



Media Release

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Viva reaches out to potential riders

From A to Being ... informed

NEWMARKET – People throughout York Region have received a comprehensive Viva Rider's Manual. The new "how to" guides were distributed to 150,000 households along the Viva Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors.

The Rider's Manual describes how to buy a fare, how to use a fare machine and the hours of operation. It also includes a Viva route map and a description of the four stages of implementation.

The Viva service is being rolled out in four stages between September 2005 and January 2006. The first stage of the service, which began operating on September 4th, runs along Yonge Street from Finch Station to Bernard Station and along Highway 7 from York University to Town Centre Boulevard.

When fully implemented, Viva will link the Region's urban centres of Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Aurora and Newmarket. In addition, Viva will link York Region with the City of Toronto and its subway system, to GO Transit, to the Region of Peel and eventually to Durham Region.

Frequency is the hallmark of Viva with rapid transit vehicles arriving every five to 10 minutes during peak periods. New fare vending machines, located at all Viva stations and terminals, sell tickets that can be used on both Viva and York Region Transit (YRT) with no increase in price. Tickets are valid for 120 minutes, giving passengers up to two hours to hop on and hop off to run errands. Along with this frequency and flexibility, Viva also provides real time information so passengers know exactly when the next vehicle is arriving.

The Viva rapid transit vehicles were constructed in Belgium by the award-winning bus manufacturer Van Hool. These new modern rapid transit vehicles are fully accessible, with wide doors, low floors and ramps to accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. They operate on clean burning fuel and meet the latest government emission standards. Today, there are 42 rapid transit vehicles delivering the Viva service and that number is expected to increase to 85 vehicles by the time the system is fully operational.

A video screen, which offers passengers current news, weather, sports and entertainment information, has been installed on one Viva 18-metre innovation vehicle. Technology has also been installed providing passengers with Internet connectivity, allowing them to surf the Internet or send e-mails during their daily commute. Over the coming weeks and months ahead, these innovations will be added to the entire Viva fleet.

When the first phase of Viva is fully implemented, York Region estimates these initial

improvements will lead to a 30 per cent increase in transit ridership or an additional 4.5 million riders – moving 7,000 cars a day off the major arterial roads.

For more information on Viva, or to receive a copy of the **Viva Rider's Manual**, please visit the Viva Web site at: 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

Electronic photos of the Viva vehicles or Viva stations are available upon request.

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