# Report to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

**To:** **Chair and Members**
**Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee**

**From:** **Kelly Scherr, Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure**

**Subject:** **London Transit Route Planning and Management Review**

**Date:** **April 21, 2026**

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the London Transit Route Planning and Management Review:

a) the summary of findings and recommendations by Stantec Consulting on the London Transit Commission Route Planning and Management Review **BE RECEIVED**;

b) the London Transit Commission **BE DIRECTED** to review the following opportunities and report back to Council on implementation, including timing, operational considerations, and resource implications no later than Q4, 2026**:**

i. with respect to *Transit Planning and Operations,* explore further route modifications and service frequency increases on rapid transit feeder routes to fully leverage rapid transit operations;

ii. with respect to *Transit Structure and Hierarchy*, review opportunities for interim service enhancements on the North and West rapid transit corridors and develop an implementation plan for a tiered-style transit map;

iii. with respect to *System Monitoring and Key Performance Indicators*, expand performance and planning indicators and objectives, and develop transit infrastructure bus stop guidelines;

iv. with respect to *Transit Progression Strategy and New Service*, implement alternative service delivery models and establish clear thresholds for expanded or new transit service;

v. with respect to *Mobility Integration*, partner with regional providers and coordinate rapid and local transit networks;

c) the Administrations at the Corporation and the London Transit Commission **BE DIRECTED** to collectively create a more structured collaboration process to better integrate and achieve alignment on planning, operations and administrative initiatives.

## Executive Summary

London’s transit system is a critical part of London’s mobility system, providing an accessible, affordable, and efficient transportation option to Londoners. In early 2025, City Council directed Civic Administration to review LTC’s procedures for:

- planning new transit routes and modifying or discontinuing existing ones relative to industry standards, and
- how transit planning is integrated into London’s rapid growth, both residential and industrial.

To ensure London's transit system is operating as effectively as possible, the City retained Stantec Consulting to complete a Route Planning and Management Review. The review provided a framework for planning, monitoring, and mobility integration, that are common in successful transit networks, relying on three decades of research and practical application within transit agencies in North America, and applying them to the London context.

The review focused on several key areas that influence overall system effectiveness, including:

1. Transit planning and operations;
2. Transit structure and hierarchy;
3. System monitoring and Key Performance Indicators;
4. Transit progression strategy and new service; and
5. Mobility integration.

The review found that London's transit system has many best-practice elements, including a route structure with service guidelines, a robust annual service planning process, and many infrastructure policies to build upon. However, several opportunities were identified to further improve network planning, communication strategies, reporting objectives, and integrate transit with other mobility solutions in the region.

Recommendations are provided within this report to deliver a more reliable, intuitive, and effective transit system to Londoners.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The London Transit Rapid Transit Operational Readiness Review supports the 2023–2027 City of London Strategic Plan under the Mobility and Transportation Strategic Area of Focus.

The recommendations in this report support the outcomes of equitable access to reliable public transportation, improved ridership and rider satisfaction, and public transit that better meets the needs of London's workforce by helping ensure the transit system operates reliably, efficiently, and accessibly in London's transportation network.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Background Information

#### 1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – April 23, 2018 – Bus Rapid Transit Environmental Assessment Initiative
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – October 28, 2019 – Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, Public Transit Infrastructure Stream, Approved Projects
- Civic Works Committee – July 18, 2023 – Mobility Master Plan Update: Strategies, Mode Share Target Options and Project Evaluation Frameworks
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – March 26, 2024 – Request for Proposals for External Auditor of the London Transit Commission
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – January 14, 2025 – Request London Transit Commission Review Recommended Approach
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – March 25, 2025 – Request London Transit Commission Assessment Growth Business Case
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee - April 21, 2026 – London Transit Rapid Transit Operational Readiness Review
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee – April 21, 2026 - Review of Subsidized Transit Programs in London

### 1.2 Background

The London Transit Commission (LTC) operates as a Commission of the City of London under *By-law No. A.-6377-206*, which establishes LTC as the sole operator of public transit for the City of London and defines the composition of the Commission.

At its meeting on July 25, 2023, Council directed Civic Administration to review the current by-law and report back with recommendations to optimize the collaboration between LTC and the City of London in delivering on Council's 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan.

At its meeting on April 2, 2024, Council further resolved that Civic Administration undertake a Request for Proposals for an external auditor to initiate a comprehensive operations and performance audit of LTC.

At its meeting on January 21, 2025, Council received a report from Civic Administration outlining the London Transit Commission review recommended approach for the scope of work to be managed with existing staff resources and be broken down into four distinct reviews: Governance Review; Rapid Transit Operational Readiness Review; Route Planning and Management Review; and, Transit Passes and Subsidized Transit Programs.

### 1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarize the Route Planning and Management review completed by Stantec Consulting and outline recommended next steps arising from the assessment.

The third-party review provided an opportunity to assess industry best practices from comparable transit systems and evaluate their relevance for London. The recommendations presented in this report vary in level of impact and timeline to implement. The review also confirmed several initiatives that the London Transit Commission and the City have already undertaken or are currently advancing.

## 2.0 Discussion and Considerations

Given the shared aspects of the LTC Rapid Transit Operational Readiness and Route Planning and Management reviews, they were combined into a single RFP to improve cost-effectiveness and reduce overlap, with the intent that the work be conducted in parallel and delivered as one consolidated report, structured as Part A (Route Planning and Management) and Part B (Rapid Transit Operational Readiness). The final document presents Stantec's analysis, findings, and recommended actions, summarized in the main report and Appendix A.

To strengthen the project team's expertise, the City engaged Dr. Casello, a University of Waterloo professor, recognized for his leadership in sustainable urban transportation. His background in planning, engineering, and the design and operation of multimodal transportation systems provided specialized insight for this assignment.

## 3.0 Summary of Review Findings and Recommendations

The City of London, together with the London Transit Commission (LTC), is on the cusp of an exciting transformation as it prepares to introduce Rapid Transit (RT) service for the first time. Although RT warrants the most attention and communication focus, a functioning transit system has many layers that work together to deliver an effective, reliable, and pleasant transit service.

This review examined several operational and policy elements that support effective and efficient transit systems that rely on RT as the spine. Although the scope of this review was not a top-to-bottom review of all service planning and reporting practices at

London Transit, it provides a broad indication of where London currently is, what has worked well in other similar jurisdictions, and how to apply those lessons to London.

The following sections summarize key considerations and opportunities related to:

- Transit planning and operations
- Transit structure and hierarchy
- System monitoring and key performance indicators
- Transit progression strategy and new service
- Mobility integration

These elements combine to consider transit holistically and to leverage the many connections and integrations to provide mobility options for all.

### 3.1 Transit Planning and Operations

The report provides broad guidelines of how transit can be planned and the decisions that influence the design of the network. These concepts form the principles that should be considered for the ongoing improvement of the LTC network. It discusses some key concepts such as:

- ridership versus coverage
- how transit systems can be created in layers
- basic service guidelines for each layer
- how systems evolve from radial to grid systems
- transfer options
- mobility hubs

These concepts are based upon the consultant's research over the past three decades as well as practical testing and application within transit agencies in North America; these concepts are discussed below.

#### Ridership versus Coverage

Understanding the tension between ridership and coverage goals is critical to establishing appropriate service guidelines and setting rider expectations. A **coverage**-based focus maximizes access to transit services regardless of the quality or frequency of service. Bus routes are dispersed across the city delivering low-frequency and circuitous service. A **ridership**-based priority maximizes ridership and productivity by focusing on serving areas of high demand. It connects key destinations with frequent and direct service to attract new riders.

Decision makers should decide the percentage of transit service hours devoted to each goal understanding the trade-offs involved. With a finite number of service hours, an increase in bus routes that serve coverage goals will reduce the frequency possible in routes serving ridership goals, and vice versa.

#### Service Layers

A transit network is based on the creation of layers of service. A well-designed and successful transit system features a mix of layered transit services designed to meet the diverse needs of communities. Transit service layers are distinguished by service frequency, distance between bus stops, and the main purpose of the service.

A primary transit network provides high service levels all day and is defined by high-frequency service, high passenger demand, and often with longer spacing between stops. In London, this would include rapid transit and some all-day express routes.

Standard service provides feeder service to the primary network and has high ridership in the peak periods. In London, this would include core and feeder routes.

Special service includes coverage-based routes, community bus service, on-demand services, or commuter service. In London, this would include local, industrial, alternative service delivery, and the peak-only express routes.

### Service Guidelines for each Layer

Each layer of transit serves a subset of trips, but when integrated in a network, the system provides greater mobility and access. Each layer has a sphere of influence that determines how far passengers are willing to travel to access the stop. For rapid or frequent transit, passengers may be willing to walk 10 minutes or 800 metres; for local routes, it may be 5 minutes or 400 metres.

As defined in London Transit's Five-Year Plan, service guidelines for each layer/ classification determine the frequency of service, the span of service, the stop spacing, and the vehicle type. There can also be infrastructure needs based on the layer, for instance a rapid transit route will require a dedicated lane, while frequent transit or transit priority corridors may benefit from the addition of queue jump lanes or queue bypass lanes at intersections, or transit signal priority measures.

### Evolution from Radial to Grid Network

There is a typical progression of the evolution of a transit network that starts with a radial network focused upon the downtown. As a city grows outward, routes become more complex as they try to cover the suburbs without a standard grid street network. Fewer transfers are required in this model, and if they are, they take place downtown where all routes converge.

While Downtown London remains to be a highly competitive and a consistently developing place to live, work, and play, London has also matured into a city with multiple, smaller centers of population and employment. As the downtown is no longer the sole focus, demand for crosstown trips between these smaller centers has increased over time. This necessitates transit systems to adapt to travel demand by restructuring existing services adding crosstown and suburb-to-suburb services. LTC has good examples of crosstown services, such as Express Route 91 which operates on Oxford Street from Wonderland Road to Fanshawe College, with plans to transition more routes to become feeders into the rapid transit network.

The creation of a network (based both on the modified grid as well as the layered service approach) is based on several key considerations such as the level of service devoted to ridership versus coverage routes, the different layers of service and a decision over the type of transfer that will be accommodated. London has a high level of service purely dedicated to ensuring that transfers are minimized, e.g., the downtown-based routes and the interlining of services to create long crosstown services that travel through downtown which is typical of a pre-rapid transit network.

However, as rapid and frequent transit services are created and expanded, the no-transfer option becomes an economic liability because of the investment in infrastructure needed for rapid and frequent transit services to ensure their effectiveness. Moving from a radial network that currently exists in London to a modified grid network revolves around the ability to move to a different transfer type.

### Transfer Options

There are many different types of transfer systems that can be used including:

- Focal point or pulse system to allow transfers between buses, used to connect local and on-demand routes to feeder or core routes. Can often be a strategy used at transit terminals or mobility hubs when buses arrive simultaneously.
- Timed transfers can allow passengers to transfer between two routes at a pre-determined time along a route.
- Random and shared corridor transfers are used to access rapid and high-frequency routes. The short gap between buses means that no timing coordination is required, connecting feeder routes to rapid transit.

For routes connecting to frequent transit, a coordinated transfer is not required since any required waiting is short. Additionally, if the stop or station is well-located, has appropriate infrastructure, including places to wait comfortably and real-time information, the transfer is much less onerous.

### Mobility Hubs

Transfers also happen between modes of travel, and these often occur at mobility hubs. These hubs can accommodate a variety of modes and serve as people places that link the transportation and land use realms. Toronto and LA have led the way with mobility hub implementation and focus primarily on the movement of people between modes with focus on transit, parking, and cycling. The hub should be attractive with priority on pedestrian movement through the area.

London is currently planning mobility hubs at Fanshawe College, White Oaks Mall, and Downtown, with future hubs in the North and West as their rapid transit lines develop.

### Recommended Next Steps

This section provides an overview of the different elements that need to be addressed when planning new transit services or developing refinements to existing services. This sets a foundational understanding of transit service to support all the recommendations in the report.

The introduction of rapid transit presents an opportunity to reconfigure the transit network into appropriate layers that feed the RT spine. Because RT is frequent with comfortable stations and real-time information, transfers between feeder routes and RT can be incorporated into the system design without being too onerous on passengers. A layered transit system, operating on a modified-grid, can ensure frequent feeder routes connect with RT, while local routes connect to the frequent feeder routes.

The review identifies the following actions for London:

1. **Prepare a phased implementation plan to increase frequency of feeder routes connecting to RT**, consistent with the RT Network Integration Framework and as noted in LTC's Five-Year Plan, to no more than twice the headway of RT for core routes.

2. **Re-evaluate route network as Rapid Transit matures.**
   LTC's Five-Year Plan proposes route changes to reduce duplication with RT; however, as RT matures, additional routes operating nearby RT should be re-evaluated to ensure they are complementing RT rather than competing with it.

## 3.2 Transit Structure & Hierarchy

### Why This Matters

The introduction of new RT service can be a groundbreaking moment for a city and for a transit agency, and the LTC and the City of London have a chance to capitalize on this opportunity to attract new riders and benefit existing riders. A revised transit structure can communicate to existing and future riders how rapid transit anchors a network of tiered transit services that provide a connected and efficient system.

### Current Approach in London

LTC has a Five-Year Service Plan (2025-2029) that restructures the transit routes to be classified as Rapid, Core, Local, Feeder, Alternative Service Delivery, Express or Industrial. This allows specific service guidelines to be established for each classification, ensuring appropriate performance monitoring and setting consistent expectations for transit users.

The Mobility Master Plan (MMP) also identified important transit corridors in the 2050 plan, including rapid transit, transit priority corridors, and transit friendly corridors that support improved infrastructure, service standards, and alignment of land-use policies going forward.

**Stantec Review Findings**

Operational

The MMP has approved future North and West rapid transit corridors, but there are no current plans to enhance conventional transit service levels in these corridors in the interim, either through express service or by increasing frequency. Ensuring timely completion of the North and West rapid transit corridors remains essential, as delays could undermine ridership growth, service reliability, and development patterns along these high-demand routes.

Current planning processes also lack clearly defined evaluation criteria—particularly around accessibility, equity, and connections to key destinations, making it difficult to assess whether proposed service changes meet citywide mobility goals.

Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) / On-Demand Transit

LTC's Five-Year Service Plan identifies implementing on-demand transit but does not define when on-demand service should transition to or from fixed-route service. Research shows that on-demand transit works best in low-density areas and becomes less efficient as ridership increases, with most studies placing the cost-efficiency threshold at 5–7 passengers per hour. Real-world examples—such as Dallas' GoLink program—show that per-passenger subsidies can exceed those of fixed-route service. Implementation of ASD will require iterative refinement and monitoring of key indicators such as boardings per hour, subsidy per passenger trip, wait times, and integration with fixed-route transit.

Land Use

London's adoption of Transit Station Area Zones, along with Strategic Growth Areas added to *The London Plan*, demonstrates a strong policy foundation for transit-supportive land use around rapid transit corridors. Transit supportive land use encourages higher-density development, lower parking minimums, and restrict non-transit-supportive uses near stations, aligning growth with planned mobility investments. To fully realize the benefits of these policies, more detailed station-area plans and rezoning policies will be needed to guide development toward the transit corridors.

**Global Best Practices**

In Canada, Calgary and Winnipeg offer good examples of transit systems with robust route structures that connect feeder routes to a rapid transit spine. These systems employ:

- Feeder networks that complement high-frequency rapid transit
- An established **primary transit network** that is frequent and reliable
- Connector or local routes that aim to reduce wait times at transfer locations
- System maps that clearly display the hierarchy of the various transit types

These features help reduce passenger wait times and increase the understanding of the system for new or regular riders.

**Recommended Next Steps**

The review identifies several key actions for London:

1. **Continue to adopt proposed route classifications & gradually implement service changes**, consistent with LTC's current practice.

2. **Explore frequency enhancements to approved North and West Rapid Transit corridors.**
   Addresses the need for rapid transit-like frequency in all parts of the city, ahead of full rapid transit implementation.

3. **Create a tiered-style transit network map.**
   The new map would clearly communicate that RT is a new, revolutionary type of transit service that acts as the spine of one integrated system.

4. **Establish a transit-oriented development plan focused on areas around RT stations and corridors.**
   Civic Administration to continue to support policy and zoning efforts to direct intense development toward higher order transit and away from areas with limited transit provision.

The recommended approach combines implementing current plans with targeted enhancements. Maintaining the Five-Year Plan's route classifications minimizes rider confusion and keeps focus on rapid transit delivery, while exploring service enhancements to the approved North and West rapid transit corridors can improve frequency and address interim rapid transit gaps. Creating a stylized tiered rapid transit-centric system map is both recommended and critical for public communications. A long-term transit-oriented development plan offers significant land-use benefits.

### 3.3 System Monitoring and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Transit service guidelines (TSG's) are a collection of tools that can achieve significant benefits when applied in a tailored, consistent and comprehensive way. TSG's address the following 3 areas of transit:

- Overall system performance indicators
- Route/service performance indicators
- Transit infrastructure guidelines

Transit Service Guidelines provide clarity regarding service expectations, consistency in the application of those expectations, and can be combined with the desires of the community to deliver prioritized improvements.

**Current Approach in London**

LTC and the City of London each maintain distinct yet complementary systems for monitoring mobility performance and key indicators across the public transit and transportation network. The LTC primarily focuses on operational efficiency, service reliability, and customer satisfaction, while the MMP and Strategic Plan emphasize broader mobility, sustainability, and mode-share goals. LTC and the City of London also have various guideline documents that mandate infrastructure requirements and design specifications.

- <u>System Performance Indicators</u>

  The LTC Five-Year Service Plan keeps track of performance indicators such as ridership, revenue service hours, passenger revenue, operating costs, ridership per revenue service hour, and the revenue-to-cost ratio.

  LTC tracks a comprehensive range of service and operational performance indicators through its Annual Reports and related dashboards. These include metrics such as total ridership, rides per revenue service hour, service frequency, and on-time performance, alongside efficiency indicators like mean kilometres between service interruptions and complaints per 100,000 riders. In 2024, for example, LTC reported 19.233 million annual rides achieving 27.1 rides per revenue service hour.

Customer satisfaction is monitored through “Voice of the Customer” surveys, which assess rider priorities such as on-time reliability, service frequency, and real-time information availability. LTC also benchmarks its system performance against peer Ontario transit agencies through the Canadian Urban Transit Association, as outlined in its 2024 Annual Report.

The 2025 Mobility Master Plan (MMP) lists many KPIs to track the success of the plan as it relates to transit, including mode share, commuting duration by transit, transit competitiveness, residents and jobs within 400m of a transit stop, transit service hours per capita, resident satisfaction, and the percentage of the transit fleet that is zero-emission.

Addressing the MMP goal of maintaining a regular and consistent data collection effort that informs mobility-related decisions, two actions recommended in the plan are to budget for updated travel demand data collection and to implement a monitoring plan. Both represent an ideal opportunity to develop a more comprehensive baseline of KPIs that measure the performance of transit in London before and after the introduction of rapid transit corridors to the city.

- Service Performance Indicators

  LTC has targets on route level productivity, measured in boardings per revenue service hour, depending on the type of route and the time of day. They also compare productivity levels to triggers at which service improvements are considered. Likewise, the LTC has targets around minimum standard service levels related to the duration and frequency of routes.

- Infrastructure Guidelines

  The City of London and LTC have established comprehensive guidelines for the location, design, and infrastructure of bus stops to ensure safety, accessibility, and operational efficiency. These standards are outlined primarily in the LTC Bus Stop Standards & Technical Guidelines, LTC Shelter Warrant Criteria, the City of London Design Specifications and Requirements Manual, the Complete Streets Design Manual, and the LTC Accessibility Plan.

**Stantec Review Findings**

The review highlights several key gaps:

- **Travel Time Competitiveness:**
  Overall travel time comparison between transit and driving is a helpful ongoing metric; dividing the transit trip time into its components is even better. Accessing the stop, waiting, and in-vehicle travel time are perceived differently by passengers, with waiting time perceived as more onerous than vehicle travel time.
- **Establishing Performance Indicator Objectives:**
  Every KPI needs a defined objective to understand success: a fleet of zero-emission vehicles is a published goal without a clear timeline for implementation.
- **Infrastructure:**
  At present, London lacks systematic measurement and public reporting on the physical condition and compliance of its transit infrastructure, especially at the bus stop level. Bus stop guidelines are necessary to ensure that each stop is categorized and offers appropriate infrastructure, amenities, accessibility, maintenance and safety to transit users.
- **Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion:**
  While both the Mobility Master Plan and the LTC’s Five-Year Service Plan emphasize equitable access to mobility, equity and inclusion are not yet operationalized into measurable indicators. Similarly, customer feedback could be disaggregated by priority populations to understand the experience of older adults, low-income residents, or persons with a disability, for example.

- **Sustainability & Multimodal Integration:**
  Increased use of transit helps London's Climate Emergency Action Plan goal of net-zero emissions but this trend could be tracked through emissions per passenger kilometer or similar. Additionally, the MMP emphasizes transit connectivity with walking and cycling networks, but there is currently no documentation of how investments in cycling lanes, sidewalks, and pedestrian crossings are improving access to nearby bus stops.

**Recommended Next Steps**

The report recommends that London Transit further develop and expand upon their use of existing transit service guidelines as well as bus stop infrastructure guidelines in the following ways:

1. **Performance Monitoring**
   A more comprehensive assessment of service performance at the system, route and stop levels will help identify issues sooner, measure effectiveness of changes, and provide clarity in transit users' expectations. Establishing clear objectives for each performance indicator and reporting regularly on these indicators, increases transparency and provides a valuable data source for service planning, peer comparisons, and financial planning.

2. **Service Planning**
   London Transit already has a robust annual service planning process. Establishing a more formal process to evaluate existing services and previous service changes against established indicators further demonstrates accountability and alignment with community goals. Examples of bolstered indicators are:
   - Service coverage levels based on land use, type of service (frequent vs local), time of day, and day of week, rather than just distance to any stop.
   - Travel time competitiveness between marginalized areas and important destinations such as hospitals or post-secondary institutions.

3. **Transit Infrastructure Bus Stop Guidelines**
   To ensure bus stops and stations have the appropriate infrastructure and amenities by type of transit service, the following needs to be developed:
   - A framework of bus stop classification
   - Minimum infrastructure requirements for bus stop class
   - Prioritization guidelines for stop improvements
   - Implementation plan for new bus stops

Service guidelines are required to regularly monitor transit performance of existing services, understand trends, provide status reports, address financial accountability, and proactively initiate improvement initiatives. London Transit and the City of London are already tracking and monitoring many transit-related indicators, but expanding these indicators with clear objectives provides decision makers with a better understanding of the effectiveness of the system. Additionally, reporting should be easily accessible by the public so successes can be celebrated and challenges prioritized.

### 3.4 Transit Progression Strategy and New Service

**Why This Matters**

Transit progression strategies are used to manage the transformation of transit services to tailor service provision to travel demand. This is especially relevant in developing neighbourhoods that typically see a growing demand for service as land use growth occurs. This includes both residential neighbourhoods as well as neighbourhoods accommodating jobs such as industrial parks.

Thresholds need to be established for ridership characteristics and land use growth that trigger service improvement initiatives or service reductions. In growing

neighbourhoods, population size and the number of jobs within the transit catchment area are important factors to determine when service is warranted.

A route expansion will define a service frequency and coverage area and should also detail operational aspects such as service span and service days. For example, a new service may start up as a limited peak hour service accommodating commuters and/or students on weekdays. As demand increases the service may be expanded gradually to full weekday service, evening service and finally weekend service.

It is important that the progression strategy is communicated well as it serves as the rationale to guide both service improvements and reductions. It creates the awareness that transit services are constantly monitored and manages expectations relating to service adjustments that are based on travel demand.

**Global Best Practices**

Translink in Vancouver has developed the “6-D’s” to manage new transit service and its integration with land use:

- **Destinations** should be connected by direct corridors that are simple to understand and convenient to use by providing appropriate service, for customers. When routes meander, they become difficult to use and inefficient to provide.

- **Distance** to access transit services. As most transit trips begin or end with a walk, having accessible and convenient pedestrian access to transit is essential. Connected infrastructure to bike paths and other networks, with short blocks is important too. Cul-de-sacs and disconnected street networks make transit inaccessible and ineffective.

- **Design** refers to creating a people-friendly, urban environment which is attractive and pedestrian/bike friendly in all weather conditions. Transit benefits communities and contributes to shaping urban design and vice versa.

- **Densification** of population along routes especially in proximity to frequent transit services and stops. Densification of employment along route and job access is key for public transit since transit ridership strongly correlates to job or employment density.

- **Diversity** of land uses and housing types. Transit use and success benefits from mixed land uses, where many different people travel to and from throughout the day for many different purposes. This helps ensure the success of corridor-type services and justifies the cost of providing frequent transit services.

- **Demand management** is used to discourage unnecessary driving through traffic diversions and parking pricing thereby making transit more attractive. New developments can contribute to a transit-oriented multi-modal city or detract from it.

**Service Delivery Models**

Service to new neighbourhoods can be conventional fixed route transit operating at low frequencies, on-demand transit/ Alternative Service Delivery, or additional service models that possess elements of both, such as fixed route with deviations or zone-based service. These additional service models could use smaller vehicles which are visually less intrusive and more maneuverable allowing service into areas where a traditional transit vehicle could not be accommodated.

For the non-fixed route service, trip requests would be required via phone or app in advance of the trip. These services would have many similarities to the current Community Bus Routes that London Transit operates today.

### Current Approach in London

Within LTC's Five-Year Service Plan, new service areas are identified with proposed conventional route extensions/ modifications to serve them, or in two areas, Alternative Service Delivery models are planned to replace existing low-frequency routes.

Minimum productivity thresholds are established by route classification, with Local and Industrial routes having the lowest threshold of 15 boardings per revenue service hour. Routes not meeting this threshold would be considered for Alternative Service Delivery. It is not clear what criteria is required for new service areas to qualify for transit service or how transit should be extended into new areas.

### Global Best Practices

Closer to London in Oakville, on-demand transit replaced underperforming fixed route service and was able to provide expanded transit service to specific neighbourhoods. A dedicated app allows users to book on-demand trips, including specialized services, although it took two years to develop. The service was set up so that on-demand operating costs should not exceed fixed-route operating costs for a given service area.

### Recommended Next Steps

To deliver transit service to new areas of the City, the review identifies the following priorities:

1. **Proceed with implementing Alternative Service Delivery,** consistent with the Five-Year Service Plan, and measure its performance relative to fixed-route transit.

2. **Establish new thresholds for population and job density**, within a new service catchment area, when it is appropriate to provide an initial level of transit service.

## 3.5 Mobility Integration

London's Mobility Master Plan is explicit in how transit service should have an integrated, multi-modal approach that links local transit, active transportation networks and regional connections to enhance access and reduce reliance on private vehicles.

### Current Approach in London

<u>Regional Transit</u>

London is connected to the surrounding towns and counties through public and private bus operators. Public transportation options are typically provided by minibuses and shuttle-sized vehicles with fares in the $5-$10 range per trip. Although service is limited, ridership increased substantially between 2022 and 2024 on Middlesex County Connect routes. These services are subsidized by the province and participating municipalities and connect to LTC services at transit hubs such as downtown, Fanshawe College, White Oaks Mall, and Masonville Mall. The following routes provide regional service:

- **Middlesex County Connect** provides service north to Lucan (4 daily trips Mon-Fri), east to Woodstock (3 daily trips Mon-Fri), south to St. Thomas (4 daily trips Mon-Sat), and west to Sarnia via Strathroy (3 daily trips Mon-Sun).

- **PC Connect** provides 3 daily trips to Stratford and St. Mary's on weekdays and Saturdays.

- **Huron Shores Area Transit** provides 2 daily trips between London and Grand Bend on all days.

These public options are supplemented with private bus operators (such as FlixBus, ONEXBus, and Intercity Bus) serving longer trip distances, connecting London to Windsor, Kitchener, Brampton, Hamilton, Mississauga, and Toronto.

VIA Rail and London Train Station

VIA connects London passengers to Windsor and Toronto with 4-6 daily trips and connects to Sarnia and Kitchener with a single trip per day. The Toronto-London-Windsor corridor saw over 800,000 passengers in 2024, a 3% increase from 2023.

In addition to VIA, Metrolinx ran a pilot train route to Toronto between 2021 and 2023 which had 4-hour travel times and did not attract many riders; no plans to resume this service have been announced.

Connections to or from the train station can happen with a short walk to rapid transit stations on the Downtown Loop (King at Clarence), local transit stops along King Street or on Richmond Street, and regional bus stops on York Street.

Active Mobility Connections

Walking is the primary method transit passengers access the bus; however, there are other options that can expand transit's catchment area including cycling, scooters, rides from family/ friends, and park-and-ride facilities.

The experience of pedestrians and cyclists travelling to a rapid transit station or bus stop affects their decision to make that trip again or at all: does it feel safe, dignified, and is it convenient?

London's Complete Streets Design Manual aims to design streets that offer safe, comfortable, and dignified travel for all road users. These philosophies have been implemented on recent projects in addition to ongoing work to improve walking and cycling facilities, bus stops, streetlighting, and maintenance activities.

The new rapid transit stations have an obelisk to help users find the station, and wayfinding can further support people accessing the stations with ease. Currently, all London Transit buses have bike racks on the front, and to further enhance the bike to bus connection, bike parking should be considered near transit stops; simple racks near conventional bus stops and secure or covered bike parking facilities where cycling routes intersect with rapid transit stations.

Shared micromobility services are not currently operational in London. These services have the potential to increase transit and active mobility use and are mentioned in the Mobility Master Plan and Climate Emergency Action Plan to be reviewed further.

Fares and Technology

London's transit system uses a reloadable smart card specific to London with no contactless, mobile, or regional fare integration (no discounts when connecting from regional services). However, LTC has made strong progress on trip information by providing open GTFS data that supports real-time tracking and multimodal trip planning through platforms like Google Maps, Apple Maps, and Transit App.

Rapid transit stations and some local bus stops also include real-time departure information. Major hubs such as White Oaks and Fanshawe College are key transit terminals, positioned to support smooth transfers between rapid transit and local routes.

**Stantec Review Findings**

Some key gaps remain in providing an integrated user experience for transit riders in London. The whole trip needs to be considered, including arriving to the bus stop through a variety of means and ensuring that connections are seamless in geography, time, cost, and technology.

Placement of local transit stops relative to Rapid Transit should consider the following:

- Location/siting of nearby major destinations to minimize walking distances;
- Visibility and safety for persons walking and on bicycles;
- An understanding of travel movements/patterns;

- Turning movement conflicts;
- Direct line-of-sight between local service stops and Rapid Transit stations.

Additional guidance between Rapid Transit and local transit stops may be necessary at some station locations and could include painted arrows on platforms or sidewalks or signage.

The city lacks a shared micromobility system that can limit the alternatives available for first and last mile portions of a trip for some potential transit riders. To maintain flexibility, rapid transit stations should preserve space nearby for bike parking and for future micromobility needs.

Trip planning platforms do not include ticket purchasing options, nor do they provide integrated fare payments between other mobility providers such as intercity bus operators or VIA Rail. Riders must manually coordinate transfers and purchase separate tickets for each leg of their trip.

All public transit in London, and especially the future RT corridors, should integrate mobility options in a way that feels effortless to the user. While the technology is ever evolving, the City of London and LTC may wish to make this a long-term objective and seek to incrementally improve their trip planning and fare payment options as more features and functionalities become available from fare vendors and technology platforms.

**Global Best Practices**

One of the earliest adopters of bus rapid transit was Curitiba in Brazil where 6 routes serve 2.3 million passengers daily. They have a highly integrated network that has a single fare payment system for both public and private transit operators, and a network design that makes transfers between bus rapid transit and feeder routes seamless at comfortable stations.

Denver, Colorado has been able to integrate public transit with ride hailing and micromobility services like Uber to incorporate trip planning and payment into one app. Denver is also piloting the integration of intercity trips and Lyft scooters into the transit planning ecosystem.

In Quebec City, the transit authority is developing a fully integrated mobile application that will allow users to plan and pay for trips by bus, on-demand transit, bike-share, carshare, parking, electric vehicle charging and more. This will offer users a seamless experience between travel modes but is complex and costly to undertake.

**Recommended Next Steps**

The review identifies five recommendations for London:

1. **Coordinate transfers at RT stations**, reducing wait time for passengers transferring from RT to feeder routes.
2. **Continue to partner with regional transit providers on schedules and stops**, streamlining transfers for regional transit users connecting to London Transit services and extending catchment area for transit.
3. **Promote development of a shared micromobility system.** Civic Administration to develop business plan for shared micromobility to increase options for first/ last mile access to transit and for active and sustainable transportation.
4. **Explore real-time information system inclusion of other transit providers.** Although operationally complex to provide information from multiple agencies, it supports connections between transit providers and reduces the uncertainty and perceived wait time for passengers.

5. **Upgrade the area near VIA Rail and RT stations to act as a multimodal transit hub.** Civic Administration to implement a mobility hub on Clarence Street, to improve the connections between regional buses, train service and local transit coordinated with planned infrastructure renewal work.

London has made meaningful progress toward a more connected, multimodal transportation network, yet fully integrated mobility remains a long-term objective. Strengthening coordination between rapid transit, local routes, regional services, and active transportation—supported by improved wayfinding, real-time information, and future micromobility options—will be essential to creating a seamless user experience. By continuing to modernize fare and trip-planning technologies and investing in multimodal mobility hubs, London can build a transit system where transfers are intuitive, access is convenient, and sustainable travel becomes an attractive choice for more residents.

## 4.0 Financial Considerations

The financial implications associated with the recommended next steps vary. Some actions can be absorbed into existing workflows and staff complement; however, bolstering any planning, monitoring, or policy efforts requires dedicated resources. Additionally, any service- or program-related recommendations will have financial impacts and would have to be further assessed and reported back by LTC or Civic Administration as part of the broader evaluation.

## Conclusion

London's transit system is a critical part of London's mobility system, providing an accessible, affordable, and efficient transportation option to Londoners. As London experiences rapid growth, transit service needs to support this growth, both in existing built-up areas and in new growth areas.

To ensure London's transit system is operating as effectively as possible, Stantec Consulting completed a Route Planning and Management Review that compared current operations in London to best practices in North America and beyond. The review confirmed that many best practice elements, such as route-level structure and guidelines, supportive land-use policies, and reporting of transit-related indicators are well underway.

The review also provided several recommendations relating to transit planning, monitoring, and mobility integration, that are common elements of successful transit networks. The recommendations vary from how transit should be structured, to how it can serve new growth areas, and how it connects to regional services and active transportation more seamlessly.

When delivered holistically, the recommendations can ensure that London's transit system leverages this rare opportunity for Londoners to view transit in a new and fresh perspective with the implementation of rapid transit.

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|---|---|
| **Prepared by:** | **Daniel Hall, Manager, P.Eng., RPP, Active Transportation, Transportation Planning & Design** |
| **Submitted by:** | **Doug MacRae, P.Eng., MPA, Director, Transportation & Mobility** |
| **Recommended by:** | **Kelly Scherr, P.Eng., MBA, FEC, Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure** |

Appendix A: Stantec Route Planning & Management Review - Executive Summary & Summary of Recommendations

cc. Kelly Paleczny, Jennie Dann, Ardian Spahiu, Kristen Pawelec

# Appendix A – Stantec Route Planning & Management Review - Executive Summary & Summary of Recommendations

## Executive Summary

The City of London, together with the London Transit Commission (LTC), is on the cusp of a transformative moment as it prepares to introduce Bus Rapid Transit (RT) service for the first time. This report evaluates London's readiness to deliver this new Rapid Transit service and assesses how existing policies, infrastructure, service planning practices, and operational approaches align with the requirements of a high-quality RT system. While the immediate objective is to support the successful launch of RT, the broader opportunity is to use this investment as a catalyst to reshape how people move through the city establishing transit as a faster, more reliable, and more attractive choice for everyday travel.

The assessment is structured in two complementary parts. **Part A** focuses on how London's existing non-RT modes including local bus services, regional transit, active transportation, on-demand services, and other mobility options can be better integrated and re-oriented in a network anchored by rapid transit. **Part B** evaluates London's readiness to deliver RT itself as a high-quality, rapid, and reliable service. Together, these perspectives ensure that RT is not treated as a standalone project, but as a system-shaping investment.

**Part A: Transit Planning and Route Management**

Part A focuses on the role of RT within London's broader transit network and examines how route planning, service structure, and mobility integration can support a successful transition to rapid transit. The introduction of RT represents a fundamental shift in how transit is organized and experienced in London. Rather than functioning as a standalone service, RT is intended to serve as the backbone of the network supported by core, local, feeder, and alternative service delivery routes that work together as an integrated system.

The assessment finds that London's existing planning frameworks, including the Mobility Master Plan and the Five-Year Service Plan, already articulate many of the principles required for this transition, such as a clear service hierarchy, emphasis on frequent and reliable corridors, and improved multimodal connectivity. However, the report identifies opportunities to strengthen how these principles are translated into practice, particularly in clearly communicating the role of RT within the network, refining route classifications, and ensuring that service changes associated with RT are implemented in a coordinated and customer-focused manner.

Part A also examines mobility integration beyond the bus network itself, including connections to regional transit services, active transportation, on-demand services, and emerging mobility options. While London benefits from its role as a regional hub and has strong foundations for multimodal connectivity, the report highlights the importance of improving coordination, wayfinding, and passenger information at key transfer points to ensure seamless journeys. Clear guidance on transfers, intuitive network maps, and consistent branding are identified as essential tools to help riders understand how RT fits into the wider system.

Overall, London is well positioned to leverage RT as a catalyst for a more legible, connected, and efficient transit network. With focused attention on service integration, network communication, and long-term route planning, RT can reinforce broader mobility goals and significantly enhance the usability and performance of the transit system as a whole.

# Summary of Recommendations

## 1. Transit Planning and Operations, Transit Structure and Hierarchy

*Table 1: Minimum, medium, and maximum levels of recommended courses of action.*

| Option | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| **Do Current Plans Only** | |
| Redefine route classification types as proposed in the Five-Year Plan 2029 and gradually implement changes in service. | **Benefits**<br>• Clearer route classifications help staff consistently evaluate routes against comparable peers, improving decisions around frequency, span, vehicle assignment, and resource allocation.<br>• Redefining classifications allows routes to be assessed based on their intended function<br>• Allows focus on the delivery of RT infrastructure.<br>• Internally consistent classifications provide a clear rationale for service changes, helping staff explain decisions to leadership, Council, and stakeholders when required.<br>**Risks**<br>• Because classifications are not customer-facing, care must be taken to ensure that internal changes do not unintentionally complicate external messaging or customer expectations.<br>• Redefining classifications alone does not improve outcomes unless they are clearly tied to service planning processes, performance monitoring, and decision-making frameworks |
| | **Cost: $** |
| | **Recommended:** YES (*Note: This is an action already being taken by LTC. This recommendation is to reaffirm LTCs actions)* |
| | **Critical?:** YES |
| **Do Minimum (Current Plans +)** | |
| Create a transit-style and well stylized map of the LTC network with RT corridors as spines and integrated with the rest of the network | **Benefits**<br>• Clearly presents and communicates RT as a new, revolutionary type of transit service.<br>• Builds familiarity with RT lines ahead of opening. Also opens up the possibility of presenting future lines to demonstrate network planning and forethought.<br>• Connects the RT network with the rest of the network to demonstrate integration and showcase how it can be used to make connections to other parts of the network.<br>**Risks**<br>• Requires a large communication and marketing effort to standardize image of the system for years to come.<br>• Without the clarity provided by a new stylized map the benefits of RT risk being diluted by confusion and legacy travel patterns whereas a new map would improve system legibility and support the travel behavior changes required for RT to function effectively. |
| | **Cost:** $$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Critical?:** YES |
| Explore how modified service to Express Routes could be transferred to North and West Express Routes to enhance frequency | **Benefits**<br>• Addressed the need for rapid transit in all parts of the city.<br>• Improves service for cross-town trips.<br>**Risks**<br>• Might increase and reallocate service hours beyond budgeted plans.<br>May require minor capital improvements such as spot bus lanes or queue jumps. |
| | **Cost: $** |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Critical?:** YES |
| **Do Medium (Minimum+)** | |

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| Develop a staffing plan with clear guidelines of driving requirements and maintenance operations that is agency wide | **Benefits**<br>• Internally advances the notion that RT is a new, different type of transit service.<br>• Mitigates potential issues with transferability of current workforce's skills to new vehicles and service characteristics.<br>• Inform all staff about RT and increase familiarization with RT across the whole agency<br>**Risks**<br>• Might require specialized training from RT experts with extensive experience in operations |
| | **Cost:** $$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** NO |
| | **Critical?:** NO |
| Evaluate the rest of the network as RT matures. | **Benefits**<br>• No redundant routes and maximised network efficiency for spend<br>• Increase ridership by making best use of resources<br>• Improves legibility of network<br>**Risks**<br>• Not doing so can result in overlaps and redundancy in the network<br>• Needs to be done with care and engagement with the public to ensure acceptance. |
| | **Cost:** $$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Critical?:** NO |
| **Do Maximum (Medium+)** | |
| Establish a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) plan focused on areas around RT stations, ideally supported by permissive area-wide rezoning. | **Benefits**<br>• Acknowledges the land use planning-transportation planning feedback loop and builds an open regulatory environment that allows for easy development around rapid transit.<br>**Risks**<br>• Strategy follows a long-term timeline and is also dependant on the health of the construction industry and development trends.<br>• Regulatory and legal complexity to allow for rezoning. |
| | **Cost:** $$$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** City of London (Planning) |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Critical?**: NO |

## 2. System Monitoring, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Progression

*Table 2: Minimum, medium, and maximum levels of recommended courses of action for monitoring and KPIs.*

| Option | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| **Do Minimum** | |
| **Performance Monitoring**<br>• Identify expanded toolbox of criteria to be used to undertake performance monitoring of existing services<br>• Implement and monitor performance | **Benefits**<br>• More thorough assessment of existing service performance to better monitor performance to proactively identify issues.<br>**Risks**<br>• Additional staffing required to ensure accurate data collection and analysis. |
| | **Cost:** $ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Underway?:** YES – practice currently in place |

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| **Service Planning**<br>• Develop service planning process<br>• Identify performance criteria<br>• Confirm data collection and analysis procedures | **Benefits**<br>• Establishes a formal process to ensure regular service plan development, updates and improvement prioritization.<br>• Allows for more accurate budgeting.<br>• Allows for more transparent reporting to stakeholders.<br>• Track improvement implementation progress.<br>**Risks**<br>• Additional staffing required to undertake data analysis and plan development. |
| | **Cost:** $ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Underway?:** YES – practice currently in place |
| **Transit Infrastructure: Bus Stop Guidelines**<br>• Develop framework of bus stop classification<br>• Develop minimum infrastructure requirements for bus stop classes<br>• Develop infrastructure prioritization guidelines<br>• Develop implementation plan for new bus stops | **Benefits**<br>• Formalises and standardises bus stop infrastructure requirements.<br>• Assists with the recognition of different services.<br>• Manages customer expectations.<br>• Allows for prioritization of infrastructure implementation to align with budgets.<br>• Manages the maintenance of the capital investment.<br>**Risks**<br>• Staffing costs to develop and implement and manage plan. |
| | **Cost:** $ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Underway?:** YES – practice currently in place |
| **Do Maximum (Medium+)** | |
| **Performance Monitoring**<br>• Review results and potentially tweak toolbox of criteria | **Benefits**<br>• Ongoing thorough assessment of existing service performance to better monitor performance to proactively identify issues.<br>**Risks**<br>• Ongoing staffing requirements. |
| | **Cost:** $ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC and City of London |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Underway?:** YES – practice currently in place |
| **Service Planning**<br>• Develop improvement prioritization framework<br>• Develop service improvement plans<br>• Assess and incorporate public requests for service improvements into plan | **Benefits**<br>• Informed and quantified plan development.<br>• Tailor plan to financial realities.<br>• Manage expectations and introduce more transparent reporting to stakeholders.<br>• Initiate tracking of improvement implementation.<br>**Risks**<br>• Ongoing staffing requirement to undertake data analysis and plan developments |
| | **Cost:** $ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Underway?:** YES – practice currently in place |

## 3. Mobility Integration

*Table 3: Minimum, medium, and maximum levels of recommended courses of action for mobility integration.*

| Option | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| **Do Current Plans Only** | |
| Maintain system and make no major changes from current plans. | **Benefits**<br>• Avoids immediate capital expenditures<br>• Maintains operational stability.<br>**Risks**<br>• Missed opportunity in increasing multi-modal connectivity and expanding transit access<br>• Lower service perception of RT<br>• Increased pressure for RT to perform as stand-alone service. |
| | **Cost:** $ |
| | **Recommended:** NO |
| Update service schedules to coordinate transfers at RT stations | **Benefits**<br>• Improves transfer efficiency and overall travel time<br>• Enhances passenger convenience<br>• Strengthens network as a whole.<br>**Risks**<br>• Requires additional scheduling and planning time on top of current workload<br>• More opportunities for operational integration to fail. |
| | **Cost:** $ |
| | **Responsible Parties**: LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| Establish regional transit partnerships for coordinated scheduling and shared stops | **Benefits**<br>• Streamlined transfers for regional transit users<br>• Expands transit access and builds foundation for future agreements / further integration<br>• Extend catchment area of LTC system.<br>**Risks**<br>• Long-term operational feasibility of other regional transit agencies is not assured<br>• Governance complexity<br>Potential low demand levels for inter-municipality services compared to LTC core services. |
| | **Cost:** $$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC and regional transit service providers |
| | **Recommended:** YES (*Note: While this is a" Yes" recommendation, this is already an action that is being undertaken by LTC. This recommendation is to reaffirm the actions of LTC)* |
| | **Critical?:** NO |
| **Do Minimum (Current Plans +)** | |
| Promote development of a shared micromobility ecosystem | **Benefits**<br>• Increased options for first/last mile segments of trips<br>• Encourages active and sustainable transport<br>• Development of BRT stops as local multimodal nodes<br>• Reduces car dependency.<br>**Risks**<br>• Lack of continuous protected bicycle and active transportation lanes integrated with RT<br>• Safety concerns<br>• Accessibility concerns<br>• Regulatory complexity around new micromobility operators. |
| | **Cost:** $$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** City of London |
| | **Recommended:** YES |

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|---|---|
| | **Critical?:** NO |
| **Do Medium (Minimum+)** | |
| Implement a platform that aggregates trip planning in London | **Benefits**<br>• Simplifies trip planning<br>• Potential travel data stream<br>• Encourages integrated mobility options.<br>**Risks**<br>• High upfront investment for technological development or subscription<br>• Requires constant maintenance and updating<br>• Requires ongoing multi-agency cooperation<br>• Limited access for some users. |
| | **Cost:** $$$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** NO |
| **Do Maximum (Medium+)** | |
| Expand real-time information systems to include regional service and other transit modes | **Benefits**<br>• Reduces uncertainty and perceived wait times<br>• Promotes multimodality<br>• Easier to communicate service changes/disruptions.<br>**Risks**<br>• Operationally complex to support real-time information systems from multiple agencies<br>• Requires ongoing data integration and management. |
| | **Cost:** $$$$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** LTC |
| | **Recommended:** YES *(Note: This is something that is already available through third-party platforms. LTC and the City of London are currently taking steps to integrate as much as possible)* |
| | **Critical?:** NO |
| Upgrade the area near the VIA Rail and RT stations to act as a multimodal transit hub | **Benefits**<br>• Existing plans to provide mobility hub on Clarence Street; opportunity with upcoming street renewal from York Street to Dundas Place.<br>• Centralized intercity rail and streamlines connections into local transit<br>• Improves passenger experience.<br>**Risks**<br>• Significant capital investment.<br>• Coordination complexity across multiple agencies. |
| | **Cost:** $$$$ |
| | **Responsible Parties:** City of London, VIA |
| | **Recommended:** YES |
| | **Critical?:** NO |