



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Transportation Services Committee

**FROM:** Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, Commissioner of Transportation Services

**DATE:** March 22, 2010

**RE:** February 2010 Transit Ridership Statistics

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This memo will provide an overview of YRT/Viva ridership statistics for February 2010. Ridership in February 2010 has increased slightly compared to February 2009. February 2010 has the highest ridership for the month of February since amalgamation in 2001.

Total YRT/Viva revenue ridership in February this year reached approximately 1.5 million, representing a slight increase of 3.5% over the same month last year. Total overall boardings (i.e. including transferring passengers) amounted to just over 2 million riders, representing an increase of approximately 0.9% over the approximately 1.9 million passengers carried in February 2009.

Putting the ridership increase into perspective, ridership in February 2009 was negatively impacted due to various factors such as the poor economic climate last year and the York University strike from November 2008 to late-January 2009. The absence of these factors, along with significant gain in ridership on core services such as Routes 4 (Major Mackenzie), 20 (Jane), 85 (Rutherford/16<sup>th</sup> Ave), 88 (Bathurst) and 90 (Leslie South) has attributed to this year-over-year difference in ridership for the month of February.

### **York University Strike**

Between November 6, 2008 and January 29, 2009, York University was affected by a strike which contributed to lower than expected ridership for YRT/Viva in February 2009. The February 2010 normal operating environment has helped YRT/Viva carry more passengers (i.e. staff and students) to/from York University in comparison to February 2009. The resulting positive impact on ridership is most evident for those routes that directly service the York University campus, such as Viva Purple, Route 3 (Thornhill-YorkU) and Route 20 (Jane). Comparing February 2010 ridership with February 2008, there was a 1.7% increase.

### **Employment**

According to Statistics Canada<sup>[1]</sup>, compared to the previous month, “employment [for February 2010] increased...pushing the unemployment rate down 0.1 percentage points to 8.2%” at a national level. Statistics Canada further reports the national employment rate for February 2010 is marginally improved over a rate of approximately 8.0% as reported for February 2009. As such, on an overall system basis, it

is possible that YRT/Viva is being less affected by the higher levels of unemployment that have characterized previous months.

At the same time, however, it is observed that routes serving predominantly employment and industrial areas, such as TTC Routes 35D (Jane), 37D (Islington) and 107 (Keele North), continue to experience decreased ridership. It is anticipated that the 'lag' in ridership recovery on such routes will emerge if more positive economic trends continue. In addition, the delay in development along the Viva Green route continues to impede ridership growth on this route.

### **High Gas Prices**

Gas prices in February 2010 were approximately 17% higher than they were in February 2009<sup>[2]</sup>, which could also help to attract ridership. In February 2010, the cost of fuel was approximately \$0.97 per litre vs. approximately \$0.83 per litre in 2009.

### **Recent Service Improvements**

In September 2009, YRT implemented various service improvements related to route extensions, restructuring and schedule adjustments. For example, Route 2A (14<sup>th</sup> Ave) is up by 9.4% since this route provides all-day service in the Box Grove development; Route 22 (King City) increased by 31.6% partially due to a route modification in the Maple area; Route 88 (Bathurst) was restructured to provide more effective express service to/from Seneca College King Campus, resulting in an increase of 11.9%. These service improvements are having a positive impact to growing our ridership.

### **New Development Impacts**

New residential developments are having a positive impact on routes that service those areas. Routes such as Route 53 (Woodspring-Clearmeadow), Route 303 (Bur Oak Express) and TTC 165 (Weston Road North) are experiencing ridership growth, most likely due to the impacts of such new residential developments.

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Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

#### **Notes:**

[1] February 5, 2010. Latest Release from the Labour Force Survey. *Statistics Canada*. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/labour-travail/lfs-epa/lfs-epa-eng.htm>. Retrieved date March 22, 2010.

[2] 18 Month Average Retail Price Chart. (2010). [Graph illustration February 16, 2010]. *GasBuddy.com*. Retrieved from [http://www.torontogasprices.com/Retail\\_Price\\_Chart.aspx](http://www.torontogasprices.com/Retail_Price_Chart.aspx). Retrieved date March 22, 2010.

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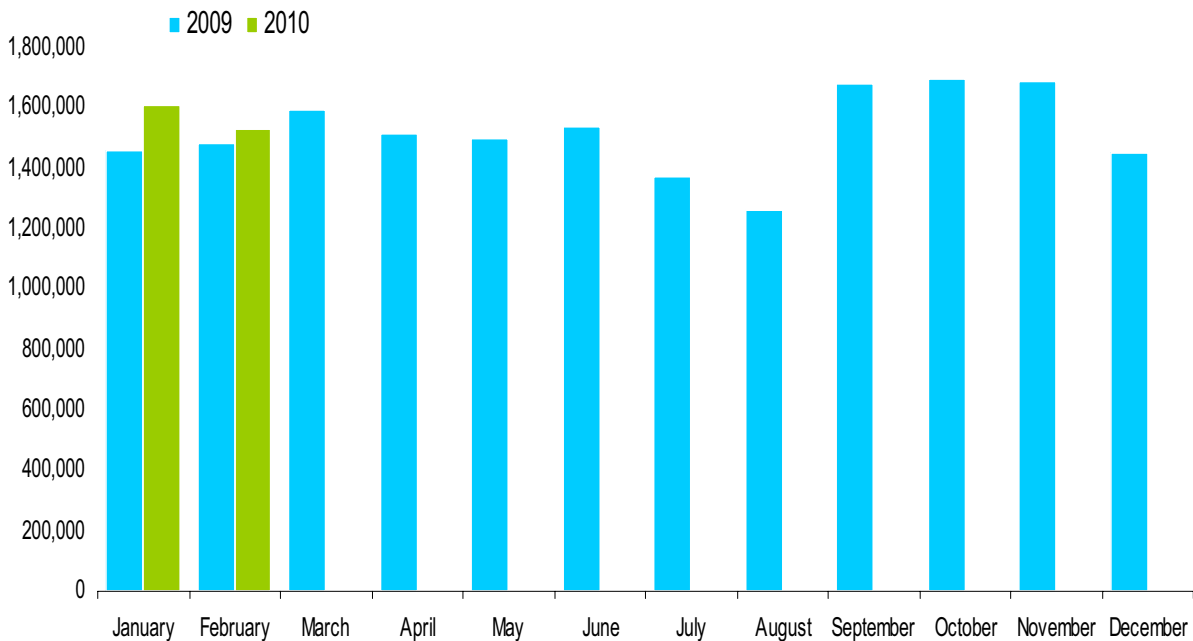
YORK  
REGION  
TRANSIT

VIVA

YRT/Viva

## 2010 Revenue Ridership Summary

Conventional Services including Contracted TTC Services North of Steeles



| Month                | 2009 <sup>1</sup> | 2010      | Month Change<br>['09 vs '10] | YTD<br>Change | Avg Wkday<br>Rev.<br>Ridership<br>2010 |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------|
| January <sup>2</sup> | 1,464,280         | 1,608,610 | 9.9%                         | 9.9%          | 68,844                                 |
| February             | 1,480,919         | 1,532,249 | 3.5%                         | 6.6%          | 69,667                                 |
| March                | 1,596,601         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| April                | 1,516,370         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| May                  | 1,501,987         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| June                 | 1,536,795         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| July                 | 1,373,879         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| August               | 1,262,862         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| September            | 1,685,021         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| October              | 1,700,080         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| November             | 1,686,369         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| December             | 1,454,734         |           |                              |               |                                        |
| YTD                  | 18,314,619        | 3,140,859 |                              |               |                                        |

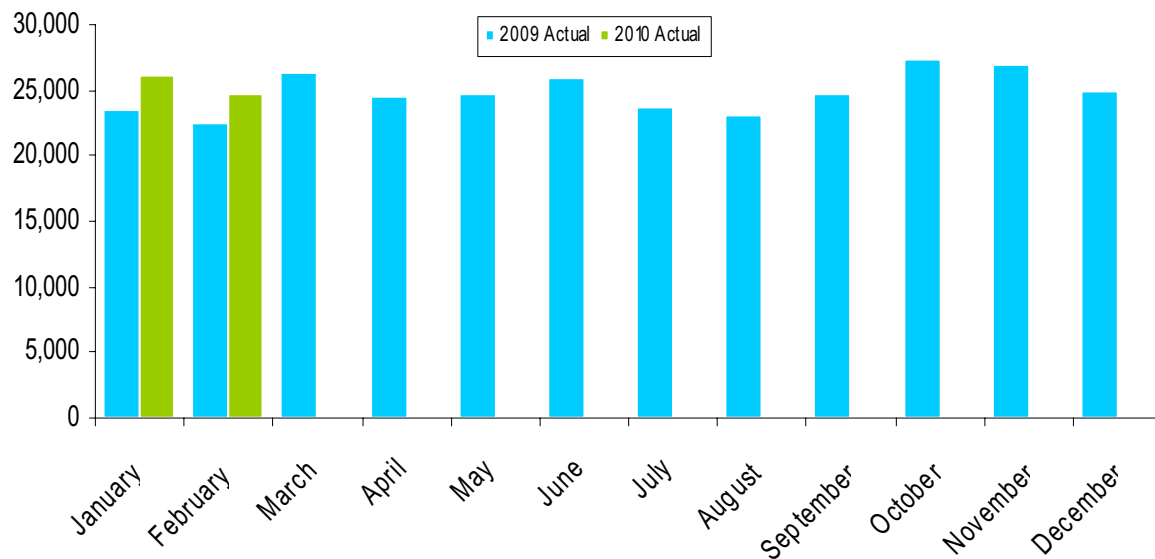
### NOTES:

- 2009 revenue ridership adjusted for 2010 comparison.
- York U Strike Nov 6, 2008 to January 29, 2009.

## YRT\Viva

# 2010 Ridership Summary

Specialized Services – Mobility Plus



| Month     | 2009 Ridership | 2010 Ridership | Month Change ('09 vs. '10) | Year to Date Change | Avg Wkday Rev Ridership 2010 |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| January   | 23,589         | 26,156         | 10.9%                      | 10.9%               | 1,138                        |
| February  | 22,515         | 24,758         | 10.0%                      | 10.4%               | 1,140                        |
| March     | 26,294         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| April     | 24,518         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| May       | 24,709         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| June      | 26,005         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| July      | 23,768         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| August    | 23,140         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| September | 24,764         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| October   | 27,451         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| November  | 27,013         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| December  | 25,031         |                |                            |                     |                              |
| YTD       | 298,797        | 50,914         |                            |                     |                              |

## rev. 18mar2010

\* Route crosses municipal boundaries.

