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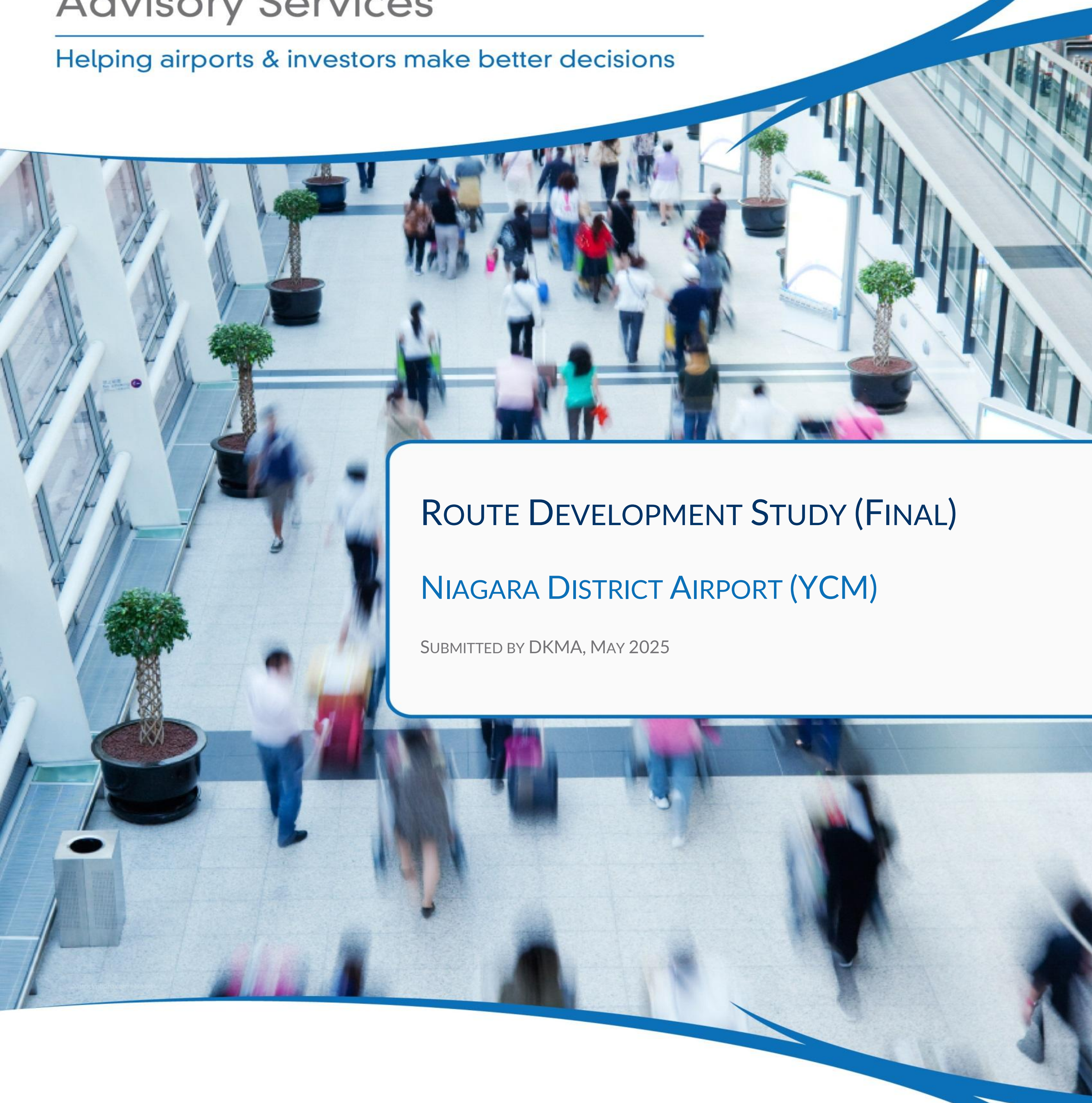

Route Development Study (Final)

Niagara District Airport (YCM)

Submitted by DKMA, May 2025

DKMA

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBSA:	Canada Border Services Agency
MIDT:	Marketing Information Data Tapes
OAG:	Official Airline Guide
O&D:	Origin and Destination
USCBP:	US Customs and Border Protection
YCM:	Niagara District Airport

Introduction

Scope of the Report

Avia NG has been commissioned to deliver a Redevelopment Study for the Niagara District Airport and as part of this DKMA, a firm specialising in airport forecasting and market research, has been mandated to provide the following studies:

1. A route development;
2. A traffic forecast; and
3. An economic impact study.

This report focuses on the route development study. The study has two key steps:

1) Estimate total passenger demand for the region/ catchment area; and
2) Once passenger demand has been estimated, identify the routes with the greatest potential for the airport.

For this study, DKMA has been requested to provide an independent view based on its experience and knowledge gained over the years from undertaking similar studies, and its knowledge of travel market trends, and airline strategies. In parallel, a series of consultations were held with key stakeholders.

Route Areas

- Domestic: All flights to/ from Canada
- Transborder: Any flights between Canada and the USA.
- Sun: Any flights between Canada Mexico and the Caribbean.
- Rest of International: All other international flights.

Main Sources of Data

For this study the main source of data used were the following:

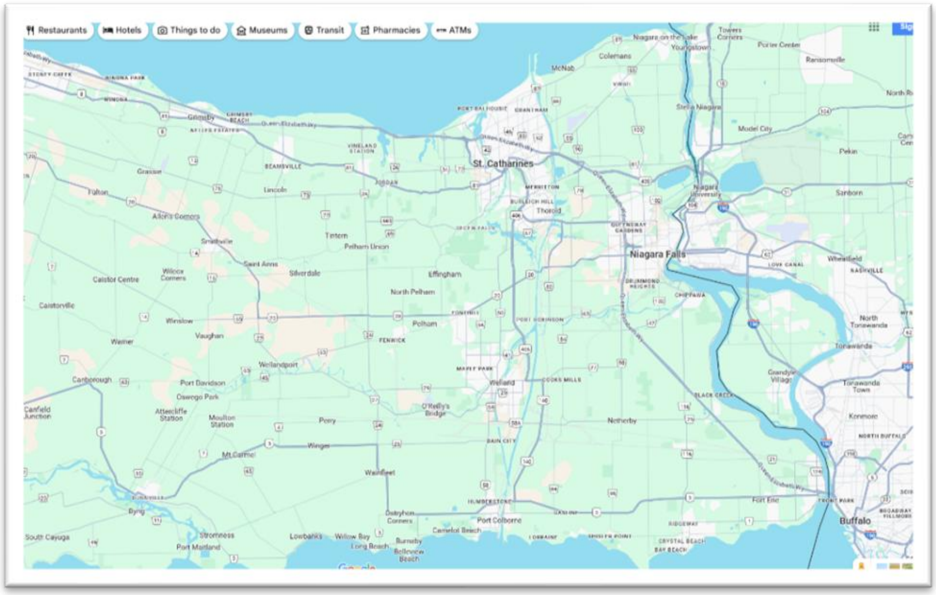
- MIDT (2019 data);
- Government of Ontario;
- OAG (for airline seating capacity); and
- Statistics Canada.

Main Acronyms

- CBSA: Canada Border Security Agency;
- MIDT: Marketing Information Data Tapes;
- O&D: Origin & Destination;
- OAG: Official Airline Guide;
- USCBP: US Customs and Border Protection; and
- YCM: Niagara District Airport.

Niagara Catchment Area

- Fort Erie;
- Grimsby;
- Lincoln;
- Niagara Falls;
- Niagara on the Lake;
- Pelham;
- Port Colborne;
- St. Catharines;
- Thorold;
- Wainfleet;
- Welland; and
- West Lincoln.



Stakeholder Discussions

- Casino Niagara;
- City of St. Catharines;
- City of Niagara Falls;
- Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce;
- Niagara Falls Convention Centre;
- Niagara Falls Hotel Association;
- Niagara on the Lake Chamber of Commerce;
- Niagara Parks;
- Niagara Region;
- Niagara Tourism;
- Tourism Partnership of Niagara;
- Town of Niagara on the Lake; and
- Wine Industry.

Overview of the Competitive Landscape

The region of Niagara is situated in Southern Ontario which is a major player in Canada's economy and is the most populated region of Canada. Given the size of Southern Ontario, the region is served by a number of airports. Within a 2-hour car drive from Niagara we note that seven (7) airports offer commercial flights: five (5) are situated in Canada and two (2) in the US. While they each offer commercial flights each airport has a different level of traffic and a different route network. For example, we have Canada's largest airport namely Toronto-Pearson International with a dense network (including a large international network), Toronto-Billy Bishop which is limited to short and medium haul routes because only turboprop operations are permitted and Kitchener Waterloo which is an operating base for the low-cost carrier Flair Airlines.

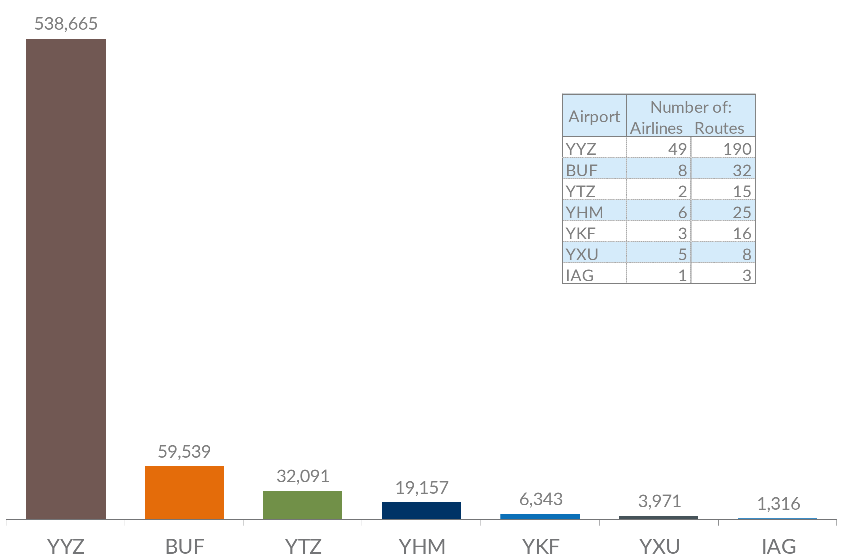
Estimated drive time
and distance (KM)

Airport	Time	Distance
IAG	0:45	27*
BUF	1:00	60
YHM	1:05	80
YYZ	1:20	114
YKF	1:35	130
YTZ	1:45	120
YXU	2:00	190

* Border crossing time not included

The seven (7) airports combined were scheduled to supply over 34 million departing seats in 2024 and unsurprisingly Toronto-Pearson dominated in terms of passengers. In 2024, Toronto-Pearson had 49 carriers operating 190 routes and the airport with the second largest network, Buffalo, had 8 carriers operating 32 routes. In comparison, in 2019 these airports offered 36 million departing seats.

Average Weekly Departing Seats in 2024

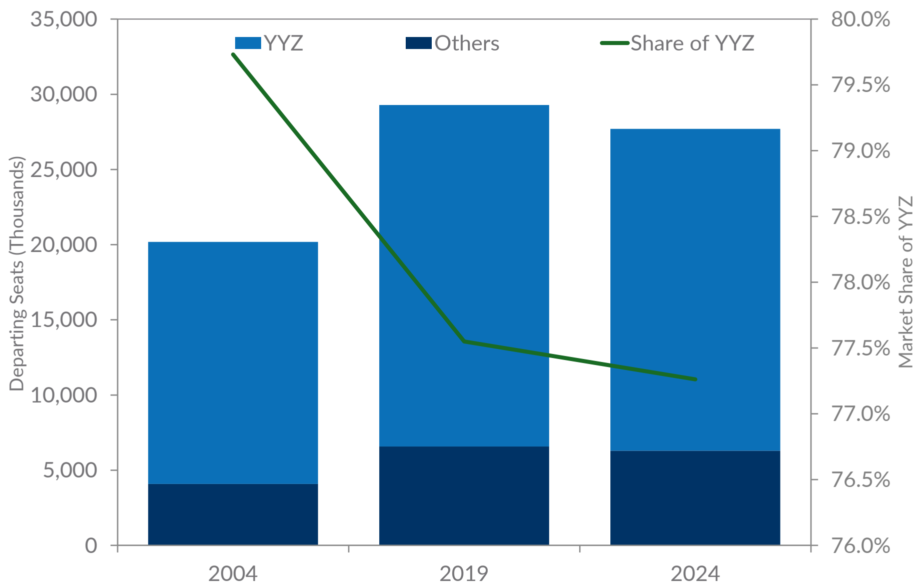


Airport	Number of: Airlines	Routes
YYZ	49	190
BUF	8	32
YTZ	2	15
YHM	6	25
YKF	3	16
YXU	5	8
IAG	1	3

Source: DKMA analysis based on OAG

As indicated Toronto-Pearson dominates but the competitive landscape in Southern Ontario is slowly changing. Between 2004 and 2024 airports in the region other than Toronto-Pearson have increased their capacity by over 50%. Despite this Toronto-Pearson still dominates with 77% of the regional capacity (vs. 80% in 2004).

Departing Seats: Toronto-Pearson (YYZ) vs. Other Airports
All Routes except International Long-Haul, 2004-2024



Source: DKMA analysis based on OAG

Despite investments, in the long-run it will be a challenge for Toronto-Pearson (YYZ) to add significant capacity. Faced with increasing constraints, Toronto-Pearson will normally favor international development. Toronto-Billy Bishop which is also a key airport in Southern Ontario is currently governed by the Tripartite Agreement until 2033. Under this agreement only turboprops can operate but a new agreement which will govern the airport after 2033 will change the operating environment but at this stage it's impossible to know what changes might come about. Even if the new Tripartite Agreement increases the capacity at the airport (by allowing small jet operations for example), the airport which is situated on a small island will eventually be constrained.

A growing economy in Southern Ontario will generate more air transport in the future and since some airports are expected to be constrained that will provide some opportunities for smaller airports to meet demand. In particular the smaller airports should be well positioned to serve the domestic, transborder and sun markets.

The key questions for this study are:

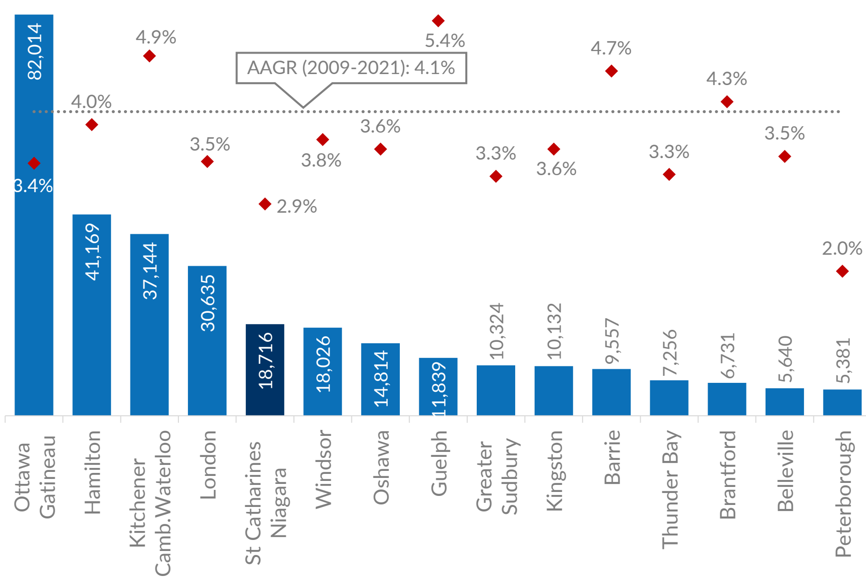
1. How large is the passenger air transport market for Niagara?
2. What are the largest O&D markets for Niagara?
3. Which routes could be served from Niagara District Airport?

Overview of the Socio-economic, Tourism and Demographic Tourism Profile

Niagara Falls' economy is a diverse mix of tourism, manufacturing and agriculture sectors. The region is a major hub for trade with the United States, with a strong manufacturing sector and a globally renowned tourism industry.

Tourism is a major engine of growth with millions of visitors annually spending billions in the region. In terms of manufacturing, among other things, the region has a history in the automobile sector and the agriculture sector centres on the production of fresh fruits and vegetables as well as the production of wines.

Nominal GDP by Key Regions in Ontario (Excludes Toronto)
2021 Millions CDN$



Source: Statistics Canada

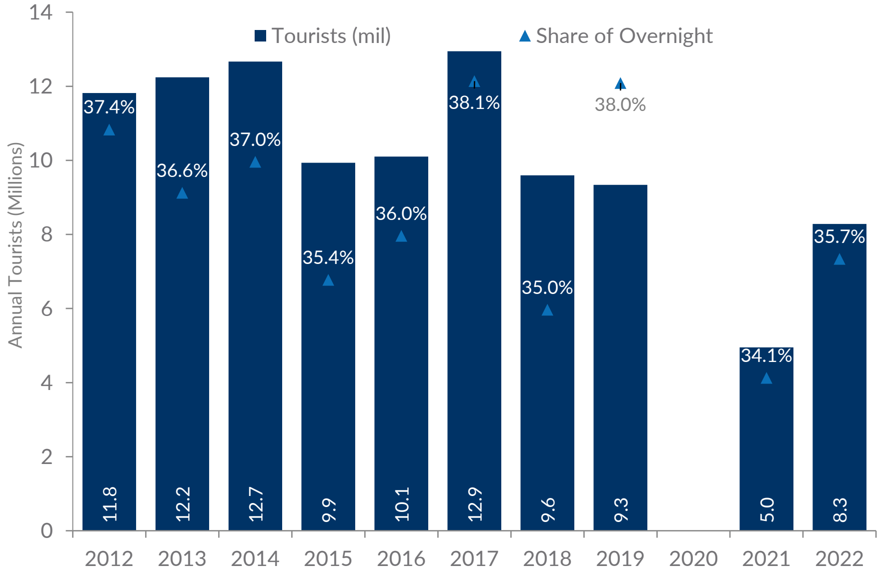
According to Statistics Canada in 2021 GDP totalled nearly $18 billion. GDP growth rate for Niagara lagged Ontario between 2009 and 2021 (2.9% vs. 4.1%). In an effort to reverse the trend Niagara has undergone important economic changes recently and benefitted from large investments which should well position the region in the future. One such example is, Asahi Kasei Corporation which announced an $1.6 billion investment to build a battery plant in Port Colborne. However, the economic activity in Niagara is currently soft (and will remain soft for some time), reflecting challenging economic conditions across the country as a result of the tariff war with the US. In the short and medium term there is a real risk of a recession.

Niagara has long been among the most prominent tourism destinations in Canada, given the large variety of attractions in the area including natural wonders, cultural heritage, and entertainment.

In 2019 over 9.3 million tourists visited the region and about 65% of tourists were from Ontario. In parallel, Americans and overseas travellers accounted for about 30% of the visitors and the remainer were from elsewhere in Canada. In 2022 an estimated 8.3 million tourists visited the region and while international figures are not yet available in 2023 nearly 8.4 million domestic tourists visited the region. This is a 15% increase over 2019.

According to Niagara Economic Development, in 2023 the tourism industry supported 37,261 direct jobs, which is a decline to 16% from the pre-pandemic levels. This reflects the on-going pandemic effects on this industry. Despite this the tourism industry is a leading sector for the region.

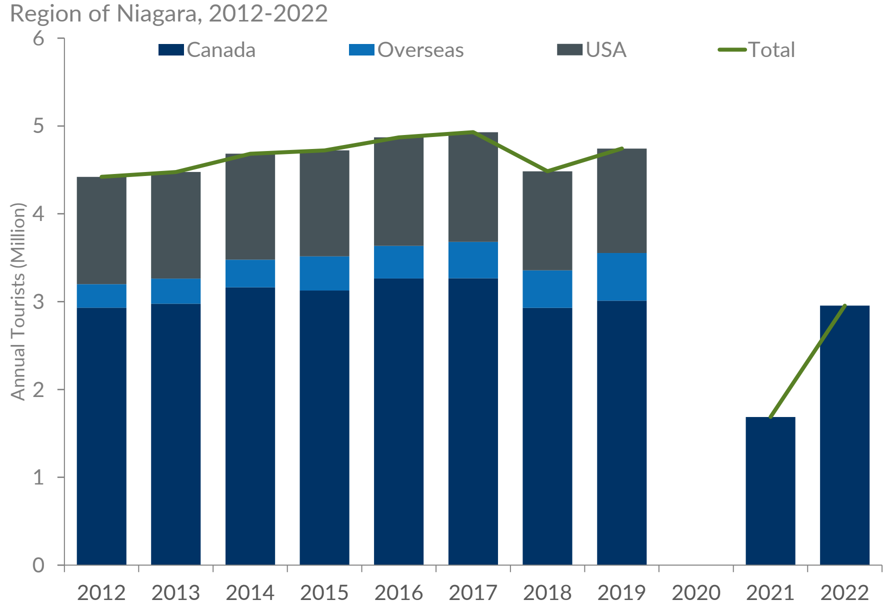
Estimated Annual Tourists and Share of Overnight Tourists
Region of Niagara, 2012-2022



Source: Government of Ontario

The vast majority of tourists are 'same day' visitors who are less likely to travel by air than those who overnight. The number of tourists who overnight, varies by year but pre-pandemic it was over 4 million tourists annually with the majority originating from Canada. Post pandemic, the figures for overseas and US visitors are not available but by 2022 Canadian overnight tourists had recovered from the pandemic.

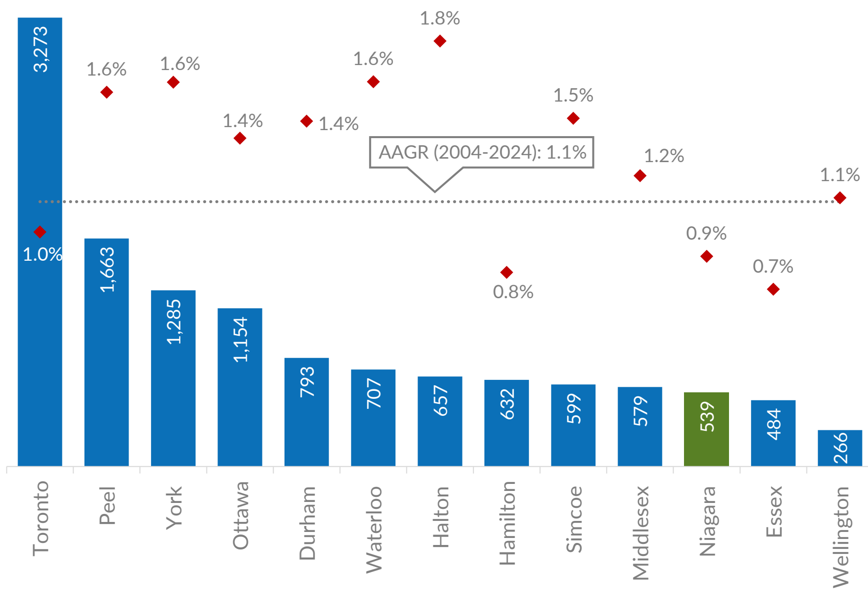
Estimated Annual Overnight Tourists by Key Region of Origin
Region of Niagara, 2012-2022



Source: Government of Ontario

Changes in an area's population are driven by two factors: natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (arrivals minus departures). A strong regional economy with job opportunities will help a region retain its population and attract new residents from other regions and abroad. In 2024 it is estimated that the population of Niagara nearly reached 540,000 residents up 0.9% p.a. since 2004. In comparison the provincial level population has increased by 1.1% p.a. As a result, Niagara's share within the province has declined (3.5% in 2004 vs. 3.3% in 2024) and, taking into account the fact that its economy has developed less rapidly than at the provincial level, a declining population share does not come as a surprise.

Largest Divisions in Ontario in 2024 (Thousands) and 2004-2024 Growth



Source: Statistics Canada

The key comments:
1) The economy and population in the region of Niagara is large enough to support passenger air transport at Niagara District Airport.
2) The trade war with the US and the uncertainty surrounding the Trump administration will translate into an economic slowdown/ recession in Southern Ontario.
3) Tourism is a key sector in the region and currently most visitors are 'same-day'. Having passenger flights at Niagara District Airport could greatly stimulate the tourism sector, in particular 'over-night visitors.

Estimated Passenger Demand in the Catchment Area

Methodology

Currently there are no commercial air services at Niagara District Airport but given the size of the economy and population there is a consensus that air passenger demand in the catchment area exists. As a result of the lack of air service from Niagara District Airport, currently the entire demand must be handled by competing airports in the region, i.e., 100% of the demand is leaked to other airports.

Passenger demand in the catchment area is composed of 'resident' travel and 'visitor' travel. Each component of the demand will be estimated separately. Resident travel will be based on MIDT data and visitors will be based on other comparable airports. The sum of both components will represent the total estimated passenger demand.

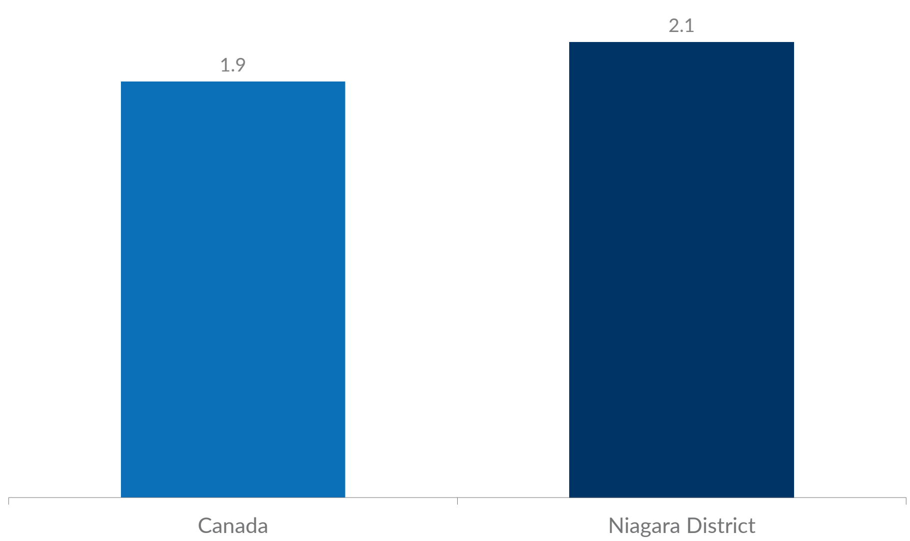
Resident travel: As indicated above resident travel is estimated based on 2019 MIDT data. DKMA had access to both 2023 and 2019 MIDT data. A top-level analysis indicated that 2023 demand had not yet recovered from the pandemic and thus offered an incomplete picture. Rather, 2019 was the last year prior to the Covid pandemic and offered a much more complete picture of the local demand. Based on these facts, the 2019 MIDT was selected.

The 2019 MIDT that was analyzed covered resident ticket sales within the catchment area (for the definition of the catchment area please see page 4). The postal code was used to identify the ticket sales in the catchment area. Not all ticket sales include postal code information plus some carriers (most notably low cost airlines) are not included in the MIDT database which means that the data set is incomplete.

To calibrate the MIDT DKMA proceeded as follows:

- Low-cost carrier activity varies by airport but it's particularly important for Niagara Falls Airport (IAG) in the US and it is understood that a number of Niagara area residents use this airport. To estimate the low-cost activity by airport in the catchment area (see page 5) the team analysed the OAG data which provides seating information by carrier (including low cost airlines). To convert low-cost carrier seats into passengers, a passenger load factor was estimated (PLF). Once the low-cost passengers by airport were estimated, the team estimated the share of Niagara residents using this airport. Appling the market share to the estimated passengers gave us a figure for the number of residents who flew on low-cost flights at the competing airports. These estimated figures were added to the MIDT.
- The missing ticket sales that had their postal code field left blank were calculated by first estimating a propensity to fly for residents in the region. In 2019, DKMA estimates that in Canada, in 2019, there was 1.9 trips per inhabitant and for Niagara we estimate that the trips per inhabitant could be 2.1. Southern Ontario (including Niagara) has a higher disposable income than the national level and this leads to more travel. Given the population of the region this translates to close to 1.0 million passengers in 2019. Based on this the data was adjusted to make sure that the MIDT and low cost passengers totalled close to 1.0 million trips.

Estimated Trip per In-habitant (2019): Canada vs. Niagara District



Source: DKMA analysis based on Statistics Canada data

Visitor travel: For the visitors, DKMA had access to a database which included information on the share of residents versus visitors for airports around the world. DKMA analyzed airports which have a composition of demand comparable to what is anticipated at Niagara District Airport. The airports analyzed centered on airports with an important share of tourists and/ or that have a developed economy. These airports gave us a share of residents versus visitors which was applied to the MIDT.

Stakeholder Discussions

When selecting the routes with the most potential, aside from the MIDT data, the team also took into consideration the information provided by the various stakeholders that were consulted.

All the stakeholders understand that a well-developed local airport will facilitate the flow of goods, investments and trade and that a well-developed route network improves lives and communities.

The tourism experts believed that direct air service would support the development of their industry and help them meet the following objectives:

- Increase the number of foreign tourists (from the US in particular): These tourists are valuable for the region because they spend more than a typical Canadian tourist.
- Increase the average stay: Because today most of the tourists are 'same-day' the average stay in the region is low. Tourists arriving by air would typically stay a few days in the region.
- Niagara Falls has a large convention center which could more easily attract North American conferences if direct access by air was possible.

For the tourism sector the key routes to serve were (a) the US east coast where many US tourists originate from and (b) at least one route to a hub airport (e.g., Montreal-YUL). Having quality service to a hub airport would mean that one-stop to Niagara would be accessible to the world.

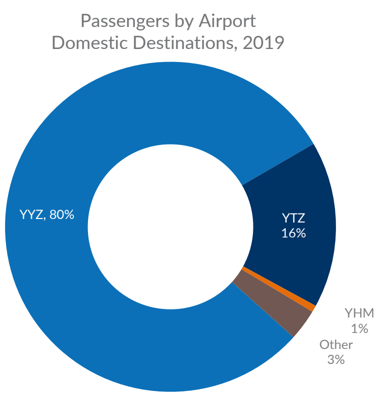
Broadly speaking the other economic stakeholders also expressed the need for service to hub airports, connection to large US cities and service to the main Canadian cities.

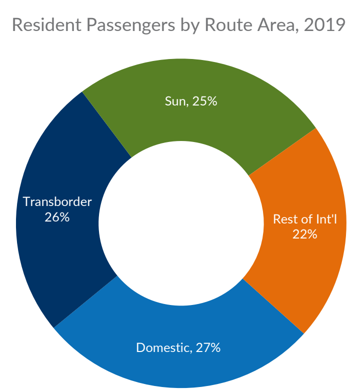
Finally, the residents indicated that service to sun destination (US or the Caribbean) was important along with connection to the main Canadian markets.

Results

Resident passengers: Based on calibrated MIDT it is estimated that in 2019 residents in the catchment area generated nearly 1 million O&D passengers. Naturally, because Niagara District Airport doesn't operate any commercial flights, the entire passenger demand was leaked to other airports. Most passengers relied on Toronto-Pearson while 16% used Toronto City Centre but about 7%also used US airports.

The domestic market was the largest but overall resident demand is well balanced by route area.

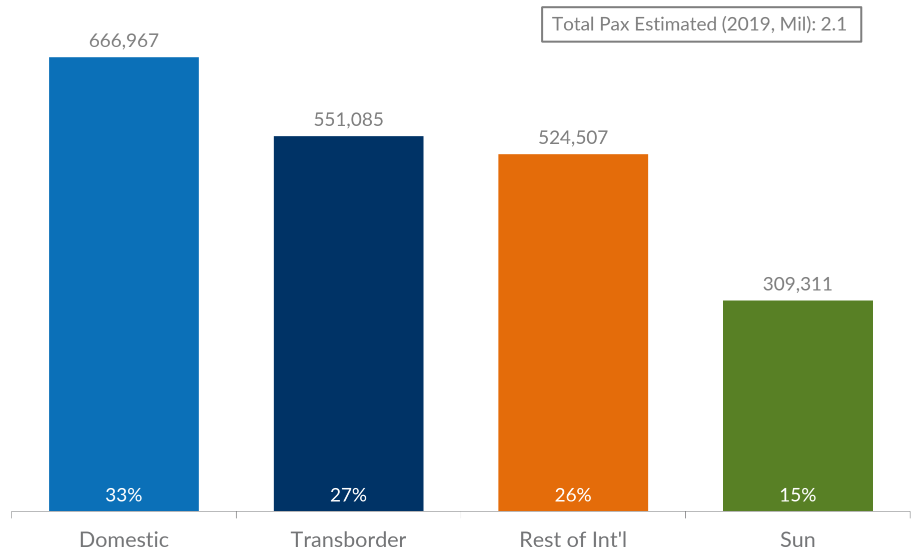




Source: DKMA based on calibrated MIDT

Total passengers: Once residents and visitors are combined it is estimated that in 2019 the catchment area generated 2.1 million passengers. While the resident demand was well balanced by route area, when visitors were added we note some significant changes in the market composition. The domestic market remains the largest, but the 'Sun' route area is the smallest of the 4 route areas. Given that this market is supported largely by resident travel, this is not unexpected.

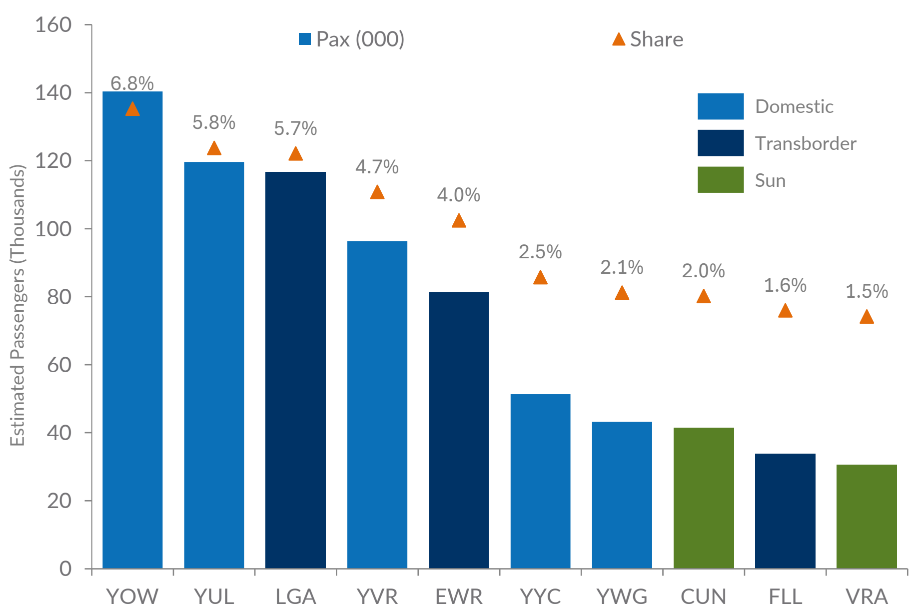
Estimated Passenger Demand by Route Area, 2019
Residents and Visitors



Source: DKMA based on calibrated MIDT

The destinations in the region are diversified and centre on short and medium haul destinations. More precisely, in 2019 passengers in the region flew to over 600 different destinations and the 10 largest routes accounted for 37% of total passengers. As can be seen in the next chart the top 10 routes were all short and medium haul. The largest long-haul route was London-Heathrow (and it ranked 15th).

Top 10 Routes: Estimated Passengers and Market Share (2019)



Source: DKMA based on calibrated MIDT

Exceptions exist but normally only the largest routes/ markets will be served on non-stop by airlines.

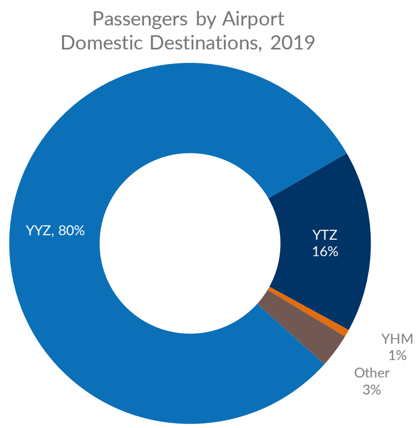
The next tables will highlight the largest O&D markets by route area.

Domestic market: The domestic market is a mix of short-haul and medium/ long-haul routes. We also note that there is a mix of destinations from the Maritimes, the West Coast and several Ontario destinations.

Together Ottawa and Montreal are the two largest domestic routes, and these two short-haul routes account for about 40% of the domestic demand. Vancouver, Calgary and Winnipeg, all medium/ long-haul routes complete the top 5. Together these 5 routes account for over 65% of all passengers.

Niagara Falls Catchment Area: Top 15 Domestic Markets (Residents and Visitors, 2019)			
Rank	Market	Total O&D	Share
1	Ottawa	140,350	21%
2	Montreal, Dorval	119,560	18%
3	Vancouver	96,150	14%
4	Calgary	51,343	8%
5	Winnipeg	43,214	6%
6	Halifax	23,564	4%
7	Edmonton	26,107	4%
8	Timmins	18,946	3%
9	Thunder Bay	11,529	2%
10	Moncton	10,268	2%
11	Kelowna	9,911	1%
12	St. Johns	9,644	1%
13	Quebec	9,280	1%
14	Sudbury	9,195	1%
15	Deer Lake	7,195	1%
	Sub-total	586,256	
	Others	81,617	12%
	Total	666,967	

Source: DKMA based on calibrated MIDT

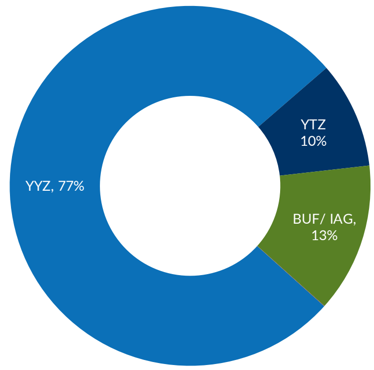


Transborder market: The largest market is New York (LGA & EWR) and next are a series of US sun destinations (e.g., Fort Lauderdale). It is estimated that nearly 15% of the transborder passengers rely on either Buffalo Niagara International Airport (BUF) or Niagara Falls International Airport (IAG).

Niagara Falls Catchment Area: Top 15 Transborder Markets (Residents and Visitors Travel Only, 2019)			
Rank	Market	Total O&D	Share
1	New York (La Guardia)	114,414	21%
2	New York (Newark)	80,578	15%
3	Ft. Lauderdale	33,841	6%
4	Orlando	22,464	4%
5	Las Vegas	16,348	3%
6	Miami	13,744	2%
7	San Francisco	12,230	2%
8	Los Angeles	12,173	2%
9	Boston	11,664	2%
10	Chicago (O'Hare)	10,582	2%
11	Madison	11,268	2%
12	Nashville	9,345	2%
13	New Orleans	9,185	2%
14	Atlanta-Hartfield	8,972	2%
15	Dallas/Ft. Worth	7,900	1%
	Sub-total	374,708	
	Others	175,795	32%
	Total	551,085	

Source: DKMA based on calibrated

Passengers by Airport
Transborder Destinations, 2019

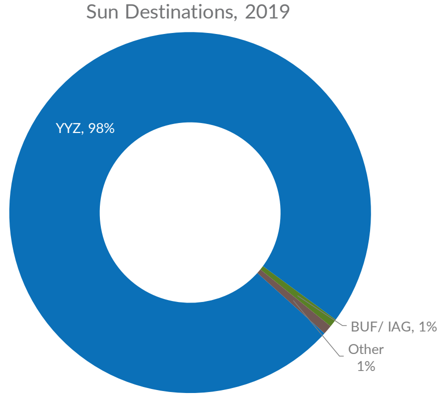


'Sun' destinations: Mexico, Cuba and Jamaica are the countries which generate most of the sun passengers in the region. In 2019 Toronto Pearson had a near monopoly on this route area. The Dash 8 Q400 which operates from Toronto-Billy Bishop does not have the range to reach these destinations while Niagara Falls (IAG) only serves US domestic routes and the other airports (BUF, YHM and YKF) operated only a small number of seasonal 'sun' routes in 2019.

Niagara Falls Catchment Area: Top 15 Sun Markets (Residents and Visitors Travel Only, 2019)			
Rank	Market	Total O&D	Share
1	Cancun	41,448	13%
2	Varadero	30,604	10%
3	Cayo Coco	28,617	9%
4	Punta Cana	27,929	9%
5	Montego Bay	24,649	8%
6	Holguin	17,343	6%
7	Santa Clara	16,400	5%
8	Puerto Plata	15,840	5%
9	Mexico City	9,905	3%
10	Puerto Vallarta	7,652	2%
11	San Salvador	6,552	2%
12	Nassau	5,427	2%
13	Liberia	4,831	2%
14	St. Lucia	4,731	2%
15	Los Cabos	4,559	1%
	Sub-total	246,487	
	Others	58,586	19%
	Total	309,311	

Source: DKMA based on calibrated

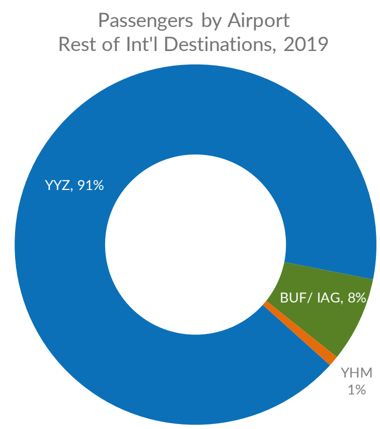
Passengers by Airport
Sun Destinations, 2019



International market: The international market is by far the most diversified, where London-Heathrow is the largest route accounting for 4% of demand (6% when London-Gatwick is included).

Niagara Falls Catchment Area: Top 15 Rest of Int'l Markets (Residents and Visitors, 2019)			
Rank	Market	Total O&D	Share
1	London-Heathrow	22,415	4%
2	Amsterdam	15,340	3%
3	Paris-CDG	15,218	3%
4	Dublin	15,124	3%
5	Rome-Fiumicino	14,574	3%
6	Warsaw	11,772	2%
7	Beijing	10,378	2%
8	Athens	9,946	2%
9	Chennai (Madras)	9,650	2%
10	Lima	9,452	2%
11	London-Gatwick	9,344	2%
12	Barcelona	8,699	2%
13	Frankfurt	8,523	2%
14	Santiago-Benitez	8,327	2%
15	Manila	7,880	2%
	Sub-total	176,642	
	Others	346,842	66%
	Total	524,507	

Source: DKMA based on calibrated



Proposed Routes

Based on the estimated passenger demand, the stakeholder discussions and the airport operational characteristics (most notably the runway length) the team selected the routes which have the greatest potential to be served from Niagara District Airport (YCM).

Note: DKMA has not analysed the financial viability of the proposed routes, nor are any specific airlines proposed. The economic environment has not been taken into consideration and DKMA has not had any discussion with airlines. There is no guarantee that a carrier would select these routes.

In terms of operational characteristics, currently the main runway has 5,000 feet and can accommodate the Dash 8 Series 400 which is the largest type suitable for operating from it.

It is assumed that by 2030 the main runway would be extended to 7,500 feet[1] enabling some Code C jet (e.g. EMB E195-E2) to operate short and medium- haul flights. In parallel, that same year it is also assumed that the airport would have the necessary CBSA facilities to support scheduled transborder and sun operations.

Given that the estimated passenger demand was based on 2019 figures it was necessary to estimate demand in the future and the following table highlights the assumed growth rates.

Historical and projected passenger growth rate by route area																
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Domestic	-71.2%	22.5%	121.6%	14.7%	-1.1%	-0.5%	2.8%	2.5%	2.3%	2.0%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%
Transborder	-76.8%	-18.4%	305.1%	36.5%	12.4%	2.0%	2.9%	2.6%	2.5%	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%	2.0%
Sun	-55.6%	-49.8%	241.1%	29.3%	12.2%	2.8%	3.3%	3.0%	2.8%	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%

Source: DKMA assumption

[1] In comparison Waterloo Airport (YKF) has a 7,003 foot runway and offers service to Canadian, American and Caribbean destinations using the Boeing 737-800 and 737-8 aircraft with 189 seats.

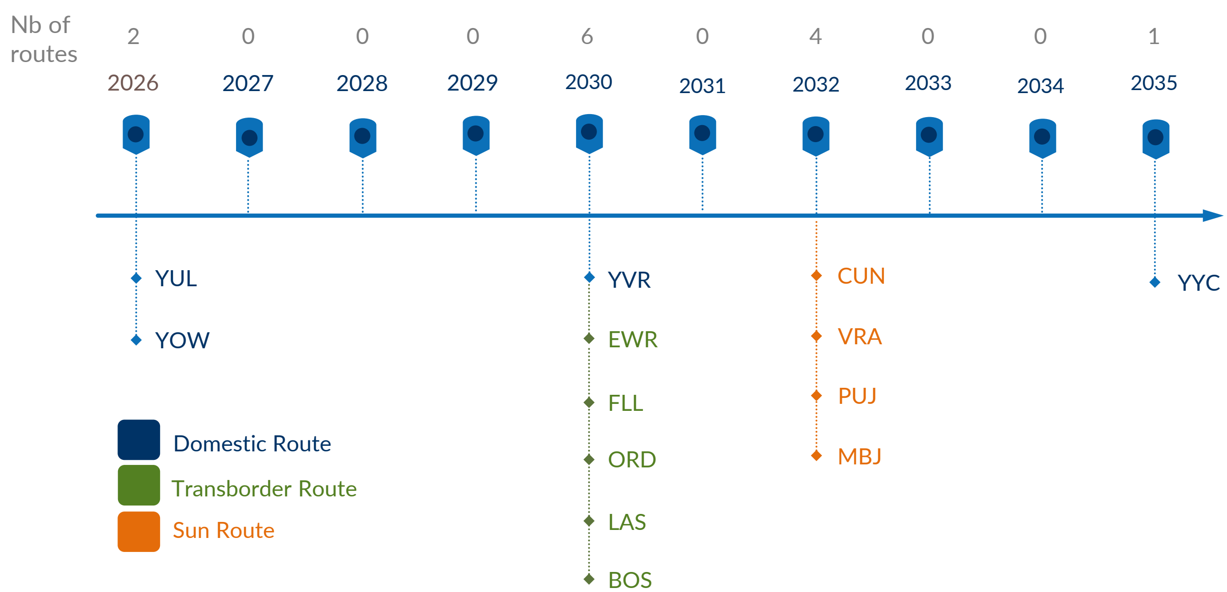
Domestic	Transborder 'mature'	Transborder 'sun'	Sun
25%	50%	60%	45%

In addition, a one-time stimulation factor was included during the year the route was introduced. This effect has been observed around the world where the introduction of a service by a new competitor has "stimulated" the traffic. The table on the right-hand side shows the stimulation factors assumed when service is introduced in the following route areas. Because the domestic market is the most mature a relatively smaller stimulation factor is used.

Lastly, for some domestic and transborder routes an additional percent for connecting passengers is used. This is particularly significant at large US hubs such as Newark (EWR) and Chicago O'Hare (ORD) and no connectivity is assumed to exist on Caribbean 'sun' or transborder 'sun' destinations.

Regarding New York-La Guardia (LGA), while demand exists (see graphic on page 3) slots are a challenge to obtain and no Canadian flights to LGA can be operated without USCBP preclearance facilities. Over the next decade we do not believe that Niagara District Airport would be able to secure USCBP preclearance facilities and because of these two factors we do not believe that a YCM-LGA route is likely even if demand exists.

The next slide summarises the routes selected and their opening.



Given the current runway length, DKMA has assumed that in 2026 two short-haul domestic routes would be served (YOW and YUL) with a Q400 followed by 11 additional routes when the runway is extended in 2030. Aside from Ottawa and Montreal, all the additional routes would be jet operations.

Under this scenario in total 4 domestic routes are assumed, 5 transborder routes (3 'mature' and 2 'sun') and 4 sun destinations.

The last route is assumed to open in 2035, and naturally most of the route development would take place after the runway has been extended.

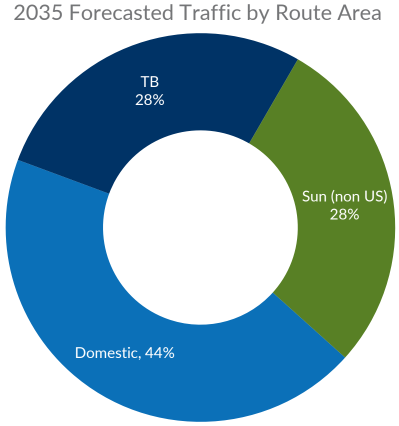
The passenger results are summarised in the next table for the year 2035. Compared to 2019, 4 of the 5 largest markets are served in 2035. Only New York (LGA) which ranks 3rd in 2019 is not served for the reasons explained earlier. New York city service via Newark (EWR) is anticipated to start in 2030 and could potentially generate large passenger volumes as some New York-LGA passengers would be likely to use Newark to travel to Niagara District Airport.

Estimated passenger demand in YCM (2035)				
Route Area	Route	Est pax	Rank (2019)	Rank (2035)
Dom	YOW	104,159	1	1
Dom	YUL	96,796	2	2
TB	EWR	80,659	5	3
Dom	YVR	71,356	4	4
Sun	CUN	65,725	8	5
TB	FLL	50,470	9	6
Sun	VRA	48,529	10	7
Sun	PUJ	44,287	12	8
Sun	MBJ	39,086	14	9
Dom	YYC	34,640	6	10
TB	ORD	29,015	36	11
TB	LAS	22,349	21	12
TB	BOS	10,660	32	13

Source: DKMA estimates

By 2035, domestic markets are projected to account for nearly 45% of total passengers and Ottawa and Montreal can be served using turboprops allowing service to commence as soon as 2026. Sun destinations are expected to grow significantly but as pointed out earlier this will need at least a 7,500 ft. runway capable of accommodating B-737s (either -800s or -8s) as well as the presence of a full time CBSA presence, especially if more than 2 weekly flights are scheduled.

2035 Forecasted Traffic by Route Area



Source: DKMA estimates

Conclusion

Given the size of the economy and population, the region generates enough air trips to support a local airport.

Tourism is a key sector which would benefit from direct air service to the region:

- Direct US air service would enable the tourism sector to attract a greater number of US tourists (who generate more revenues than Canadian tourists).
- It would also become easier for the tourism industry to more easily attract North American conferences.

Local area residents would also greatly benefit from a local airport most notably if 'sun' destinations are operated from Niagara District Airport.

Based on 2019 figures it is estimated that the region generated 2.1 million passenger trips. Based on the current runway configuration in 2026 service to Montreal and Ottawa could be offered from the airport. We've assumed that by 2030 the runway would be extended (to 7,500 feet) enabling jet operations (narrow body) from the airport. This would enable the start of 11 additional routes with a mix of domestic, transborder and sun destinations.

While demand exists the airport's management must improve the infrastructure and attract an airline.