CHAPTER 04

A bus you can count on

Push to finish BRT in year one. Aim to start light rail construction in year two.

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This is the plan I'll bring to City Hall. Putting it into action means securing Council decisions, detailed costs and agreements with the people delivering it. I'll report what gets funded, what moves ahead and what has to change.

04 / A bus you can count on

My targets are to finish BRT in 2027, complete the plan and approvals needed for the first LRT construction package that year, and start physical work in 2028. Within 100 days, I'll publish a delivery review showing what has to change, what it costs and whether those dates can be met. The current southern BRT schedule extends beyond 2027, so bringing it forward needs a workable agreement with the people building and running it. [11][12]

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A bus needs to get you where you're going

If a bus gets you to work after your shift starts, the route on the map doesn't help much. The same goes for a missed class, an appointment or picking up your child. I'll judge transit by the whole trip: getting to the stop, waiting, making the connection and getting home again. Riders should be able to plan their day around the service with a reasonable idea of whether it will show up.

I'll ask London Transit to look at early starts, late finishes, weekend work and trips to employment areas alongside busy student and commuter routes. A daytime commute gives us only part of the picture. Riders and employers can help point out the gaps, and the service plan needs evidence to decide which improvements come first. We have limited money, staff and buses. The reasons for choosing one change ahead of another should be available to the people affected.

Reliable transit can also give a household the option to share a car or avoid buying another one. I'll look at whether ordinary trips become more practical and measure what changes. Different neighbourhoods and mobility needs will call for different solutions. Any claim about a particular reduction in congestion needs evidence. The useful starting question is whether someone can reasonably choose the bus for the trip they need to make.

Put the BRT finish on one schedule

My target is to get BRT finished in 2027. London's current program needs a serious push to reach that date. LTC's October 19, 2026 report schedules the east service for fall 2027 and the south for fall 2029. The City's Wellington plans also include civil work in 2028 and 2029, with stations and final surfacing into 2030. I'll put the target and the existing schedule side by side so people can see what has to change. [11][12]

Within 100 days, bring the contractors, utilities, City engineers and LTC together around one completion program. Identify the work that controls the finish date, where crews could work in parallel and which decisions are holding things up. Ask for priced options for extra shifts, additional crews and a different order of work. Keep hospital access, emergency routes, safe crossings and access to shops in that program.

There has been alot of disruption already. Open finished sections as soon as they are accepted and LTC is ready to use them. Look at safe temporary stations where they genuinely bring service forward. Publish the remaining work on each section, including permanent stations and restoration, so residents can see the full finish as well as the earlier service benefits.

Buses and drivers need to be ready too. Ask LTC to cost earlier fleet availability, possible short leases and training in parallel with the road work. Check the condition and availability of any proposed vehicles and the effect on other routes. The delivery review needs an operating plan with the people and equipment to carry it out.

The City's May 2026 report records $454 million in approved infrastructure funding for the three BRT corridors, including $176 million from federal and provincial partners. Work within those agreements and the construction contracts already in place. Any added cost for acceleration needs a clear benefit, an identified funding source and approval before it is spent. [1]

If the review shows the full 2027 finish cannot be reached safely and within an approved budget, publish the earliest supported date, the obstacle and the options. Keep delivering the sections that can open. People should be able to tell which dates have contractor and utility backing and which are still targets.

Choose a first rail stage we can get moving

Start with one useful rail stage. Compare the east and south BRT corridors, then choose the route with the strongest passenger case and the fewest expensive obstacles. Council considered eventual conversion in 2016. Reuse that work and the current drawings where they still help, and get the missing information early. [6]

Favour a route on existing public land, simple accessible stops and a standard vehicle that suppliers can support. Look for a workable maintenance site and a practical downtown connection. A short first stage still needs enough useful destinations and connections to justify its depot, power and operating costs. A small ceremonial line would give London another bill without fixing many trips.

Have engineers review bridge loading, curves, gradients, platform space, street crossings, power and underground utilities before giving credit for reuse. The general conversion research identifies geometry, clearance and station changes as important issues. Any savings from existing infrastructure must be attached to assets we can actually use. [10]

Coordinate the remaining BRT work with the rail choice before final surfaces and stations are finished. Where a modest, approved change would avoid digging the same place up again, price it and seek the funding partner's agreement. Keep BRT opening work moving while those choices are made.

Finish the first stage decisions in year one

Treat 2027 as a delivery year for the rail plan. In the first three months, gather the existing drawings, passenger data and utility records, compare the east and south options and agree on a preferred first stage. Ask suppliers and contractors about delivery capacity at the same time. That early market advice needs to be available to everyone who later bids.

During the middle of the year, complete the initial business case, operating concept, functional design, construction sequence and funding request. Compare the rail option with improving BRT. Check peak loads, ordinary daily trips, transfers and slower growth. Bring in riders, disability organisations, businesses, neighbourhoods and Indigenous communities while the route and construction choices can still change.

Start the environmental and other approval work in parallel once the scope is clear enough. Ask Ontario to confirm the applicable process. Its guide expects substantial preparation and consultation around the formal assessment period. The approvals and final design needed for the first physical package must be complete before that package starts. [7]

By the end of 2027, aim to have Council's route and delivery decisions, the first construction package designed and priced, its permissions secured and a tender ready. The planning ceiling is firm. The initial review must establish whether that package can be prepared within it. Full corridor engineering, every later construction drawing and an operating railway cannot be guaranteed by that allowance.

The deadline applies to the first stage plan and the permissions needed to begin it. Later packages must receive their own necessary designs and approvals before they proceed. If an essential first package task will miss the date or exceed the planning cap, report that early and explain what it means for the 2028 start. Thats part of making the schedule useful.

Buy useful work and keep it moving

Use specialist contractors where they can deliver a defined piece of work more quickly or at better value. Keep the team small, set clear deliverables and have one City lead responsible for coordinating the packages. Publish the price, dates, accepted work and approved changes. Pay for work that meets the contract and keep enough technical oversight to catch a problem early.

BRT construction already has contracted suppliers. Ask the existing firms for priced acceleration options. Where work can be separated cleanly, let other qualified firms compete for it through the proper process. Changes of provider need a net benefit after transition and coordination costs. London's procurement policy governs competitions, contract changes and who can approve them. [14][15]

For rail, invite comparable prices for conventional and prefabricated track, standard platform components and simpler construction methods. European rail research has developed modular track and faster installation approaches. Ask bidders to demonstrate suitability for London's ground conditions, winter operation, maintenance and expected passenger loads. Count savings when the proposal supports them. [13]

Review the whole cost of each bid, including the City's own oversight. Tie any proposed early completion payment to accepted work and a demonstrated benefit. Extra shifts should earn their cost through a shorter, better coordinated program. Keep public ownership of the plans and records so the City can manage the work and obtain competitive prices for the next package.

Start physical rail work in 2028

The target for year two is physical construction on the chosen first LRT stage. A suitable first package could be a necessary utility diversion, rail formation or preparation of an approved maintenance site. Its design must show how it serves the selected railway and fits the funded delivery plan. Another study, a general road repair or a photo opportunity would not meet that commitment.

Keep the first year planning limit at $1 million, brought forward into 2027. The budget chapter sets out that allocation and a separate ceiling for the first physical works in 2028. Each package needs a measured scope, a professional estimate, competitive pricing, the necessary permissions and an identified funding source before release. Select useful work that fits the ceiling and the approved route.

Before the main rail works are committed, Council needs the complete first stage capital cost, inflation allowance, contingency, net operating cost, renewal plan and financing. Compare Canadian project costs on a consistent basis and explain the differences in scope. Existing BRT contributions and possible future grants must be kept to their agreed uses. [8][9] The cost detail is in the budget chapter and the full plan PDF.

Keep accessible bus service operating through the work and coordinate construction around the routes people rely on. Buying standard vehicles, reusing verified infrastructure and building a useful first stage

can keep the scope under control. If the first package cannot be legally and usefully delivered within its approved limit, bring the schedule and scope back to Council before spending it. The 2028 date is a construction start target; the passenger opening date needs its own delivery program.

Give reliability a proper operating budget

The London Transit Commission operates, repairs, controls and manages local transit, including conventional and specialised services. Council and the Commission have separate responsibilities and a required policy relationship. [3] As mayor, I'll bring people together, propose budget priorities and seek Council support. LTC's operational role matters when we discuss routes and service changes. Residents deserve to know who can make the decision they're asking for.

I'll ask LTC for public starting figures on missed or cancelled trips, crowding and reliability by route and time period where data allows. An average can hide poor evening service or an unreliable corridor. Reports should explain delays linked to congestion, construction, vehicles and staffing, and be clear when the exact cause is uncertain. That detail helps identify which changes could actually improve a rider's trip.

The improvement package needs the full ongoing price: operators, supervisors, mechanics, cleaning, fuel or energy, spare buses and depot capacity. I'll bring budget options explaining what each buys and what other work it would displace. Some connection problems may be helped by an operational adjustment with little extra service time. I'll ask for those possibilities to be considered alongside options needing more staff and money.

Make it possible to reach the bus

A feeder arriving just after the main bus leaves can add a lot of time to a short trip. So can a last connection that ends before a shift. I'll ask LTC to check important transfer points and employment destinations against actual work schedules. Employers, schools and riders can help identify problems, with service decisions kept public and supported by evidence. The return journey deserves the same attention as the trip in.

A curb ramp, snow clearing, a safe crossing and readable detour signs can decide whether a person reaches the stop at all. I'll seek a ranked access program with City transportation staff and LTC, developed with disability organisations and riders. Immediate safety and accessibility barriers deserve attention, and each site needs clear responsibility for clearing and maintenance. The path leading to the stop is part of usable transit.

Shelters and seats need space, installation money and ongoing upkeep. I'll ask for site criteria and maintenance costs to be published. Specialised transit also belongs in the reliability discussion, including appropriate booking, accommodation and trip delivery measures. People need options that fit their mobility needs. Improvements to conventional service should work alongside specialised transit and other accessible travel arrangements.

Keep the information useful during construction

Construction can move a stop, break a transfer or turn a familiar trip into a guessing game. I'll seek coordinated disruption information across City construction updates and LTC notices. It should show accessible temporary stops, when a change starts, the expected duration and where to find updates. Printed notices at stops matter too, especially when someone learns about the change halfway through their journey.

Major projects should identify transit access before work begins, including the walk from temporary stops to homes and businesses. Underground surprises can change the plan. A fallback arrangement and prompt updates give riders something to work with when that happens. Businesses also need to know how staff and customers can reach them, and everyone needs a way to report an unsafe temporary route.

Arrival information should make clear whether a bus is actually being tracked or simply shown on the timetable. Accessibility details should be easy to find. I'll ask what existing tools do well and where practical gaps remain before buying another system. Any technology proposal needs someone responsible, an upkeep budget and a way to check whether riders find it useful. Sometimes fixing a confusing notice is the quickest improvement we can make.

Be clear about cost and progress

Within 100 days, publish the BRT acceleration review and the first rail work program. Bring the year one planning allocation through the budget and aim to complete the first rail stage decisions in 2027. For 2028, publish the exact physical package before award and show progress against it each month. Keep bus reliability and stop access work moving alongside it.

The budget should separate construction grants, fares, municipal contributions and other confirmed support. A grant for infrastructure may leave the City funding drivers and annual maintenance. If we need a bigger municipal allocation, I'll explain what service it purchases and the budget effect. If part has to wait, residents should see which part and why. Those are choices people deserve to understand.

Through the term, I'll seek quarterly updates connecting spending to delivered service. Are missed trips falling? Are difficult connections improving? Is agreed access work finished? Targets should follow the baseline and approved service plan. And if the numbers improve but riders keep flagging the same problem, we should look closer. The point of the reporting is to help make the daily trip more dependable.

What I'll bring forward

01 / Show where service is letting riders down

I'll seek a joint City and LTC report within 100 days on missed trips, crowding, transfers and construction impacts, followed by quarterly updates.

Who can act: I'll bring the partners together and propose priorities. LTC supplies and approves operational measures; Council approves City resources and policy.

How we'll pay for it: Use existing planning and reporting capacity first. Show any extra analysis cost before seeking approval.

What we'll check: Publish the starting figures and quarterly results by route and time of day, with definitions and the action being taken.

What could get in the way: Some data may be incomplete or costly to collect. Start with what is available and explain the gaps.

02 / Budget for the service we promise

I'll bring a costed package of reliability and connection improvements through the budget and LTC service planning, including operators, maintenance and vehicles.

Who can act: LTC plans and operates service. The mayor proposes the municipal budget, with Council involved in approval and oversight.

How we'll pay for it: Show ongoing municipal funding and fare assumptions. Seek eligible federal or provincial help and mark grants that haven't been confirmed.

What we'll check: Track funded service hours actually delivered, missed trips, crowding and connections against the starting figures.

What could get in the way: Even funded improvements need drivers, available buses and workable construction schedules.

03 / Plan the first rail stage in 2027 and target a 2028 start

I'll bring the route choice, initial business case, operating concept, delivery plan and first construction package to Council in year one. The target is physical LRT construction starting in 2028, once the required design, permissions and funding are in place.

Who can act: City staff lead the work with LTC, specialist contractors and the relevant approval bodies. Council decides the route, budget and construction release. Funding partners must approve their contributions.

How we'll pay for it: Keep year one rail planning within the existing $1 million ceiling. The budget chapter sets out a separate, limited construction start allocation and the conditions for releasing it.

What we'll check: Publish the first year decisions, outstanding permissions, contractor program and first physical work completed in 2028. Report changes against the original dates.

What could get in the way: Approvals, utilities, market capacity or funding could move the start. The first year review must establish what can be completed within the planning cap and explain any shortfall before contracts are awarded.

04 / Push BRT to completion in the first year

Set 2027 as the acceleration target. Ask contractors, utilities and LTC for a joint completion program within 100 days, including the price and practical limits of bringing work forward.

Who can act: The City manages the construction contracts and road network. Utilities control their work and LTC approves service preparations. Council approves material changes and funding.

How we'll pay for it: Use existing approved BRT resources where the work is eligible. Price any acceleration premium separately and bring it to Council before committing it.

What we'll check: Publish the revised completion program, station readiness, fleet and staffing requirements, and monthly progress. Show construction completion and service opening as separate milestones.

What could get in the way: The current southern program runs into 2029 and 2030. The target needs engineering, contractor and operating confirmation; a partial opening must be reported as a partial opening. [12]

When I'll bring it forward

First 100 days

Publish one BRT completion review with contractors, utilities and LTC, testing the 2027 target. Scope the first rail stage, obtain early market advice and set the year one planning program.

Year one

Target BRT completion in 2027, with a priced delivery program and earlier use of accepted sections. Complete the first LRT stage plan, Council decisions and the design and permissions needed for its first construction package within the planning ceiling. Report any constraint that puts the date at risk.

Years two to four

Target the start of physical LRT construction in 2028 through a defined, approved and funded first package. Keep buses running, publish monthly delivery results and release later rail packages only with their own design, permissions and funding. Set a passenger opening date when the full delivery program supports it.

Sources and notes

Source numbers refer to this chapter. Publication and access dates are listed below, with notes on what each source tells us. Programs and rules can change, so check the linked source for current details.

1. **London Rapid Transit Readiness & Route Planning**
City of London · May 2026
Accessed 19 October 2026. May 2026 readiness position, including $454 million approved infrastructure funding across three corridors and $176 million federal/provincial funding. Use later City updates for corridor service and restoration forecasts. This is BRT infrastructure funding, not an LRT budget.
Read source

2. **2026 Work Program: Second Quarter Update**
London Transit Commission · 31 August 2026
Accessed 18 October 2026. Records construction on the eastern and southern corridors and preparation to use completed infrastructure.
Read source

3. **Commission Information**
London Transit Commission · Undated; accessed October 2026
Accessed 18 October 2026. Explains operating responsibility and the policy relationship between LTC and Council. Changing membership details aren't used for these proposals.
Read source

4. **Buses begin using London's first centre-running bus lanes September 6**
City of London · September 2026 service update
Accessed 19 October 2026. Forecasts East London Link service in 2027 and Wellington Gateway in 2029. These are reported expectations, not guaranteed opening dates.
Read source

5. **Wellington Gateway enters final phase of rapid transit**
City of London · 28 August 2026
Accessed 19 October 2026. Major remaining construction through 2029 and final restoration into 2030; distinguishes service launch from all work being complete.
Read source

6. **Council minutes: Rapid Transit Implementation Strategy**
City of London · 31 May 2016
Accessed 19 October 2026. Council asked that BRT design consider eventual conversion to LRT, subject to a later review and business case. That direction needs to be read alongside the plans and assets actually built.
Read source

7. **Guide to Ontario's Transit and Rail Project Assessment Process: Project assessment process**
Government of Ontario · Online guide; checked October 2026
Accessed 19 October 2026. Explains preparation, consultation, environmental reporting and formal assessment. The applicable approval route for London rail must be established with the Ministry; formal timelines do not include all preplanning or detailed design.
Read source

8. **Stage 2 ION Initial Business Case: cost appendix, Tables 2 and 3**
Region of Waterloo · 4 November 2025
Accessed 19 October 2026. Full LRT option: $3.130 billion in 2025 dollars; $4.300 billion escalated to 2033; annual operations, maintenance and rehabilitation $23.8 million in 2025 dollars. London would need its own estimate for its route and structures.
Read source

9. **Canada Public Transit Fund: Baseline Funding applicant guide**
Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada · Online guide; checked October 2026
Accessed 19 October 2026. Planning can be eligible subject to current requirements, project approval and agreements. Normal operations and financing are not automatically covered. No funding award, matching share or unallocated London balance is

assumed.
Read source

10. **Bus and Rail Transit: Modal Integration, E-Circular 145**
Transportation Research Board · 2010
Accessed 19 October 2026. Bus Rapid Transit as a Precursor of Light Rail Transit?, printed pages 138 to 140, discusses conversion geometry, clearances and station changes. General engineering context only, not a London asset assessment.
Read source

11. **Rapid Transit Implementation Status Report**
London Transit Commission · 19 October 2026
Accessed 19 October 2026. Current east and south service forecasts, fleet and operator preparations, and advance notice for new infrastructure. The plan proposes acceleration beyond this reported baseline; an agreed revised program is still required.
Read source

12. **Wellington Gateway Phase 2B preconstruction presentation**
City of London · 2026 preconstruction presentation
Accessed 19 October 2026. Pages 18 to 22 show civil work extending through 2029 and some station and surfacing work into 2030. The proposed 2027 completion target requires a new supported program, beyond the current sequence.
Read source

13. **URBAN TRACK final report: Urban rail infrastructure**
European Commission, CORDIS · Final project report; checked October 2026
Accessed 19 October 2026. Research on prefabricated track, faster installation and maintenance. General options for a priced procurement comparison; establishes no saving or London delivery date.
Read source

14. **Procurement of Goods and Services Policy**
City of London · In force 1 October 2025
Accessed 19 October 2026. Competitive procurement, contract changes, approval authority and market capacity requirements apply to the proposed contractor delivery approach.
Read source

15. **Wellington Gateway and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements Phase 2B: tender record**
City of London, Bids and Tenders · Award recorded 23 June 2026
Accessed 19 October 2026. Confirms the phase has an existing awarded construction contract. Acceleration must account for the existing agreement and project coordination.
Read source