



Core Service Plan 2025-27 and Strategic Roadmap:

Overview

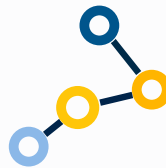


Halifax Transit: By the Numbers



Fleet:

369 conventional buses
47 Access-A-Bus buses
5 ferries



Routes:

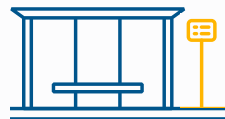
10 Corridor Routes	3 Regional Express Routes
35 Local Routes	3 Rural Routes
18 Express Routes	2 Ferry Routes

Total = over 2,300+ km of bus routes



Boardings:

32,000,000 in 2024
8.5% increase in
boardings since 2023



Infrastructure:

Over **2,300** bus stops
15 transit terminals
15 Park & Rides

Corridor, Local and Ferry Routes

These routes generally provide all day two-way service with standard stop spacing, with a few exceptions.

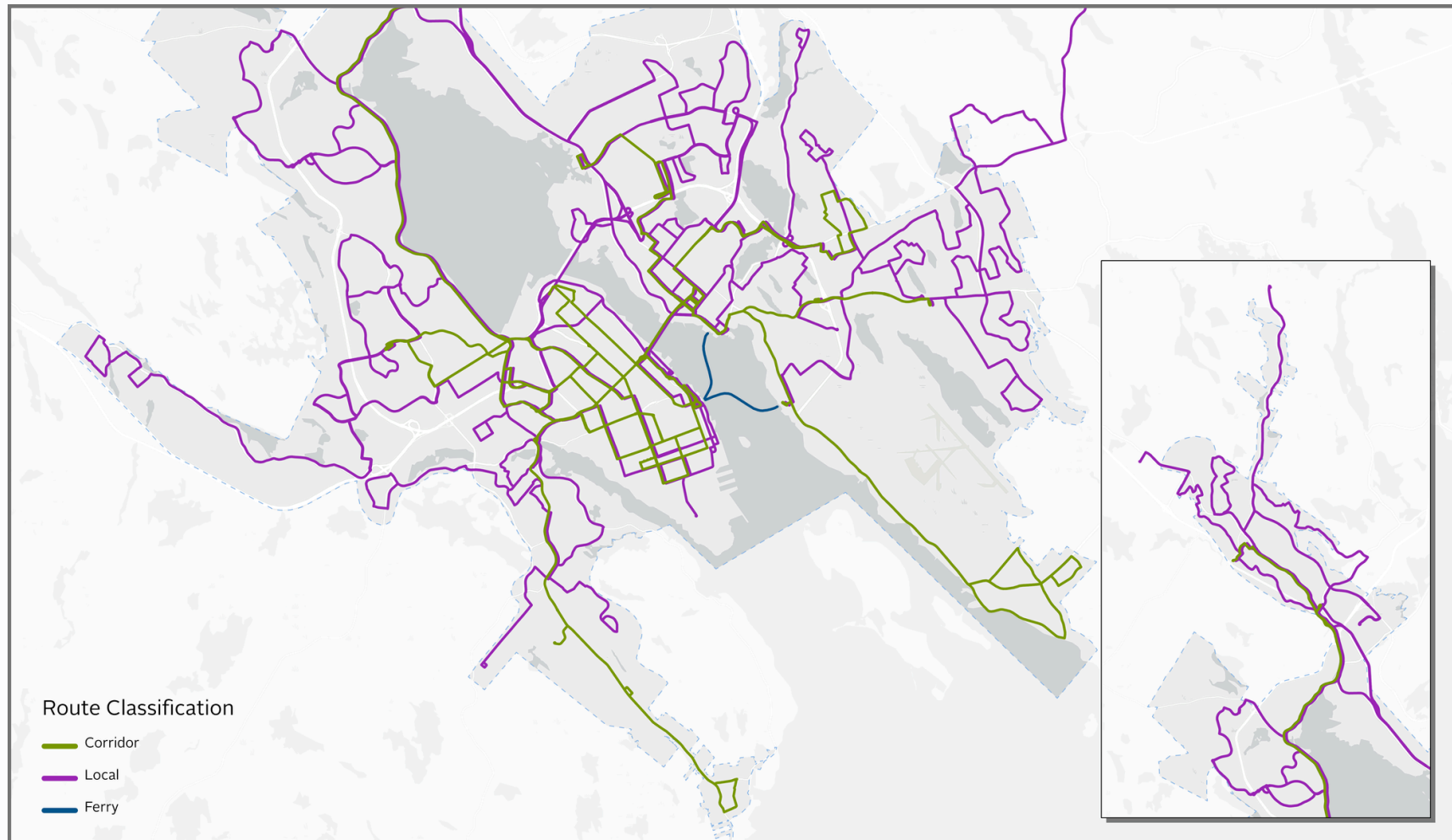


Figure 1: Map of Halifax Transit Corridor, Local and Ferry routes

Route Type

Corridor



Frequent service on high-demand corridors, with all-day operation

Local



Lower-frequency services to connect neighborhoods and communities to each other and the wider network

Ferry

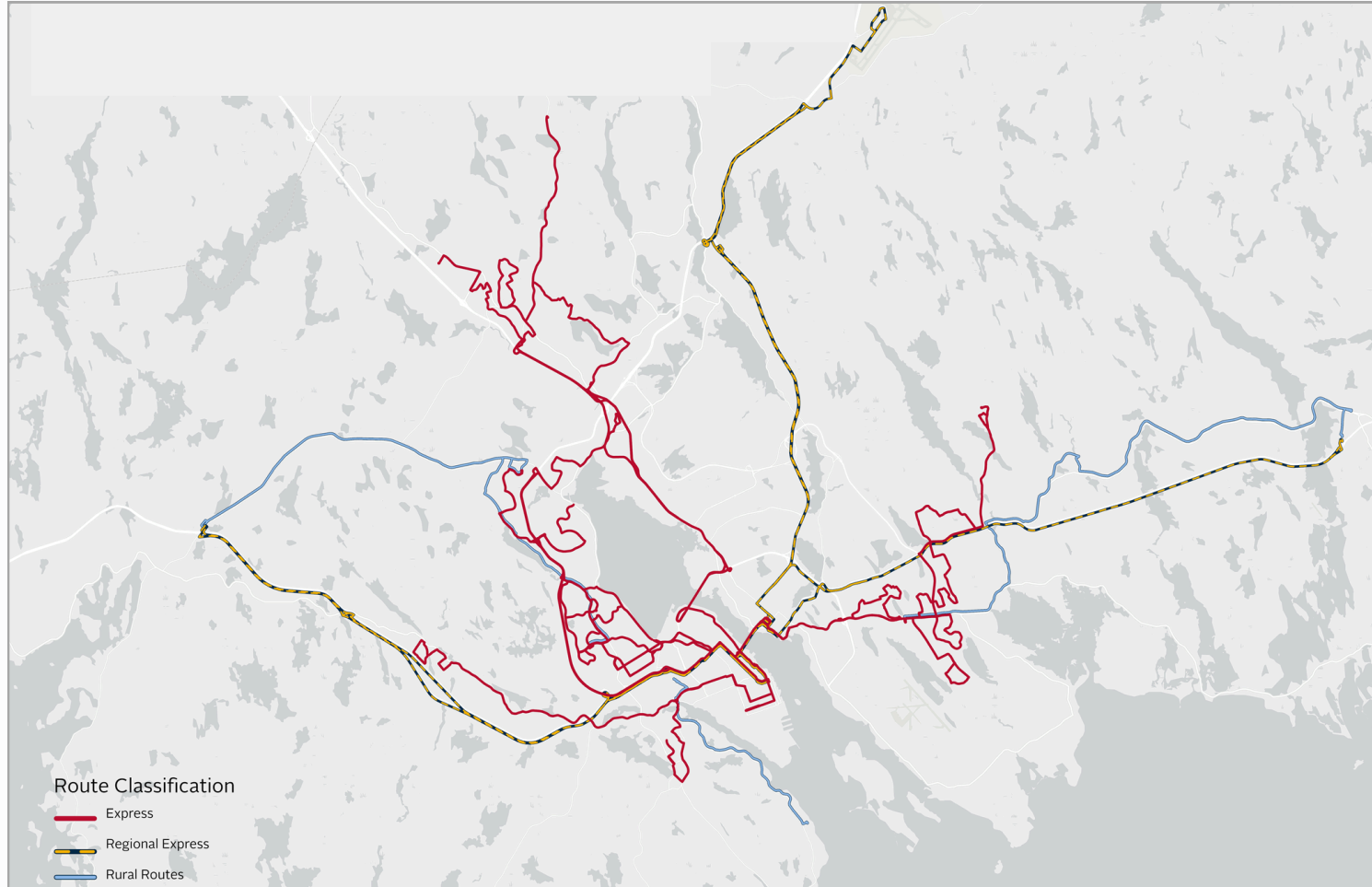


Two ferry services connecting downtown Halifax to Alderney Landing and Woodside in Dartmouth

Express, Regional Express and Rural routes



These routes provide service for commuters and people living in rural communities. Service is generally provided during peak hours, in one direction, with limited stops.



Route Type

Express



Limited-stop service during peak hours for downtown commuters

Regional Express



Limited-stop service connecting rural communities to the regional centre

Rural



Routes connecting areas outside the Urban Transit Service Boundary to transit terminals

Figure 2: Map of Halifax Transit Express, Regional Express and rural routes

Population Growth in Halifax

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Since 2016, the population within the region has grown 22 per cent. Those areas with the highest growth (noted in dark purple) include the Halifax peninsula, Clayton Park, West Bedford, Lower Sackville, Dartmouth North and downtown Dartmouth (See figure 3). Halifax Transit has experienced an increase in ridership in most communities.

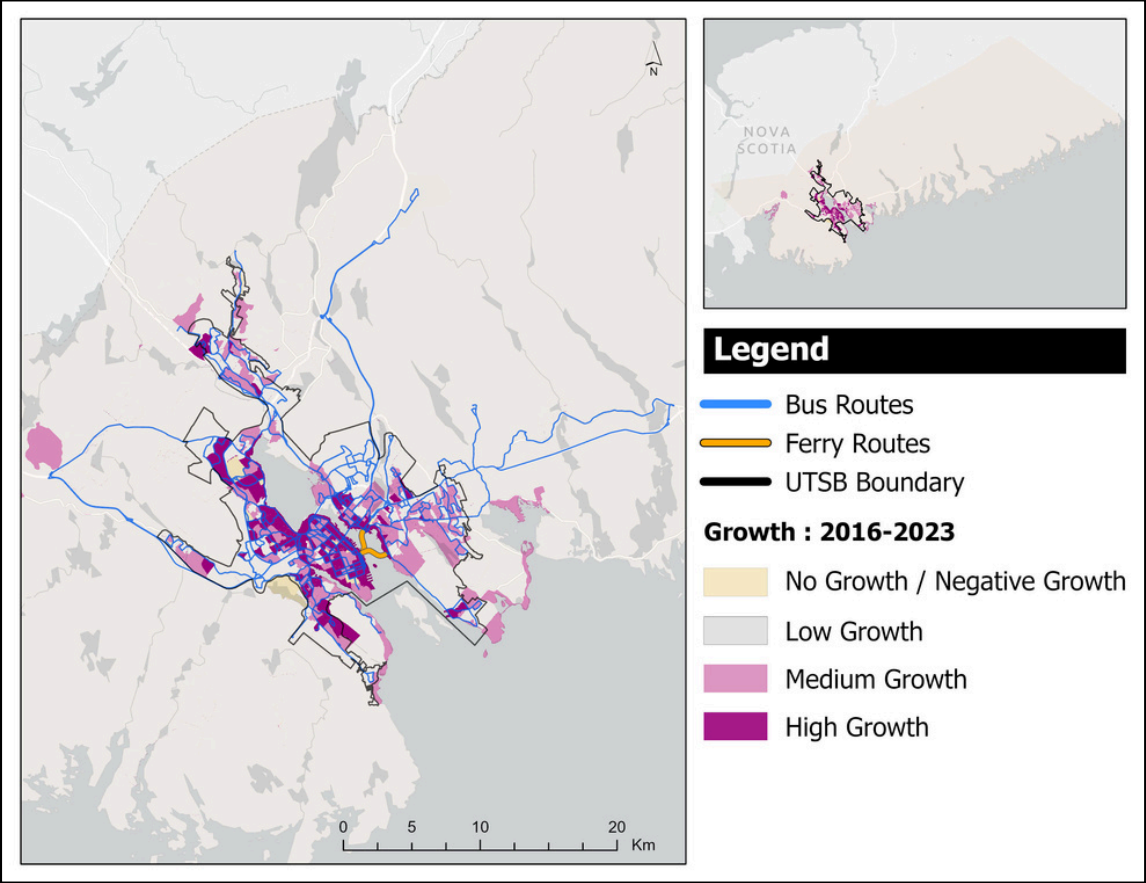


Figure 3: Map of highest growth in population density. Areas with high growth are concentrated within the Urban Transit Service Boundary (UTSB)

Population Density

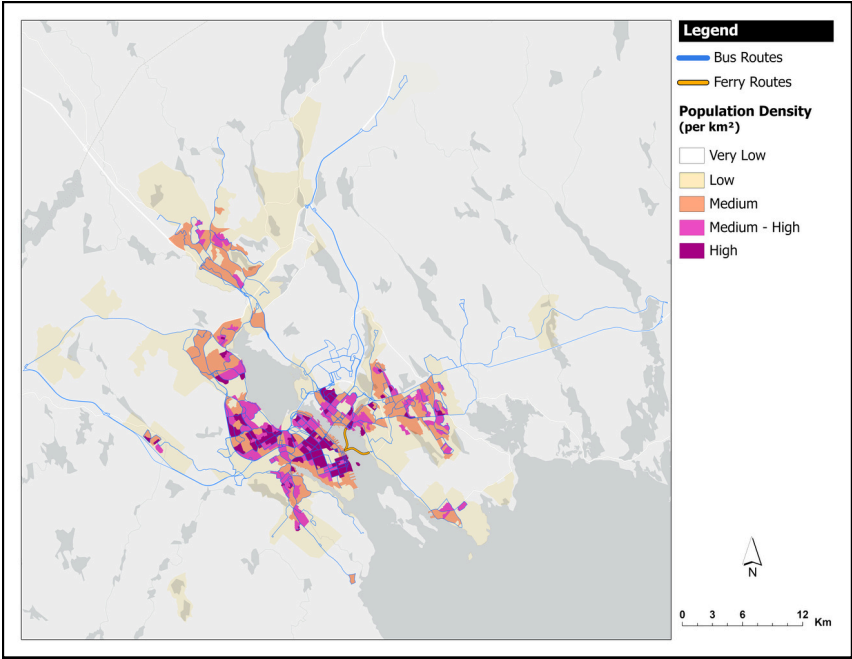


Figure 4: **Population Density** (Based on Census 2023 estimates). Residents who live in community areas with high population density are less likely to use a car and more likely to rely on transit for their daily trips. Transit serving these locations attracts higher ridership and typically requires more frequent service

Transit Propensity within Transit Service Area

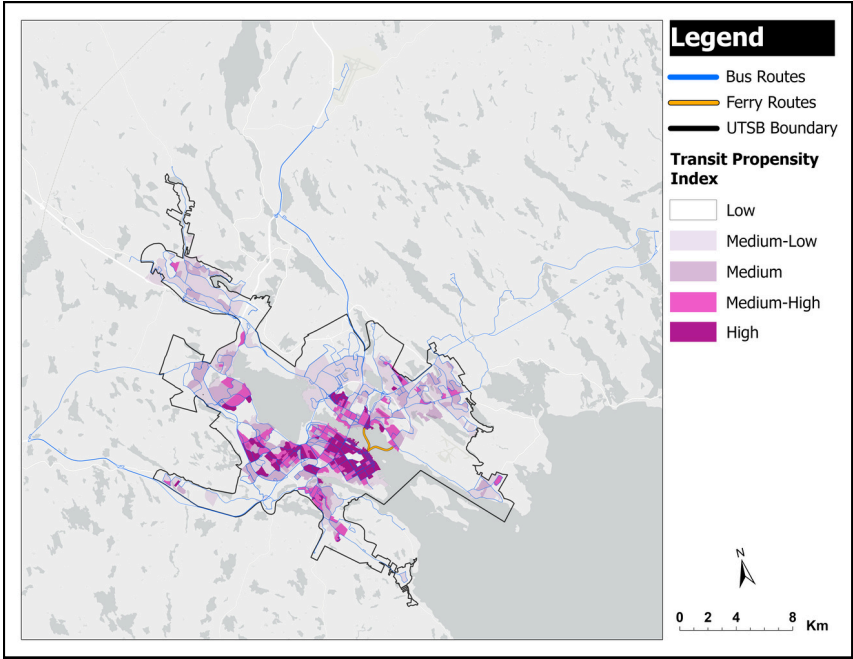


Figure 5: **Map of Transit Propensity within the Urban Transit Boundary (UTSB)** (Based on 2023 Census data and other sources). Some demographic groups rely more on transit for all their daily trips. Identifying areas where many residents rely more on transit ensures that decisions to modify routes or adjust service levels can reflect community needs

Ridership Patterns



2018 to 2024

Halifax has seen an overall increase in transit ridership in recent years (see figure 6).

Although ridership was impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, ridership increased 15 per cent over the previous year in both 2022/23 and 2023/24. Some increases are due to network changes, including the implementation of the Corridor Routes, and due to ongoing adjustments to service frequency on popular routes.

New programs that reduce barriers to using transit* have contributed to some of the increased ridership. The recent rapid population growth in the region has also resulted in higher transit use. Many new residents rely on transit to get to work and for other daily trips, like shopping or accessing essential services, resulting in a shift in travel patterns across the network.

**Programs include the Affordable Access Transit Pass and the Student Transit Pass.*

Main trends:

Corridor routes, and other routes which serve communities with medium to high population density continue to see high ridership and steady increases, across all time periods. Some weekend trips are experiencing significant increases in ridership, especially on Sundays where some of the highest increases have occurred.

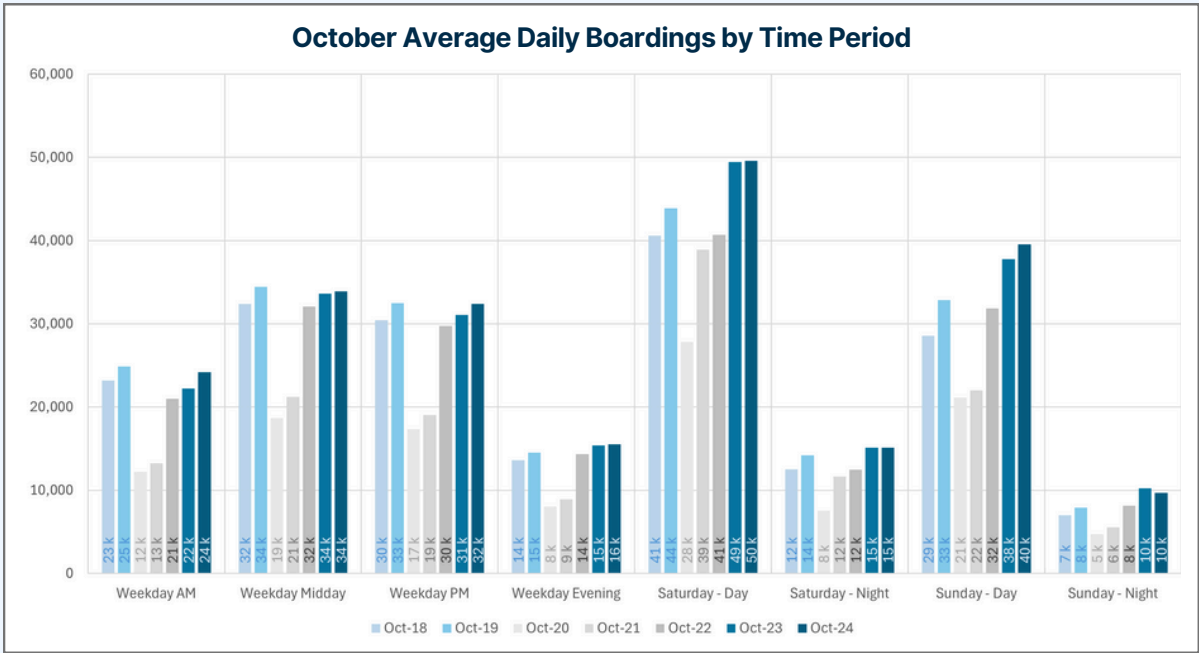


Figure 6: Average daily boardings for October, by year 2018 – 2024

Ridership

Peak Service

Corridor, Local & Rural Routes



Hours of service

Morning: 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Afternoon: 3 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

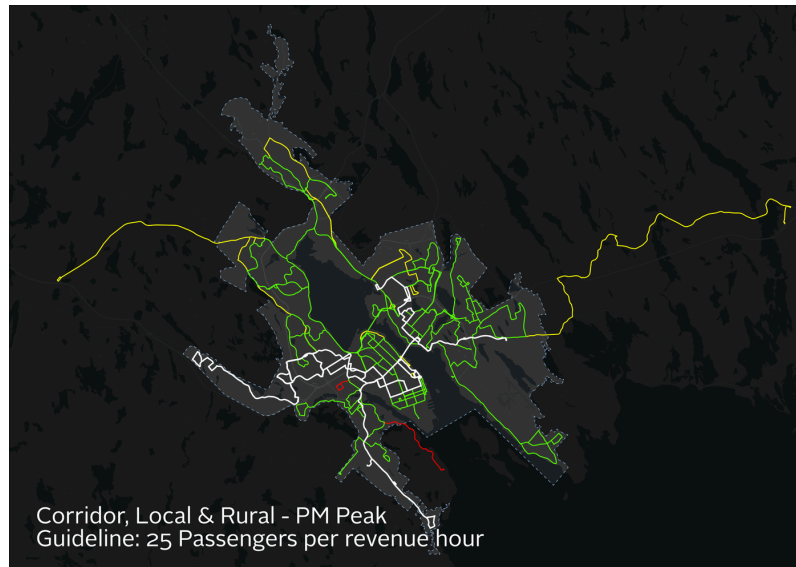
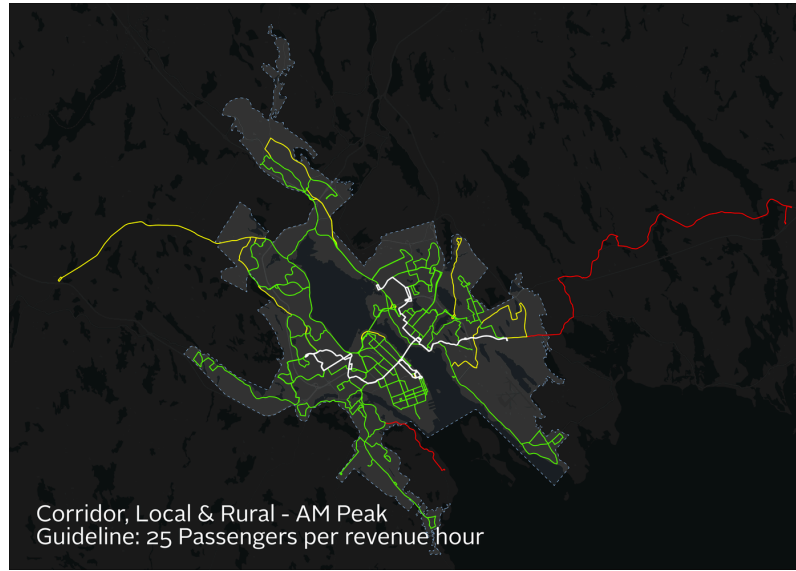
Ridership Guidelines

Morning: 25 passengers per hour

Afternoon: 25 passengers per hour

Ridership guidelines are higher during peak hours of service. The higher guidelines reflect historical travel behaviour indicating many more trips were made during peak times to commute to work, school or for other reasons. Frequency of service is higher during weekday peak times to meet the higher demand.

Ridership levels remain high across the network during peak periods. Most services meet the guideline of **25 passengers** per hour, with a significant number exceeding the guideline by twice or more (greater than 50 passengers per hour).



Route Performance

Low ridership



Below guidelines



Meeting guidelines



Exceeding guidelines
by 2x or more



Ridership

Weekday Non-Peak Service

Corridor, Local & Rural Routes

Hours of service

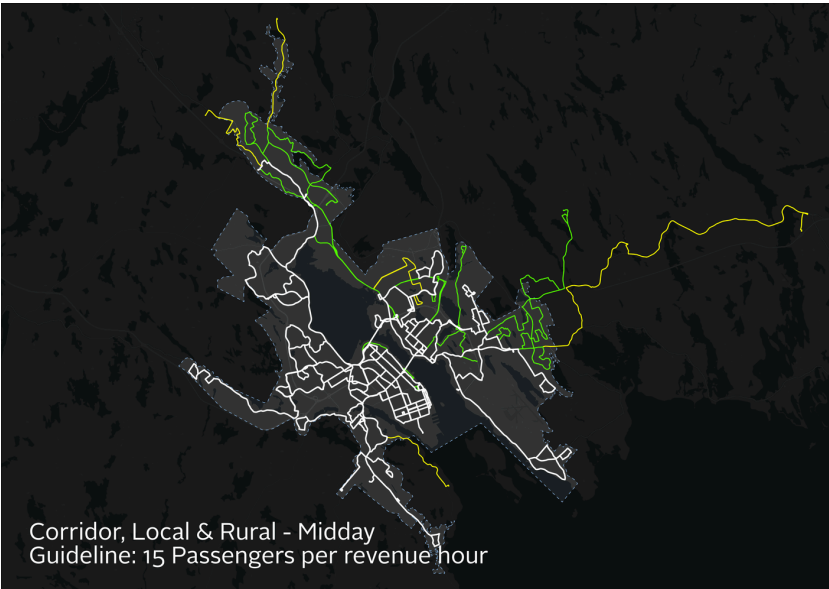
Midday: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Evening: 6:30 p.m. to 12 a.m.

Ridership Guidelines

Midday: 15 passengers per hour
Evening: 10 passengers per hour

Ridership guidelines are reduced for weekdays during non-peak hours of service. This is due to historical travel behaviour where many more trips occurred during weekday peak periods and lower ridership was expected during the midday and evening periods.

Now, ridership on many weekday non-peak services are exceeding the guidelines by two or more times, indicating how travel patterns and transit use have shifted across the network.



Route Performance

Low ridership

Red bar

Below guidelines

Yellow bar

Meeting guidelines

Green bar

Exceeding guidelines by 2x or more

White bar

Ridership

Weekend Service

Corridor, Local & Rural Routes



Hours of service

Saturday: all day

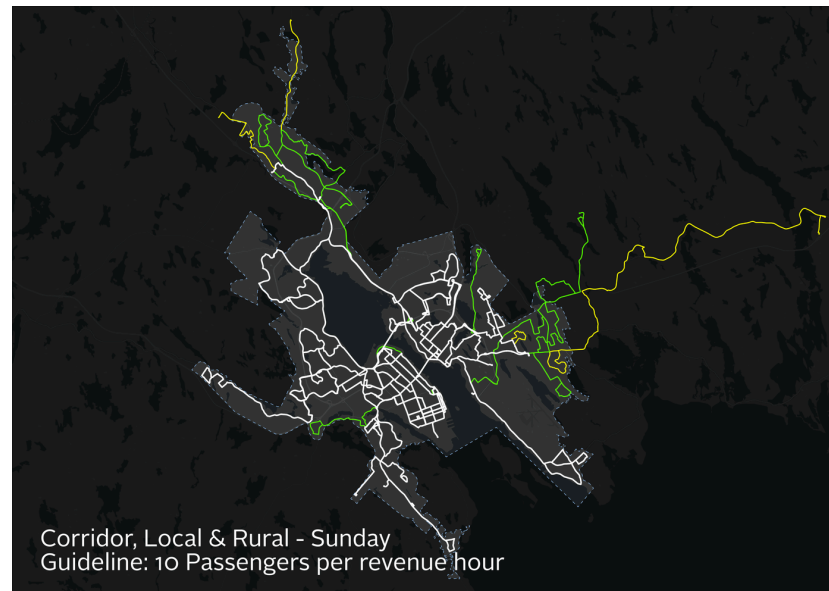
Sunday: all day

Ridership Guidelines

Saturday: 15 passengers per hour

Sunday: 10 passengers per hour

Ridership guidelines on weekend services are lower than during peak periods. Ridership on many weekend services is exceeding the guidelines by two or more times, further indicating how travel patterns and transit use has shifted across the network.



Route Performance

Low ridership



Below guidelines



Meeting guidelines



Exceeding guidelines
by 2x or more



Ridership

Express and Regional Express

Hours of service

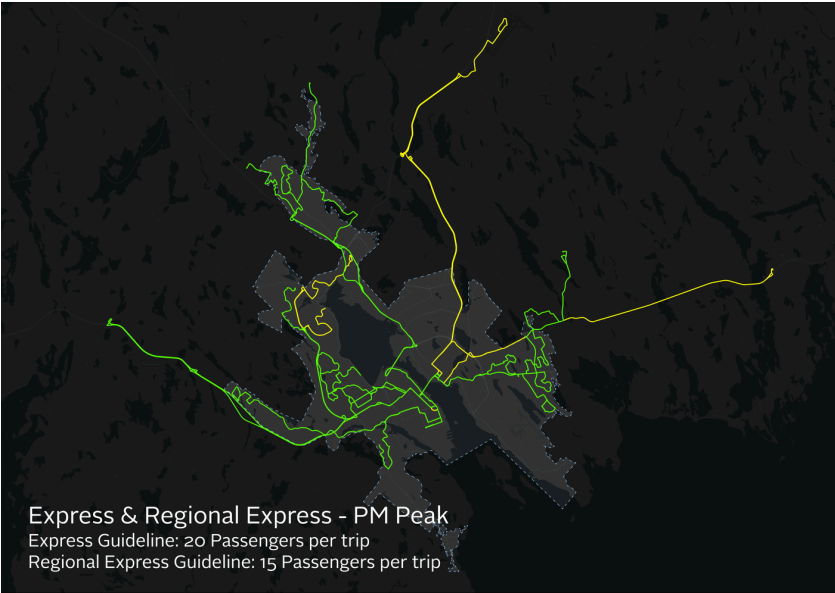
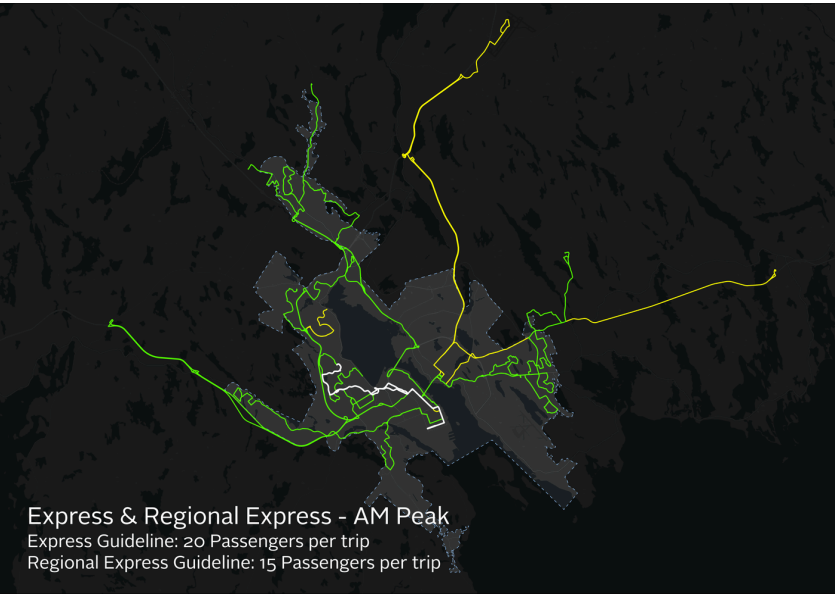
Express: Limited stop service during morning and afternoon periods.
Regional Express: Limited-stop service connecting regional destinations across all periods.

Ridership Guidelines

Ridership guidelines for express and regional express routes are based on trips rather than passenger hours.

Express routes guidelines are set at 20 passengers per trip. Ridership on express services remains high in the morning and afternoon. Some routes have additional trips during the afternoon based on travel patterns and to meet transit demand.

Regional express guidelines are reduced to 15 passengers per trip as these services provide important connections between regional destinations. The regional express route serving Halifax Stanfield airport offers all day service and is not subject to ridership guidelines.



Route Performance

Low ridership

Below guidelines

Meeting guidelines

Exceeding guidelines by 2x or more

Building a Strategic Roadmap

Halifax Transit has proposed shifting from a single multi-year plan to a Strategic Roadmap developed over a three-year period. Previous plans outlined service changes to be implemented over a five-year period; these comprehensive plans often required updating to respond to evolving circumstances.

Now, to respond to growth in the region and changes in mobility needs, a more flexible approach is needed. The Strategic Roadmap will be an ongoing planning activity over the next three years that will include the following deliverables:

- **Service Plans:** Outline network, route and transit services.
- **Operational Review:** An analysis of operating models, policies, and/or procedures with the aim to optimize or enhance service.
- **Implementation Plans:** Work plans which share the goals, objectives, actions, resources and schedules associated with a project or program.
- **Standards Development:** Recommended upgrades or proposals aimed to make transit more accessible, sustainable and/or improve the quality of service.



Core Service Plan 2025-27

The **Core Service Plan** will be the first deliverable developed within the **Strategic Roadmap 2025-28**.

This multi-year plan will establish short term transit route or service level changes that respond to current demand, while anticipating future needs. The Core Service Plan 2025-27 will build upon the foundations of the Moving Forward Together Plan (MFTP). The principles and guidelines established in that plan will continue to inform transit planning with the aim to improve and enhance the transit network.

Developing the Core Service Plan.

In developing proposals to improve transit services, Halifax Transit will:

- Evaluate network performance, transit ridership patterns and adherence to service standards in relation to guidelines.
- Review service requests and customer feedback.
- Analyze growth patterns, shifts in travel behaviour and plan for future demand.
- Share proposals for feedback through public engagement, that include options to expand the network and updates to service spans and frequency.



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