

# Middlesex County Transit Assessment

*Council Presentation*

June 24, 2025



Prepared by Left Turn Right Turn Ltd



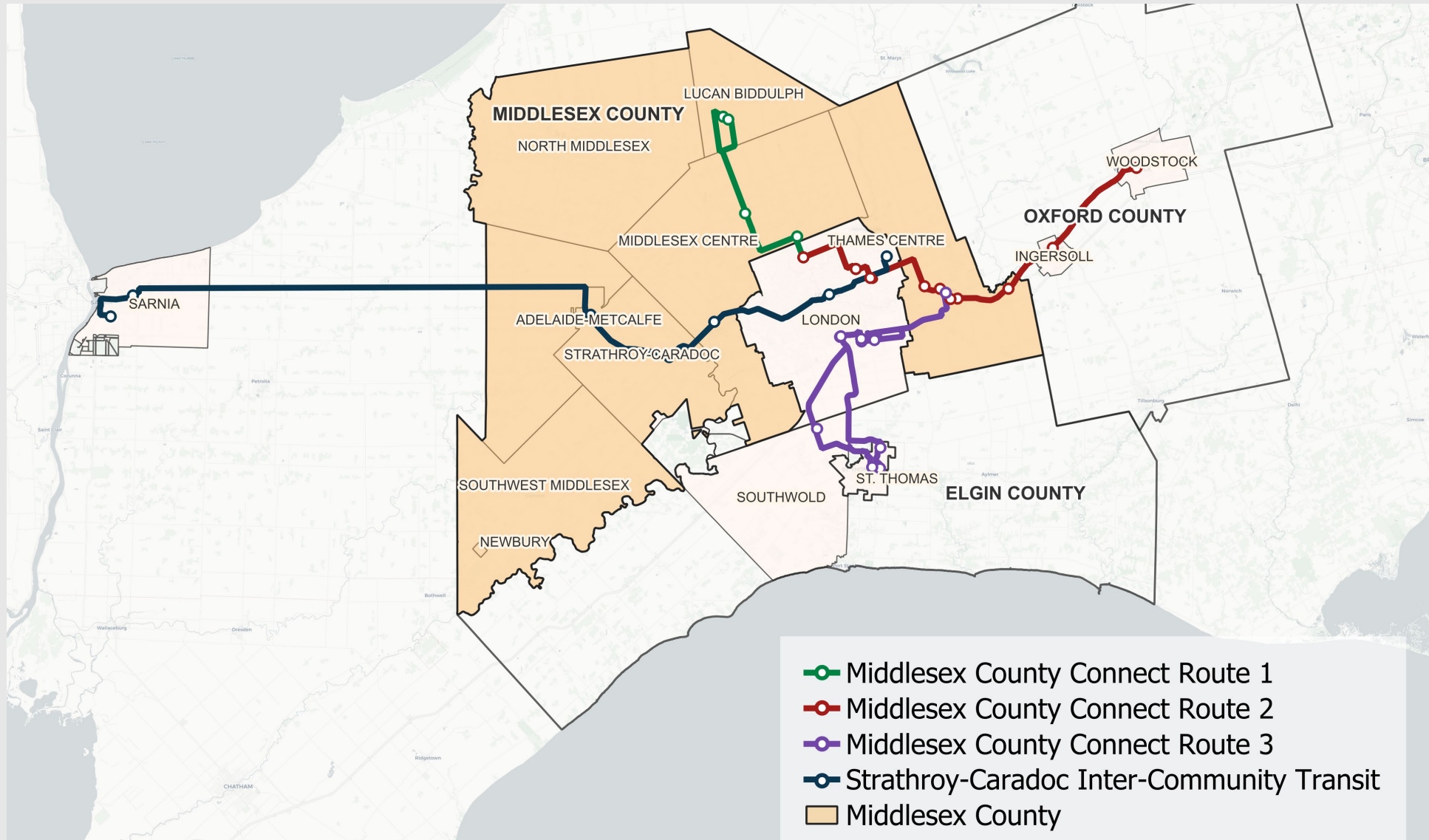
# Outline

- Identified Opportunities
- Future Recommendations
  - Integration and Optimization of Current Fixed Route Network
  - New On-Demand Service
- Implementation and Timelines
- Fare Structure and Estimated Costs

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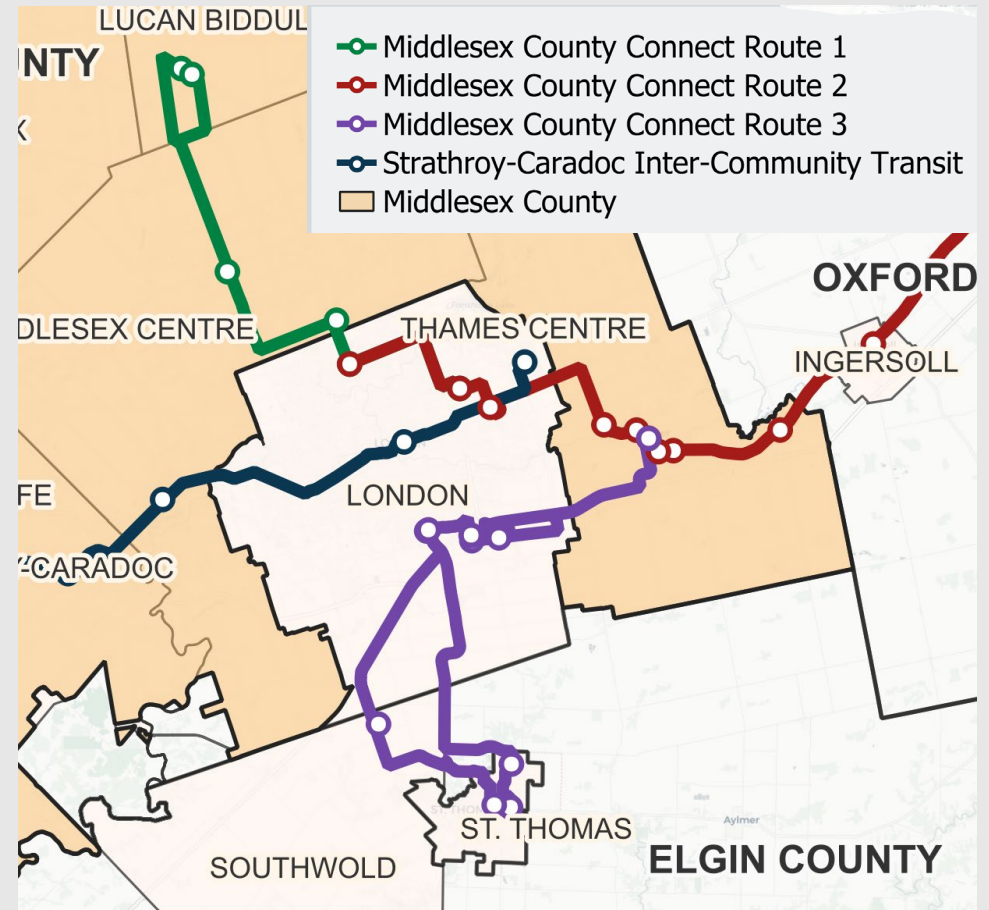
# Identified Opportunities

# Current Network



# Current Network Observations

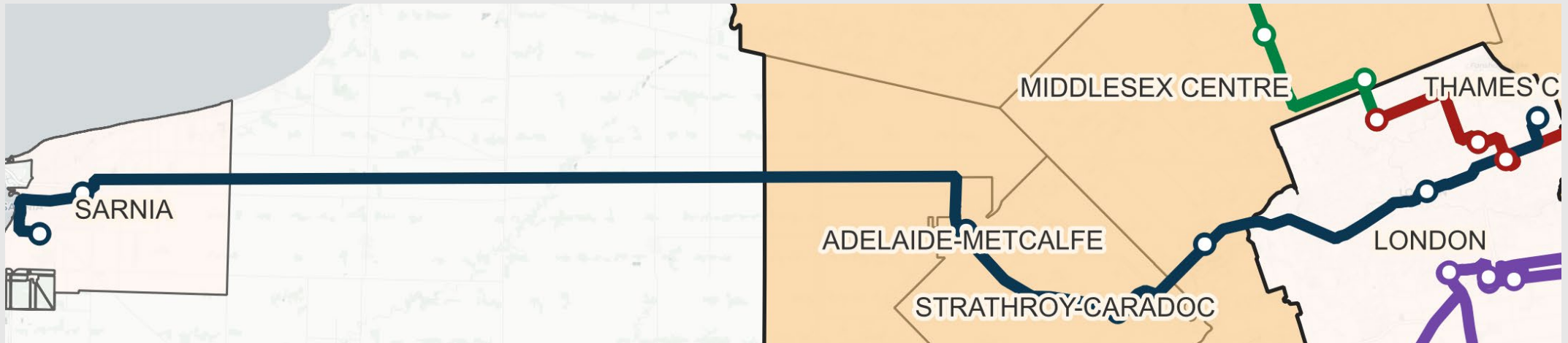
- Route 1 has lower service efficiency.
- Route 2 ridership includes significant travel between Fanshawe College in London, Woodstock, and Ingersoll.
- Route 3 is the most efficient route and has strong ridership, with passengers traveling to and from areas outside the County.
  - One-way routing to Amazon limits ridership
- Infrastructure, operational, and shared stop constraints impose stop deviations that impact efficiency.



# Current Network Observations

## Strathroy-Caradoc Route

- Limited stop coverage in urban areas
- Differing fare policy (distance-based) to the MCC system
- Opportunity to enhance the efficiency of terminal stops



# Network Development

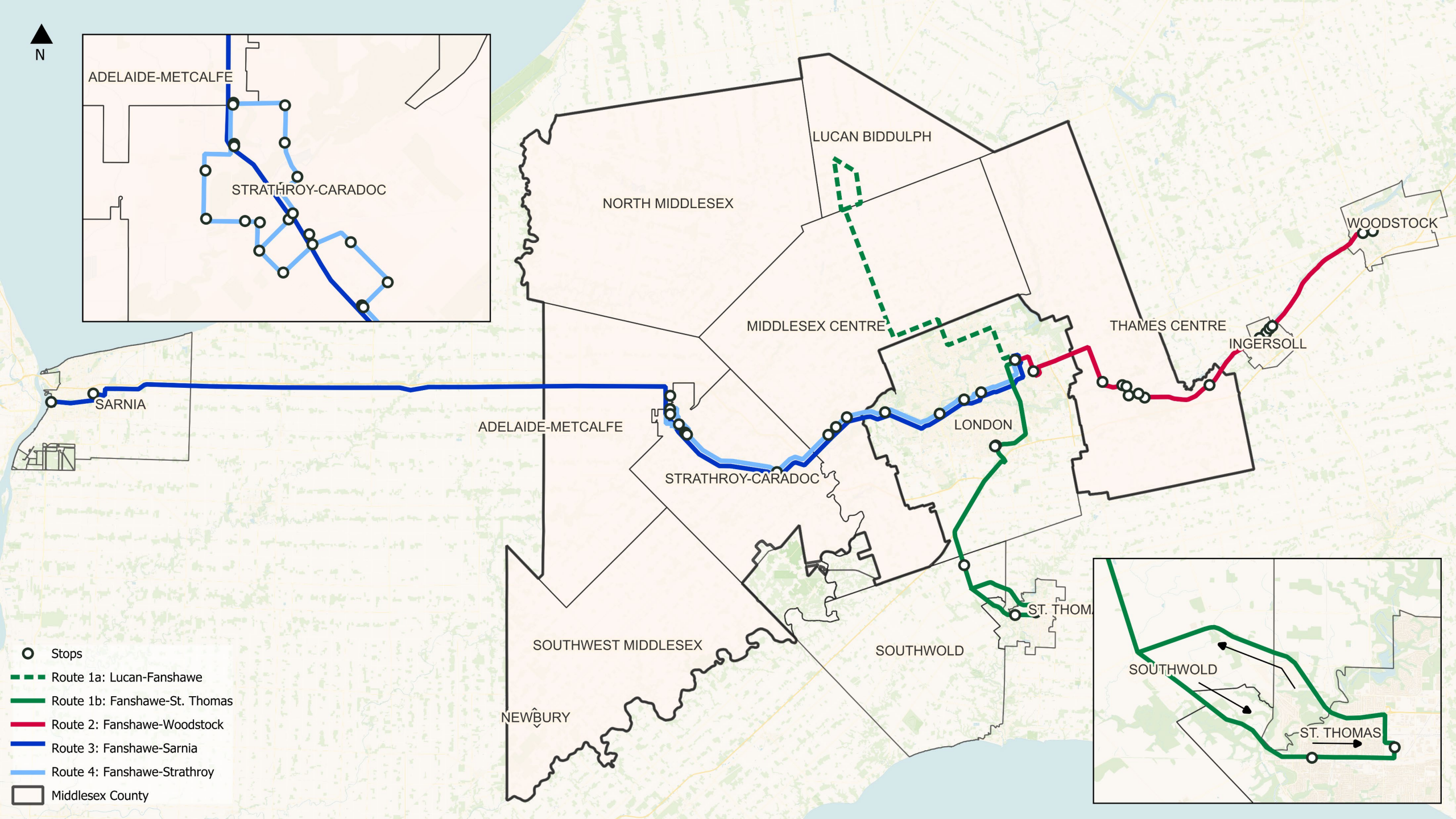
- Network options were refined through a Middlesex County Municipalities Working Group (MWG).
- The proposed network addresses identified system gaps and increases overall cost and performance efficiency
- The network prioritizes different goals identified by the MWG:
  - *Fast, efficient, reliable*
  - *Ease of access*
  - *Connectivity*
  - *Commuter needs*
  - *Scalable*

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# **Future Recommendations:**

*Integration and Optimization of  
Current Fixed Route Network*





# Service Overview

## Description

- Expansion-focused network that balances operational efficiency with enhancements.
- Maintains connections to funding partners.

## Key Changes

1. Modified routing and service to improve efficiency
2. Strategically placed new stops to enhance access and connectivity
3. New, central transfer terminus (Fanshawe College, London Main Campus)
4. Enhanced Frequency and Service Span Expansion

# Fixed-route Details

- Proposed network has all fixed-routes operating 7 days/week
- Expanded service coverage and connectivity between London and Strathroy

Service	Hours of Operation		# of Round Trips (existing)^		Frequency (hrs)
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend	
Route 1A: Lucan – Fanshawe College*	6:30am – 10:00pm	8:00am – 10:30am; 6:30pm – 8:00pm	4 (4)	2 (0)	3.5
Route 1B: St. Thomas – Fanshawe College*	6:45am – 9:00pm	8:00am – 9:00pm	8 (4)	5 (4)	~1.25
Route 2: Fanshawe College* – Woodstock	6:30am – 10:30am; 2:00pm – 7:30pm	8:00am – 11:00am; 3:00pm – 7:00pm	4 (3)	2 (0)	2.25
Route 3: Sarnia – Fanshawe College*	6:00am – 10:00pm	6:00am – 11:30am; 5:00pm – 10:30pm	3 (3)	2 (0)	5.25
Route 4: Strathroy – Fanshawe College*	6:30am – 10:30am; 1:30pm – 7:00pm	11:30am – 5:00pm	4 (0)	2 (0)	2.75

\*All Fanshawe College references are to Fanshawe College's Main Campus in London

^Bracketed numbers are the current # of round trips.

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# **Future Recommendations:**

## ***New On-Demand Service***

# On-demand Service Details

- Proposed on-demand service operates 7 days/week
- On-demand service would be available County-wide
- Expanded connectivity between select locations outside of Middlesex County via the use of On-demand Hubs.
  - Hubs are selected based on local transit connectivity, ease of access, local demand, and travel patterns

Service	Hours of Operation (Weekdays & Weekend)	Average Vehicles per Hour*	
		Weekday	Weekend
On-demand	6:00am – 10:30pm	3.75	2.25

\*The number of in-service vehicles fluctuates throughout the day based on demand. E.g., 5 vehicles may operate during peak period from 2:00pm – 5:00pm, but only 2 vehicles between 9:00pm – 10:30pm.



# On-demand Hubs

- Travel from/to Middlesex County would be available to specific “hub” locations
  - For example, residents in Dorchester could continue to connect to the Amazon facility using the on-demand service.

## **Proposed Launch Locations**

- Amazon – Southwold
- London Locations
  - Select Malls (Masonville, Westmount, Argyle, White Oaks)
  - Wonderland and Oxford
  - Fanshawe College, Main Campus

## **Future Locations to Explore**

- Woodstock Transit Terminal
- Sarnia Via Rail
- Ingersoll
- St. Thomas Locations
  - Fanshawe College – Elgin Campus
  - PowerCo EV Battery Plant

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# Implementation and Timelines

# Implementation Schedule

- The proposed network recommends service growth to better meet community needs and support long-term transit sustainability.
- However, this approach must be approached within the constraints of available funding.
- Therefore, a phased implementation approach is recommended.
  - **Phase 1:** focus on improving resource efficiency and optimizing routing to maximize the impact of current funding.
  - **Phase 2:** Introduce service expansions as additional resources become available.
  - **Phase 3:** Ensure financially sustainable growth that is responsive to evolving travel needs.



# Implementation Schedule

Solutions	Year																			
	2025				2026				2027				2028				2029			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Phase 1 – Improving Efficiency and Optimization</b>																				
Critical Infrastructure																				
High-Priority Tech.																				
Fare Revision																				
Network Optimization																				
<b>Phase 2 – On-demand Launch and Service Expansion</b>																				
Remaining Infrastruc.																				
Enhance Fixed-Route																				
Med-Priority Tech.																				
On-demand Launch																				
Enhance On-demand																				
<b>Phase 3 – Maintaining Sustainable and Responsive Transit</b>																				
Expand Hub Locations																				
Low-Priority Tech.																				
	Initiate/Prepare/Promote																			
	Implement by end of Quarter																			
	Proposed Fixed-Route Optimization Launch																			

- Work has been phased to help staff prioritize recommendations to support the successful delivery of transit
- **Phase 1** ends in Q2 of 2026 when the proposed network is implemented.
- **Phase 2** ends in Q4 of 2027 after on-demand is launched and services are further enhanced.
- **Phase 3** continues 2028 and beyond

# Implementation Activities

## Phase 1

**Phase 1 is dedicated to fixed-route network optimization.**

**Activities include:**

- **High-Priority Technology | by 2025 Q4**
  - Expand the Blaise Transit app to include the Strathroy-Caradoc route(s), allowing for booking and fare payment via mobile app across all Middlesex routes.
- **Critical Infrastructure Transitions | by 2026 Q2**
  - Network optimization includes new bus stops. Stop-based infrastructure would need to be prioritized in these locations to accommodate riders.
- **Fare Revision | by 2026 Q2**
  - Shift to distance-based fares and monthly passes County-wide.
- **Route Realignment | by 2026 Q2**
  - Implement network recommendations, including stop locations.

# Implementation Activities

## Phase 2

**Phase 2 prepares for the launch of on-demand transit and enhances both fixed-route and on-demand. Activities include:**

- **Enhancing Fixed-route Services | by 2026 Q4**
  - Extends hours of operation for previously launched network optimization, expanding evening and weekend services.
- **Med-Priority Technology | by 2026 Q4**
  - Procure on-demand-supportive software with booking, scheduling, and dispatching capabilities in preparation for the launch of on-demand service.
- **On-demand Launch | by 2026 Q4**
  - Introduce on-demand service by the end of 2026 at the latest.
- **On-demand Enhancement | by 2027 Q4**
  - Enhance on-demand vehicle contingent, providing augmented service.

# Implementation Activities

## Phase 3

**Phase 3 seeks to maintain a sustainable and responsive system, exploring future opportunities and connections.**

**Activities include:**

- **Lower-Priority Technology | 2028 onward**
  - Procuring technologies that improve the customer experience and quality of life.
- **Exploring Additional On-demand Hub Locations | 2028 onward**
  - Increasing the connectivity of on-demand transit by seeking locations in adjacent partner municipalities.

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# **Fare Structure & Estimated Costs**

# Proposed Fare Structure

- Moving to distance-based fares will enhance service efficiency and fiscal sustainability
- On-demand fares have been designed to encourage connecting into fixed routes to improve efficiency
- Includes monthly passes

On-demand Service	Fare
Base fare	\$2.50
Per kilometer traveled	\$0.40
Additional passengers	50% Discount

Fixed-route Service	Fare
<b>Route 1A</b>	
All trips	\$5
<b>Route 1B</b>	
St. Thomas/ Amazon-White Oaks	\$5
St. Thomas/ Amazon-Fanshawe College	\$8
<b>Route 2</b>	
Woodstock-London	\$11
Ingersoll-London	\$7
All other trips	\$5
<b>Routes 3 and 4</b>	
Sarnia-London	\$20
Strathroy-London	\$10
Strathroy-Sarnia	\$12
Middlesex Centre – London	\$5
Local Strathroy/Middlesex Centre or Local London	\$3

# Cost Estimates: Gross

Service	2026	2027	2028
Route 1A	\$170,000	\$210,000	\$210,000
Route 1B	\$340,000	\$470,000	\$470,000
Route 2	\$260,000	\$290,000	\$290,000
Route 3	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Route 4	\$200,000	\$310,000	\$310,000
On-demand	\$190,000	\$980,000	\$1,620,000
<b>Total Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$1,660,000</b>	<b>\$2,760,000</b>	<b>\$3,400,000</b>

## Assumptions:

- \$95 per service hour  
(Due to inflation, costs could exceed those stated)
- Recommended contracted turnkey service model
- Total Gross Cost to be shared between Middlesex County and other partners
- Fare revenue, OTIF, and Gas Tax would reduce costs per municipality

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# Thank you!

Questions?



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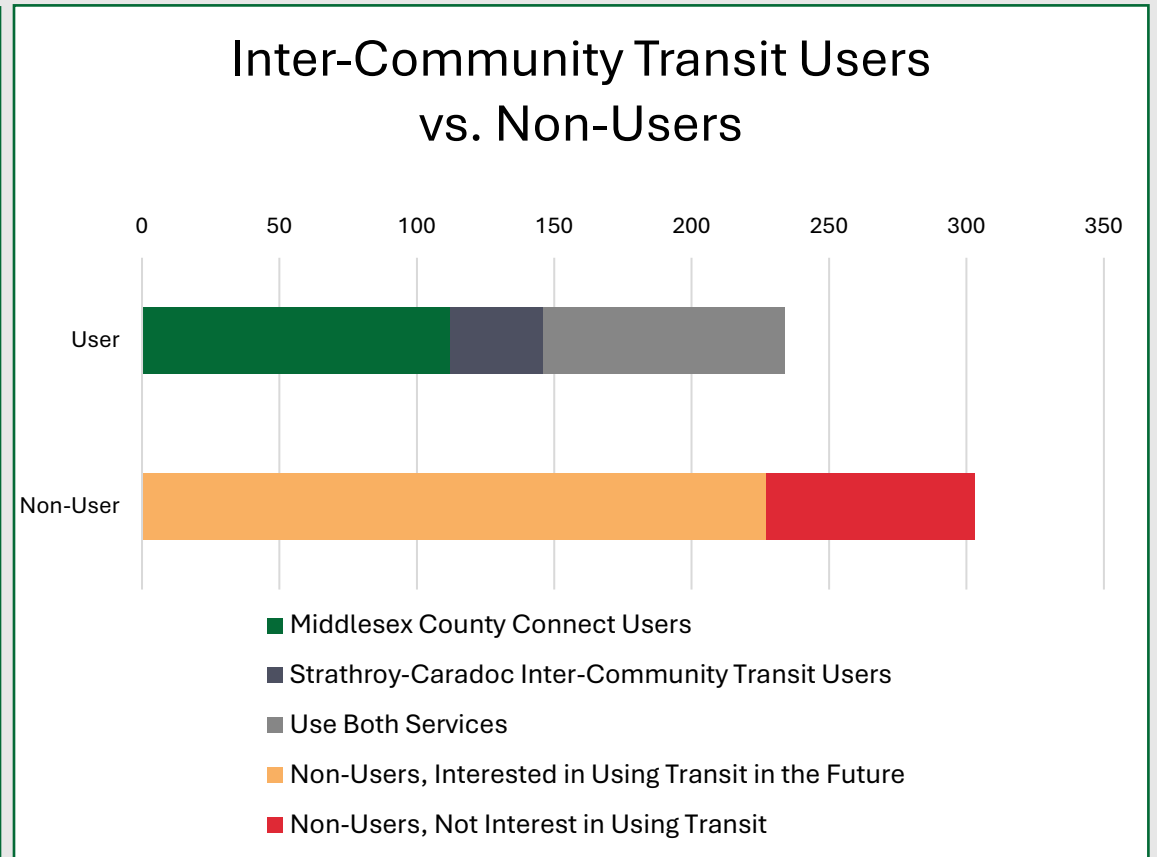
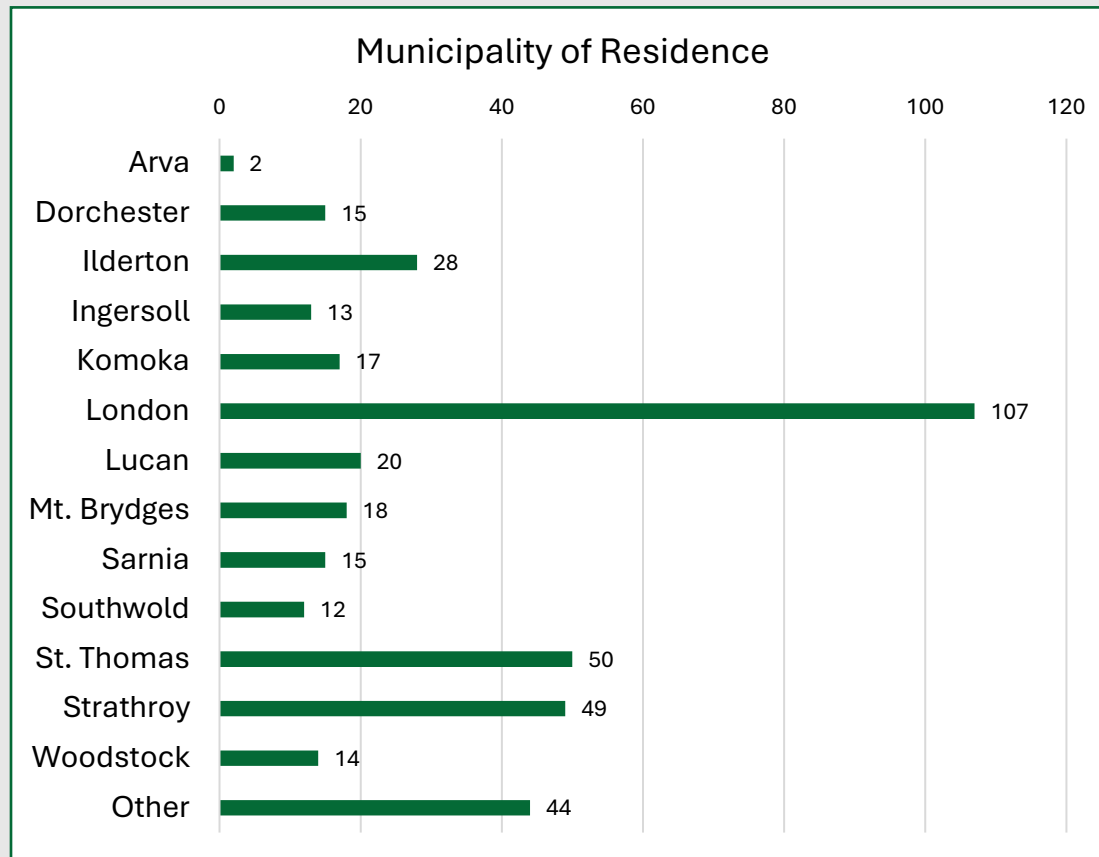
# Engagement Overview

# Activities and Timing

- Public Survey | Feb 24 – Mar 21
  - Survey open to all public members for response, 594 responses
- Stakeholder Survey | Mar 10 - 21
  - A survey shared directly with key community stakeholders, 14 responses
- Community Focus Groups | Mar 19 & 21
  - Held with community stakeholders who identified an interest in supporting transit
- Pop-up Engagement Session | Mar 18 @ Flight Exec Centre
  - A session to talk directly to residents about inter-community transit in Middlesex County

# Who Did We Hear From?

## Public Survey



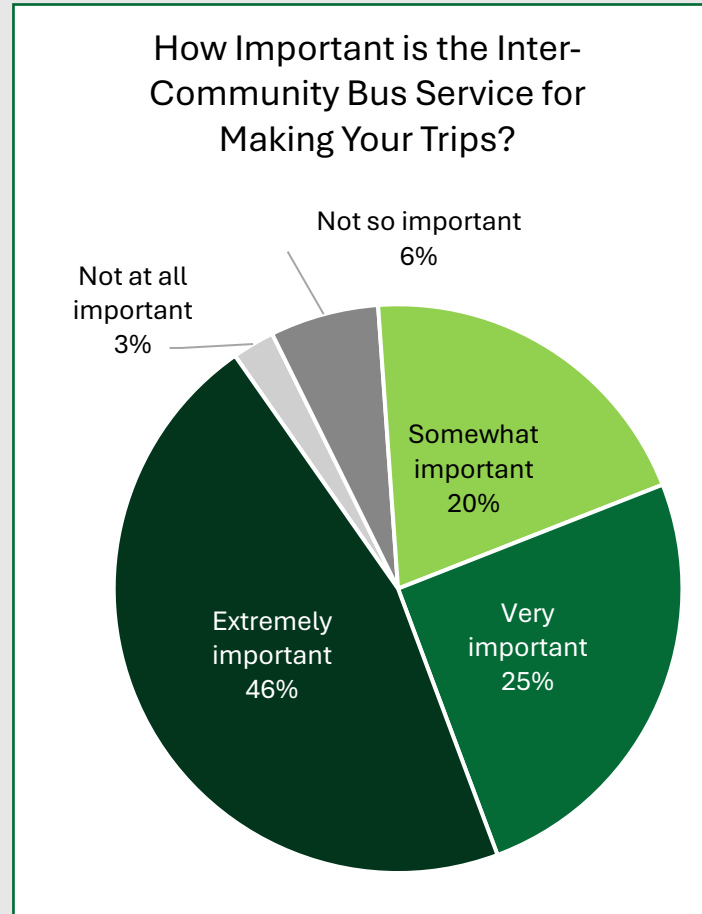
This question was optional

# Transit Use & Importance

**71%** of respondents indicated the bus service is “very important” or higher for making their trips.

**“This is my transportation to work at my full-time permanent job. Without it, I would likely have to quit and get a job within the community, which is difficult to compare to the opportunities in London.”**

372 respondents answered these questions.



**“My son is unable to drive because of his disability. It allows for maintaining his sense of independence and being able to routinely see his support worker.”**

**“Service to Strathroy Hospital crucial as referrals are made by London physicians. I no longer have a car so this service is very important to me.”**

**“This is very important because I have autism and use this to get to school and my part time job. I can’t drive and this is my way to travel.”**

# Emerging Themes

## **Students are a Key User Group**

- Many students rely on the inter-community transit service
- Access to inter-community transit can unlock employment opportunities
- Stakeholders and the general public noted the Fanshawe College campuses as key destinations

## **Strong Public Support**

- Essential for students, seniors, workers, and non-drivers
- Strong interest in continuing and expanding the service

# Emerging Themes

## **Improve and Expand Service**

- Increase daily trips, especially in the early mornings, evenings, and on-weekends
- Add stops in West London, Fanshawe/Western, Delaware, Poplar Hill, Komoka, and more
- Improve connections to nearby communities
- Improve frequency
- Build regional integration

## **Increase Marketing and Awareness**

- Many residents are unaware of the service
- There is a need for increased promotion and outreach
- Many respondents indicated that they were not aware of the marketing initiatives:
  - 30-day discounted student pass,
  - Library Bus Pass Loan Program,
  - Employer Toolkit