in advance of the requested trip day
- **Specialized Daily Ridership** - Number of passengers taking specialized transit trips per day
- **Specialized Service Type** - Number of trips that are using the specialized transit service
- **Subscription Booking Method** - Trips that are booked once and happen on a recurring schedule ie. trips to dialysis



THE CORPORATION OF THE **TOWN OF COBALT**

September 3, 2025

To whom it may concern,

Please be advised that at the Regular Meeting of Council on August 19, 2025, the Town of Cobalt adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION No. 2025-124

MOVED BY: Councillor Anderson

SECONDED BY: Councillor Hughes

WHEREAS the Ontario Government has enacted O. Reg. 343/22, establishing mandatory certification requirements for firefighters under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997;

AND WHEREAS Council for the Town of Cobalt acknowledges the importances of standardized firefighter training and safety;

AND WHEREAS these mandatory certification requirements pose significant challenges for small, rural and northern municipalities due to limited financial and training resources, geographical barriers and reliance on volunteer fire departments;

AND WHEREAS the implementation of these requirements without additional flexibility or support may negatively impact the Town's ability to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters and provide adequate fire protection to its residents;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council for the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt formally opposes the mandatory firefighter certification requirements as currently outlined in O. Reg. 343/22;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Solicitor General, Premier of Ontario, MPP John Vanthof, the Fire Marshal, AMO, FONOM and all Ontario Municipalities.

CARRIED

Kind Regards,



Steven Dalley
Town Manager, Clerk/Treasurer
Tel: (705) 679-8877
Email: sdalley@cobalt.ca

cc: Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, premier@ontario.ca
MPP, John Vanthof, jvanthof-co@ndp.on.ca
Solicitor General, Michael.kerzner@pc.ola.org
Ontario Fire Marshall, askofm@ontario.ca
AMO, resolutions@amo.on.ca
FONOM, fonom.info@gmail.com
Ontario Municipalities



August 29, 2025

MPP Will Bouma, MP Larry Brock, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); and all Ontario municipalities

Sent via email: will.bouma@pc.ola.org

Dear MPP Will Bouma,

Please be advised that Brantford City Council at its meeting held August 26, 2025 adopted the following:

12.3.1. Advocacy for Provincial Scrap Metal Legislation and Bail System Reform, 2025-421 - Councillor Hunt

WHEREAS a Town Hall meeting, hosted by Councillors of Ward 4 was held on Monday June 23, 2025, to discuss recommendations and actions taken to address ongoing concerns from local businesses regarding break-ins, theft and vandalism; and

WHEREAS Ward 4 businesses owners were invited to share their experiences and contribute to identifying actionable steps to theft concerns and help identify steps to foster a safer and more secure environment for businesses in Brantford; and

WHEREAS staff from the City of Brantford Bylaw & Security Department and representatives from Brantford Police Services provided presentations outlining current measures and actionable recommendations; and

WHEREAS business owners in attendance requested that a formal letter be drafted advocating for the transition of the municipal scrap metal bylaw into a provincial statute, to be addressed to MPP Will Bouma, Attorney General of

Ontario Doug Downey, MP Larry Brock and Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada Sean Fraser; and

WHEREAS business owners further requested that the letter include a call to strengthen the bail system to better protect communities by ensuring repeat offenders are not prematurely released.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT City Council DIRECT Staff to prepare a formal advocacy letter to MPP Will Bouma, Attorney General of Ontario Doug Downey, MP Larry Brock and Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada Sean Fraser, recommending the transition of the municipal scrap metal bylaw to a provincial statute. The letter to be completed by August 31, 2025, should also include:

- i. A request to strengthen the bail system to enhance community safety; and
 - ii. Testimonials from local business owners detailing the financial and operational impacts of break-ins, theft and vandalism, including threats to personal safety, and the financial burden of increased insurance cost; and
- B. THAT a copy of this resolution BE FORWARDED to MPP Will Bouma, MP Larry Brock, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); and all Ontario municipalities.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours truly,



Chris Gauthier
City Clerk
cgauthier@brantford.ca

CC MP Larry Brock - larry.brock@parl.gc.ca
The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) - amo@amo.on.ca, policy@amo.on.ca
All Ontario municipalities

**Township of Southgate
Administration Office**

185667 Grey County Road 9, RR 1
Dundalk, ON N0C 1B0



Phone: 519-923-2110
Toll Free: 1-888-560-6607
Fax: 519-923-9262
Web: www.southgate.ca

September 4, 2025

Re: Resolution of Support – City of St. Catharines – Elect Respect Pledge

Please be advised that at the September 3, 2025, regular Council meeting, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Southgate, approved the following:

No. 2025-423

Moved By Deputy Mayor Dobreen

Seconded By Councillor John

Be it resolved that the correspondence from the City of St. Catharine's regarding the Elect Respect pledge be received and supported as outlined below:

WHEREAS democracy is healthy when everyone is able to participate fully and safely and contribute to the well-being of their community; and

WHEREAS we are witnessing the dissolution of democratic discourse and respectful debate across all levels of government and in neighbouring jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS Ontario's municipally elected officials and municipal staff are dealing with increasingly hostile, unsafe work environments facing threats and harassment; and

WHEREAS social media platforms have exacerbated disrespectful dialogue, negative commentary, and toxic engagement which disincentivizes individuals, especially women and candidates from diverse backgrounds from running for office; and

WHEREAS better decisions are made when democracy is respectful and constructive and the voices of diverse genders, identities, ethnicities, races, sexual orientation, ages and abilities are heard and represented around municipal council tables; and

WHEREAS the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Healthy Democracy Project has identified concerning trends with fewer people voting in local elections and running for municipal office; and

WHEREAS in 2024, female elected representatives from across Halton formed a group called H.E.R. (Halton Elected Representatives) which pledged to speak out against harassment and negativity in politics and called on elected officials to uphold the highest standards of conduct; and

WHEREAS H.E.R. Halton has launched a campaign called Elect Respect to promote the importance of healthy democracy and safe, inclusive, respectful work environments for all elected officials and municipal staff that encourages individuals to participate in the political process; and

WHEREAS on June 5, 2025, the Canadian Association of Feminist Parliamentarians launched a non-partisan "Parliamentary Civility Pledge" to encourage all parliamentarians to commit to end workplace harassment and increase civility on Parliament Hill, modelled after the pledge developed in Halton by representatives of H.E.R.;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of Southgate supports the Elect Respect pledge and commits to:

- Treat others with respect in all spaces—public, private, and online,

- Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks,
- Focus debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks,
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office,
- Call on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Model integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Township of Southgate Council calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, MP Alex Ruff and MPP Paul Vickers, the Ontario Provincial Police, and all Ontario Municipalities.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (519) 923-2110.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Green

Lindsey Green, Clerk
Township of Southgate

cc:
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
MP Alex Ruff
MPP Paul Vickers
Ontario Provincial Police
All Municipalities in Ontario

November 19, 2025

Re: KCCA Board Resolution Re: Bill 68 and ERO Posting 025-1257

On October 31, 2025 the Ontario government announced plans to create a provincial board-governed agency, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA), to provide leadership, governance and strategic direction to Conservation Authorities. On November 6, Bill 68 “Plan to Protect Ontario Act” was released including Schedule 3 which outlines changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* to establish the OPCA. The Bill is currently in 3rd reading.

In addition, the Province is currently consulting on a proposal to consolidate 36 Conservation Authorities into 7 Regional CAs. The “Proposed Boundaries for Regional Consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities” (ERO #025-1257) is open for public consultation until December 22, 2025. Under this proposal Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA) would be consolidated into the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority together with seven other CAs and encompass 81 municipalities. The new governance structure is proposed to be effective following the municipal elections in 2026.

KCCA’s Board of Directors considered the formation of the OPCA and regional CAs at its November 19, 2025 meeting and passed the attached motion.

The KCCA Board of Directors strongly encourages our member municipalities and partners to carefully evaluate the province’s proposal. The CA network was built on local resources, local knowledge and local decisions.

Local watershed management decisions and resources need to stay in the hands of local decision-makers.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide comments through the posting [ERO #25-1257 Proposed boundaries for regional consolidations of Ontario’ Conservation Authorities](#), well in advance of the closing date December 22, 2025.

Sincerely,



Todd Noble
Chair, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority

Attached: KCCA Board Resolution, November 19, 2025

RESOLUTION RE: Conservation Authority Consolidation

Date: November 19, 2025
Resolution: FA112/2025
Moved by: Sam Trosow
Seconded by: Jim Herbert

WHEREAS the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted Environmental Registry Notice No. 025-1257 (“Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities”), proposing to reduce Ontario’s 36 conservation authorities to 7 regional entities as part of a broader restructuring that would create a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to provide centralized oversight and direction under the *Conservation Authorities Act*; and

AND WHEREAS under this proposal, the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA) would be merged into a new “Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority” together with the: Essex Region, Lower Thames Valley CA, St. Clair Region CA, Upper Thames River CA, Catfish Creek CA, Long Point Region CA, and Grand River CA, forming a single organization stretching from Windsor, through London, Brantford and north of Waterloo region;

AND WHEREAS the Board acknowledges and supports the Province’s goals of improved efficiency, consistency and fiscal responsibility in conservation delivery, but find that the proposed “Lake Erie Region” configuration would create a geographically vast and administratively complex entity; dilute local accountability and municipal partnership; generate substantial transition costs, including human-resources integration, governance restructuring, IT migration and policy harmonization that would divert resources from the front-line service delivery making it hard for applicants to obtain timely local advice, resolve issues or expedite housing and infrastructure approvals that support the Province’s goals;

AND WHEREAS KCCA has always worked with its member municipalities, the province and partners to be fiscally responsible while ensuring the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources within the Kettle Creek watershed including modernizing its programs and services and aligning them with provincial guidance and neighbouring CAs and will continue to do so;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT KCCA Board of Directors does not support the proposed “Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority” boundary configuration outlined in the Environment Registry Notice 02-1257; and the Board instead requests that the Ministry engage directly with affected municipalities and conservation authorities to evaluate a reduced geographic scope for consolidation that better reflects established relationships and enhances cost-efficient delivery of integrated watershed management, grassroots connections and local understanding;

AND FINALLY THAT this resolution, be forwarded to the Ministry of Environment Conservation Parks, local members of Provincial Parliament, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Rural Ontario Municipalities Association, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, all municipalities and CAs within the proposed Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority and Conservation Ontario.

Carried



November 28, 2025

Premier Doug Ford

Sent via email: premier@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Doug Ford:

Please be advised that Brantford City Council at its meeting held November 25, 2025 adopted the following:

12.4.11 Professional Activity (P.A) Day on Municipal Election Day – School Boards - Councillor Carpenter

Councillor Carpenter read the title of his notice of motion:

WHEREAS municipalities across Ontario are responsible for organizing and administering municipal and school board elections every four years, as mandated under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*; and

WHEREAS local schools are traditionally among the most convenient, accessible, and familiar polling locations for voters in all communities; and

WHEREAS schools offer important accessibility features such as level entrances, parking, and public visibility that make them ideal polling stations, particularly for seniors, parents, and persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS the use of schools as polling locations can lead to increased costs with regards to ensuring the safety and security of students; and

WHEREAS many municipalities face challenges securing suitable and accessible alternative voting locations, resulting in increased costs and reduced accessibility for voters; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Elections Act provides that school boards shall provide their facilities free of charge for the Municipal and School board elections; and

WHEREAS holding a province-wide Professional Activity (P.A.) Day for all publicly funded schools on municipal election day would alleviate concerns from school administrators for voting purposes while maintaining student safety; and

WHEREAS this coordinated approach would enhance voter convenience, improve accessibility, and help strengthen civic engagement and democratic participation by allowing electors to vote at their local schools without disrupting the student body; and

WHEREAS it would also create efficiencies and potential cost savings for municipalities by reducing the need to rent alternative facilities or implement special security measures; and

WHEREAS aligning a P.A. Day with municipal election day would require minimal disruption to the school calendar, as school boards already schedule several P.A. Days each academic year; and

WHEREAS this measure would demonstrate a spirit of cooperation between the Province of Ontario, local municipalities, and school boards to promote civic engagement and fiscal responsibility;

WHEREAS the Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario and its members have lobbied the Province to establish a P.A day on Election Day;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

A. The Council of the City of Brantford respectfully requests the Premier of Ontario to consider directing all publicly funded school boards in Ontario to schedule a Professional Activity (P.A.) Day on the date of the municipal election in each election year; and

B. That this direction be made in consultation with the Ministry of Education, the

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), and school board associations, to ensure consistency across the province; and

C. THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to:

- i. The Premier of Ontario;
- ii. The Minister of Education;
- iii. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO);
- iv. The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA);
- v. The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA); and
- vi. All Ontario municipalities for their information and support
- vii. MPP Will Bouma

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours truly,



Chris Gauthier City Clerk,
cgauthier@brantford.ca

CC - The Minister of Education paul.calandra@pc.ola.org

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Bwallace@opsba.org

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) aobrien@ocsta.on.ca

Association of Municipalities of Ontario - resolutions@amo.on.ca

All Ontario municipalities for their information and support

MPP Will Bouma - will.bouma@pc.ola.org