

# Rapid Transit to Cambridge

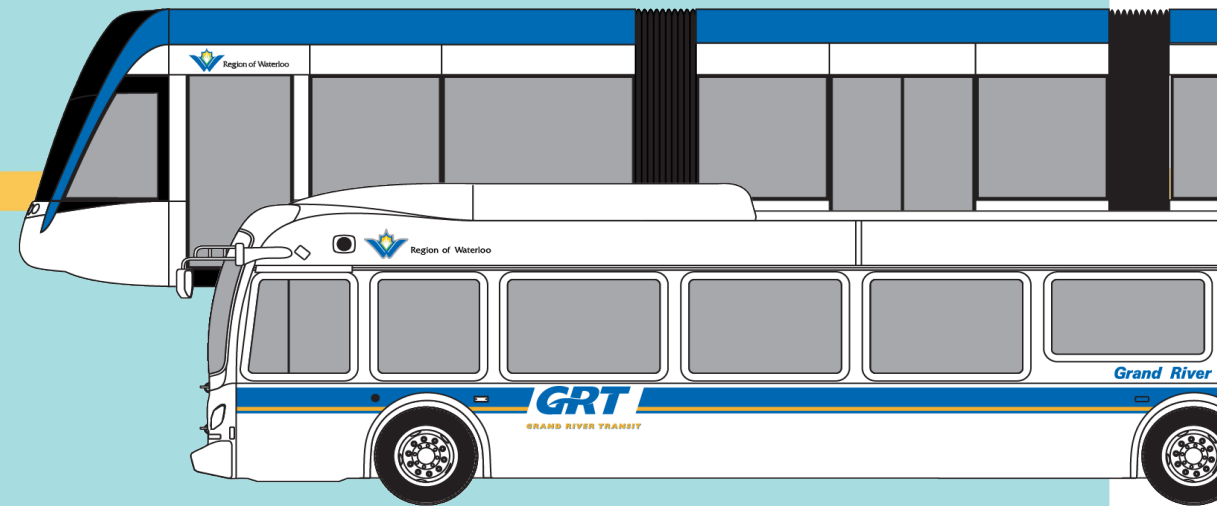
## Engagement results and recommendation



Region of Waterloo

**GRT**

GRAND RIVER TRANSIT



# Overview

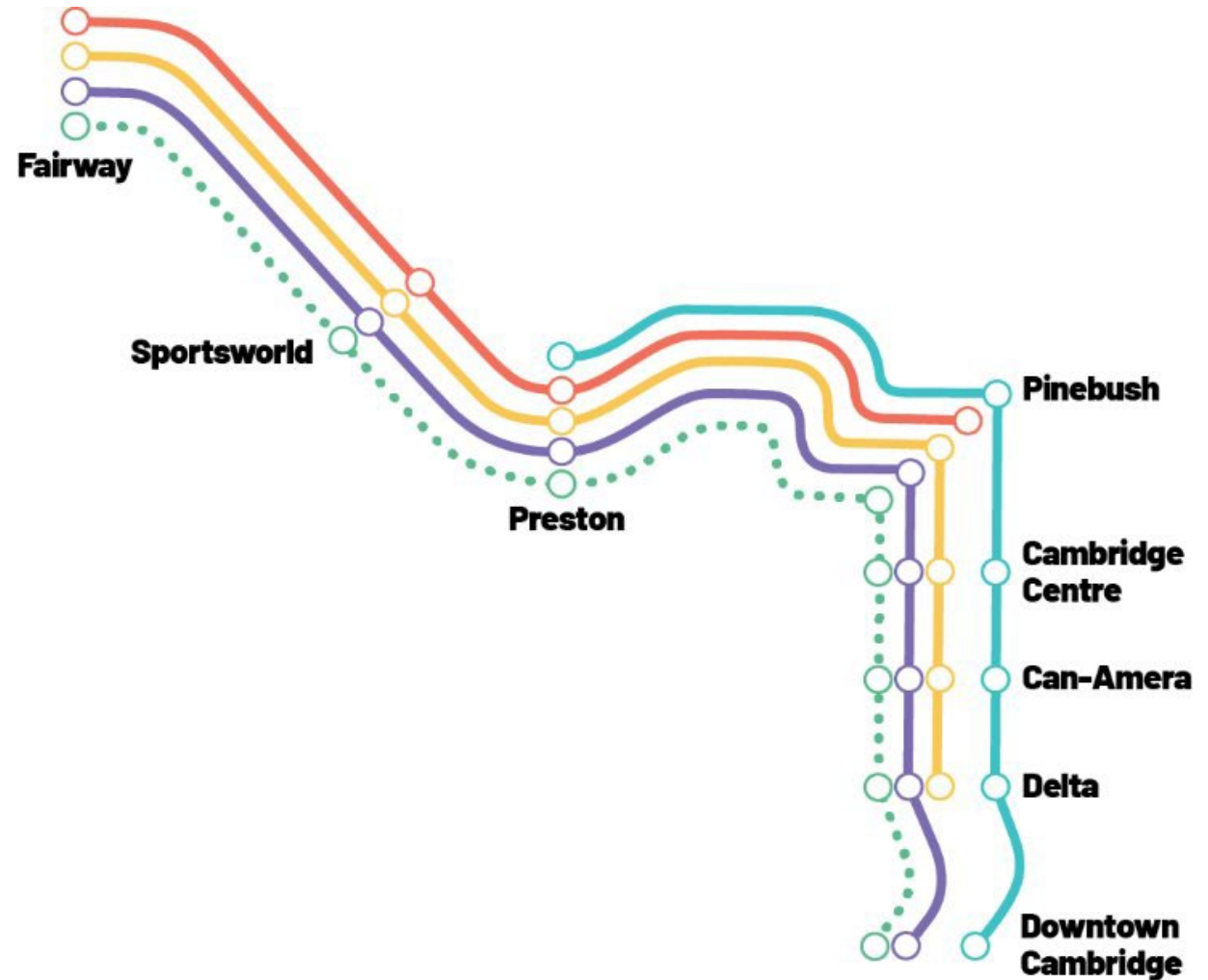
- Initial Business Case (IBC) results
- Public feedback and engagement summary
- Staff recommendation
  - Based on IBC results, project/Region goals, and public and stakeholder feedback
- Next steps: detailed design and pre-construction phase



# Options for Rapid Transit to Cambridge

- The Initial Business Case considers five options:
  - **Full LRT service:** LRT extended from Fairway Station to downtown Cambridge, creating one continuous LRT route
  - **Partial LRT service:** Shortened LRT routes that would connect to the remaining stations by express bus
    - Fairway Station to Pinebush Station
    - Fairway Station to Delta Station
    - Preston to Downtown Cambridge
  - **BRT service:** Dedicated and separated lanes for high-frequency buses from Fairway Station to Downtown Cambridge
    - Customers would need to transfer at Fairway Station between bus and train

# Options for Rapid Transit to Cambridge



# IBC results

- LRT has a higher cost to build and operate, but delivers the greatest economic benefits to Waterloo Region and achieves the strategic goals of rapid transit.
- BRT has lower costs than LRT but delivers less economic benefit and achieves many, but not all, of the project's strategic goals.
- The partial LRT options fall short of the economic benefits and fail to achieve the project's strategic goals, unlike the full-length options.
  - Missing potential to shape development and missing important connections to employment and housing areas.
  - No continuous connection from Waterloo to Kitchener to Cambridge.
  - Leaving residents near Downtown Cambridge without direct access to rapid transit, or requiring multiple transfers.

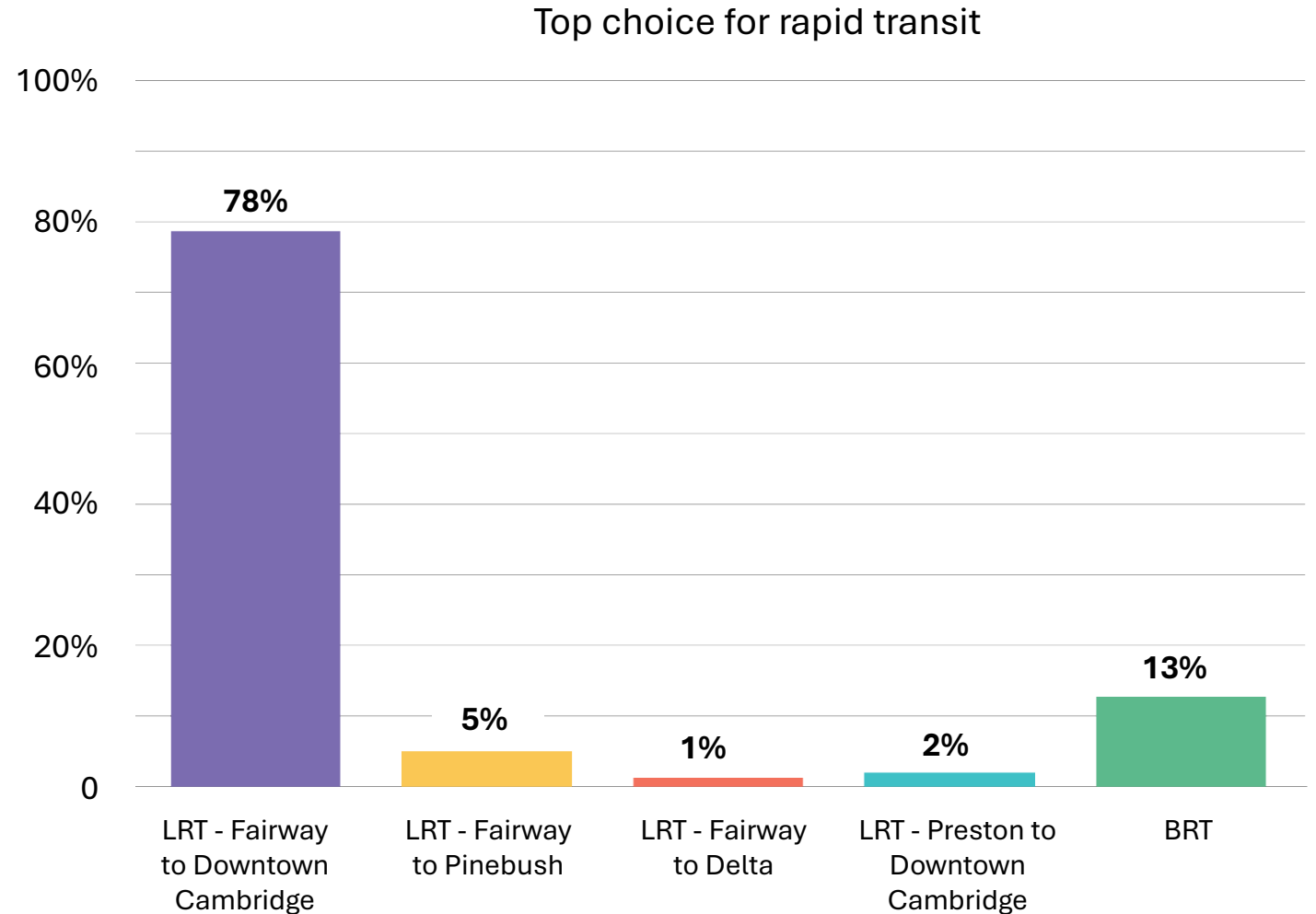
# Engagement summary

## By the numbers:

- More than 2,500 survey responses on Engage Waterloo Region and more than 1,600 responses to the Ipsos survey.
- Almost 12,000 visits to the Engage Waterloo Region page.
- Staff attended 30 events to engage the public and hand out info.
- 2,800 handouts distributed at information sessions, community events and transit stations; 11,000 flyers distributed along the proposed route.
- 160,000 views of social media posts.
- Five stakeholder sessions attended by local post secondaries, developers, BIAs and various community leaders.

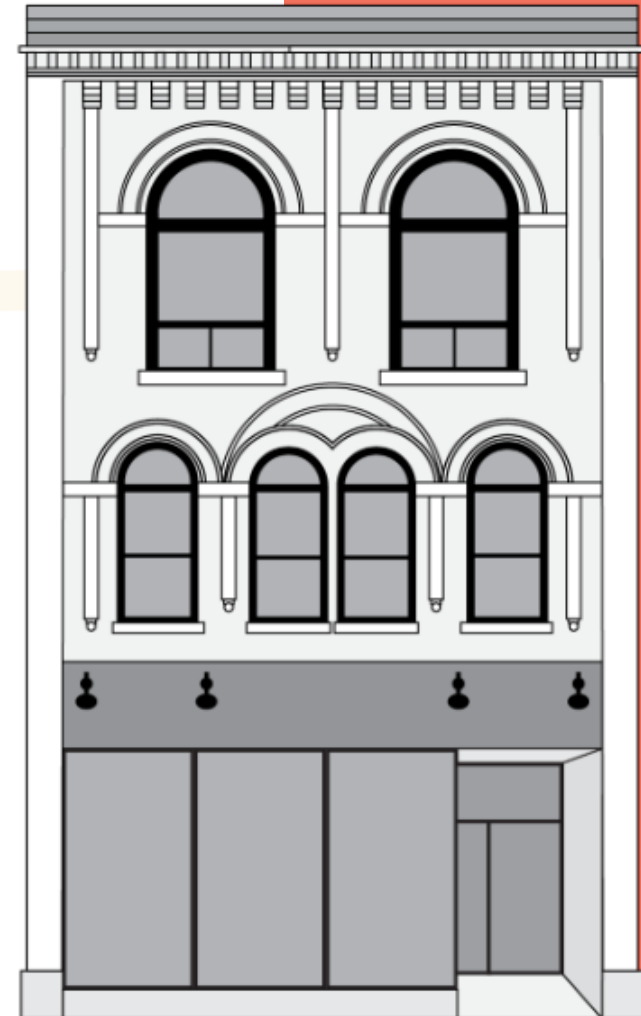
# Engage WR survey results

- Of the five options being considered, 78% of survey respondents want full LRT.
- 53% of respondents were from Cambridge.
- Of those Cambridge respondents, 74% want full LRT.
- Regardless of how often people ride transit, they see the benefits of LRT; even people who indicated that they rarely or never ride transit want to see full LRT.



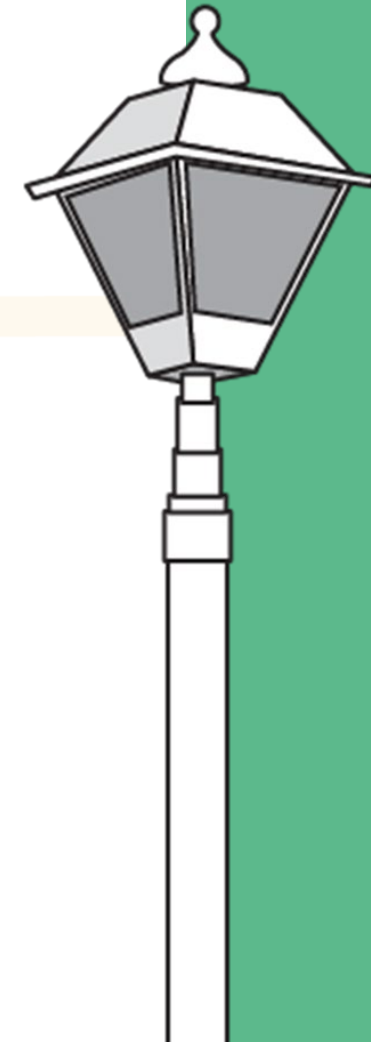
# Ipsos survey results

- Support for extending rapid transit to Cambridge stands at 75% across the Region, with 54% expressing strong support.
- While Cambridge shows slightly lower support (72% vs. 76% outside of Cambridge), opposition remains limited to 22% in Cambridge—meaning support exceeds opposition by more than 3:1.
- Across the Region, residents prefer LRT over BRT (54% vs 22%), while 23% have no preference.
- 70% of residents indicate their decision is firm, suggesting public opinion is unlikely to shift.



# Public and stakeholder feedback

- Developer, business and community stakeholders indicated LRT from Fairway Station to Downtown Cambridge is their preferred option.
- This option demonstrates commitment to increased development and opportunities in Cambridge.
- While BRT is considered a good option, stakeholders did not show the same enthusiasm and felt it could limit the potential of future transit ridership attraction and future development.
- In particular, the development community noted that the choice of vehicle technology is taken as a signal of government confidence in and commitment to the corridor.



# Recommendation

- That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action regarding the Region's proposed extension of Rapid Transit to Cambridge:
  - Endorse a full-length extension from Fairway Station in Kitchener to Downtown Cambridge as the preferred route length;
  - Endorse Light Rail Transit (LRT) as the preferred vehicle technology; and
  - Direct staff to pursue full funding from the Provincial and Federal governments for project development and implementation.

# What comes next?

- Upon approval of preferred vehicle technology and route length:
  - Staff will begin to immediately pursue, and advocate for, full project funding from the Provincial and Federal governments.
  - Move into the detailed design and pre-construction phase of the project.
    - In this phase, work will continue with heritage assessments, utility relocates, environmental field work and detailed design.
  - During the 2026 Annual Plan and Budget Process, a proposal will outline additional staff and capital funding required for the next phase.
  - Staff will provide a progress report on deliverables and funding updates in 2026.

Questions?

Let's connect  
Cambridge.

