



## Media Release

Thursday, March 31, 2005

For Immediate Release

### **York Regional Council approves Viva Rapid Transit Operating and Maintenance Contract**

NEWMARKET – Connex Canada has been awarded a five-year contract to operate and maintain the fleet of 85 Viva rapid transit vehicles. The contract, totalling \$112,496,870 over five years, was approved today by York Regional Council following a comprehensive evaluation process.

The annual cost to operate Viva rapid transit will be off set significantly by revenues primarily collected through fares.

“This was a critical decision since Viva’s success will depend on a well maintained fleet of vehicles and a first rate support staff, including drivers, inspectors, mechanics and IT specialists” said Bill Fisch, Regional Chair and CEO. “Our team worked tirelessly, ensuring York Region identified the best operator at the best price. I look forward to our partnership with Connex Canada.”

Connex was one of five proponents to submit a technical and business proposal for evaluation. Since January, a bid review team considered each proposal, analysing several criteria, including knowledge, experience, innovation and financial viability. The bid review team was made up of senior staff from York Region, York Region Transit, the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation and York Consortium 2002. KPMG was appointed to ensure the process was fair and impartial.

“This is an exciting opportunity for us, as we will be operating this new and innovative rapid transit service that is the first of its kind in the GTA,” said Olivier Brousse, Connex President and CEO. “We are flattered by this vote of confidence. However, we recognize the challenge before us, if we are to offer people a viable alternative to their car. We are looking forward to bringing to York Region innovative practices that we employ on our bus rapid transit projects elsewhere in the world.”

Connex is an operations and maintenance transportation firm with over 50,000 employees serving more than one billion passengers a year in five continents. It currently operates conventional bus operations, bus rapid transit, light rail, subway, commuter rail, ferries and taxis. Connex has extensive experience maintaining the same type of Van Hool vehicles to be used in York Region. The company’s European division maintained 240 Van Hool vehicles in Antwerp, Belgium.

Viva will have three operating and maintenance facilities, the primary operation in the Town of Newmarket, a maintenance facility in the City of Vaughan and an intelligent transportation central control centre in the Town of Richmond Hill.

... Continued on Page Two

Frequency will be the hallmark of Viva, with rapid transit vehicles arriving every five to 10 minutes during peak periods. Viva will link the Region's urban centres of Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Aurora and Newmarket along four major corridors, including Highway 7 and Yonge Street. In addition, Viva will link York Region with the City of Toronto and its subway system, to GO Transit, and to the transit systems in the Region of Peel and eventually into Durham Region.

The Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario and York Region each contributed \$50 million for Viva's first phase. When the first phase is fully implemented in 2006, York Region estimates these initial improvements will lead to a 30 per cent increase in transit ridership – moving 7,000 car trips a day off the major arterial roads.

For more information on Viva, to visit the Local Leaders' Gallery or to learn about the Viva Challenge, please visit the Viva Web site at: [www.vivayork.com](http://www.vivayork.com)

For more information on the Regional Municipality of York, the services offered and links to the nine area municipalities, please visit the York Region web site at: [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)

-30-

**Media Contacts:** Dan Miles, Communications Specialist, York Region  
- (905) 886-6767, Ext. 2250  
- Email: [dan.miles@york.ca](mailto:dan.miles@york.ca)

Deborah Pester, V.P. Communications, Connex  
- (443) 850-6824  
- Email: [dpester@usconnex.net](mailto:dpester@usconnex.net)