

Modified Implementation Plan for *County Transit Strategy 2028*

As completed by external consultants in September, the 60-page *County Transit Strategy 2028* outlines a phased approach to building the network to provide better mobility for more residents and visitors across a wider area of Prince Edward County. Key elements include:

1. Adjusting the weekday Belleville Bus route to provide more travel options during peak hours.
2. Continuing the Summer Weekend Connector routes while ensuring AODA compliance.
3. Maintaining the county-wide co-mingled specialized and on-demand service.
4. Introducing a dedicated on-demand service within Picton.
5. Establishing a fixed route connecting Wellington, Bloomfield, and Picton.

While the consultants' plan proposed launching new services (points 4 and 5) as early as September 2026, staff have developed this revised implementation plan that aligns with available resources and allows more time to collect data and rider feedback before making further investments. Improvements will be introduced gradually to ensure sustainability and responsiveness to community needs. Full implementation of the strategy will remain the goal but is unlikely to be achieved by 2028.

Proposed actions for 2026 include:

1. Improve Fixed-Route Service & Grow Ridership

Key Strategy Recommendations: Focus on weekday Belleville Bus (4.3.1) and Supporting Recommendations (5.1)

- Introduce New Schedule for Weekday Belleville Bus (4.3.1): As per strategy, add morning and afternoon trips to match peak demand and grow ridership. Explore additional stops and improve Belleville connections.
- Focus on consultants' Supporting Recommendations (5.1) as follows:
- Improve Performance Monitoring (5.1.1): ridership, on-time performance, routing.
- Improve Marketing and Communications (5.1.2): focus on community engagement with partners, explore ambassador program, promote navigation tools, enhance communications through social media and video, improve web content, provide transit training and pursue sponsorship and bus branding.
- Technology Planning (5.1.3): Enable real-time bus tracking, explore options for fare integration and enhancements that are available with existing technologies. Continue researching technology options to support future service enhancements, with an eye to regional integration.

How this supports Transit Strategy 2028:

These actions focus on implementing no- and low-cost improvements to existing fixed route services, while building a foundation for growth through the Supporting Recommendations. Despite achieving 152% growth in fixed-route ridership since 2023, the fixed route still has available capacity. Further increasing ridership and improving service enhances financial sustainability and strengthens community trust.

Enhancing the fixed route will create a solid core for the proposed dedicated on-demand service in Picton, serving as a feeder to and from the fixed route.

2. Continue the Summer Connector (4.3.2)

- Operate the service in summer 2026 as recommended in the Strategy, with a new AODA-compliant schedule.
- Supplement Municipal Accommodations Tax funding for this program with private sector sponsorships and additional grants as available.
- Improve schedule and routing based on 2025 data and rider feedback.
- Develop a Walk-and-Ride Tourism Program with Visit The County and partners to promote summer weekend car-free travel to the County, easing traffic and parking pressure in congested towns during tourist season.

How this supports Transit Strategy 2028:

Continuing the Summer Connector service is a recommendation in the strategy; one that is funded and ready for implementation in 2026. Tourism-funded transit also provides premium service for residents and supports transportation options for the regional tourism workforce. The Summer Connector invites Wellington residents to experience transit and demonstrates viability before investment in a Wellington fixed route outlined in Transit Strategy 2028 (Options to be confirmed).

3. Improve awareness and use of County-wide integrated on-demand program

Introduce “shopping shuttles” program (working title). Promote weekday shuttles using extra capacity on specialized transit buses. Focus on key corridors: Wellington–Picton, Wellington–Belleville, Consecon/Carrying Place–Trenton.

Provide scheduled trips for shopping, medical appointments, and social outings—reliable, social, and affordable.

Promote monthly through community partners and municipal channels.

Include transit ambassadors to assist with booking, service use, and connections to Belleville or Trenton transit.

- Review On-Demand Service Delivery Considerations (Appendix A) with Quinte Transit and identify low- and no-cost service delivery enhancements that would improve rider experience and confidence with existing on-demand services.

How this supports Transit Strategy 2028:

The Shopping Shuttle program will serve to assess ridership patterns for Wellington prior to investing in a fixed route. It also builds awareness of the County-wide on demand transit service, initially in the western area of the County, and strengthens rider confidence and community relationships.

4. Grow Regional Collaborations for Service Delivery, Funding and Technology

- Explore opportunities to collaborate with neighboring municipalities and agencies that align with provincial funding priorities.
- Follow the technology planning recommendations (see 5.1.3) while reviewing digital platforms used regionally. Learn from other municipalities' experiences and consider partnerships that create efficiencies.
- While staff work to secure external funding for both the Picton on-demand service and a Wellington corridor option, they will also evaluate opportunities for deeper regional connectivity, including with Quinte Transit. Performance data and funding outcomes in 2026 will position staff to recommend a 2027 budget that incorporates service expansion in April 2027. The selection of which option from *County Transit Strategy 2028* will rely on data and rider feedback collected throughout 2026.

How this supports Transit Strategy 2028:

Aligns the strategy with provincial funding priorities by ensuring regional lens on service expansion and service delivery. Ahead of an RFP for dedicated on-demand transit, this work will inform affordable, interoperable technology choices.

Final- Feb. 4, 2026