



Suffolk County Reimagine Transit and Moving Forward

NYMTC - Program, Finance and Administration Committee
November 14, 2024

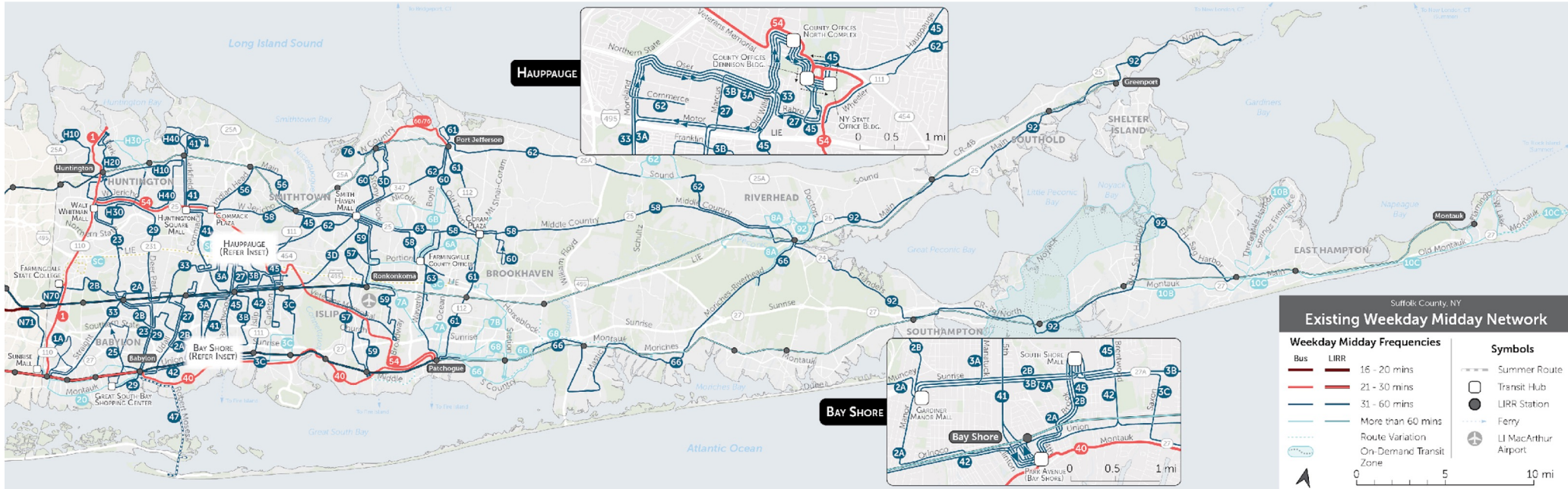
Darnell Tyson, P.E.
Deputy Commissioner, Suffolk County Department of Public Works

Reimagine Transit Timeline





Old Network Demographics



Old Conditions

- ❖ 41 routes
- ❖ 3 bus operator companies
- ❖ 500 bus operators
- ❖ Avg Weekday ridership: 9,417
- ❖ Avg Saturday ridership: 6,464
- ❖ Avg Sunday ridership: 3,730
- ❖ Annual ridership: 2,941,750

- ❖ Paratransit Buses: 170
- ❖ Fixed Route Buses: 155
- ❖ Operating Costs: \$88,853,675
- ❖ Local Funds: \$24,969,273
- ❖ State Funds: \$39,577,986
- ❖ Federal Funds: \$18,246,101
- ❖ Fare Revenues: \$6,060,315

Arrives every:

- 90 minutes
- 60 minutes
- 30 minutes

The goals



Stop the decline in ridership



Match transit supply to transit demand

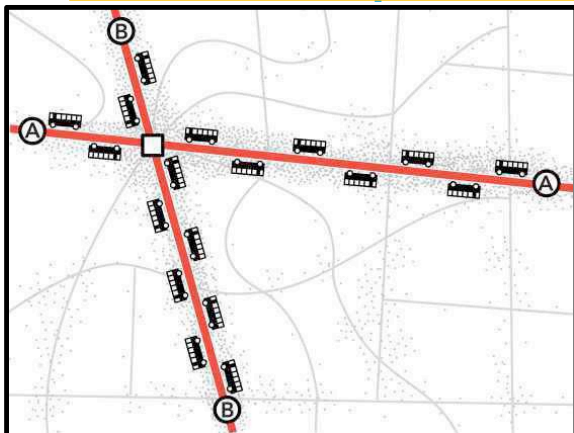


Increase system efficiency



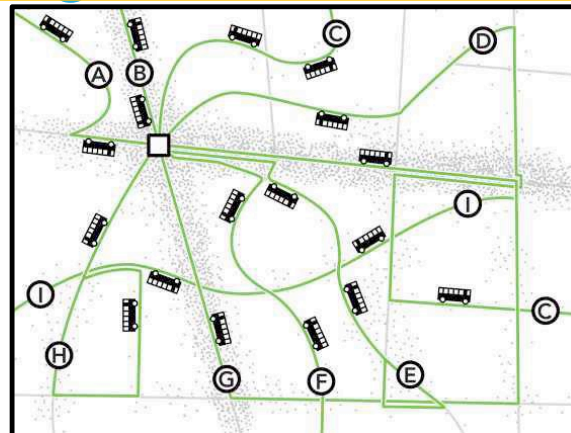
Improve rider satisfaction

Ridership vs. Coverage Goals



Ridership Goal

- Maximum average access to opportunity.
- Lowest subsidy per passenger.
- Support denser development.
- Emissions reduction.
- Reduction in vehicle miles traveled.



Coverage Goal

- Some access to opportunity for everyone everywhere.
- Lifeline.
- Service to every town or electoral district.

New Network Highlights

Extended system hours

- All routes run Monday to Friday, 5 AM to 10 PM

Full weekend service

- All routes run Saturday and Sunday, 6 AM to 8 PM

Timed connections

- Timed transfer points at major hubs throughout the County greatly reduces the time riders spend at stations

Improved on-time performance & reliability

- New schedules reflect real-world data for routes and travel times, which improves on-time performance and rider experience

Right-sizing service

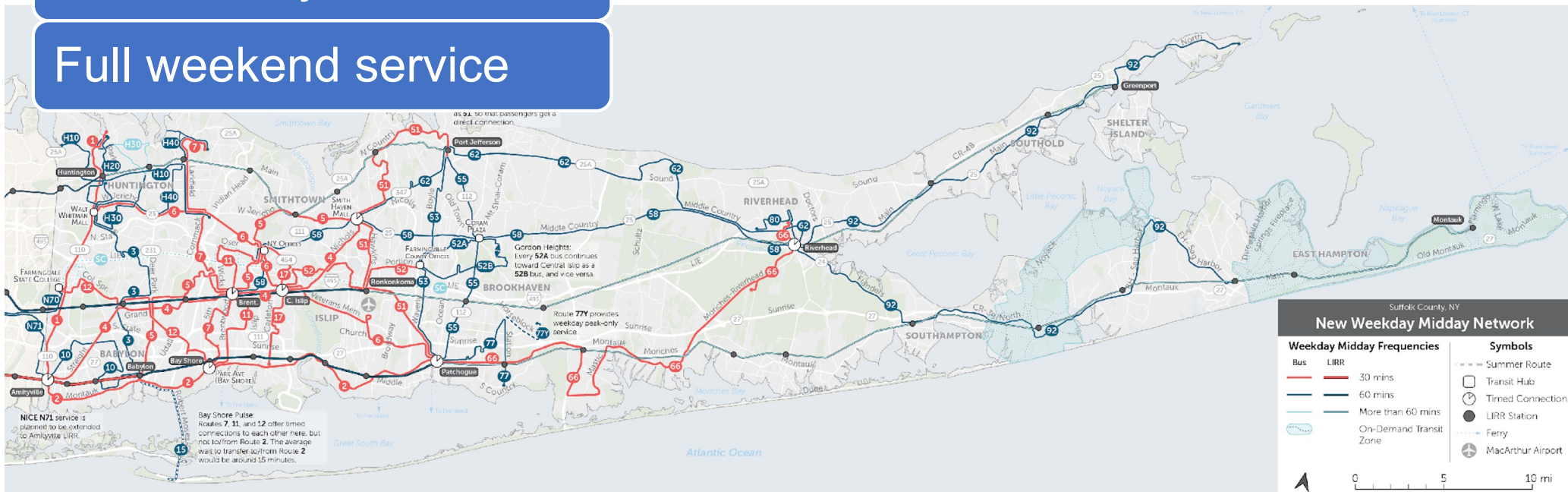
- Fleet is allocated where buses are needed most, to ensure efficient use of resources and to match supply and demand

More frequent service

- Half-hourly service on most routes provides more options for riders

Extended system hours

Full weekend service



M-F 5 AM – 10 PM

Sa 5 AM – 9 PM

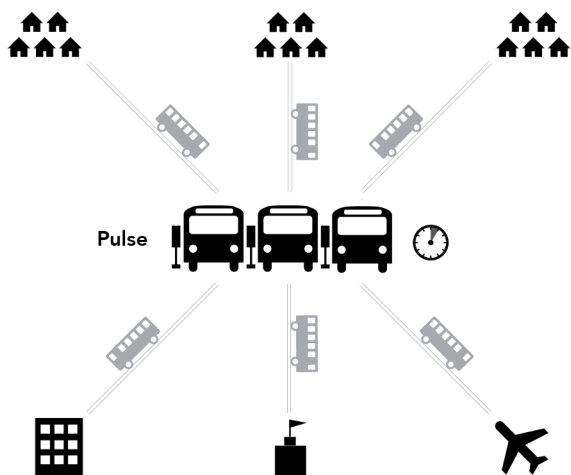
Su 6 AM – 8 PM

Pulse Points

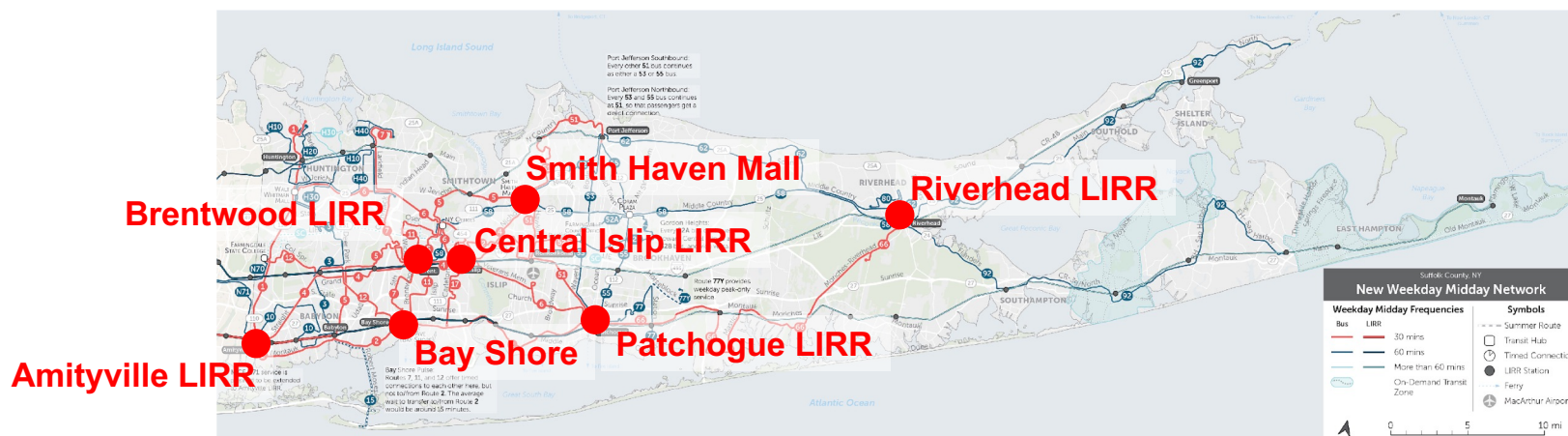
Average wait times when routes meet randomly:

- 60 min. route: 30 minutes
- 30 min. route: 15 minutes

With timed connections, wait times for transfers can be just 5 minutes.



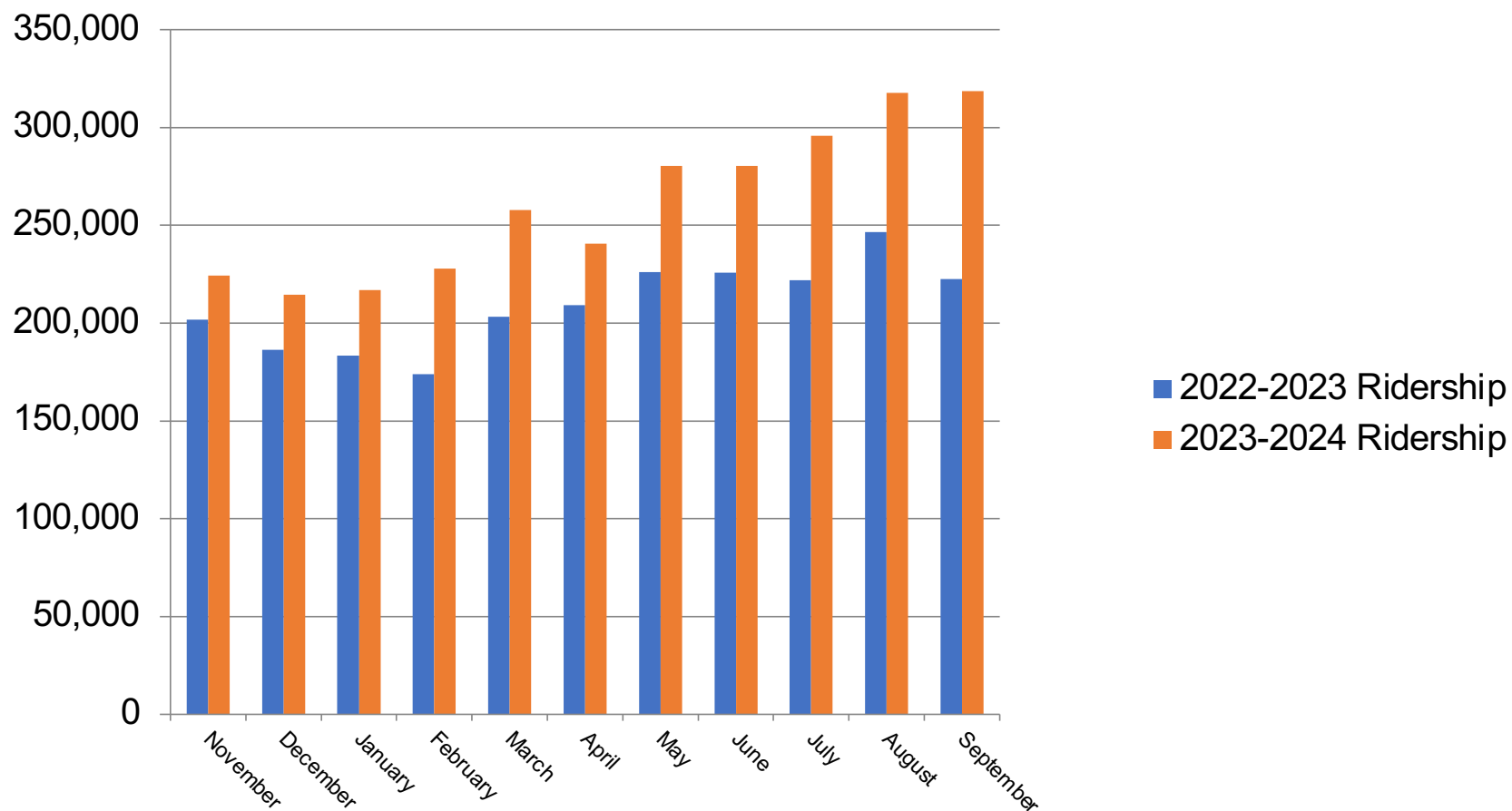
Pulse Point Locations



The New System In Action



System Ridership Is Up



System ridership for 2023 was up 13% over 2022 levels & in 2024 has increased to 27% over 2023 levels.
System average revenue miles was increased by 11% in 2024 vs 2023.

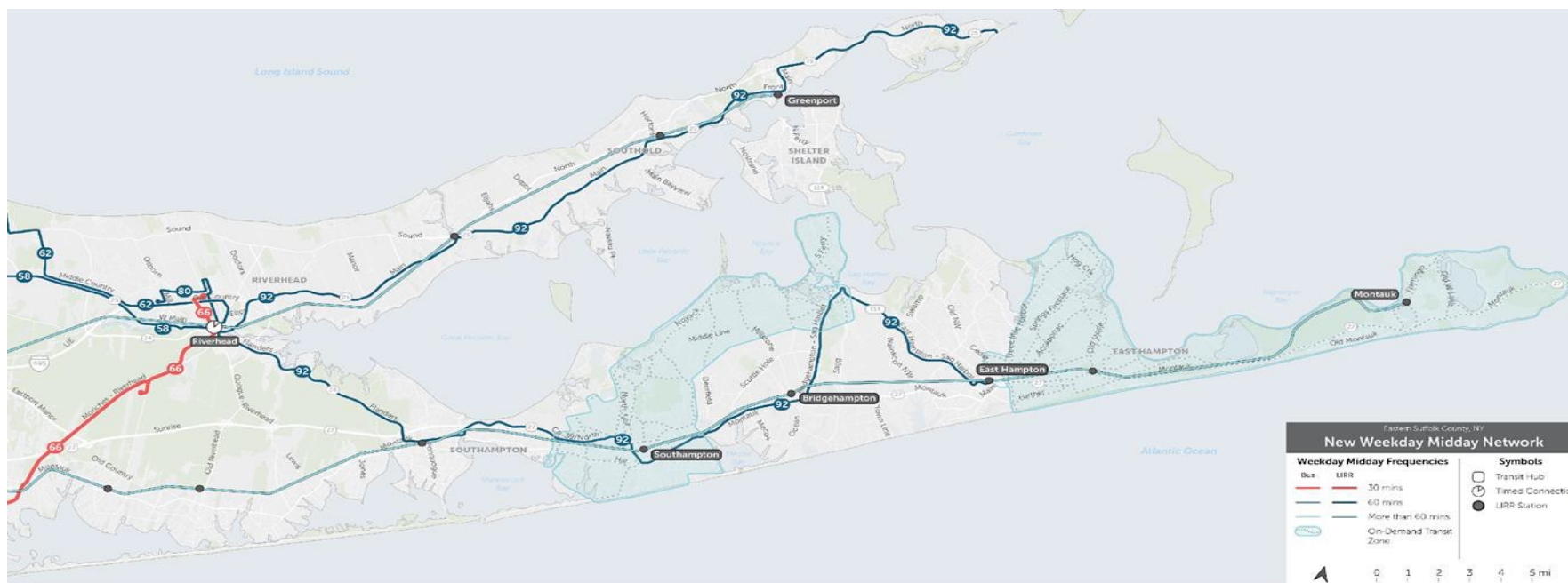
Microtransit on Demand Service

Right-Sized Service

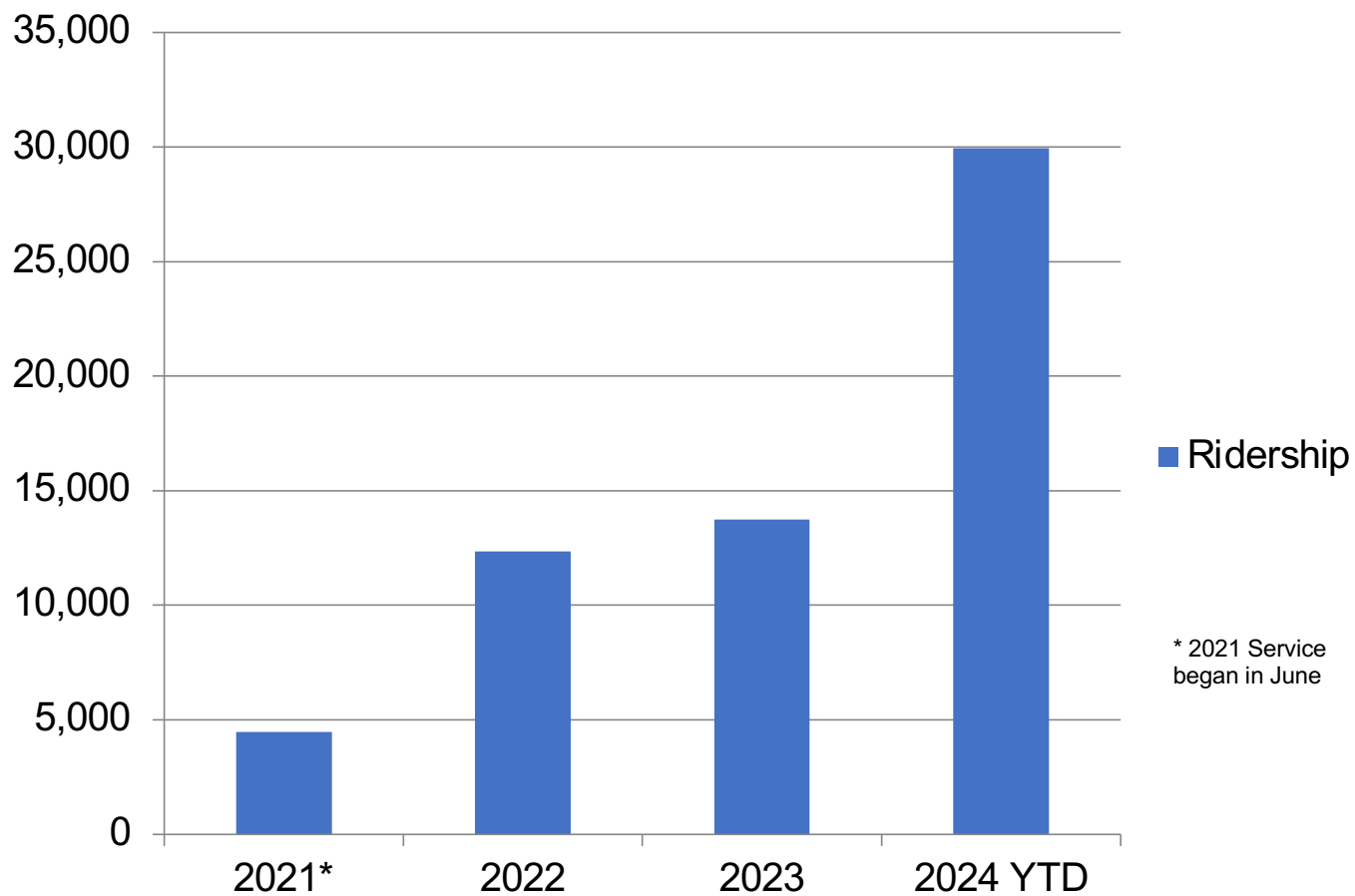
- Smaller vehicles for routes with lower peak loads
- Demand-response service for less dense areas
- Zones feature main trunk lines with room for route variations to serve first/last mile destinations



Microtransit Zones under New Network



Microtransit Ridership 2021-2024

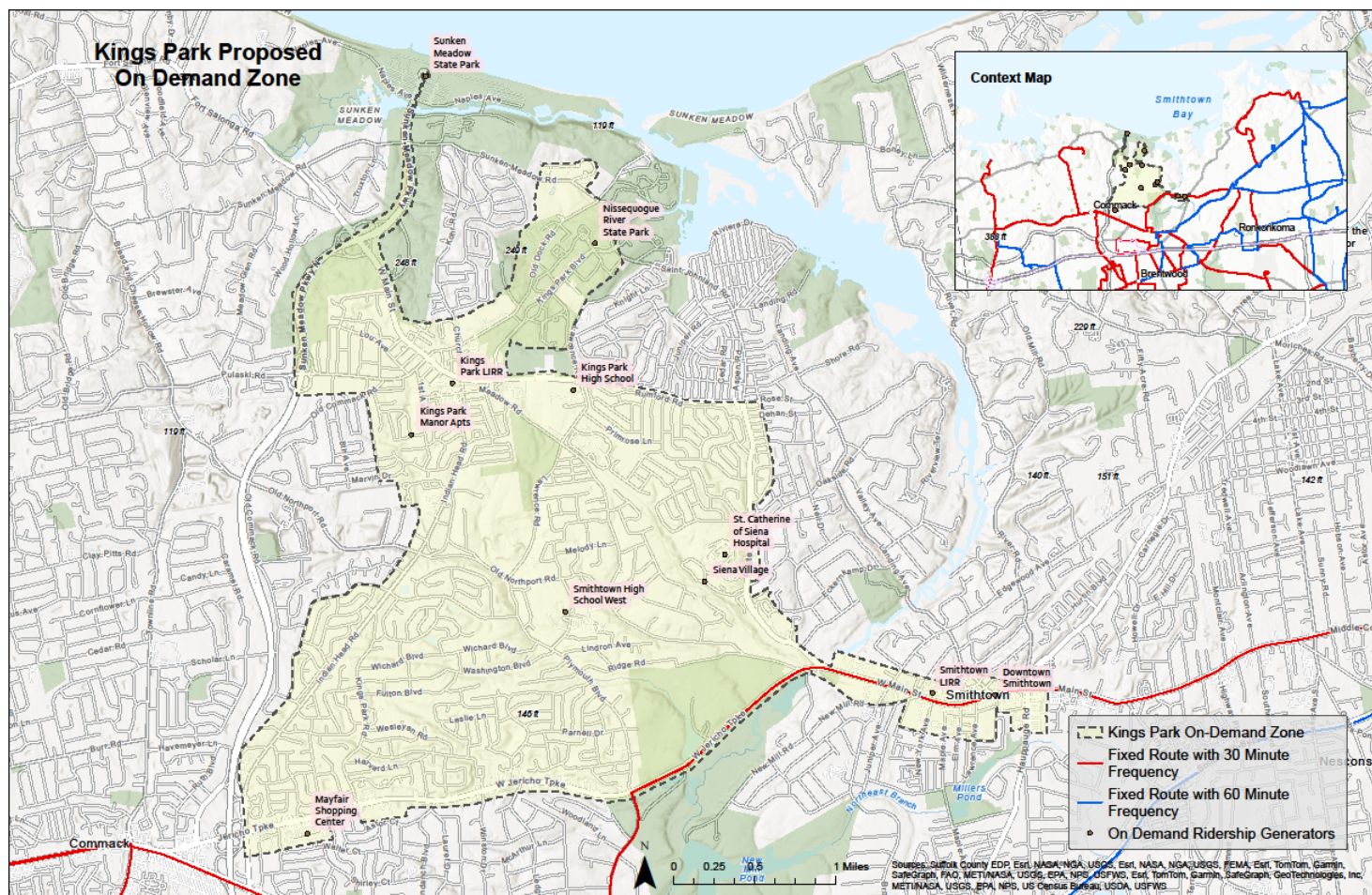


East Hampton Microtransit in 2024

- ❖ East Hampton service started on Sunday, April 28.
- ❖ In late Spring 2024 our operator advised that multiple factors lead to an unanticipated shortage of bus operators.
- ❖ To combat this our operator offered a pay bump to entice operators to operate the micro transit service, increased their driver marketing budget, implemented an increased signing bonus for new drivers, explored new advertising avenues, partnered with another local operator to add additional operators to help, and added additional seats, and reconfigured the trip planning algorithm.
- ❖ We believe that ease of use of the new system, walk distances of less than 800 feet and ETAs of 18-22 minutes vs the 60-90 min 10B + 10C headways resulted in higher than anticipated demand.
- ❖ In September we held a Planning Meeting to review service profiles and plan for future service, confirmed amount needed to sustain current LOS & secured appropriate funding for 2024 & 2025.

Total Requests						Seat Unavailable					
East Hampton Zone			Southampton Zone			East Hampton Zone			Southampton Zone		
Requests	Percent		Requests	Percent		Requests	Percent		Requests	Percent	
12 AM	63	0%	12 AM	43	0%	6 AM	301	6%	6 AM	81	2%
1 AM	28	0%	1 AM	13	0%	7 AM	298	5%	7 AM	145	3%
2 AM	21	0%	2 AM	15	0%	8 AM	416	8%	8 AM	190	4%
3 AM	12	0%	3 AM	13	0%	9 AM	267	5%	9 AM	211	5%
4 AM	23	0%	4 AM	17	0%	10 AM	303	6%	10 AM	299	7%
5 AM	118	0%	5 AM	65	0%	11 AM	267	5%	11 AM	336	8%
6 AM	1549	6%	6 AM	1055	5%	12 PM	418	8%	12 PM	286	7%
7 AM	2359	9%	7 AM	1310	6%	1 PM	526	10%	1 PM	380	9%
8 AM	2351	9%	8 AM	1230	6%	2 PM	251	5%	2 PM	422	10%
9 AM	1798	7%	9 AM	1203	6%	3 PM	419	8%	3 PM	378	9%
10 AM	1833	7%	10 AM	1311	6%	4 PM	492	9%	4 PM	390	9%
11 AM	1583	6%	11 AM	1385	7%	5 PM	615	11%	5 PM	488	11%
12 PM	1401	5%	12 PM	1362	6%	6 PM	447	8%	6 PM	379	9%
1 PM	1583	6%	1 PM	1530	7%	7 PM	409	8%	7 PM	317	7%
2 PM	1779	7%	2 PM	2060	10%	8 PM	0	0%	8 PM	2	0%
3 PM	2152	8%	3 PM	1989	9%						
4 PM	2247	9%	4 PM	1852	9%						
5 PM	2121	8%	5 PM	1873	9%	Total Seat Unavailable	5429		Total Seat Unavailable	4304	
6 PM	1571	6%	6 PM	1479	7%	Percent of Total Requests	21%		Percent of Total Requests	20%	
7 PM	1043	4%	7 PM	897	4%						
8 PM	388	1%	8 PM	351	2%						
9 PM	172	1%	9 PM	103	0%						
10 PM	130	0%	10 PM	90	0%						
11 PM	104	0%	11 PM	61	0%						
Total Requests	26429		Total Requests	21307							

Proposed Kings Park Microtransit Zone



After Implementation



Continuous refinement

- We will monitor what is working and what isn't, and make adjustments accordingly



Rider surveys

- We will survey riders to understand user satisfaction with the new system

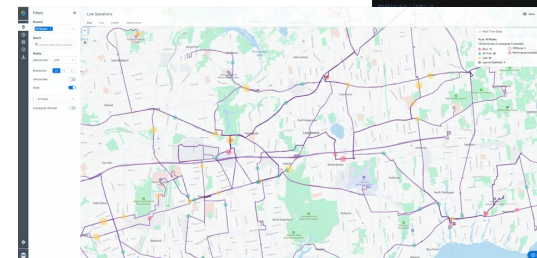
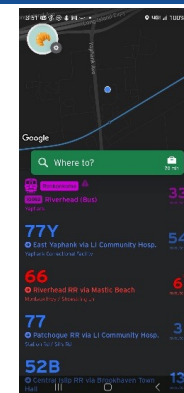
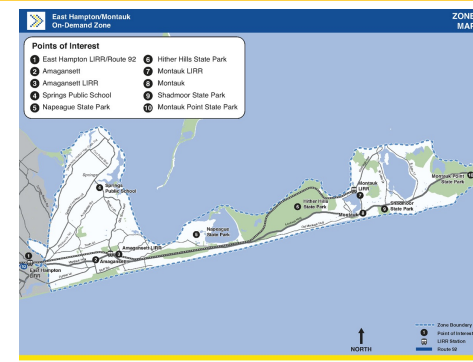


Ridership

- We will monitor ridership levels to understand trends and reactions to system changes

2024-2025 Items

- ❖ East Hampton MicroTransit replaced 10B & 10C: April 2024
- ❖ H Lee Dennison Building Bus Stop Move: May 2024
- ❖ Bus Stop Sign Installs: Summer – Fall 2024
- ❖ Real Time Next Bus Arrival Information: September 2024
- ❖ Smithtown Service Changes: September 2024
- ❖ On Bus Wi-Fi Rollout: 3Q 2024
- ❖ ParaTransit Software Upgrades (automated trip booking, mobile trip payment, next SCAT bus arrival): Fall 2024 - Summer 2025
- ❖ Kings Park MicroTransit Zone Start: Winter 2025
- ❖ Surveillance Camera Installs on Buses: 2Q 2025
- ❖ New SCAT Paratransit Vehicles In service: Ongoing



Lessons Learned

- ❖ Give people something good and they will respond to it.
- ❖ Viewed in the ridership/coverage spectrum; the desire for more coverage service speaks with a louder voice than the desire for more ridership service.
- ❖ There is more work to be done in translating the value of public transportation to the general public.
- ❖ For moderately sized transit systems like Suffolk County Transit, with limited staff, collaboration is key for navigating a system transition.
- ❖ Public transit can become enveloped in politics as any issue involving public investment.

Thank you!