



## Media Release

Wednesday, August 31, 2005 York Region begins live transit reports on A-Channel

NEWMARKET – Live transit reports are being broadcast each morning on A-Channel. Transit reporter Rebekah Murdoch is providing up-to-the-minute information on York Region Transit (YRT), and beginning September 6<sup>th</sup> on the new Viva rapid transit service.

“We are extremely excited with our partnership with A-Channel since it provides our passengers with immediate information that they can use every morning,” said Bill Fisch, Regional Chair and CEO. “Providing quality public transit is a priority, and that is certainly evident in York Region with YRT and the addition of Viva and our work with the A-Channel.”

The live transit reports will appear on A-Channel’s Breakfast Television program from Monday to Friday, four times each morning, at 7:05 a.m., 7:35 a.m., 8:05 a.m. and 8:35 a.m. The segments will run up to 45 seconds in length and report on route and schedule changes, delays, construction, accidents, impacts due to inclement weather and community events. Later this fall, A-Channel will begin broadcasting live transit reports during the evening news.

“Our goal is to provide the residents of York Region with exclusive transit information that will help them plan their day and make traveling around the Region as easy as possible,” said Bob McLaughlin, Manager of News and Operations for A-Channel. “I look forward to building on our relationship with York Region because clearly it is a win-win situation for our viewers.”

Rebekah Murdoch has worked at CTV, Global Television and with various advertising firms in public relations and marketing. Rebekah is a graduate of the Radio and Television Arts program at Ryerson University in Toronto.

Frequency will be the hallmark of Viva, with rapid transit vehicles arriving every five to 10 minutes during peak periods. New 1system fare vending machines, located at all Vivastations and Terminals, will 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 will also provide real-time information so passengers know exactly when the next vehicle will arrive.

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Over the next several weeks and months, video screens will be installed on Viva Rapid Transit Vehicles (RTVs), offering passengers current news provided by A-Channel, along with weather, sports and entertainment information. Technology will also be installed on the RTVs and along the Viva corridors, providing passengers with Internet connectivity, allowing them to surf the Internet or send emails during their daily commute.

The Viva service is being rolled out in four stages between September 2005 and January 2006. The first part of the service will run along Yonge Street, from Finch Station to Bernard Station, and along Highway 7, from York University to Town Centre Boulevard.

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 to the City of Toronto and its subway system, as well as to GO Transit, and to the transit systems in Peel Region, and eventually into Durham Region.

The Viva service will be officially launched on Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be a two-day "dress rehearsal" on Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup> and Monday, September 5<sup>th</sup>. On those days, passengers will be encouraged to ride the new rapid transit service and experience Viva for themselves.

York Region contributed \$80 million for the first phase of Viva. The Governments of Canada and Ontario also contributed \$50 million each under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund. When the first phase 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, on service implementation or to take the Viva Quiz 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)

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