Why ION?

1976 - Creating a central transit corridor in Waterloo Region is presented in the Regional Official Policies Plan

2000 - Region of Waterloo assumes responsibility for public transit

2003 - Council approves the Regional Growth Management Strategy, including a rapid transit system to help manage expected growth

2005 - The Minister of the Environment approves the Rapid Transit Environmental Assessment

2006 - Council approves rapid transit as the preferred transportation strategy

2009 - Council approves light rail transit (LRT) as the preferred technology for rapid transit in Waterloo Region

2010 - Provincial government commits $300 million towards rapid transit in the Region of Waterloo

2010 - Federal government commits to one-third of rapid transit project costs up to $265 million

June 15, 2011 - Region approves light rail transit, in two stages

2012 - Region decides to implement rapid transit through a design, build, finance, operate and maintain contract with a public-private partner

2013 - Rapid transit in Waterloo Region has a name – ION

2013 - Region agrees to purchase 14 vehicles from Bombardier

2014 - GrandLinq awarded the design, build, finance, operate and maintain contract for Stage 1 and finalizes a 30-year agreement

August 21, 2014 - Groundbreaking at the Operations, Storage and Maintenance Facility

Spring 2015 - Stage 1 construction begins in the urban cores

July 2017 - Stage 1 construction is complete

February 2018 - Testing begins across the alignment

December 2018 - All vehicles delivered to Waterloo Region

June 5, 2019 - Council endorses the Preferred Route for Stage 2

June 21, 2019 - Start of ION light rail service
### Why ION?

#### Moving people

Light rail provides a fast, reliable way to travel around our urban areas for work, shopping and entertainment. It provides people with more choice about how they move around the Region and increases their ability to travel without always needing a personal vehicle.

With more than 200,000 new residents expected to move to Waterloo Region over the next 20 years, light rail is a sustainable solution to meet our community’s future transportation needs.

#### Shaping our community

Light rail encourages more residential and commercial development in our existing urban areas. This type of development helps limit urban sprawl, reducing pressure on Waterloo Region’s precious farmland and groundwater sources.

Over 50 per cent of new development in Waterloo Region is happening in the existing urban areas, adding more residents and generating more jobs in our urban areas.

Without intensification, the Region would need to plan for significant expansion of the road network through existing, mature residential neighbourhoods.