



Charlottetown Area Transit Strategic Plan

Public Information Centre

November 23rd, 2010



**DILLON
CONSULTING**



Phillipe Bellon Inc.

STUDY PURPOSE

- Develop recommendations that move Charlottetown Area Transit from a successful start-up to a long term sustainable system that is:
 - Entrenched in the community;
 - Providing a quality transportation service;
 - Innovative and growth oriented;
 - Efficient and accountable to taxpayers; and
 - Responsive to customer needs.



CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

Surveys:

- Transit users on buses
- Users/non-users (online)
- Local business (through Chamber of Commerce)
- E-mails to study team

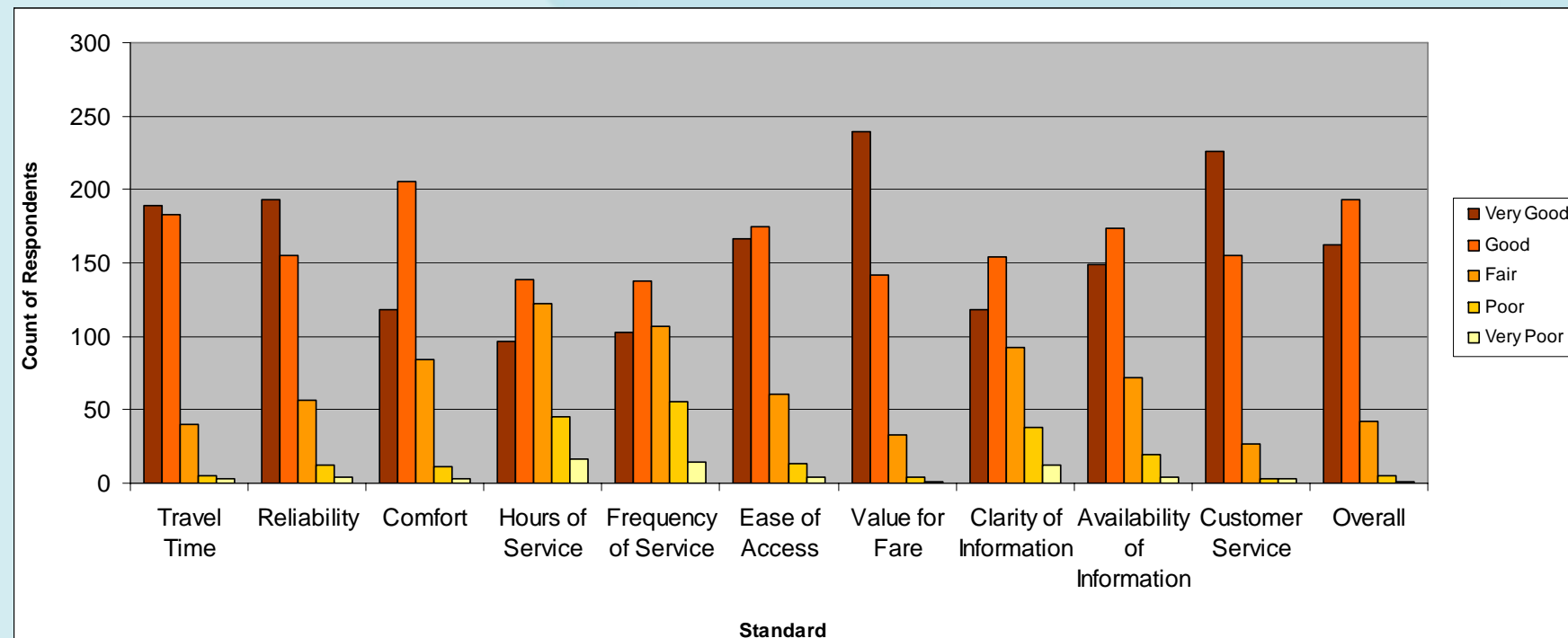
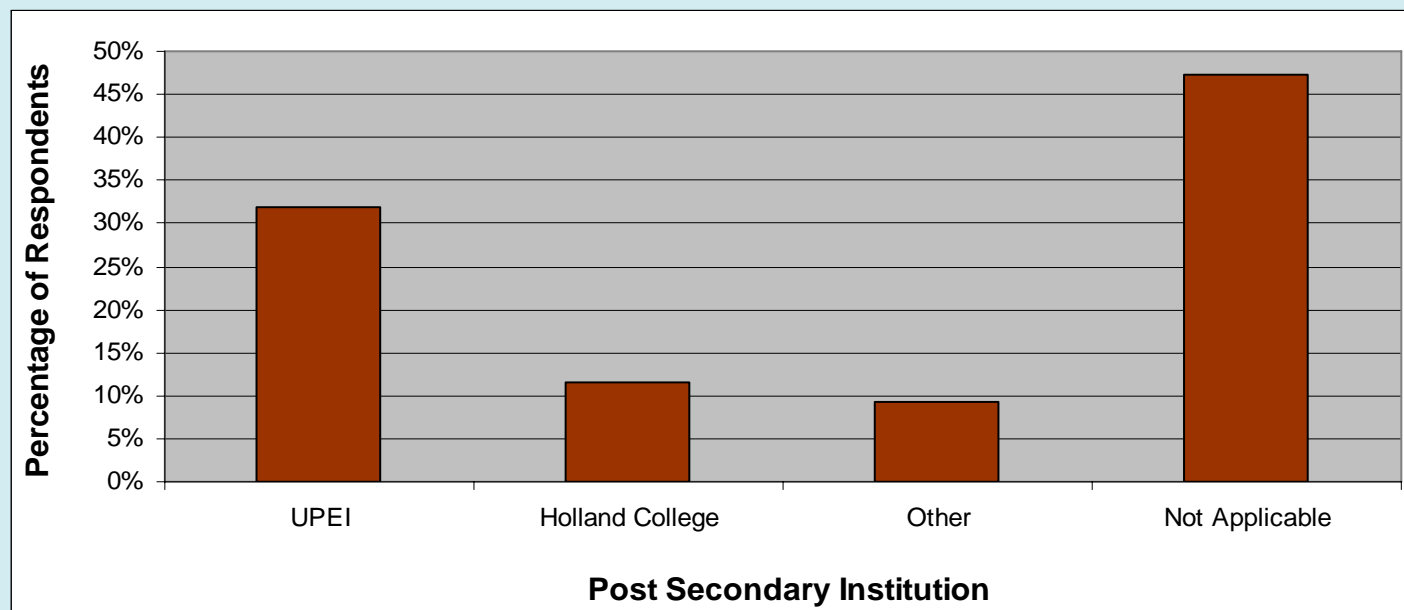
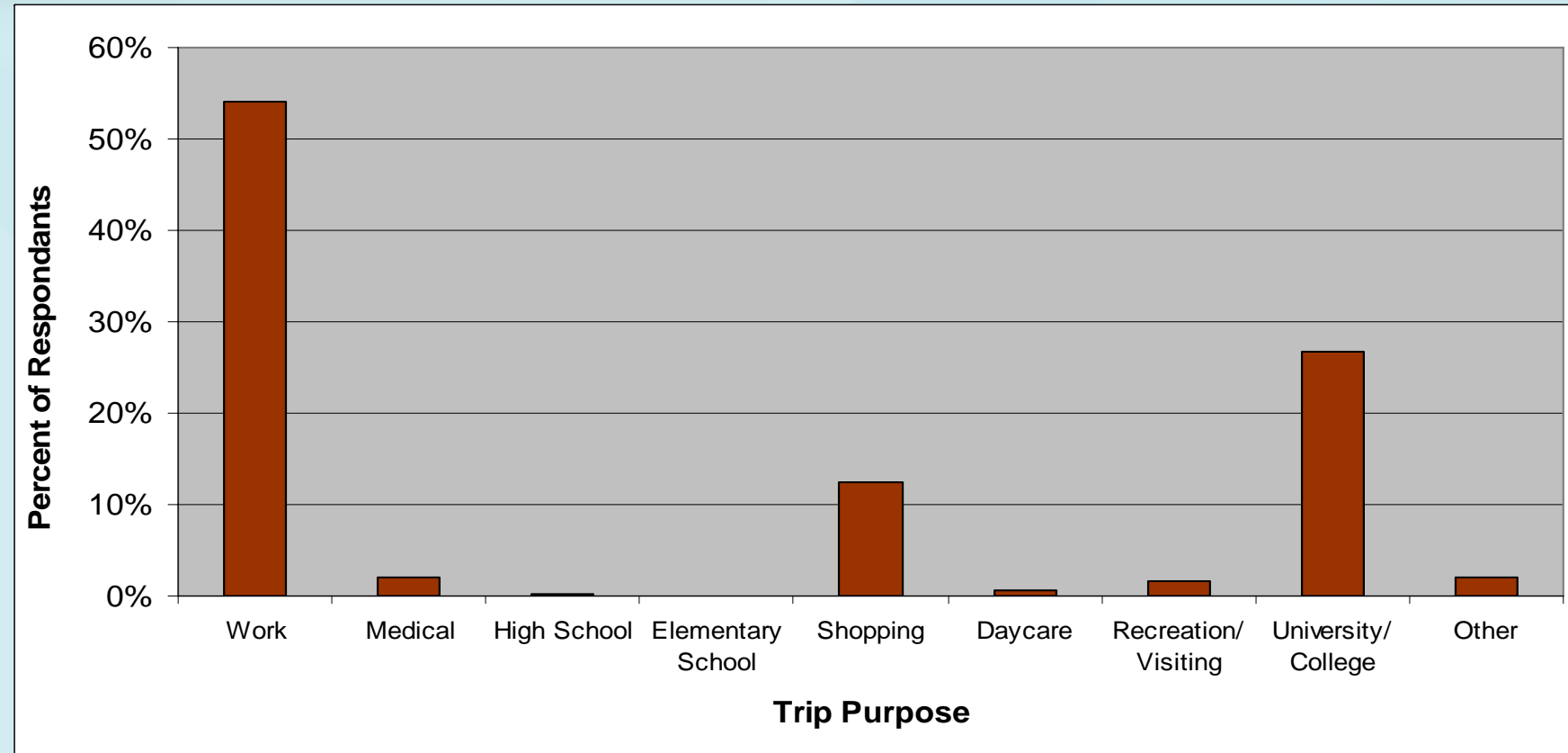


Interviews:

- Focus groups with public, transit users, community representatives and bus drivers
- Public drop-in session (Oct. 4th, 2010)
- Meetings with councillors, community organizations, employers, retailers, UPEI, Holland College
- Meetings with federal, provincial and municipal staff
- Discussions with contractor

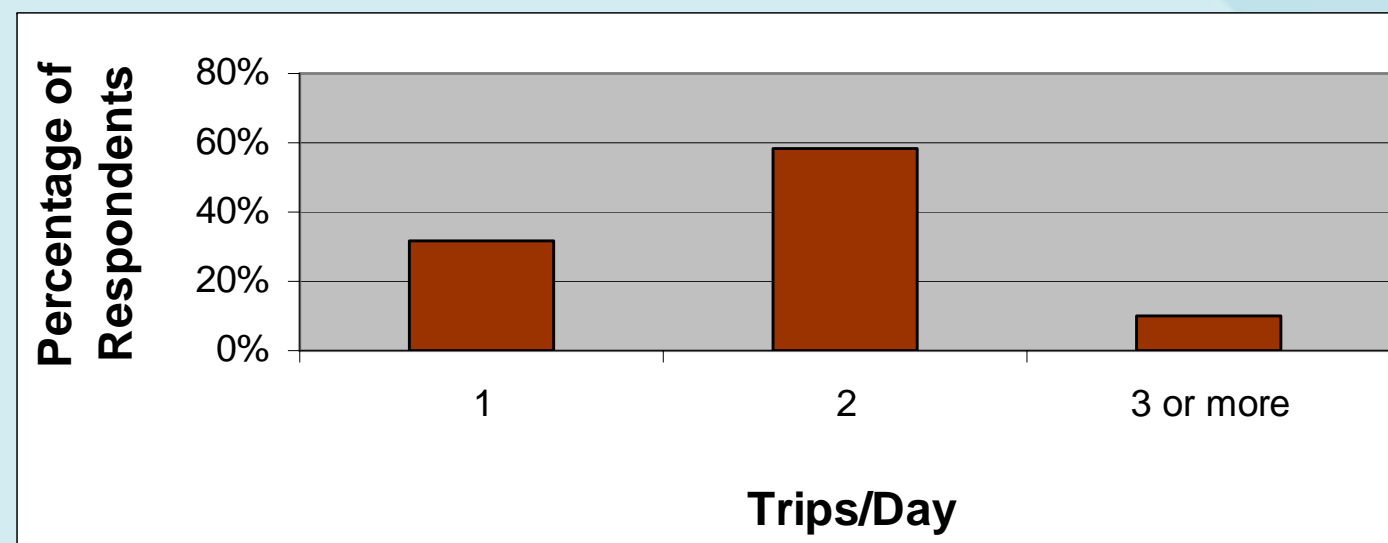
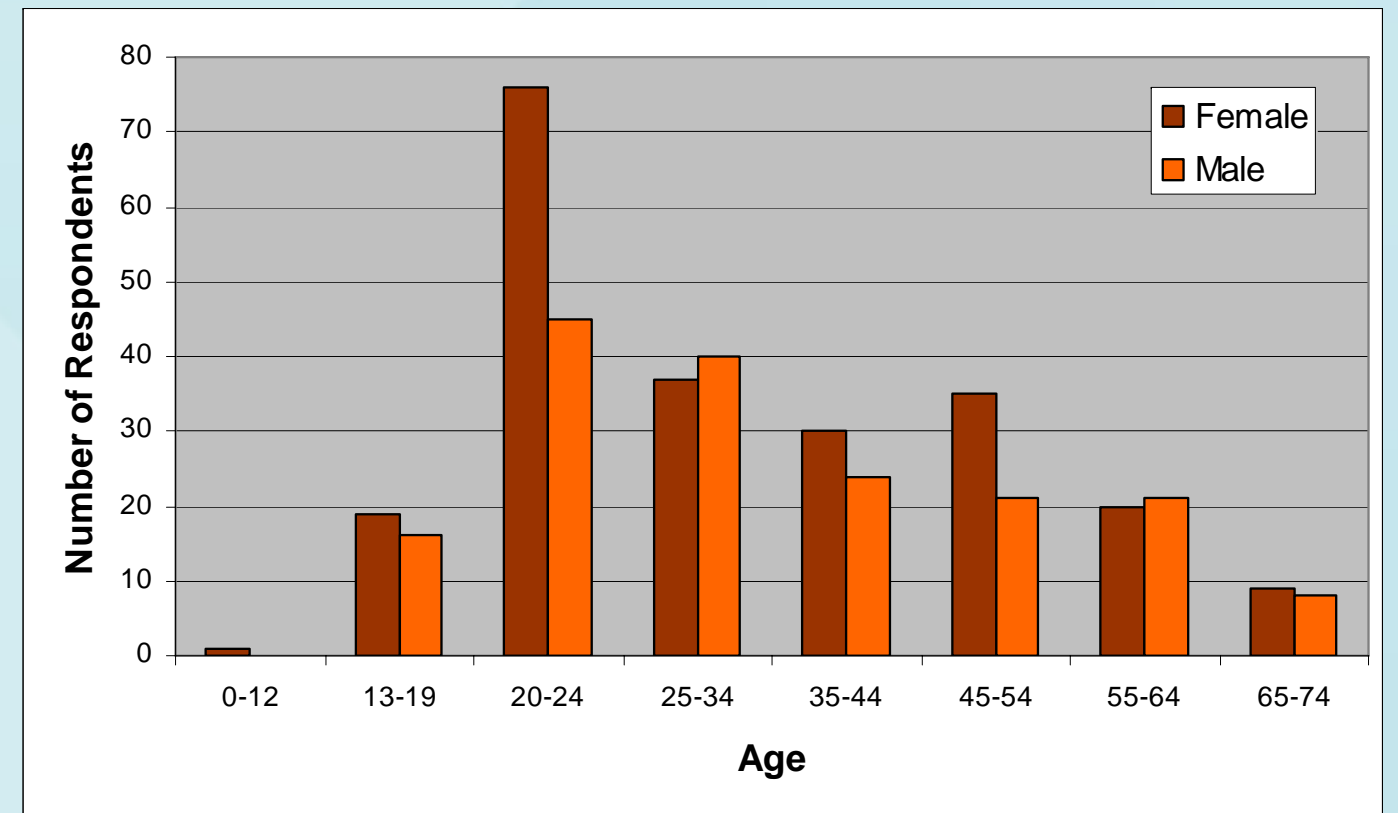
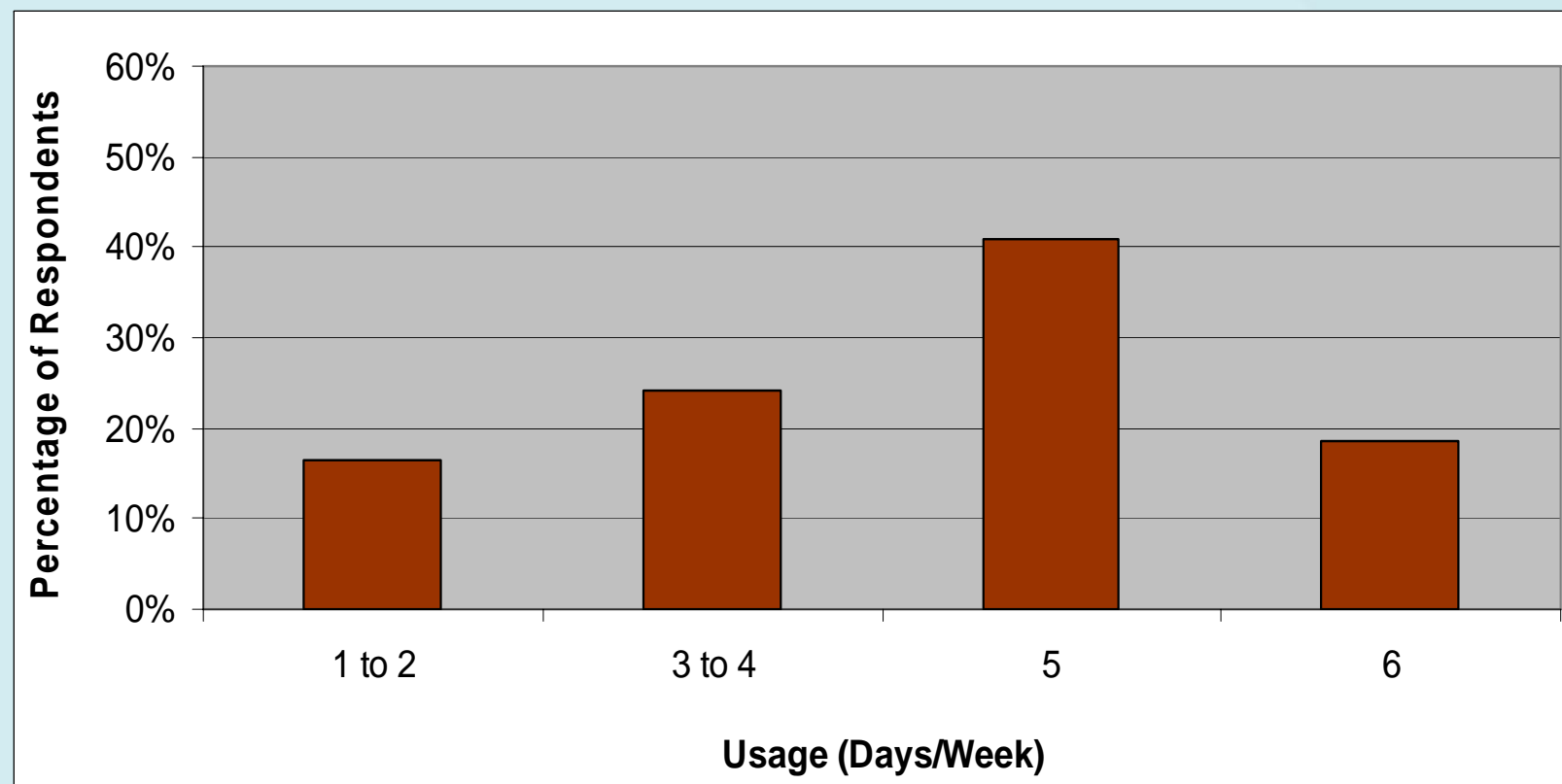
WHAT WE HAVE SEEN and HEARD Onboard Survey

- 428 replies (650 daily users)
- Most trips taken for Work (52%), Shopping (12%), UPEI/Holland College(27%)
- Users like customer service, reliability of system, fares
- Improvements are desired in frequency and hours of service



WHAT WE HAVE SEEN and HEARD Onboard Survey

- Most use transit 5 days/week
- Low use by seniors, high school students



WHAT WE HAVE SEEN and HEARD

Survey of Local Businesses

- 63 respondents, most in downtown
- 67% provide employee parking, usually for free
- Most feel transit is not important for attracting customers and employees
- However, some employers are interested in entering into partnerships with transit
- Direct routes and more frequent transit services are needed

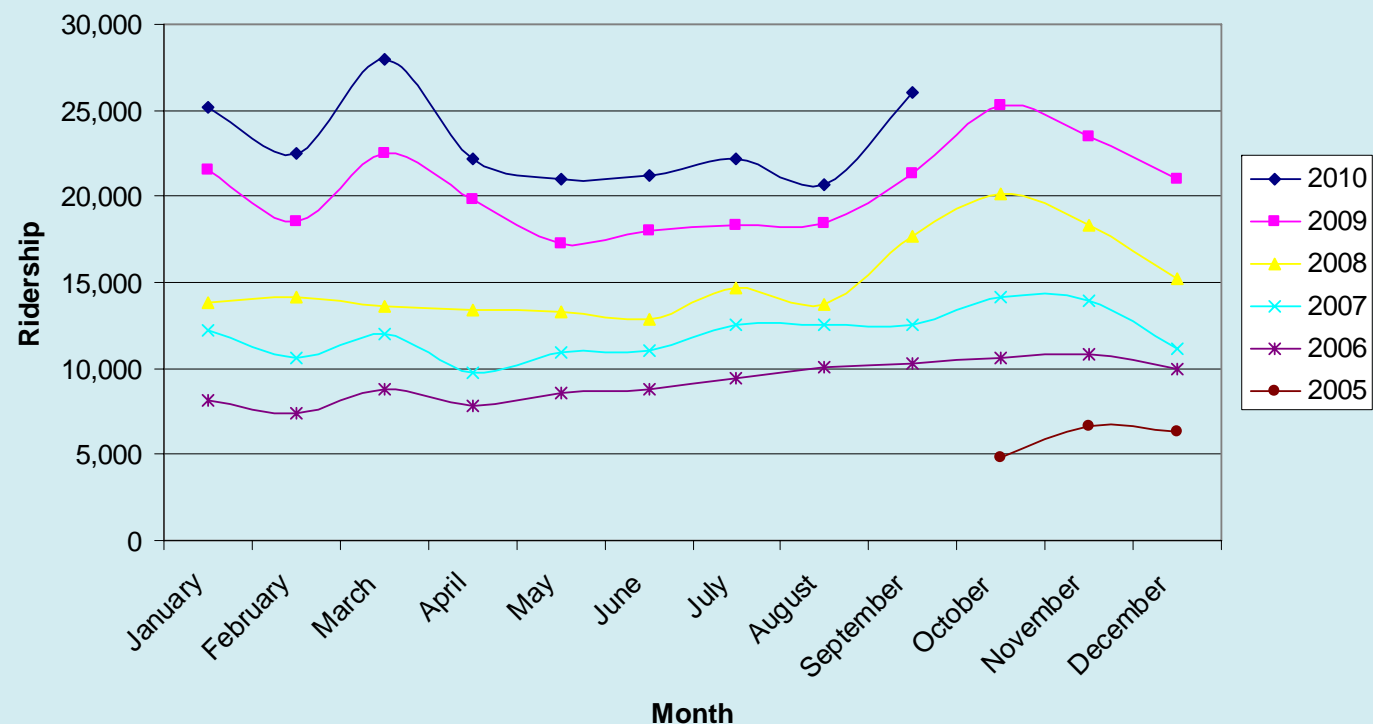
Online Community Survey

- 140 respondents, 69% transit users, 31% non transit users
- Transit is environmentally friendly
- Inconvenient schedule is main reason for not using transit
- Customer service and fares are good
- Will increase use of transit if:
 - More frequent service on weekdays
 - Shorter travel times
 - Later end of service

WHAT WE HAVE SEEN and HEARD

Focus Groups/Stakeholders

- Level of subsidy is a concern, especially in Charlottetown
- Accessibility ramps are not working
- Routes/schedules are confusing
- Rapid ridership growth since 2005

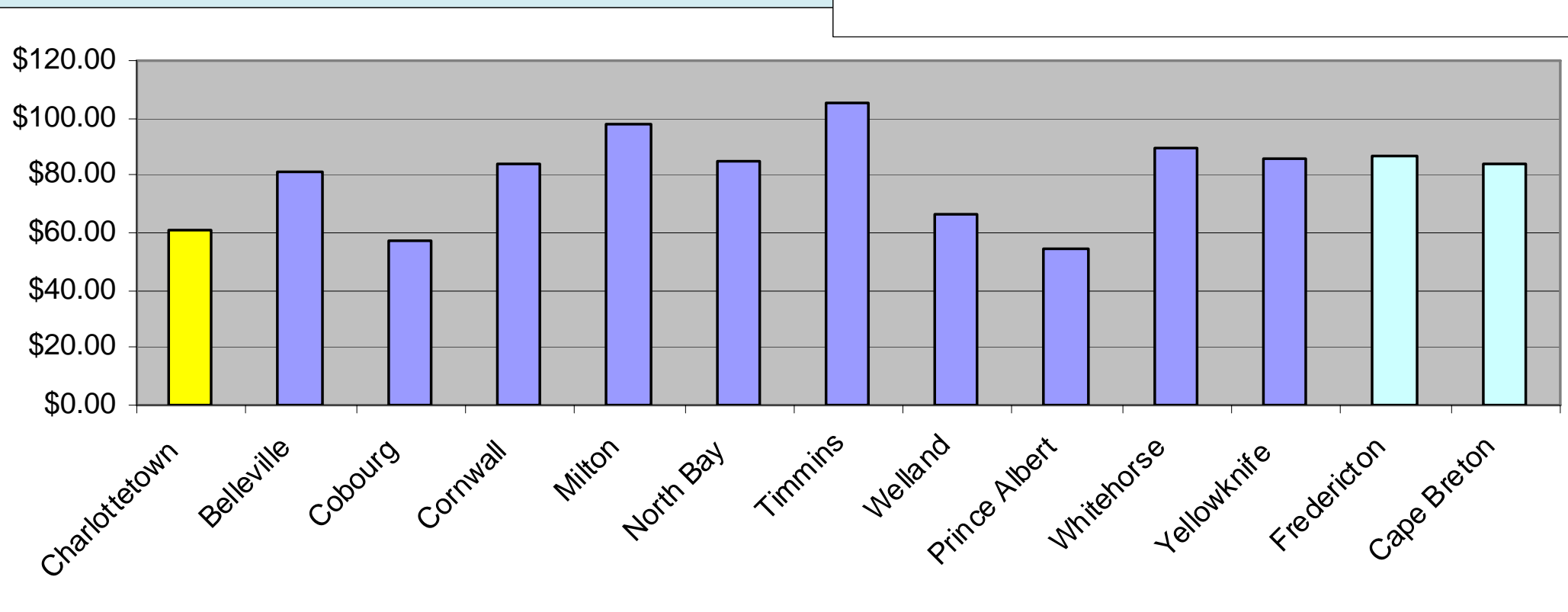
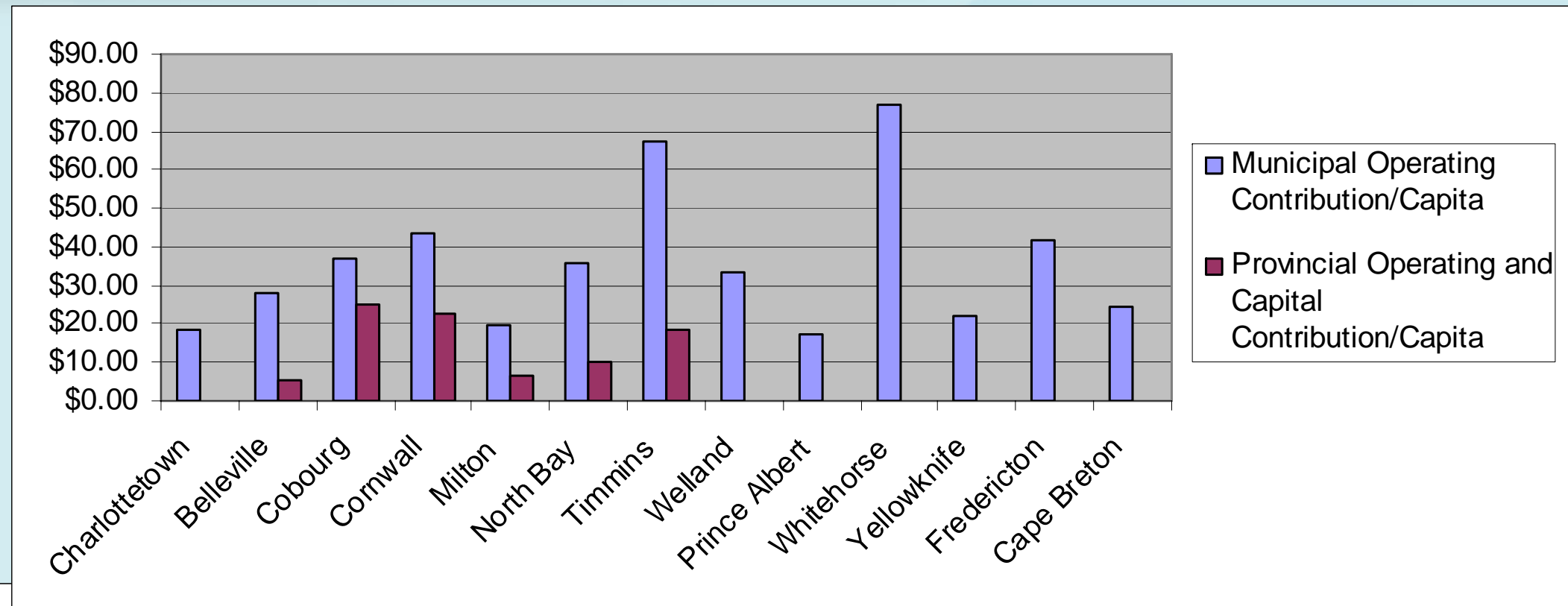


- More direct routes and express services are needed
- Extend U Pass to Holland College
- Region-wide, seamless service delivery is excellent
- Drivers are very helpful and friendly and contractor is very innovative
- Buses are underutilized and have high maintenance costs
- Transit is not easily recognizable in the community (needs branding)
- University Ave. is the main transit corridor
- Provincial and federal support is needed for operating/capital costs

PEER GROUP COMPARISON

Canadian Systems under 50,000 population (2009 data)

Municipal and Provincial Subsidy/Capita



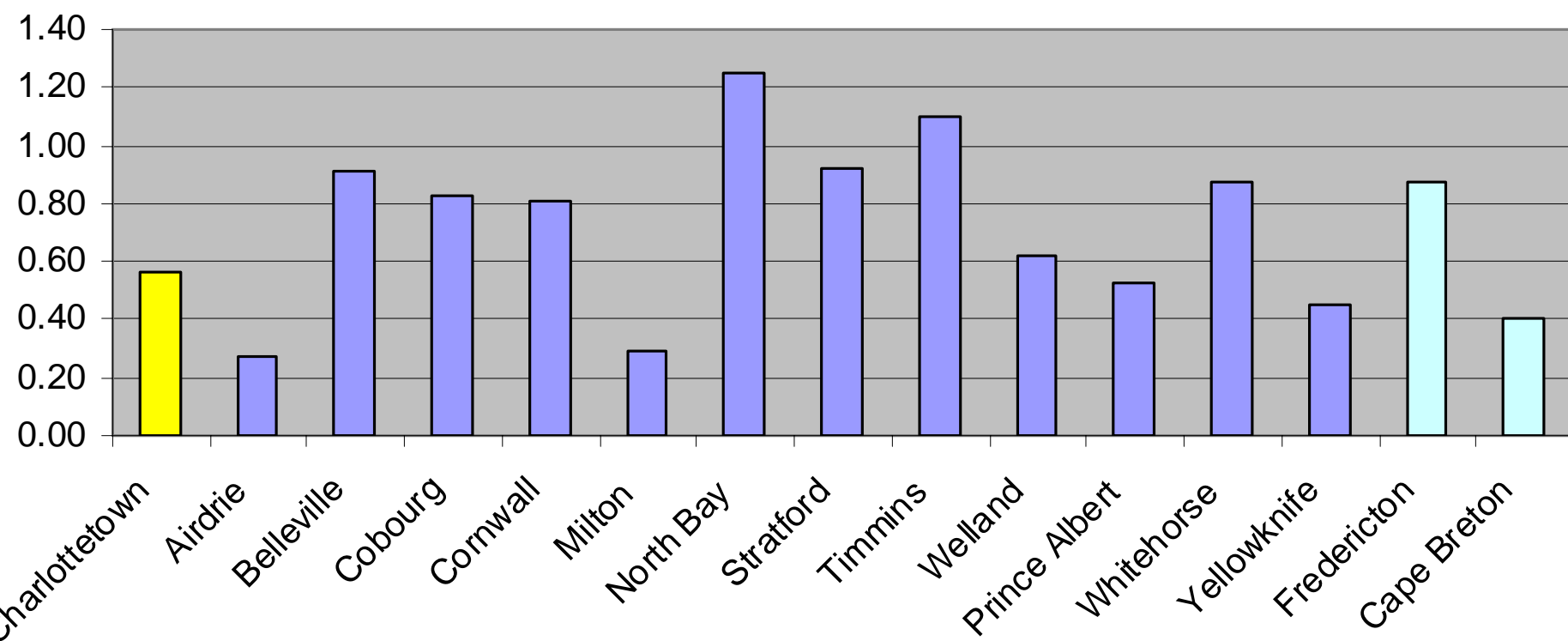
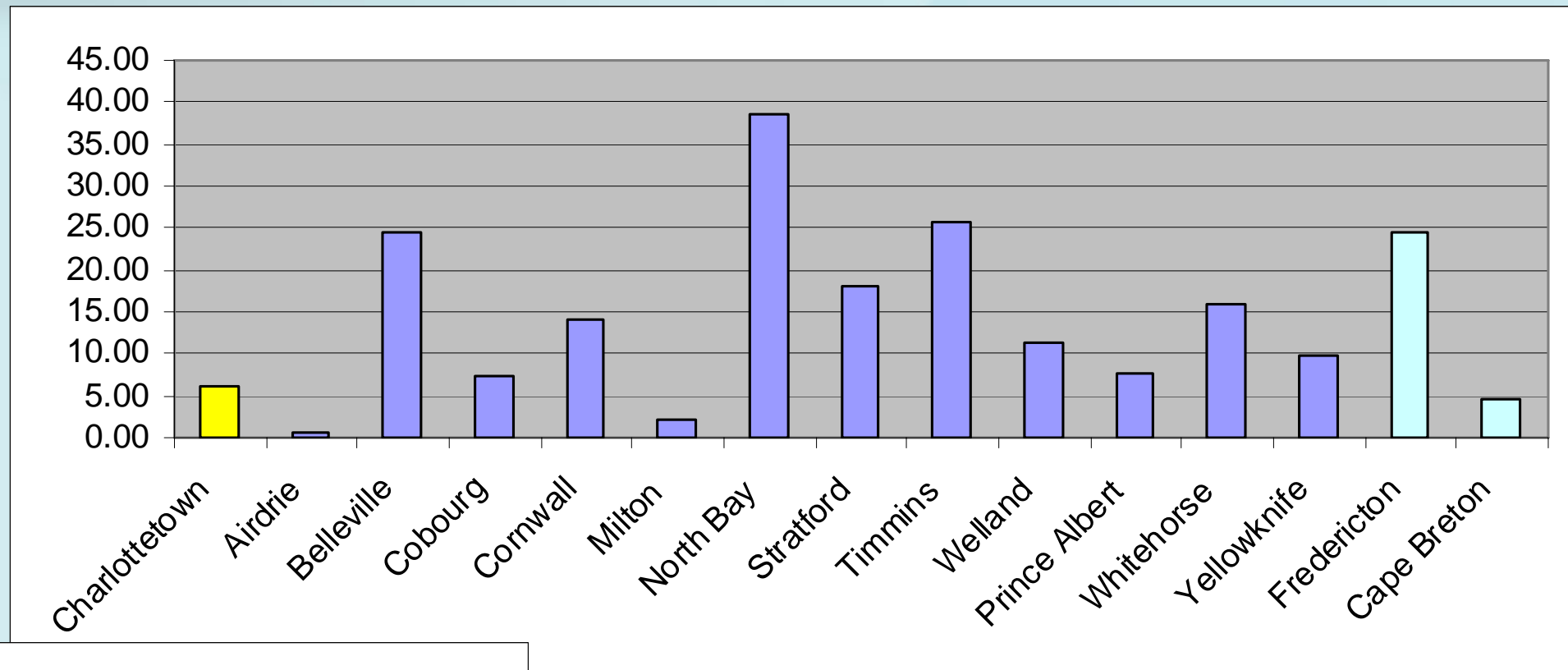
Operating Cost/ Hour of Revenue Service

Note: Fredericton and Cape Breton over 50,000 population

PEER GROUP COMPARISON

Canadian Systems under 50,000 population (2009 data)

Ridership/Capita



**Service Hours/
Capita**

Note: Fredericton and Cape Breton over 50,000 population

TRANSIT VISION and SERVICE STANDARDS

“To provide an accessible, convenient and reliable public transit service that is accountable to the customer and the community and is a viable alternative to driving within the Greater Charlottetown Area.”

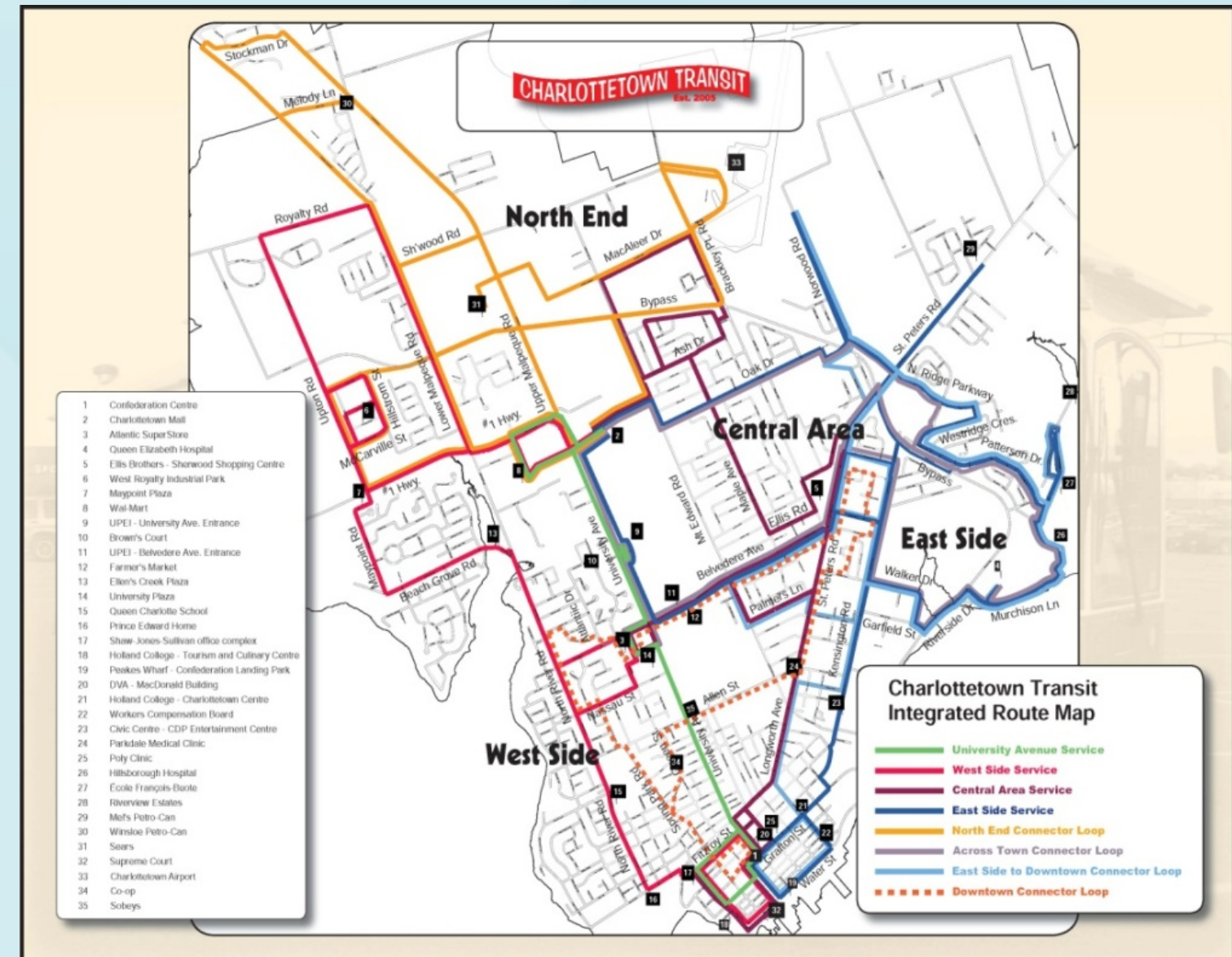
Service Standards

- Ridership Targets
 - 15-20 passengers/service hour
 - 10-15 passengers/capita
- Financial Performance
 - Target 45-50% recovery of cost from fares
 - Subsidy/capita target set at the average of selected peer group

Next Step – Develop Full Set of Design, Service and Performance Standards and Monitor Results Annually

DIAGNOSTIC of CURRENT SITUATION

- University Ave. (corridor/nodes) needs support as a transit spine
- Route structure/schedules are too complex and change frequently
- Downtown Connector Loop (for seniors) has low utilization
- Buses are designed for accessibility but ramps are unreliable
- Poor fleet mix and inadequate facilities (e.g. no indoor storage) result in high maintenance costs



DIAGNOSTIC of CURRENT SITUATION

- Responding to rapid growth and daily operational issues has resulted in limited marketing and communication activities
- U-Pass program benefits UPEI students, the University (parking), other transit users, and the community as a whole
- Many types of partnership opportunities between transit and major stakeholders are available



ROUTE STRUCTURE and SERVICE DESIGN

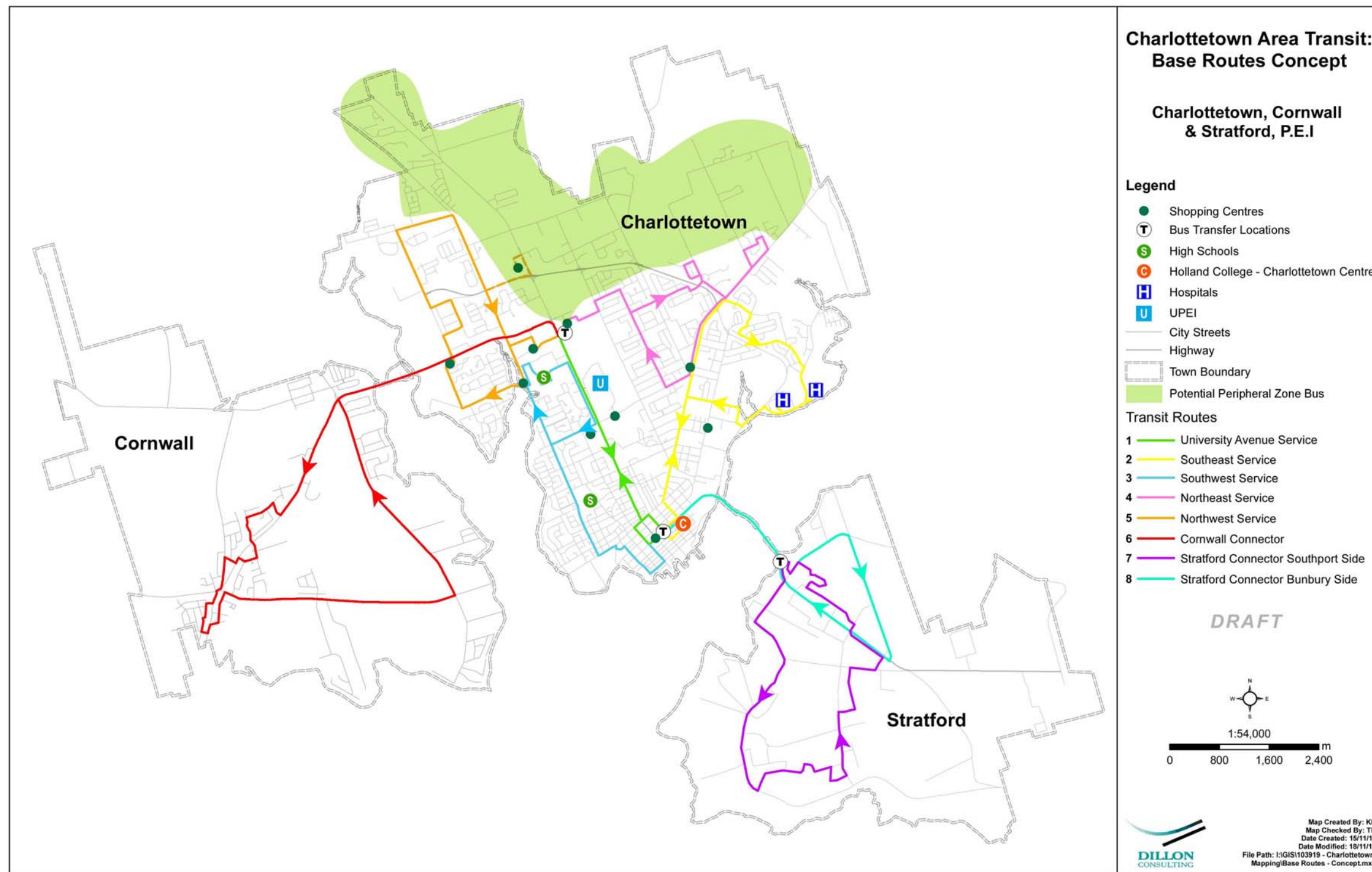
Objectives

- Achieve financial stability
- Simplify service with regular stops and consistent routing
- Use proven service strategies for University Ave. corridor and major destinations
- Adopt innovative strategies for special markets and for low demand areas / time periods
- Set targets and operate trial services (adopt if successful)
- Further transit enhancements to be based on ridership targets (implement as funding permits)

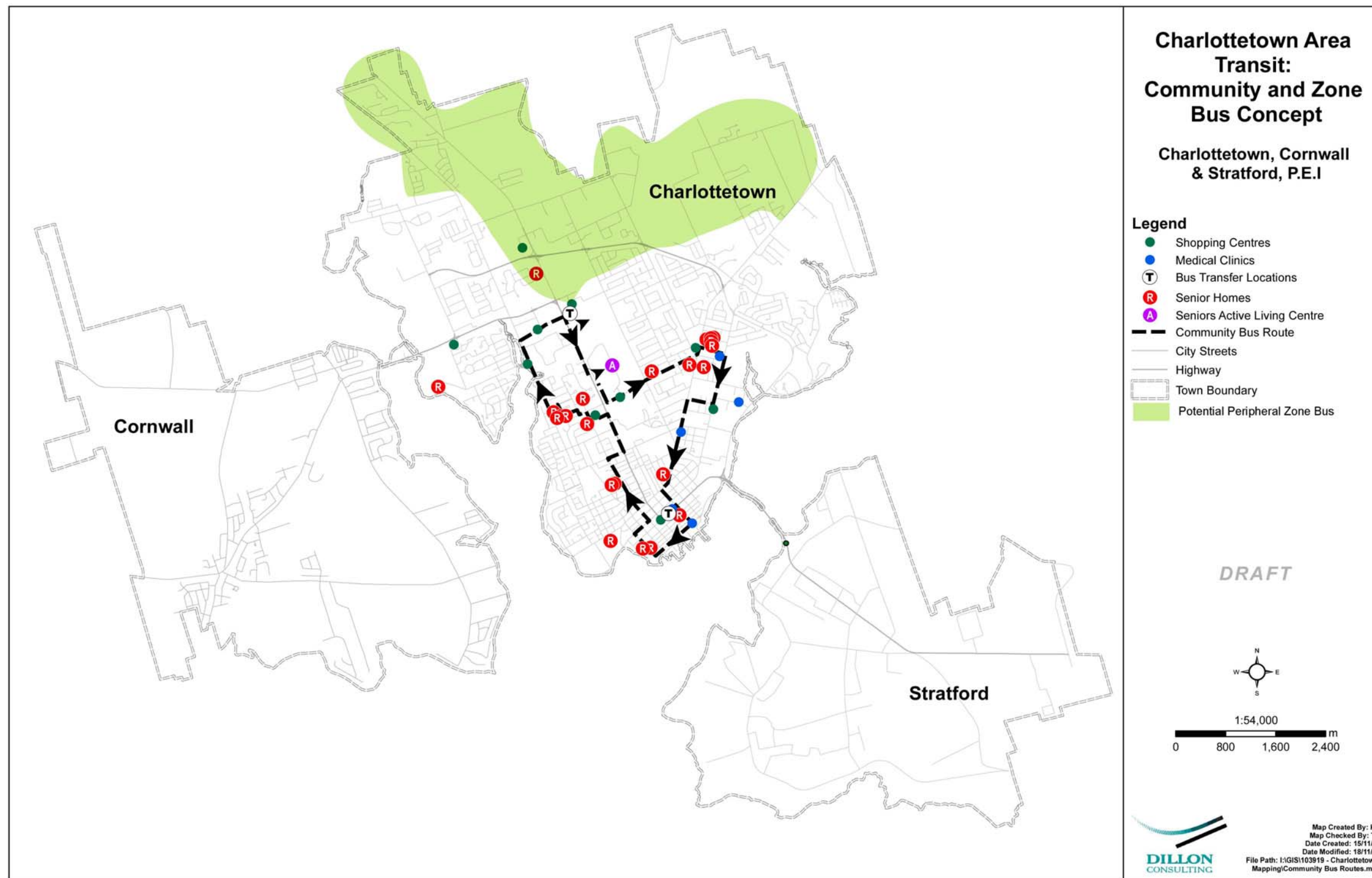
Potential Directions

- Establish a stable (base) service level with 8 routes
 - University Avenue spine service
 - 4 Collector routes
 - Cornwall route
 - Stratford routes (Bunbury, Southport)
- Provide 30 min. frequency all day on University Ave. and 30 min. peak / 60 min. off peak service on Collector routes
- Maintain current number of runs to Stratford / Cornwall
- Implement a new Community bus service (targeted for seniors) from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm weekdays
- Commit to necessary bus hours for trials of zone bus, employer shuttles, and flex route for late ride home
- Adopt when feasible: all day 30 minute service, Saturday service for Cornwall and Stratford, Sunday/holiday service, express routes, extended evening service, park and ride

ROUTE STRUCTURE and SERVICE DESIGN



ROUTE STRUCTURE and SERVICE DESIGN



MARKETING and COMMUNICATIONS

Objectives

- Build community support for transit
- Increase awareness of transit services for potential users
- Build ridership and market share for transit
- Adapt transit marketing and communication techniques to utilize new technologies

Potential Directions

- Adopt a single name, logo, colour scheme
- Produce a simple route map and schedule
- Implement outreach programs to build community support and partnerships
- Develop special programs and materials for newcomers, seniors, tourists, high schools
- Provide more transit presence at schools and community events
- Establish budget and dedicate resources for marketing (appoint an operations manager)

FLEET and FACILITIES

Objectives

- Move to a more standardized fleet
- Address high maintenance costs
- Improve fleet utilization
- Improve system accessibility for all users

Potential Directions

- Develop a Capital Asset Acquisition and Replacement Plan
- Retrofit existing buses with more reliable ramps
- Brand/use buses as one region-wide service
- Establish fixed bus stop locations and increase number of shelters
- Implement new technologies such as automated vehicle location system, updated fare box system with smart card readers
- Provide indoor bus storage and upgraded maintenance facility

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Objectives

- Build on the successful partnerships that exist among municipalities and with the contractor
- Increase predictability without losing energy and innovation
- Establish clear accountability

Potential Directions

- Continue with “turn-key” contract model
- Create a municipal CAO’s Committee supported by a part time transit coordinator
- Operate as a seamless region-wide service
- Amend contract arrangements as required to implement study recommendations
- Coordinate this service with province-wide transit initiative of provincial government

FARE STRUCTURE and REVENUE STRATEGIES

Objectives

- Achieve a 45 to 50% revenue to cost ratio
- Operate at sustainable municipal subsidy levels
- Expand transit pass programs to build ridership
- Secure the necessary funding to support the Capital Asset Replacement and Management Plan

Potential Directions

- Extend the Universal Pass program to Holland College students
- Develop financial partnerships with employers for special services and employee passes
- Seek provincial support for operating costs
- Seek federal and provincial support for capital needs identified in the asset management plan
- Adjust fares and pass prices to promote regular ridership and support improved services, while maintaining a target R/C ratio of 45 to 50%
- Implement an extended time transfer policy

MORE QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

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THANK YOU!

PLEASE COMPLETE A COMMENT SHEET