



# Strathcona County Transit Master Plan

Transit will be provided an update to Priorities Committee on Tuesday June 4, on the Transit Master Plan draft analysis and recommendations. A public survey will run September 4 – 20, 2024 asking for feedback on the draft recommendations presented below, with in person engagement session happening the second week of September.

We encourage you to review the draft recommendations below before you join us at the engagement session and prior to taking part in the online survey.

## We Want to hear from you this September

Our next round of public engagement is September with two in person pop-up sessions and an online survey available.

### **Pop-up Session #1**

Sep 10, 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Bethel Transit Terminal, 650 Bethel Drive, Sherwood Park

### **Pop-up Session #2**

Sep 11, 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Ordze Transit Centre, 970 Ordze Road, Sherwood Park

## Transit Service Update

Transit ridership levels are continuing to recover towards those experienced in 2019. In particular, Local services have recovered faster than Commuter services.

Construction in the downtown area has led to less reliable service. This is something we're paying close attention to; however, our recovery has been mainly driven by post-secondary students returning to use our services.

By the end of 2024, we expect our local service ridership to reach 75% of 2019 levels. We've noticed that our daytime services have been recovering at a slower pace compared to other services. Our evening and weekend services have seen an increase and have even surpassed the levels we had in 2019.

We have outlined some Key Principles to guide our proposed services. These include:

- Maintaining access to key destinations to ensure the convenience for all our users;
- Working so our operations run reliably and efficiently;
- Adapting to new trends in ridership to better cater to users' needs and preferences; and,
- Using resources efficiently within our given budget.



## Commuter Service Updates

The draft Transit Master Plan proposes updates to Commuter Service routes and services. These changes aim to adjust to current ridership levels and support strong demand for post-secondary travel. Some preliminary changes are summarized below.

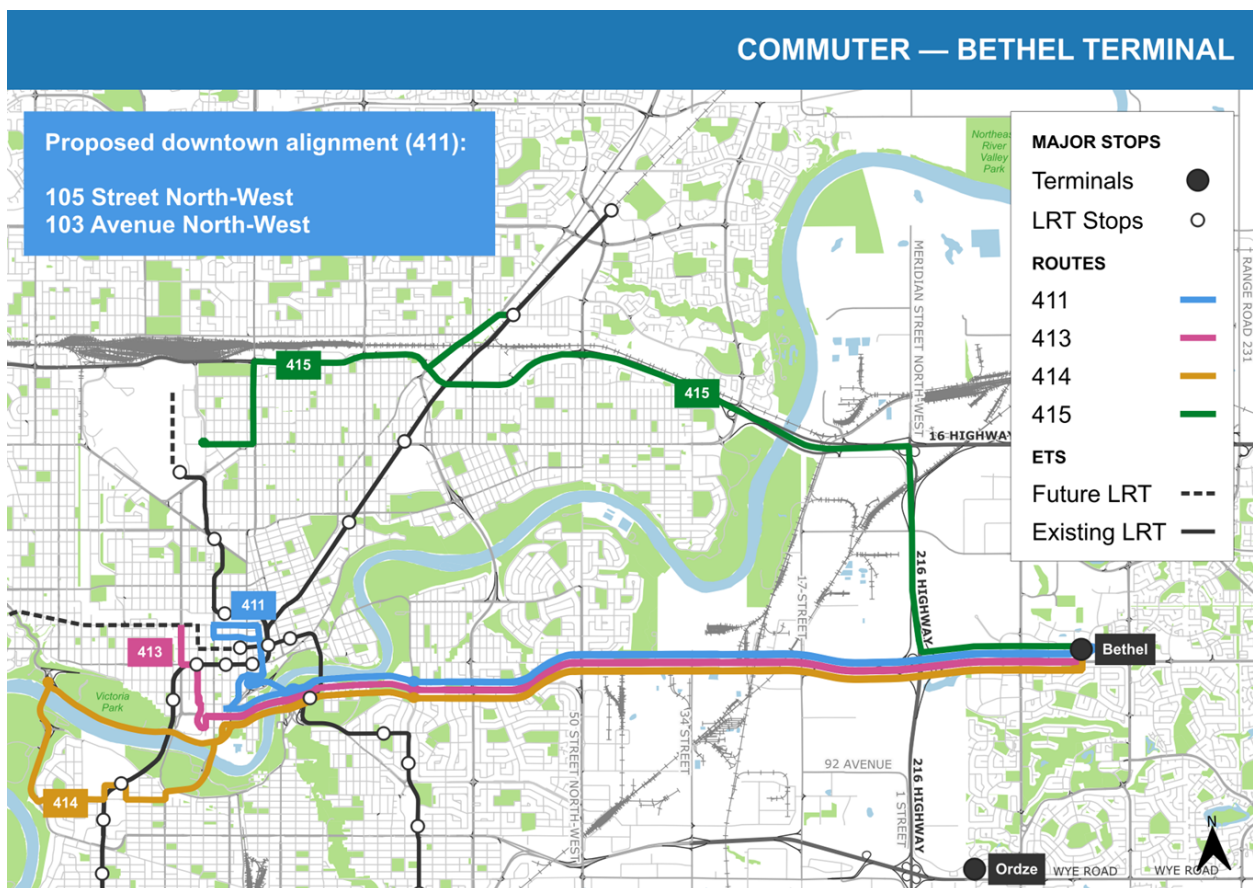
### Bethel Terminal Routes

**Route 411 - Edmonton City Centre:** Route 411 downtown Edmonton alignment changes will help avoid disruption from the construction of the Valley Line LRT. Select underused daytime peak trips will also be eliminated.

**Route 413 - Government Centre:** The alignment changes to Route 413 will improve access to Norquest College and MacEwan University. This route will be realigned due to the construction of the Valley Line LRT. However, the extension of select trips to NAIT will stop while we pilot the new Route 415.

**Route 414 - University of Alberta:** No changes are proposed for this route.

**Route 415 - NAIT:** The new Route 415 will serve NAIT and stop at the Belvedere LRT station. The pilot for this new route is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2024.

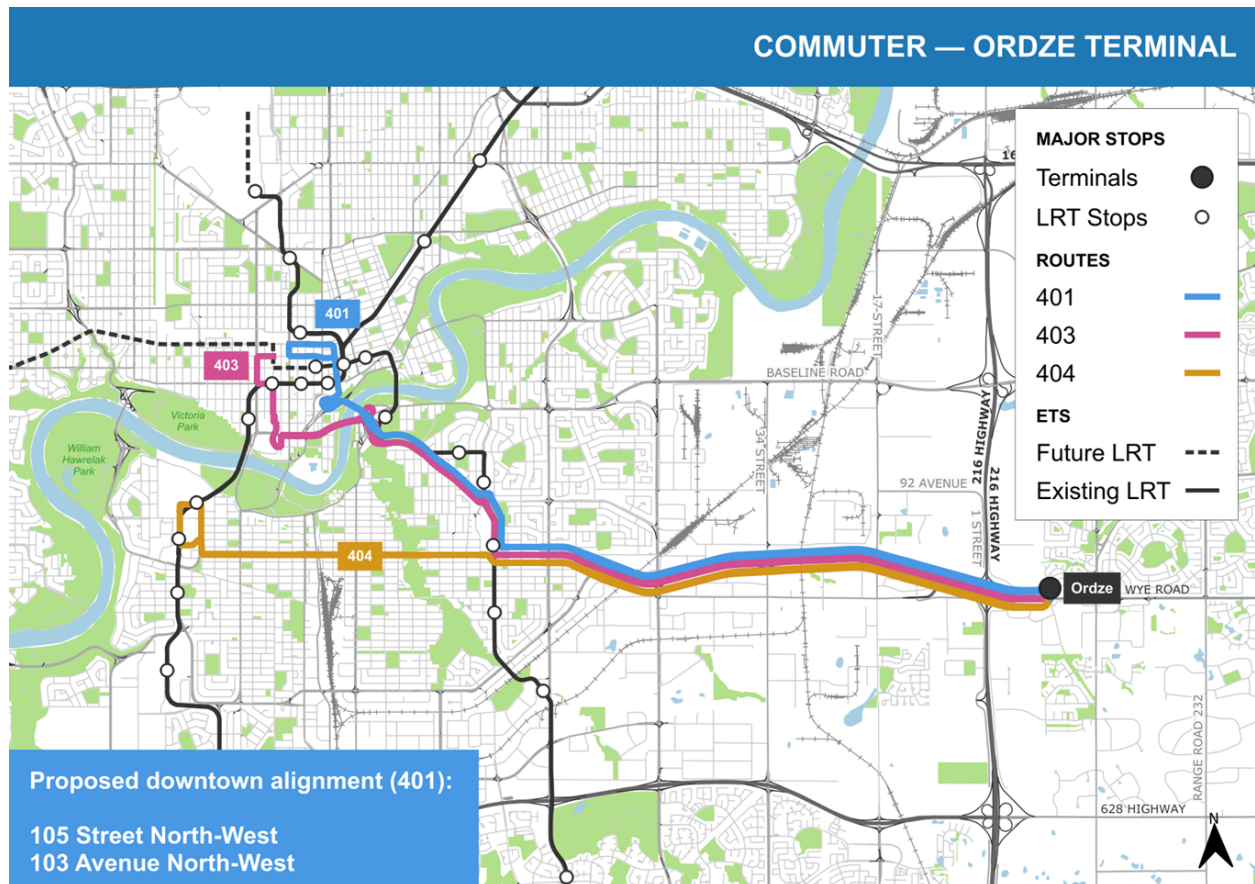


## Ordze Terminal Routes

**Route 401 - Edmonton City Centre:** Route 401's downtown Edmonton alignment changes will improve reliability by avoiding disruptions caused by Valley Line LRT construction. In addition, select underutilized daytime trips will be removed from the schedule.

**Route 403 - Government Centre – Peak Period:** Route 403 has been changed to provide improved access to Norquest College and MacEwan University. However, the route will be detoured due to the construction of Valley Line LRT.

**Route 404 – University of Alberta:** No changes are proposed for this route.





## Commuter Service – Evening and Weekend Updates

### Current Service

**411 Edmonton City Centre:** Route 411 to Edmonton City Centre is the only commuter route that operates on weekends and until the end of each weekday, currently providing one trip per hour at these times. These weekend services can be delayed due to variable weekend traffic conditions, affecting our ability to provide a reliable service. Additionally, we have received feedback from customers requesting more services on evenings and weekends, and weekend service to the University of Alberta.

### Proposed Future Service

To meet these requests, we are considering several potential options for future services. However, some of these options would require an increase to the transit operational budget:

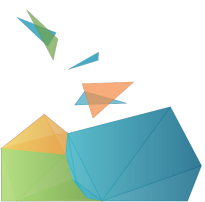
- **Route 411:** Option to reduce the frequency of the route midday on weekends from every 60 minutes to every 90 minutes to improve operational reliability.
- **Route 411:** Option to increase the route frequency to every 30 minutes on weekends during core hours.
- **Route 404:** Option to operate Route 404 to the University of Alberta on weekends and evenings, with stops at Bonnie Doon LRT station for connections to downtown Edmonton.
- **Route 414:** Option to operate Route 414 to the University of Alberta on weekends and evenings, with a detour to Strathearn LRT for connections to downtown Edmonton.
- Lastly, we could operate a combined Route 411 and Route 414 service via Bethel, Ordze, University of Alberta and MacEwan on weekends and evenings.

## Local Service Updates

The draft Transit Master Plan proposes updates to Local Service routes and services. These changes aim to adjust to current ridership levels and support stronger demand for travel to local destinations. Some preliminary changes are summarized below.

### Local - North Sherwood Park Routes

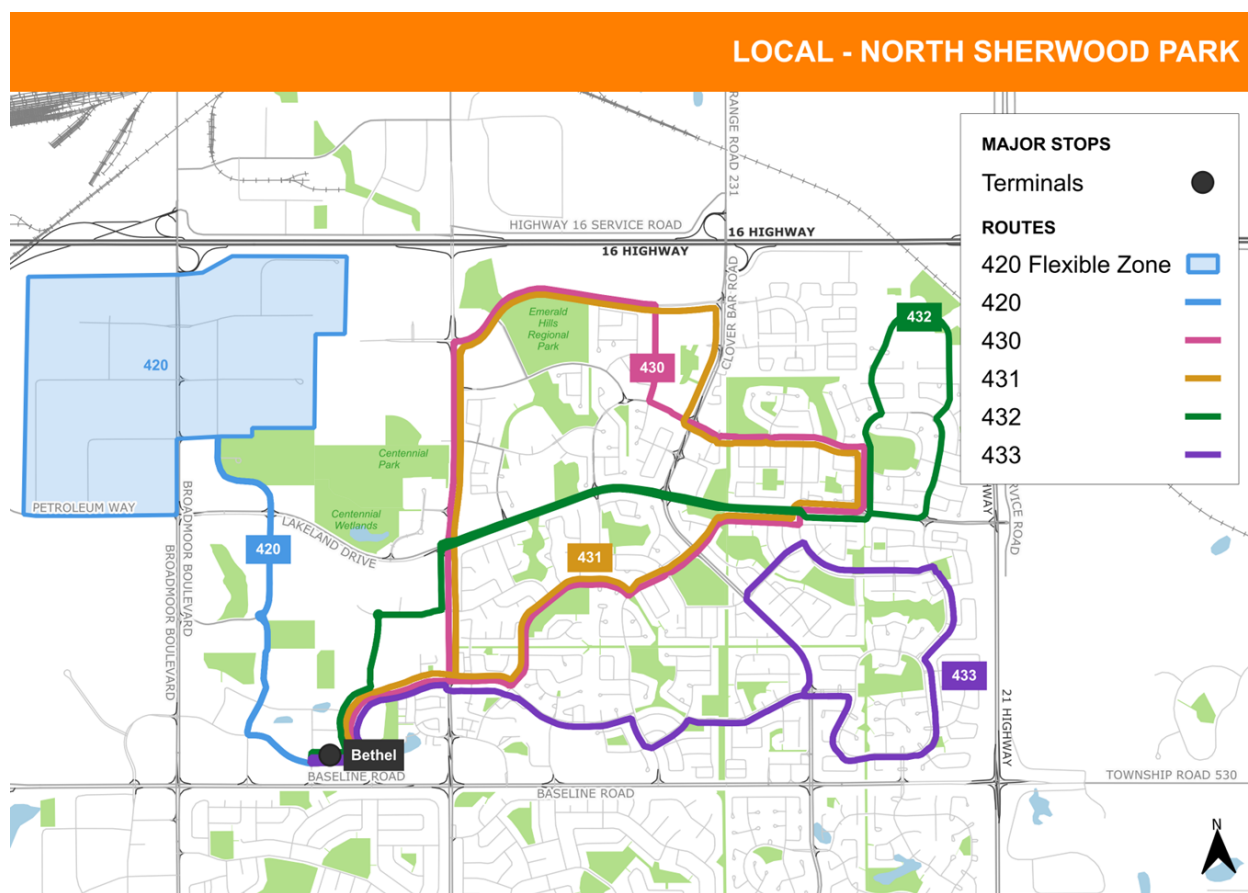
**Route 420:** Route 420 travels to Millenium Place and the northwest business industrial areas. It serves the Robinhood Learning Centre, Transit Garage, and SPSY. To better serve sparse demand in the northwest business industrial area, the draft Transit Master Plan proposes to operate this route as a flexible, on-demand service north of Millenium Place. Further details will be provided during the next round of engagement in September.



**Routes 430 and 431:** The 430 and 431 routes run to the Emerald Hills area, including ABJ High School, a shopping area, and a leisure centre. The 431 route follows the same path as the 430 route, only in the opposite direction. There are no proposed changes planned for these routes.

**Route 432:** Route 432 travels through Bison Way to the Summerwood neighbourhood, including stops at Silver Birch and Robin Hood-Aspen Village. Starting in Fall 2024, we are proposing to reroute this service into the Summerwood-north area.

**Route 433:** Route 433 serves local neighbourhoods such as Lakeland Ridge, Davidson Creek, and Clarkdale Meadows. It makes stops at Lakeland Ridge and Holy Spirit Catholic Schools. No changes are proposed for this route.



## Local – South Sherwood Park Routes

**Route 440:** Route 440 travels between Bethel Transit Terminal and Heritage Hills. This route primarily serves residential areas with limited demand. This route is proposed to be replaced by on-demand service to better match the demand for transit in the Heritage Hills area.

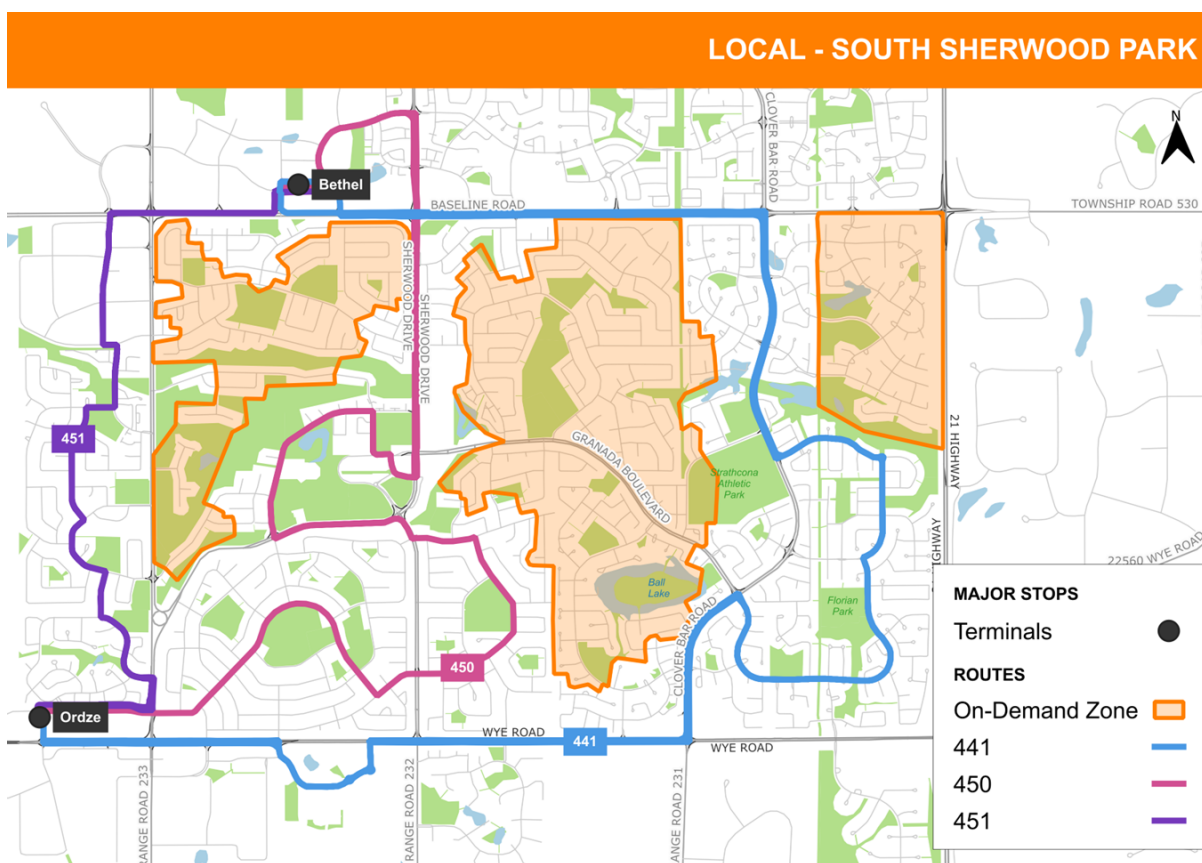


**Route 441:** Route 411 travels between Bethel Transit Terminal and Ordze Transit Centre through Heritage Hills, Foxboro, and Salisbury Village. This route serves Bev Facey High School and Strathcona Christian Academy and services customers along Wye Road. A small change is proposed to extend the route further along Clover Bar Road, improving access to the Granada Boulevard east area.

**Route 442:** Route 442 travels between Bethel Transit Terminal and Nottingham via Sherwood Park Mall. Beyond Sherwood Park Mall, which is served by other routes, Route 442 primarily serves residential areas with limited demand. This route is proposed to be replaced by on-demand service to better match the demand for transit in the Nottingham area.

**Route 450 (& Route 443):** Route 450 travels between Bethel Transit Terminal and Centre in the Park. It services Sherwood Park Mall, Community Centre, and Kinsmen Leisure Centre. The draft Transit Master Plan proposes to combine Route 450 and Route 443, extending Route 450 to Ordze Transit Centre via Brentwood and Sherwood Heights (formerly part of Route 443). The section of Route 443 north of Centre in the Park will be replaced by on-demand services.

**Route 451:** Route 451 travels between Bethel to Ordze through Woodbridge, Westboro, and Village on the Lake. The draft Transit Master Plan proposes to shorten and straighten Route 451 to provide better access to Bethel Transit Terminal. With this change, it will no longer run through Mills Haven, with on-demand serving this area instead.





## On-Demand Transit Service Updates

Currently providing local service on weekends and weekday evenings, on-demand service is an efficient way to provide transit service in lower-demand environments. With the recent improvements to the on-demand app, on-demand services generally work well during their limited periods of operation.

Building on this success, on-demand service is proposed to replace fixed-route service on sections of current routes 440, 442, and 443. Areas of these routes will remain within 400m of other fixed-route services, preserving transit access using those routes. Additionally, proposed changes to the remaining fixed-route services aim to cover higher-ridership segments of the removed services.

The On-Demand service will take customers to the Bethel Transit Terminal, Ordze Transit Centre, Centre in the Park, or a stop along the 441, 450 and 451 fixed routes.

## Local & On-Demand Transit Service - Evening and Weekend Updates

Since 2019, Weekend on-demand service has been successful and continues to grow.

As Saturday on-demand ridership continues to grow, the ability of on-demand to efficiently provide service will be challenged. To address this, it is proposed that Saturday daytime mirror weekday service, with fixed routes offered for the majority of Sherwood Park. In doing so, savings from other route changes would be reinvested to support the strong and ongoing growth of weekend services.

## Growth Areas

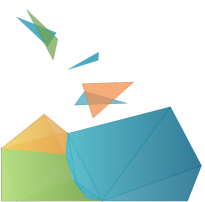
The draft Transit Master Plan considers the growth areas of Cambrian Crossing and Bremner when planning for future County transit services.

### Cambrian

Development in Cambrian has begun. The draft Transit Master Plan encourages best practices to provide transit services as soon as possible to support transit use and influence travel behaviour.

Recommended service in the draft Transit Master Plan for the Cambrian area includes:

- The provision of Local On-Demand peak-hour service once the area reaches 500 residents. The plan is to start providing this service in 2026.
- A transition from Local On-Demand peak-hour service to local fixed route services when the population reaches 1200 – 1800 people, and ridership levels reach appropriate levels.





## Bremner

Recommended service in the draft Transit Master Plan for the Bremner area include the provision of Local On-Demand peak hour service once the area reaches 500 residents and fixed route service with 1,200 - 1800 people.

## Rural Transit Service

The draft Transit Master Plan considers existing rural transit services and opportunities for future updates. Rural transit will continue to be serviced by Mobility Bus in the Rural Service Area, as the cost and frequency of conventional transit services are hard to maintain over such a large area with a small population.

## Androssan

The Hamlet's population is projected to reach 5000 people by 2040. As Ardrossan's population and job opportunities grow, so does the demand for transit service between Ardrossan and Sherwood Park. The draft Transit Master Plan recommends that transit services should be considered when the population reaches 1000 people.

## Specialized Transit

The draft Transit Master Plan considers existing specialized transit services (Mobility Bus), new service areas, and rural service levels.

## Demand for Mobility Bus

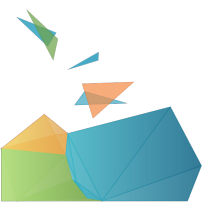
Ridership on Mobility Bus has increased from pre-pandemic levels. At the current growth rate, it's predicted that 8,000 more trips will be added by 2034. An additional three Mobility Bus vehicles and 3,300 service hours would be needed to maintain current service levels.

## New Service Areas

The draft Transit Master Plan recommends a phased approach to offer service to new urban areas, to service areas such as the Misericordia Hospital in West Edmonton, which has a high number of medical specialists who may utilize the service.

## Rural Service Levels

The draft Transit Master Plan recommends a policy update that would provide Mobility Bus riders living in rural areas with a return trip, even if the return trip is taken after service hours have ended.







# Next Steps

After the next round of engagement in September 2024 is complete, the Final Transit Master Plan will be presented to Council by the end of 2024.

