

Transit Feasibility and  
Implementation Study:  
Needs and  
Opportunities

Interim Report 1 - Final  
April 2015

County of Simcoe

Our ref: 2259201







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Prepared by:

Steer Davies Gleave  
1500-330 Bay St  
Toronto, ON, M5H 2S8  
Canada

+1 (647) 260 4861  
na.steerdaviesgleave.com

Prepared for:

County of Simcoe  
1110 Highway 26  
Midhurst, ON L0L 1X0  
Canada

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Simcoe County and its constituent municipalities have been actively exploring transportation options that address future needs for several years. Pursuing a county-wide regional transit plan fits well with the overall multi-modal focus of the County's transportation strategy focus on the integration of land use and transportation, access and mobility and multi-modal integration.
- 1.2 The *Simcoe County Transit Feasibility and Implementation Study* is an opportunity to respond to the challenge of supporting transit initiatives in and between smaller urban communities and the larger centres, as well as understanding and addressing the needs of vast rural areas and spread out geographically.
- 1.3 This study is an important opportunity to take the development of the options for transit service to the next level and demonstrate how a comprehensive approach to transit in the County can improve transportation choice and community access, while ensuring that services can be provided in an affordable manner— managing this dichotomy certainly helps to raise its opportunity for implementation.
- 1.4 This study will build on this extensive body of work and the experience of the local municipalities to define the feasibility of a broader county service that:
- serves local communities
  - connects urban centres
  - facilitates local, regional and inter-regional commuter travel
  - supports the broader economic, environmental and social objectives of development in Simcoe County
- 1.5 Our work plan for the study comprises ten tasks:
1. Conduct project initiation
  2. Develop consultation plan
  3. **Complete a needs and opportunities assessment**
  4. Develop vision, goals, and objectives
  5. Identify and assess service delivery approaches
  6. Develop and evaluate service options
  7. Develop prioritization plan for intermediate phases
  8. Implications for specialized transit services
  9. Fares and funding sources for transit services
  10. Financial plan, implementation plan and study reporting

- 1.6 This interim report contains the results of Task 3, the needs and opportunities assessment. Following this introduction, there are chapters on the following study activities:
- **Policy review**, covering key documents identified by the County as potential influences on the development of inter-municipal transit services
  - **Demographic analysis**, assessing the changing demographic composition of the community
  - **Existing and planned service review**, covering fixed-route and specialized services within the County, whether operated by the municipalities or other agencies.
  - **Travel pattern analysis**, describing major travel patterns in the County recognizing the changes during the study period
  - **Site study**, ensuring potential transit services effectively serve the communities they connect, and can be operated year-round
- 1.7 The work for this report had provided the study team with a detailed understanding of the existing transportation conditions, as well as the strategic directions for transportation and land use for the 15 years and beyond.

## 2 Policy review

- 2.1 This chapter provides an overview of the key documents identified by the County as potential influences on the development of inter-municipal transit services. The information in this chapter provides background context, and demonstrates the broad policy support for inter-municipal transit services.

### Simcoe

#### County of Simcoe Transportation Master Plan Update (2014);

- 2.2 The County of Simcoe's 2008 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was updated in 2014. The update followed growth in population, employment and tourism in the County, and the development of a number of multi-modal transportation improvements.
- 2.3 The County of Simcoe is largely rural, with a number of small urban areas. Consequently, travel in the County consists primarily of automobile use. The TMP update stresses the need to explore multi-modal transportation options, in order to reduce the negative effects of high auto usage.
- 2.4 The TMP update analysed existing conditions across a range of modes, including transit. This included a detailed analysis of five key transportation corridors in the County, along County Roads 10, 44, 77, 93, and 124. The existing conditions were used to create a Multi-Modal Transportation Vision and set of Guiding Principles
- 2.5 The Multi-Modal Transportation Vision highlights the need for a multi-modal approach, and the importance of studying transit network options. The Guiding Principles include the need to integrate land use and transportation planning, and to take a multi-modal approach to the movement of people and goods in the County.
- 2.6 Overall, the TMP update emphasizes the importance of providing transit in Simcoe County, both within and between municipalities.



### **County of Simcoe Official Plan**

2.7 The County's Land Use Schedule 5.1 of Simcoe Official Plan generally<sup>1</sup> allocates all land in the county to one of five designations:

- Greenlands
- Agricultural
- Rural
- Settlements
- Economic District/Economic Employment District

2.8 Future development is generally directed to lands designated settlements or economic district/economic employment district. In general, the is undeveloped land designated for settlements around existing communities. This implies there will no new distinct urban areas in the future. Consequently, a long-term transit network can be designed around the existing settlements.

2.9 The amount of land available for each settlement to grow varies considerably, and this will need to be taken into consideration when assessing potential future demand.

2.10 Detailed land use planning is the responsibility of the lower-tier municipalities. These are not reviewed here, but will be consulted if they are likely to have an effect on potential routing options or service patterns—which will be detailed in later study phases.

### **County of Simcoe Affordable Housing and Homeless Prevention Strategy**

2.11 This document provides 10-year strategy regarding housing in Simcoe. It sets out a vision for “adequate, appropriate and affordable housing for all Simcoe County residents”, and a number of opportunities and activities to help reach that goal.

2.12 The chapter on planning and policy instruments to support affordable housing identifies the need for transportation. In particular, it states that affordable housing developments should access to employment and community amenities by walking or public transit. It also stresses the importance of the strategy to complement local transit and transportation plans.

### **County of Simcoe Labour Market Partnership Project**

2.13 The Labour Market Partnership Project aims to:

- Address labour market issues through the promotion of broad industry community partnerships

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<sup>1</sup> Special rules apply to the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area, the Greenbelt Plan Protected Countryside, and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area. However, development in these is limited in a similar manner to land designated greenlands, agricultural or rural.

- Assist local communities with the development of innovative strategies to prepare for future skills requirements and prevent skills shortages within new and emerging industries and organizations
- Plan for effective utilization of local human resources
- Develop and promote labour market intelligence and its use in labour market development

2.14 One of the priority actions is the need to “enhance Simcoe County’s transportation network to facilitate worker mobility across the county.” The introduction of inter-municipal transit service will assist this, by providing additional connections between residential and employment areas.

## Province

### Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

- 2.15 The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (Growth Plan) arose from the Province’s *Place to Grow Act*. It is a 25-year plan that aims to limit urban expansion, improve transportation access, and promote downtowns as community centres. The original plan was created in 2006, and contained population and employment forecasts to 2031 by municipality.
- 2.16 For Simcoe, the population and employment forecasts covered the whole County (with separate forecasts for Barrie and Orillia). These were then amended in 2012 to produce specific forecasts for each lower-tier municipality. In 2013, the population were extended to 2041, again at a County-wide level only. These are discussed further in Chapter 3.
- 2.17 The amended *Growth Plan* identifies a number of “primary settlement areas” for targeting future residential development. In the Simcoe sub-area (Simcoe County, Barrie and Orillia), the primary settlement areas are:
- Alcona (Innisfil)
  - Alliston (New Tecumseth)
  - Barrie
  - Bradford (Bradford West Gwillimbury)
  - Collingwood
  - Midland/Penetanguishene
  - Orillia
- 2.18 The amended *Growth Plan* also identifies several areas in Simcoe region as nodes for employment uses, including
- Bradford West Gwillimbury Strategic Settlement Employment Area
  - Innisfil Heights Strategic Settlement Employment Area, around the Innisfil Beach Rd interchange on Hwy 400
  - Lake Simcoe Regional Airport Economic Employment District, in Oro-Medonte
  - Rama Road Economic Employment District, on the east side of Lake Couchiching in Ramara
- 2.19 The employment nodes and primary settlement areas will be the focus for population and employment growth over the next 25 years. Consequently, plans for inter-municipal transit services must take into consideration the long-term growth in trips to and from these areas.

### **Provincial Policy Statement**

- 2.20 The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) consolidates the government’s policies on land use planning at municipal, regional and provincial level. The policies aim to ensure employment and residential development are provided with appropriate opportunities. The policies also include environmental protection, resource management, efficient use of infrastructure and the development of livable and resilient communities.
- 2.21 The PPS is used by municipalities when developing their Official Plans, and as broad strategic guidance when developing other planning policies. The PPS promotes transit-supportive land use development that encourages transportation choices that increase mobility for residents.

### **Simcoe Area Multi-Modal Transportation Strategy**

- 2.22 The Simcoe Area Multi-Modal Transportation Strategy was commissioned by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to provide a long-term strategy for the movement of people and goods. The Strategy recommends options for the provincial transportation system in Simcoe and adjoining areas.
- 2.23 The study recommended a number of transit projects:
- Two-way all-day GO train service between Barrie and Union Station
  - Highway 400 bus service, from Barrie to Square One (via Pearson Airport) and Unionville GO station (via Hwy 407)
  - Expanded Park & Ride lots along the Hwy 400 corridor
  - New transit services between Barrie and communities in Simcoe County
  - Expansion of local transit in Barrie, both service levels and service area
  - Employer transit shuttles, providing direct connections between transit hubs and major employment nodes.
- 2.24 The study also recommended the importance of linking transit with active transportation, and vice versa. It also recommends various road upgrades, including HOV lanes, truck climbing lanes, and an extension of Hwy 427 through Simcoe County to Barrie.

### **Adjacent municipalities**

- 2.25 Region of York, Region of Peel and Grey County identify the increasing number of inter-regional trips with Simcoe County and the need for better coordination and connection between jurisdictions. Simcoe’s remaining adjacent municipalities do not make reference to facilitating future transit connections to Simcoe County.

### **York Region Transportation Master Plan**

- 2.26 York Region mentions in its Transportation Master Plan (TMP) enhancing partnerships with Simcoe County to coordinate provision of inter-regional transit services and optimize road network connectivity.

### **Peel Region Long Range Transportation Plan**

- 2.27 The Peel Region Long Range Transportation Plan identifies how the scale of inter-regional trips has put an additional load to the Regional Network. Out of the 15,000 inter-regional trips observed in the Region, a large proportion of trips are between Halton Region and Hamilton to Toronto, as well as from Dufferin and Simcoe Counties to the wider Greater Toronto Area via Peel Region. However, there is no specific identification for the need for providing inter-municipal public transit services.

### **Grey County Transportation Master Plan**

- 2.28 Grey County is currently updating its Transportation Master Plan. However, in the draft report, one of the recommended transit strategies is to explore inter-regional transit opportunities with Simcoe County.
- 2.29 Even though there is demand for a connection from Grey County to GO Transit services in Barrie, (especially to GO rail services), it would be challenging to implement given the lengthy distance and travel times between these two locations. Consequently, the TMP recommends focusing its efforts on establishing inter-regional routes on a smaller scale, such as a Collingwood-Blue Mountain link.
- 2.30 Grey County's TMP also encourages Grey County to initiate discussions with Metrolinx regarding the extension of a GO Transit bus connection from Orangeville into Grey County.

## **Other**

### **Towards Coordinated Rural Transportation: A Resource Document**

- 2.31 The Rural Ontario Institute's *Towards Coordinated Rural Transportation: A Resource Document* offers guidelines to municipalities and transportation providers, as well as other community support agencies to provide transportation services in rural communities in a more cost-effective way. This document helps transportation providers to collaborate with each other and develop a coordinated transportation model and to ultimately provide a better level of service for rural communities.
- 2.32 The document includes an assessment methodology for understanding the current situation and the process required to create a coordinated transportation framework.
- 2.33 The guide also provides a framework for multiple organizations within rural areas to establish a coordinated structure to improve customer service and cost-effectiveness.

### **The Big Move**

- 2.34 In 2008, Metrolinx adopted *The Big Move*, a Regional Transportation Plan which sets up long range transit goals and objectives for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).
- 2.35 From this study, a GO Rail Case Analysis study was prepared, which assessed the commuter rail services in the GTHA. On a long term period, it is recommended to provide a two-way, all-day service to East Gwillimbury Station on the Barrie GO Line. On a shorter time scale, GO expects to add peak-hour train service, as well as two-way weekend train service to Barrie.

*Barrie GO Line*

- 2.36 Barrie is identified as an urban growth centre in the Growth Plan; however, it is not designated as a Mobility Hub in *The Big Move*, because it is outside of the boundaries of the Regional Transportation Plan study area.
- 2.37 A new station is assumed to serve new developments at Innisfil, around eight kilometres south of the existing Barrie South station.

## 3 Demographic analysis

- 3.1 This chapter assesses the changing demographic composition of the Simcoe area, at both a County and municipal level. The information in this chapter will be used to ensure that plans for transit services take account of long-term population and employment trends.

### Historical Growth

- 3.2 The historic population for Simcoe was obtained using census data going back to 1996. The data revealed that Simcoe County's population increased 25% from 1996 to 2011, an average growth rate of 0.9% per year. Recent growth (2006 to 2011) has been slightly higher, at 1.2% per year. For the County as a whole, the picture has been one of slow but steady growth.
- 3.3 Amongst the individual communities, the situation is more varied. There has been very little growth in Midland (2%) and Tay (8%) over the last 25 years. By contrast, the population of Wasaga beach more than doubled from 1996 to 2011. Similarly, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Innisfil, New Tecumseth and Tiny all grew by between 20% and 40%.
- 3.4 Simcoe County has a diverse range of communities, and hence it is unsurprising that the municipalities have seen very different trends in population growth. Recent growth rates can be used to inform likely short-term growth, which in turn will influence potential inter-municipal transit service patterns.
- 3.5 The City of Barrie saw significant growth (62%, or 2.4% per year) from 1996 to 2006, but growth since then has been more modest (5.7%, or 1.1% per year) and closer to the Simcoe County average. The City of Orillia experienced growth of only 10% from 1996 to 2006, and has seen little growth (1%) since then.

### Future growth

- 3.6 As discussed in the previous chapter, the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* contains municipal-level population forecasts for Simcoe County to 2031, and County-level forecasts to 2041.
- 3.7 The *Growth Plan* forecasts that Simcoe County's population will grow by 50% from 2011 to 2031. It identifies four areas in Simcoe County as 'primary settlement areas', plus Barrie and Orillia. These are shown in Figure 1. (Primary settlement areas are areas "where development can be

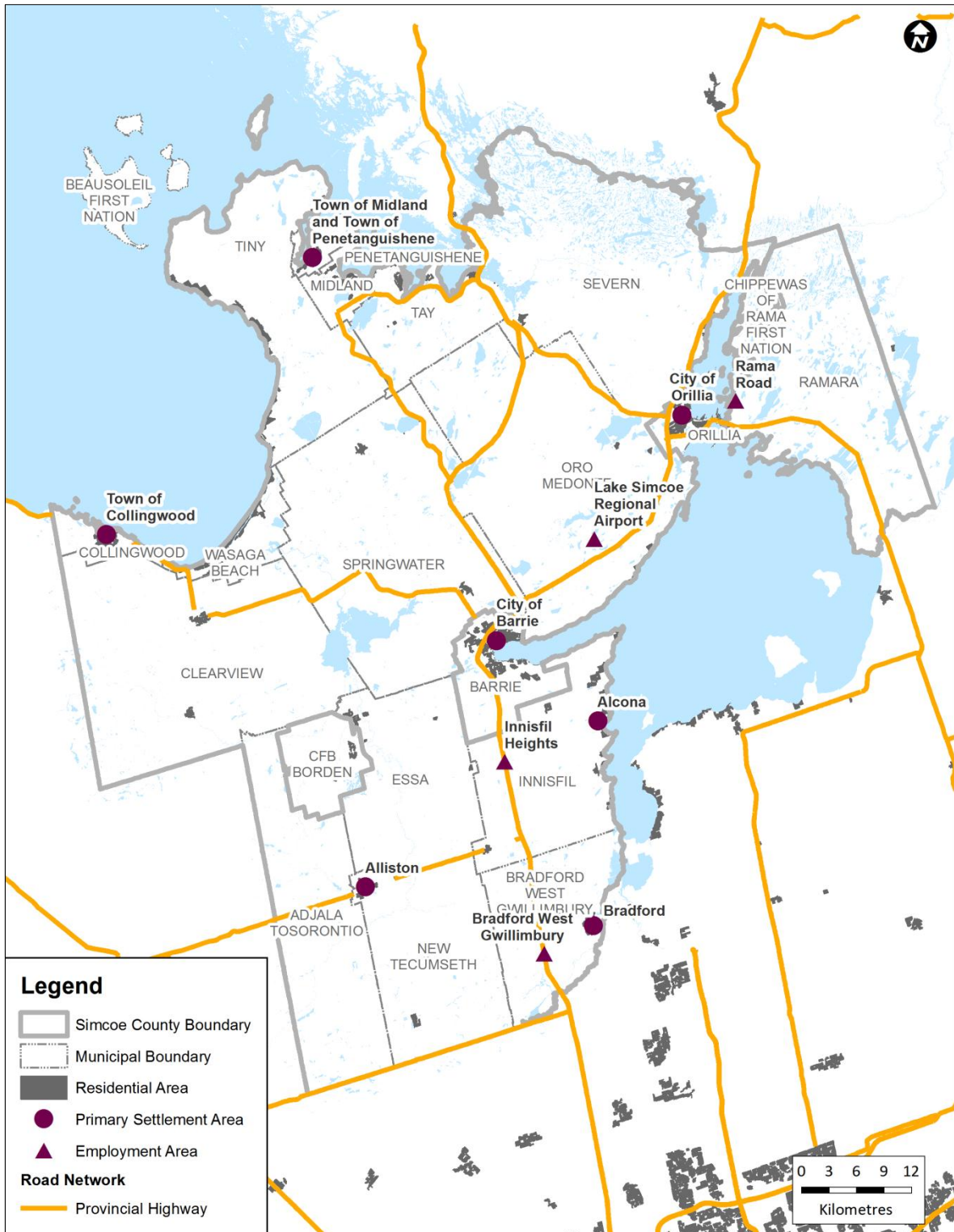
most effectively serviced, and where growth improves the range of opportunities for people to live, work, and play in their communities”<sup>2</sup>.)

- 3.8 The City of Barrie is designated as the principal primary settlement area, and downtown Barrie is the only urban growth centre (an area designated for high-density development) identified in the Growth Plan for the Simcoe area.
- 3.9 The 2031 municipal population forecasts reflect these designations. New Tecumseth, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Collingwood and Innisfil are forecast to grow between 69% and 85%, the highest rates in the County. These four municipalities are forecasts to contain the majority of the County’s population growth.
- 3.10 The populations of the separated cities Barrie and Orillia are forecast to grow by 55% and 34% respectively. For Orillia, this is a much higher growth rate than the City has seen in the last 25 years.
- 3.11 The *Growth Plan* also identifies several areas in Simcoe County as focal points for employment growth. The growth in employment is expected to be greater than the growth in population, leading to a lower proportion of residents commuting outside the region. This increases the potential travel market for inter-municipal transit services.
- 3.12 The population and employment in the Simcoe area is expected to grow significantly between now and 2031. However, the growth will be far from uniform. Consequently, the expected growth trends must be considered when planning inter-municipal transit services. This will ensure that the network of services will be adaptable to meet changing trip volumes.

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<sup>2</sup> *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 – Office Consolidation, June 2013, section 6.3.1*  
[https://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=359&Itemid=14#6.3.1](https://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=359&Itemid=14#6.3.1)

Figure 1 Simcoe county residential areas





## 4 Existing and Planned Service Review

4.1 This chapter describes the existing fixed-route and specialized services within the County and its vicinity, including municipal and inter-regional services. It also discusses services proposed in Innisfil and Penetanguishene, and community connections proposed by Metis Transit. Finally, it assesses the current operations of community transportation services within the County.

### Existing services

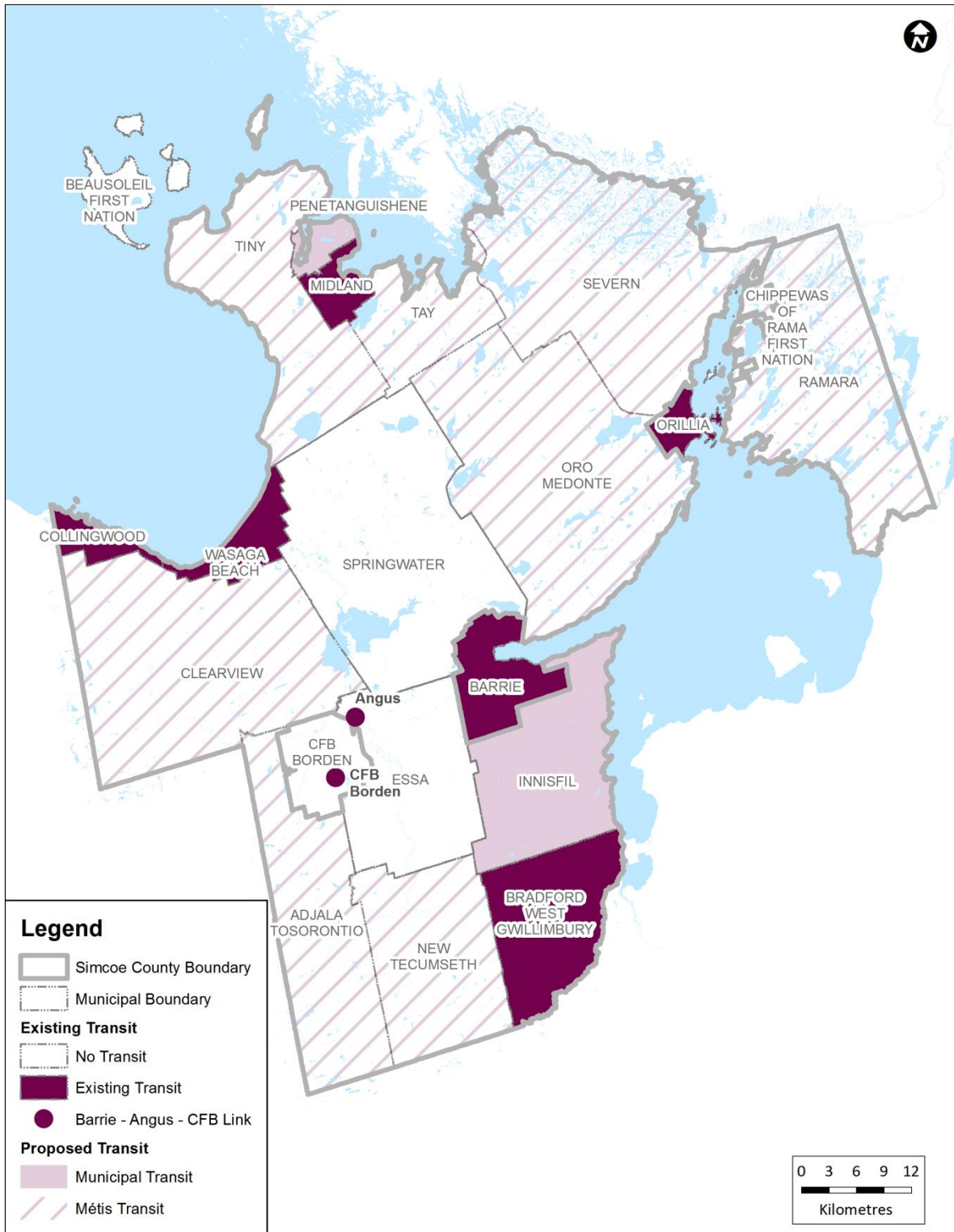
#### Municipal Transit

4.2 Transit is provided by six municipalities in the Simcoe area. These are listed in Table 4.1 (along with various key features), and mapped in Figure 2.

Table 4.1: Municipal transit agencies operating in the Simcoe area

Municipality	Number of Routes	Hours of Service	Typical Service Frequencies	Specialized Transit
Barrie	8	Weekdays: 05:45–00:30 Saturday: 07:15–00:30 Sunday: 09:00–19:15	30 minutes before 19:00 60 minutes after 19:00	Barrie Accessible Community Transportation Service (BACTS)
Orillia	5	Weekdays: 06:15–22:15 Saturday: 08:45–19:45 Sunday: 08:45–16:15	30 minutes	Orillia Wheelchair Limousine Service (OWLS)
Bradford West Gwillimbury	2	Weekdays: 07:00–17:00	40 minutes	Taxi-to-GO
Collingwood	3	Weekdays: 07:00–21:00 Saturday: 07:00–18:00 Sunday: 09:00–17:00	30 minutes	RedCross Para-Transit
Midland	2	Weekdays: 06:45–17:45 Saturday: 08:45–16:45	60 minutes	Accessible Transit
Wasaga Beach	2	Weekdays: 07:00–21:00 Saturday: 07:00–18:00 Sunday: 09:00–17:00	90 minutes	N/A

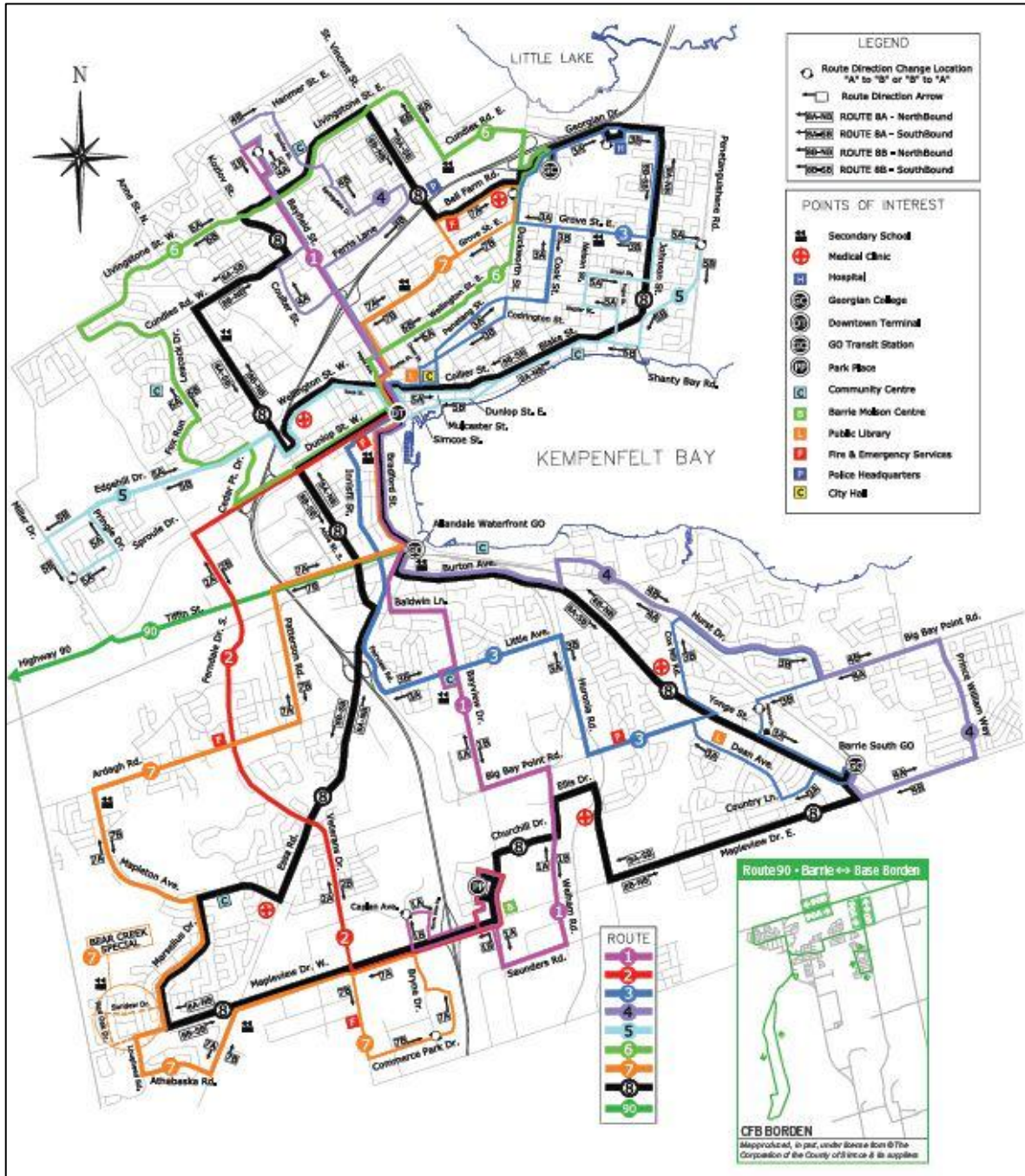
Figure 2 Municipal transit agencies map



City of Barrie

- 4.3 The City offers both fixed-route with Barrie Transit and specialized transit services for people with disabilities with Barrie Accessible Community Transportation Service (BACTS).

Figure 3 City of Barrie transit map

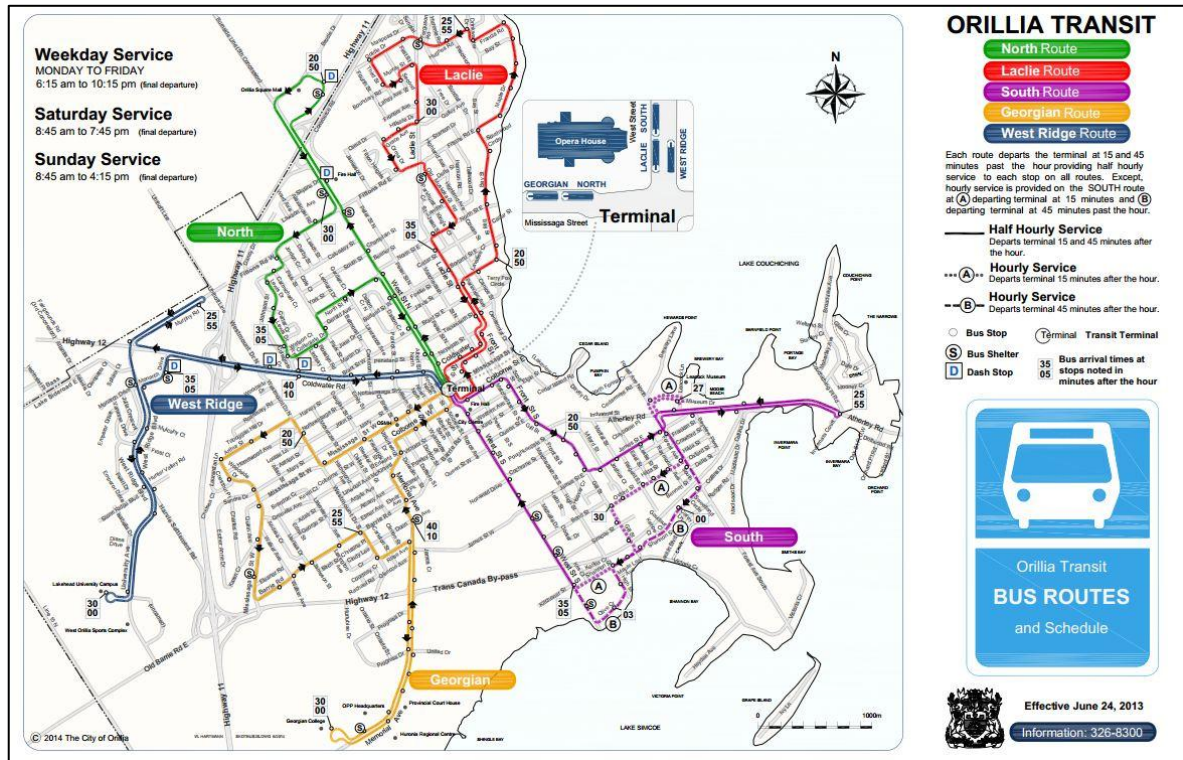


- 4.4 Barrie Transit operates a total of eight routes within the municipality and one inter-municipal transit service under contract by the Township of Essa to the community of Angus and CFB Borden. The adult cash fare is \$3.00.

4.5 BACTS is a specialized bus transportation service operating to assist persons with mobility disabilities. The service provides door-to-door service. BACTS is available weekdays from 07:30 to 23:00; Saturdays from 09:00 to 23:00; and Sundays from 09:00 to 18:00.

City of Orillia

Figure 4 City of Orillia transit map



4.6 Orillia Transit provides a service throughout the City of Orillia seven days a week. The city operates a total of five routes within the municipality. Each route departs the terminal at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour, providing half hourly service to each stop on all routes. The adult cash fare is \$2.00.

4.7 The City of Orillia also provides a door-to-door service called the Orillia Wheelchair Limousine Service (OWLS) within the Orillia City limits and to the Orillia Square Mall in the Township of Severn

## Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

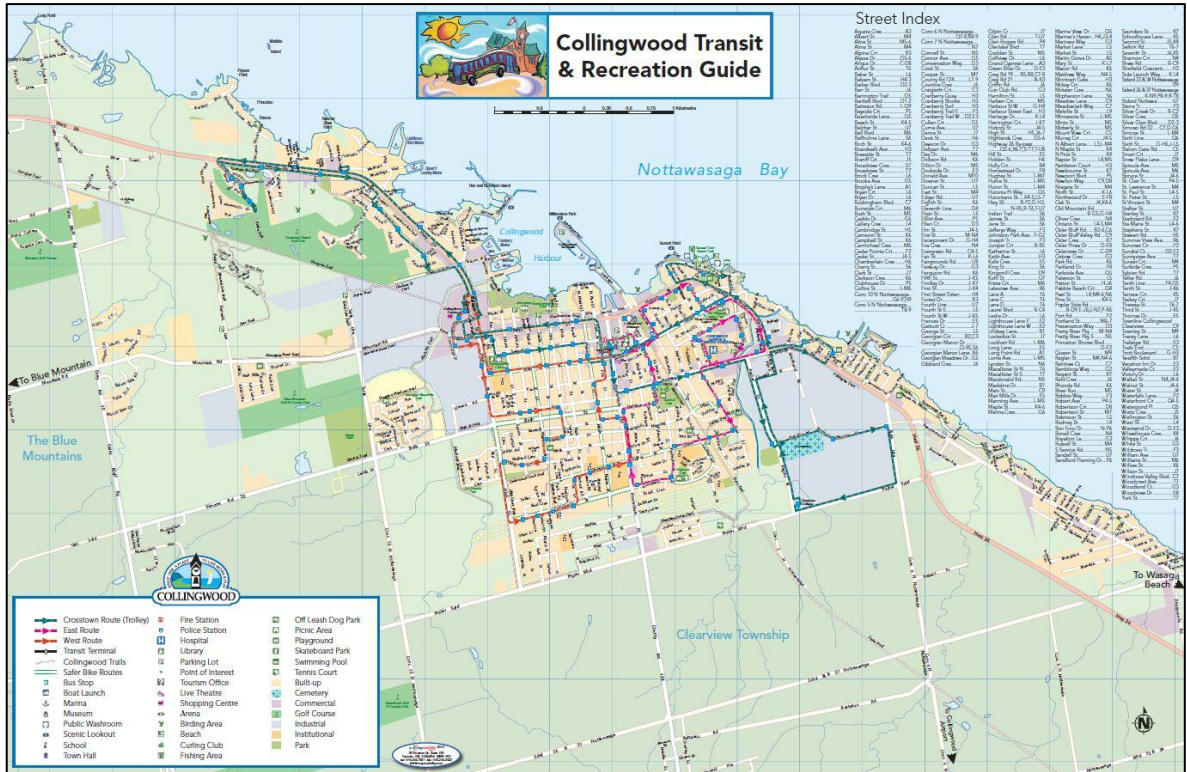
Figure 5 Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury transit map



- 4.8 Bradford West Gwillimbury Transit (BWG Transit) operates two bus routes, centred at the Bradford GO Station. The service operates every 40 minutes on the “Cross-town” route (shown in red in Figure 5) and five circular trips in each direction throughout the day on the “Around-town” route (shown in blue in Figure 5). BWG Transit operates Monday to Friday from 07:00 to 17:00.
- 4.9 BWG Transit provides shared-ride taxi service named “Taxi-to-GO” for GO Train commuters outside of regular transit hours. Taxi-to-GO is a pilot project to determine the demand for transit to and from the GO station during the early morning and evening train periods.

Town of Collingwood

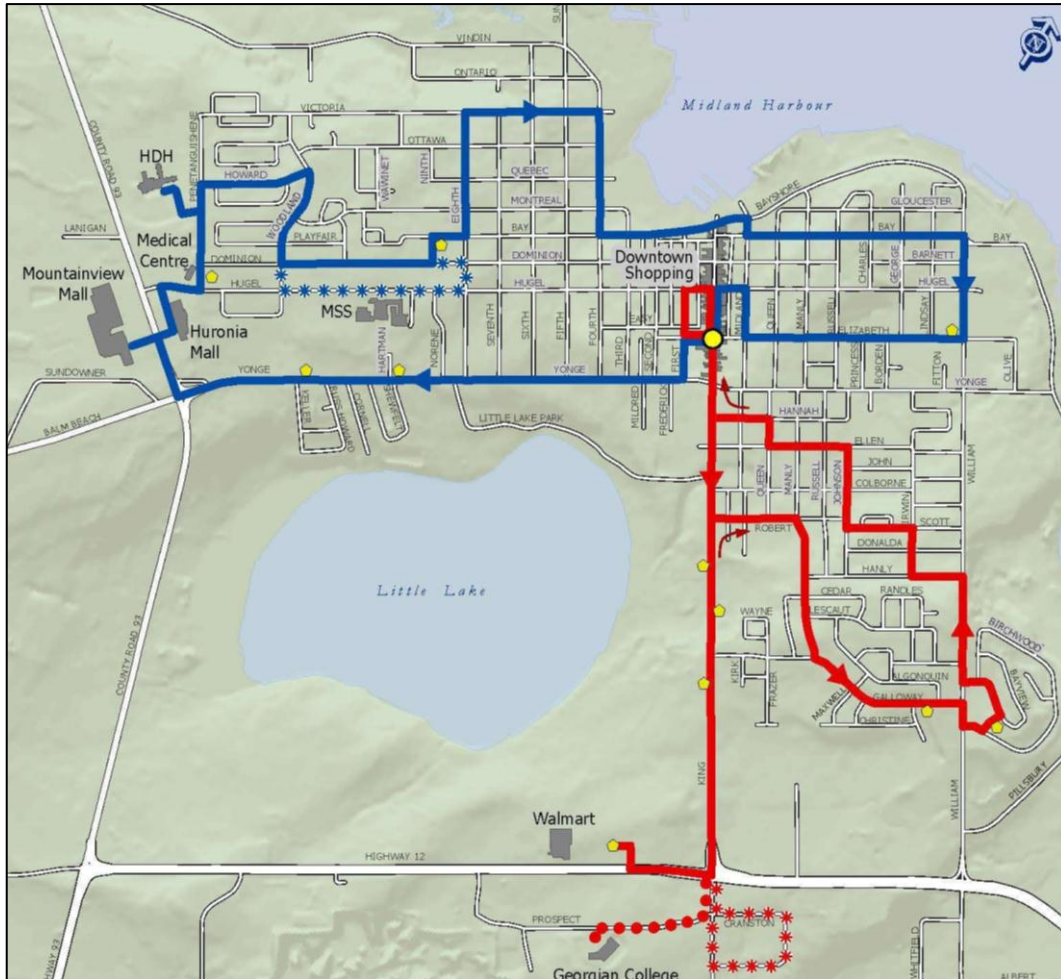
Figure 6 Town of Collingwood transit map



4.10 The town of Collingwood operates three half-hourly routes within the municipality. The adult cash fare is \$3.50. RedCross Para-Transit is also available for passenger with disabilities within the Town of Collingwood, on weekdays from 07:00 to 17:00.

Town of Midland

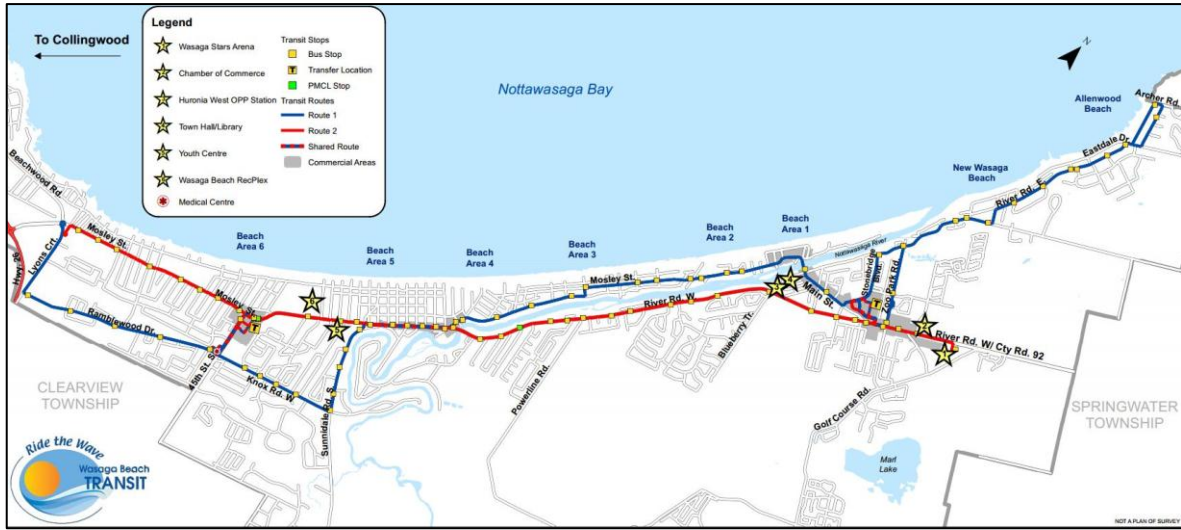
Figure 7 Town of Midland transit map



- 4.11 The town of Midland operates two hourly service routes on weekdays (06:45 to 17:45) and Saturdays (08:45 to 16:45).
- 4.12 Accessible Transit is a program that Community Reach operates in partnership with the Town of Midland. This program serves residents of Midland who, because of their disability, cannot access fixed-route transit.

*Town of Wasaga Beach*

Figure 8 Town of Wasaga Beach transit map



4.13 Wasaga Beach Transit operates two routes within the municipality. The services operate from 07:00 to 21:00 Monday to Saturday and from 07:00 to 19:00 on Sundays. Specialized transit services are currently not available.

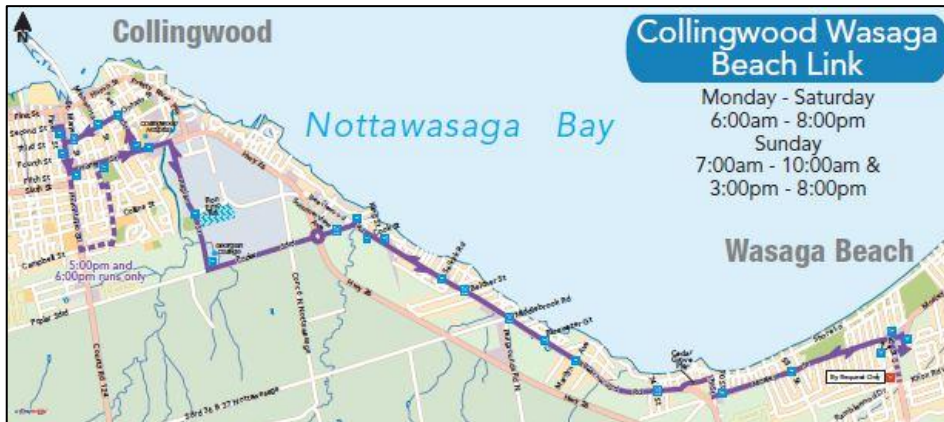
*Inter-municipal bus services*

- 4.14 There are three existing inter-municipal transit services operated by the local municipalities.
- 4.15 The **Barrie– Angus/Canadian Force Base (CFB) Borden** connection on Route 90. Barrie Transit provides service to Essa Township, specifically to Angus and CFB Borden, with five trips in each direction throughout the day from 05:30 to 19:30.
- 4.16 Travel from Barrie to Angus/Borden is a \$6.00 (2-Zone) fare or a \$3.00 zone top-up fare with a valid Barrie Transit transfer, pass or Ride Card. The service is designated route number 90 by Barrie Transit, reflecting its service along County Road 90.



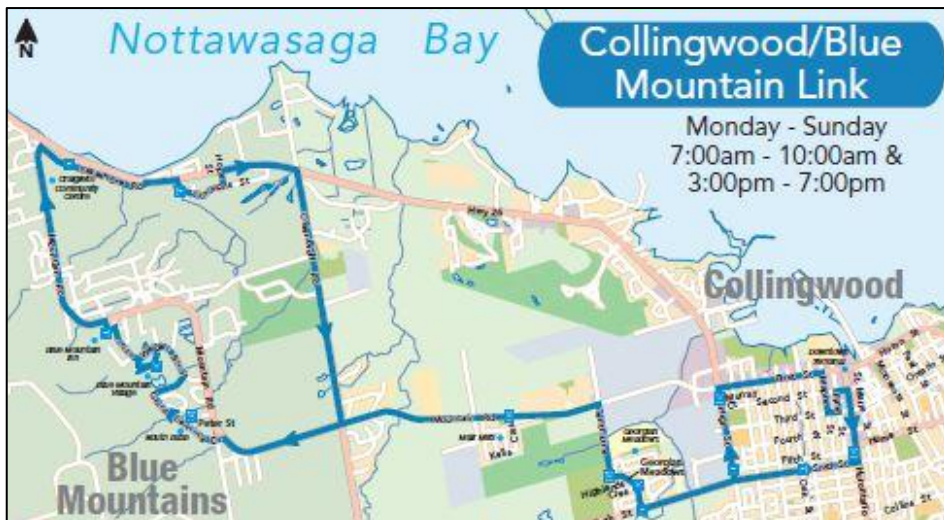
- 4.17 The **Collingwood – Wasaga Beach** transit is operated by Wasaga Beach Transit runs between Wasaga Beach and Collingwood on a continuous loop. The route is shown in Figure 9. It operates Monday to Saturday, 06:00 to 19:00, and on Sundays from 07:00 to 22:00 and 15:00 to 20:00. The adult cash fare is \$2.00.

Figure 9 Collingwood – Wasaga Beach transit link map



- 4.18 The **Collingwood – Blue Mountains** transit link operated by the Collingwood Transit runs between Collingwood and Blue Mountains (in Grey County) on a continuous loop, every day from 07:00 to 10:00 and from 15:00 to 19:00. The route is shown Figure 10. The adult cash fare is \$2.00.

Figure 10 Collingwood – Blue Mountains transit link map



## Inter-Regional Routes

### *Greyhound Bus Line*

- 4.19 Greyhound provides service between Barrie and Toronto, as well as connections to Collingwood.
- The **Barrie – Fergusonvale – Elmvale – Wasaga Beach – Stayner – Collingwood** connects with the Toronto – Barrie – Owen Sound corridor service. This route has operates only one trip in each direct seven days a week, at 09:00 from Barrie to Collingwood and at 17:00 on the return trip
  - The **Toronto – Barrie route**, operates three to seven trips in each direction between Barrie to Toronto from 05:00 to 20:00 seven days a week

### *Hammond Transportation*

- 4.20 Hammond Transportation operates three routes in Simcoe County, and provides connections with the Greyhound Bus Lines that operate between Toronto and Barrie whenever possible.
- **Barrie – Georgian College – Orillia** link, on the Toronto – Barrie – Orillia route, with four services on weekdays and two services on the weekend. Service span: 7am to 6pm between Barrie and Orillia.
  - **Barrie – Elmvale – Midland** connection on the Toronto – Barrie – Midland route. There is one trip per day in each direction on weekdays, and two trips/day on weekends.
  - **Barrie – Orillia – Washago** connection, on the “Corridor 11 Bus”. This operates on weekdays between Huntsville and Barrie, making stops along the way in Bracebridge, Gravenhurst, Washago and Orillia. There are two trips per day in each direction.

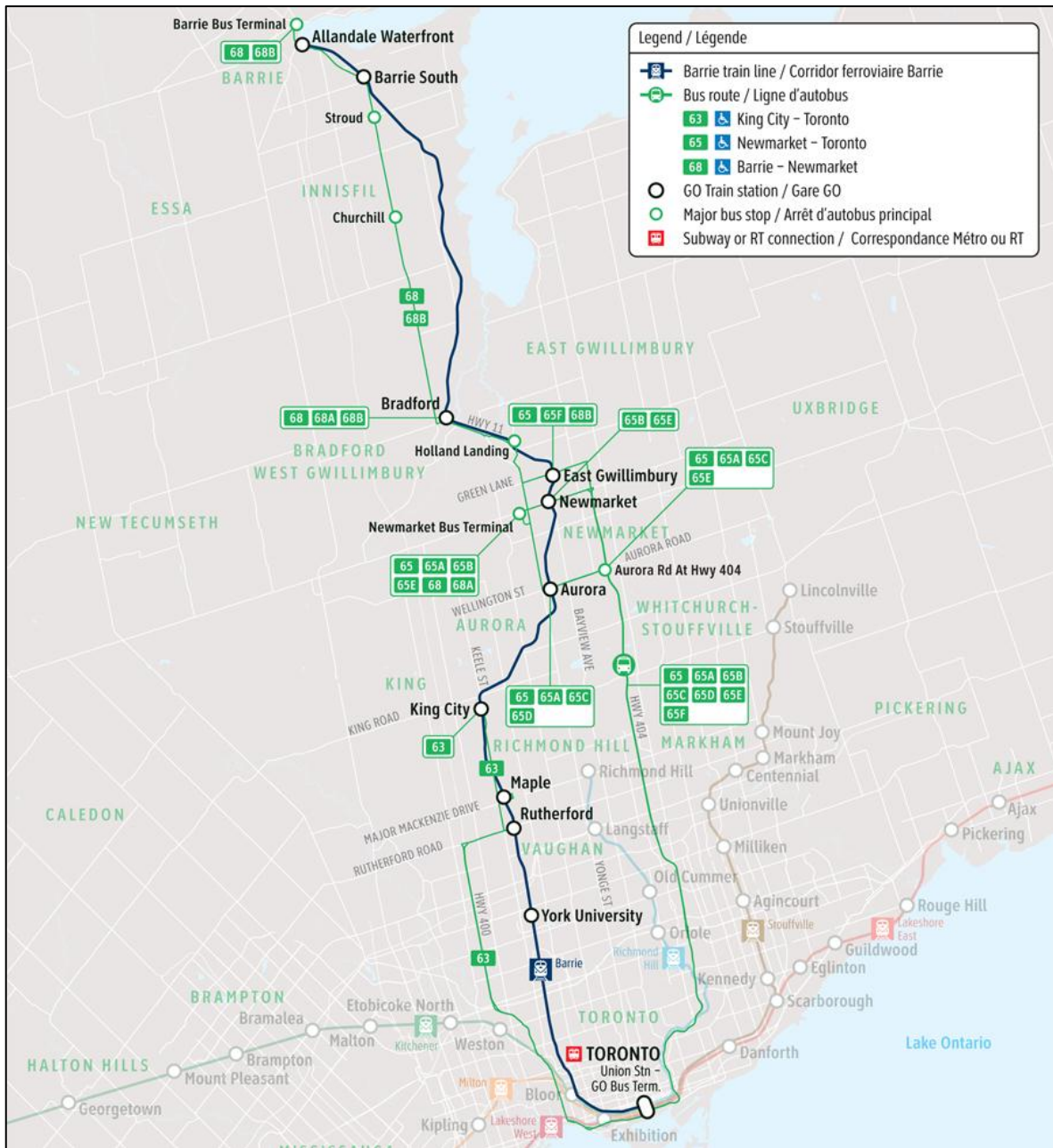
### *Ontario Northland*

- 4.21 Ontario Northland is a provincial crown corporation that provides transportation services to the residents and businesses of northeastern Ontario.
- **Barrie – Orillia – Ardtrea – Washago** connection on the “Toronto – North Bay Line”. There are four services on a weekday, operating southbound from 5am to 8pm, and northbound from 10am to 1:30am between Barrie and Washago.
  - **Barrie – Orillia** link on the “Toronto – Sudbury Line”, with only one service in each direction during weekdays.

### *GO Transit*

- 4.22 GO Transit operates one train service in the Simcoe region:
- **Barrie Allandale Waterfront – Barrie South – Bradford** – Toronto connection on the Barrie GO Line. There are five trains operating in the morning from Barrie to Toronto and seven trains in the opposite direction in the afternoon. The Barrie GO line serves four stops in Simcoe County: Barrie Allandale Waterfront, Barrie South and Bradford. There are plans to add an addition stop in Innisfil, to serve the expanding community of Alcona.

Figure 11 Barrie GO Services



4.23 GO Transit also operates one bus route in Simcoe:

- **Barrie – Innisfil – Bradford – East Gwillimbury – Newmarket (Route 68).** There are 20 trips per day in each direction running between Barrie and Newmarket, with timed connections to Route 65 (Newmarket – Toronto). These services operate in the times and periods where there is no GO train service.

VIA Rail

- Toronto– **Washago** – Vancouver. The Toronto – Vancouver VIA Rail service *The Canadian* stops in the community of Washago in Severn, providing a long distance connection with cities along the route across Canada. The service operates two or three times per week.

## Planned services

### Town of Penetanguishene

- 4.24 There is no existing transit in the Town of Penetanguishene. However, Penetanguishene Council approved a plan to support a transit system, with connections to Midland Transit.
- 4.25 A transit study in 2014 outlined four proposed concepts for the Town of Penetanguishene. Figure 12 and Figure 13 illustrate four transit route options for Penetanguishene.
- 4.26 The first provides all-day service along Beck and Fox streets, morning and afternoon trips to Waypoint, and a connection with Midland Transit at the Mountainview Mall. The second option is similar to the first, except is several kilometres longer.

Figure 12 Conceptual Transit Plan for the Town of Penetanguishene: Options 1 and 2



- 4.27 Concepts three and four are similar to the first two, but they link to Midland Transit via County Road 93 and Fuller Avenue. The fourth option would also include all-day service to Penetanguishene residences and businesses near Fuller Avenue and Robert Street East.

Figure 13 Conceptual Transit Plan for the Town of Penetanguishene: Options 3 and 4

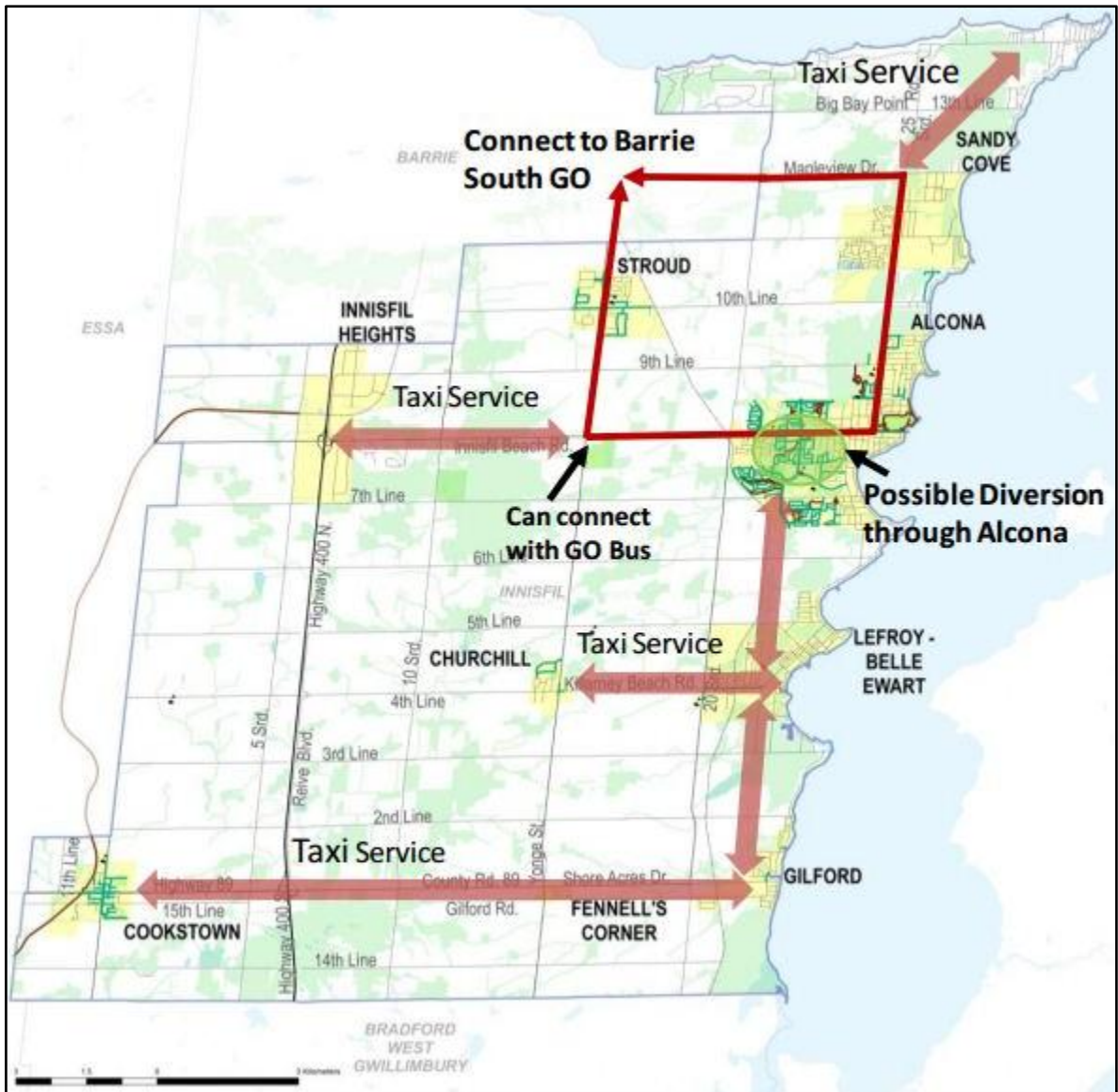


- 4.28 The Town of Penetanguishene has included \$195,000 in its 2015 budget to cover initial costs for a transit program. These include \$160,000 for one refurbished bus, \$10,000 for signs, posts and installation, and \$25,000 for operating costs for the “fourth quarter of 2015” – the earliest transit could start running.

#### Town of Innisfil

- 4.29 There is no local transit provided in the Town of Innisfil. However, the 2013 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) recommends a conceptual transit plan for the municipality.
- 4.30 As shown in Figure 14, a single-loop bus route would provide service within the Town of Innisfil, including Alcona and the existing GO bus services, and provide connection with the City of Barrie. Additionally, communities that are not served by the community-based bus route could be served by shared-ride fixed-route taxi service, with two or three return trips per day. The shared-ride fixed service would provide basic level of service to major destinations for lower demand communities.
- 4.31 The proposed connections with Barrie Transit offer some potential for partnership with the City of Barrie. This could take the form of Barrie Transit operating the service, with costs paid for by the Town of Innisfil.

Figure 14 Conceptual Transit Plan for the Town of Innisfil



### Métis Transit

- 4.32 Métis Transit is Canada's first Aboriginal owned and operated public transit system. They currently envision operating in the communities of Simcoe County. However, they have no specific plans for implementing transit service in the County.

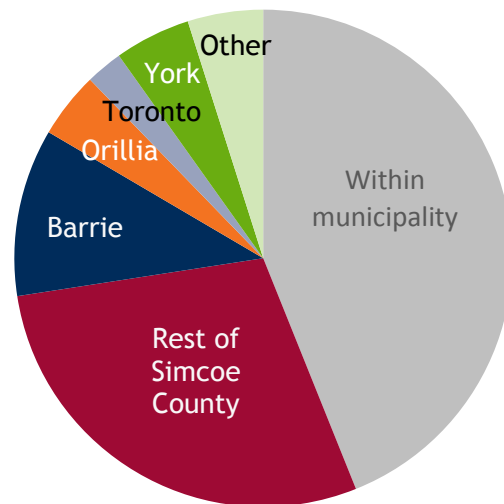
## 5 Travel Pattern Analysis

- 5.1 This chapter assesses the major travel patterns in the County. Travel pattern data was sourced from the *Transportation Tomorrow Survey (TTS)* conducted in 2011. The survey covers about 5% of households across the Greater Golden Horseshoe area (including Simcoe). The data collected includes trip origin/destination, time of travel, trip purpose, and mode(s) used.
- 5.2 The travel pattern analysis provided here relates to inter-municipal trips to/from Simcoe County municipalities, and hence excludes trips within a single municipality. Initial analysis was conducted at the municipal level only. When potential transit service concepts are being assessed, it may be appropriate to evaluate trip origins/destinations at more detailed level.
- 5.3 The information from this chapter will be used to prioritize connections between communities in the Simcoe area. It will also inform the type of service to be provided.

### Where are people going to?

- 5.4 Figure 15 shows that around half (44%) of all Simcoe County trips start and end in the same municipality. Over a quarter (28%) of trips end in another Simcoe County municipality. No single Simcoe municipality attracts a significantly high proportion of trips.
- 5.5 Less than one-sixth (15.2%) of inter-municipal trips go to Barrie or Orillia.
- 5.6 The large number of inter-municipal trips within Simcoe County implies there is untapped market for transit.
- 5.7 The large proportion of trips to and from Barrie and Orillia is not surprising, as they are the largest urban areas within the Simcoe area. Consequently, there is potential transit services to include connections to these two cities from Simcoe County municipalities.

Figure 15 Destinations of trips from Simcoe



## Why are people travelling?

5.8 TTS distinguishes between four trip types:

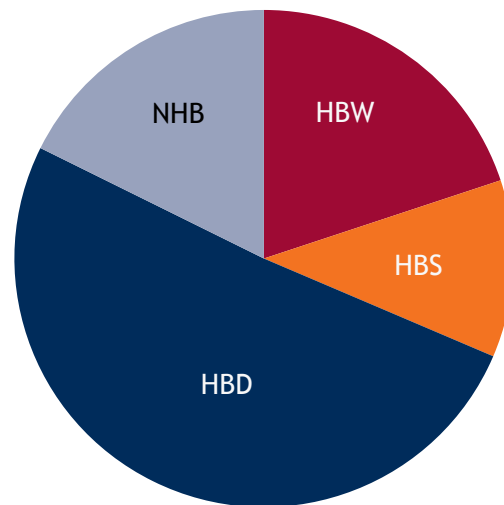
- **Home-based work (HBW):** trips between a person's home and their place of employment, in either direction
- **Home-based school (HBS):** trips between a person's home and their place of education, in either direction
- **Home-based discretionary (HBD):** trips between a person's home and any other location, in either direction (this includes shopping and leisure trips)
- **Non home-based (NHB):** trips not involving a person's home as origin or destination

5.9 Figure 16 shows that just over one-half (51%) of inter-municipal trips are discretionary trips (HBD), which is typical for the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area. Commuters (HBW) make up 20% of inter-municipal trips.

5.10 Although commuters are a smaller market than discretionary trips, they are generally a better target for transit services. This is because commuters typically use the same mode. Further, commuters' destination rarely changes, whereas people make discretionary trips to a variety of destinations.

5.11 Education-related trips (HBS) are similar to commuting trips, in that the destination rarely changes. However, students do not remain students forever, increasing the potential for shifts in mode split amongst this travel market from year to the next.

Figure 16 Purpose for inter-municipal trips

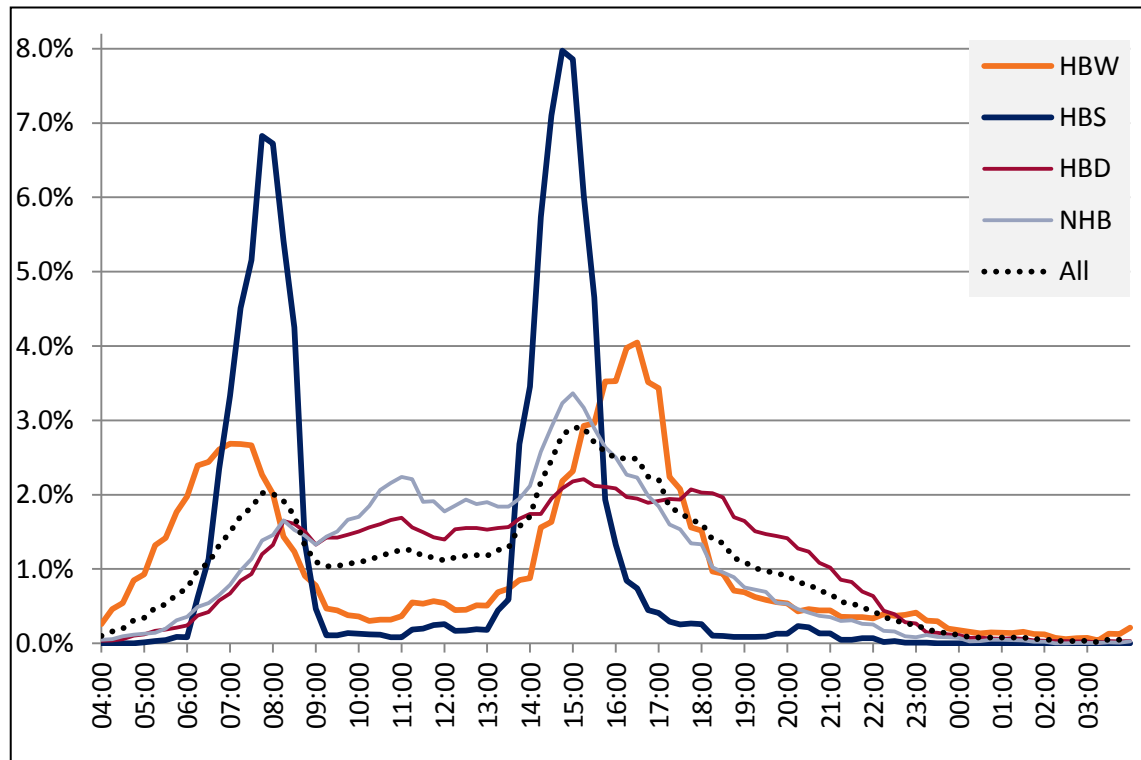




## When are people travelling?

- 5.12 Figure 17 shows the time of travel (trip start time) distribution by purpose and for all trips (black dotted line). The distribution is for all trips to a destination in Simcoe County. The chart shows that the busiest time for trips is during the afternoon and early evening, peaking around 15:30. This where the end of the HBS evening peak (students going home) overlaps with the start of the HBW evening peak (workers going home).

Figure 17 Time of travel by trip purpose for trips to Simcoe County



- 5.13 Looking at the individual trip purposes, education trips (HBS) are by far demonstrate the highest peak, with most trips occurring in two peaks around 07:45 and 15:00. The majority of HBS trips start within half an hour of these times. This reflects the fixed schedules of students.
- 5.14 Commuting trips (HBW) are spread over broader peaks than education trips, with AM peak being earlier (05:15-08:30) and the PM peak being later (15:15-17:15). This suggests a mixture of traditional '9 to 5' working hours, and shift work with an earlier start/finish time.
- 5.15 Discretionary trips (HBD) have a very broad single peak throughout the afternoon. Non-home based trips (NHB) do not have a distinct peak, although a majority start in the trips in afternoon.
- 5.16 As mentioned earlier, commuting and education trips often end up being prime targets for transit services. The presence of peak travel times suggests that service levels may need to vary significantly between peak and off-peak periods.

## Where do Simcoe County residents work?

5.17 As discussed in the previous section, commuters are a particularly attractive potential market for transit. Consequently, the workplace destinations for Simcoe County residents are examined here, and are shown in Figure 18.

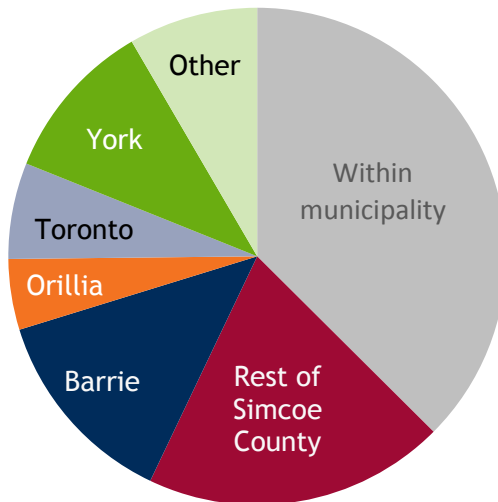
5.18 The chart shows that over a third (37%) of (employed) Simcoe residents live and work in the same municipality. Although these trips are outside the scope of this study (given our focus on identifying inter-municipal transit connections), they do form an attractive market for local transit systems.

5.19 Just under one-fifth (19.6%) of Simcoe residents work in a different Simcoe County municipality. No single municipality attracts a significant proportion of these trips, implying work destinations are highly dispersed in Simcoe County.

5.20 Outside of Simcoe County, the most popular workplaces are Barrie (13.2%) and Orillia (4.6%). Although 10% go to York Region, the destinations are quite dispersed, with only Newmarket (2.9%) and Vaughan (3.0%) containing over 1.5% of Simcoe County residents' workplaces.

5.21 Overall, the workplace distribution shows a highly dispersed pattern amongst residents not working in their home municipality. The only notable concentration of workplaces is in Barrie, yet seven out of eight of Simcoe County residents' workplaces are located outside their municipality.

Figure 18 Workplace destinations



## Where do Simcoe County residents travel for post-secondary education?

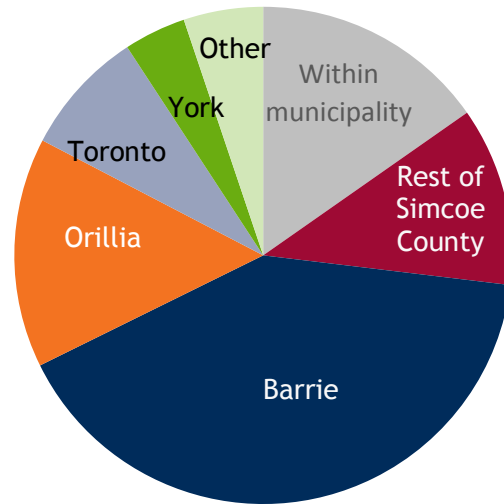
5.22 Post-secondary students share some features with commuters. Both make regular trips (generally daily) between a fixed origin and destination. However, people do not remain students forever, and hence the turnover in the market is higher. Further, Simcoe County students form a smaller market than commuters. Despite this, students still form an attractive market for transit in Simcoe County. Consequently, their trips patterns are examined in this section, and are illustrated in Figure 19.

5.23 Barrie is by far the most popular destination for post-secondary students, almost certainly because it is home to Georgian College’s main campus. This college is Simcoe County’s principal post-secondary institution and has multiple campuses in Simcoe County and beyond. The Barrie Campus is located in the east of the city and has 8,300 full-time students. Consequently, it could be a major destination for inter-municipal transit.

5.24 Orillia is home to another Georgian College campus, Lakehead University, and attracts about one-sixth of post-secondary student trips. The campus is located at the southwest edge of the city, and has 1,600 full-time students.

5.25 There are around 7,100 full-time post-secondary students resident in Simcoe County, and about 3,300 part-time students. The proportion of post-secondary student trips within Simcoe County itself is relatively small. This suggests that student-orientated inter-municipal transit services should be focused on the major post-secondary institutions in Orillia and Barrie.

Figure 19 Post-secondary education destinations



## Where do Simcoe County residents travel for other trips?

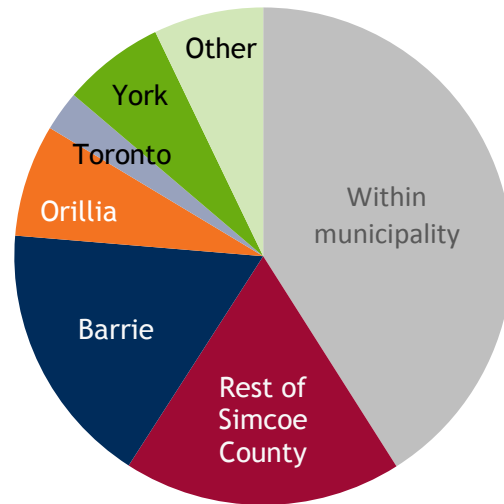
5.26 Trips classed as “home-based other” make up the majority of trips starting or ending in Simcoe County. This category includes trips for shopping, leisure/recreation, visiting friends, and tourism. As typical for the GTHA, these trips form the majority of trips in Simcoe County. However, an individual’s trip in this category will be to a variety of destinations (by definition), and occur more irregularly. This makes these trips more challenging target for transit.

5.27 The distribution of discretionary trips originating in Simcoe County as shown in Figure 20. A large proportion (40%) of trips has the same destination and origin municipality. This is to be expected as many of these trips are typically short journeys to local amenities (such as for shopping).

5.28 Around one-fifth (18%) of trips are made to other Simcoe County municipalities. This suggests a more dispersed pattern for non-local trips within Simcoe County.

5.29 Barrie and Orillia together account for about one quarter of discretionary trips. These two cities have amenities not present in Simcoe County’s smaller communities. The destinations are likely to be fairly concentrated within these cities. Consequently, the location of key attractors for these trip types should be investigated and evaluated as potential targets for inter-municipal transit services.

Figure 20 Other trip destinations



## Where do Simcoe County seniors travel?

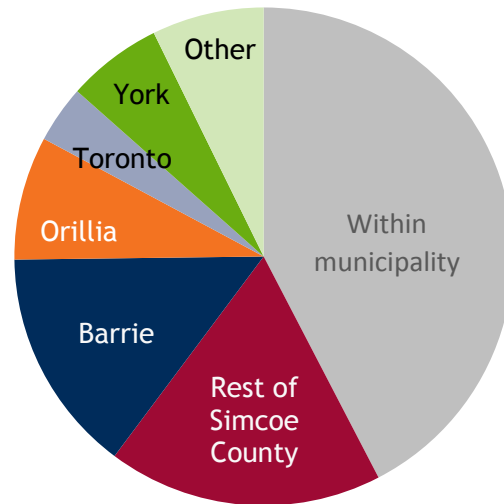
5.30 The destinations for trips made by seniors (age 65 and up) is shown in Figure 21. The chart shows that the distribution is very similar to that observed for ‘other’ trip destinations in the previous section. This is to be expected, as most seniors do neither work nor attend post-secondary education. Consequently, their trips will generally be for the purposes that fall into the ‘other’ category

5.31 The charts shows that a large proportion of trips (42%) have their origin and destination in the same municipality. Less than a fifth (18%) of trips are to another Simcoe County municipality. The proportion going to Barrie (15%) is slightly lower.

5.32 Barrie and Orillia account for around a quarter of trips. This is to be expected, given the high concentrations of amenities there, particularly major healthcare facilities.

5.33 The similarity between trips by seniors and non-commuting/education trips by the general population means that the two can be considered together in planning inter-municipal transit services.

Figure 21 Trip destinations for Seniors



## Conclusion

5.34 Overall, trips for Simcoe County show a dispersed geographic pattern, with no areas standing out other than Barrie, and to a lesser extent, Orillia. In particular, these two cities have concentrations of trips destinations for post-secondary education and discretionary trips.

5.35 This might suggest that transit services be concentrated on these two cities. However, the majority of trips do *not* involve these two cities. Instead, there is a highly dispersed pattern of origins and destinations amongst municipalities in the Simcoe region. Further, Simcoe County municipalities typically have multiple distinct communities.

5.36 Together, this suggests that a broad network of transit services across the County is required to serve residents’ travel needs in an effective manner. Flexibility in the operations of services will also be important to accommodate and adapt to the dispersed travel patterns. The network elements, their timing and phasing (short/medium/long-term) will be developed during the options evaluation stage of the study.

## 6 Site Study

6.1 This chapter assesses logical connection points in the various towns and villages, and examines the roadway conditions for bus operations. The information from this chapter will be used to ensure potential transit services effectively serve the communities they connect and can be operated year-round.

### Connection points

6.2 Inter-municipal transit services need to provide effective connections to the communities they serve. This section provides a brief overview of the types of connections points, along with specific examples within the Simcoe region.

6.3 Potential connections points include:

- **GO rail stations:** provide connections to high-order transit and the inter-regional transit network. The three GO Rail stations in the region (Bradford, Barrie South, Allandale Waterfront) currently have peak period train services supplemented by off-peak bus services.
- **Existing/planned local transit hubs:** any inter-municipal transit service should connect will existing and planned local transit services. In all existing and planned systems, the routes converge on a hub. These hubs provide a good connection point for inter-municipal services. The existing local transit hubs include:
  - Bradford West Gwillimbury: Bradford GO Station; SmartCentres shopping centre
  - Collingwood: Hurontario and Simcoe
  - Midland: King and Elizabeth
  - Wasaga Beach: Main and River; Mosley and 45th
  - Barrie: Downtown transit terminal; Park Place; *Allandale Waterfront GO Station; and Barrie South GO Station*
  - Orillia: Transit terminal

*The locations of transit hubs for the proposed local transit systems in Innisfil and Penetanguishene have yet to be confirmed.*
- **Downtown corridors / “Main Street”:** many communities in Simcoe have their commercial and employment uses concentrated on a single street in the middle of the community. Using these streets for inter-municipal transit would serve the key attractors for trips in these communities. These streets are generally centrally located, and hence services on these streets are within easy reach of most residents in the community. Examples include:

- Bradford West Gwillimbury: Holland St
- Clearview: Highway 26 (Stayner)
- Collingwood: First St/Huron St
- Innisfil: Innisfil Beach Rd
- Midland: King St
- New Tecumseth: Victoria St
- Penetanguishene: Main St

- **Major roads through communities:** these often provide an efficient way to serve small communities, with a high proportion of residents within walking distance.
- **Highway intersections/interchanges:** some communities/destinations may only be accessible via a significant detour from a major road. In these cases, it may be appropriate to serve the area from the nearest intersection/interchange.
- **Other major trip attractors,** such as employment nodes, shopping malls, and post-secondary educational institutions

6.4 The exact connection points will be decided after the potential communities and corridors for transit service have been established.

### Roadway conditions

6.5 Inter-municipal transit services are likely to use arterial roads, rather than minor rural roads. It is likely that use of local roads would be restricted to access routes into/out of individual communities. These roads are likely to be well-maintained, because of their importance for all road users.

6.6 Some roads within the region may be a low priority for snow clearance, or are likely to be closed for extended periods in winter. When the possible routes of potential transit services are identified, then checks will be performed to ensure such roads are avoided.

6.7 Overall, it is not expected that roadway conditions will form a significant impediment to the introduction of inter-municipal transit services.

# Control Sheet

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## Review

Originator

Tom Willis

Other Contributors

Agata Pieniek

Reviewed by

Matt Lee, Dennis Fletcher

## Distribution

Client

Steer Davies Gleave



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