



September 28, 29, 30, October 1, 2006



January 16, 2007

DEPUTATION

TO: YORK REGION TRANSIT COMMITTEE

FROM: MARKHAM & EAST YORK AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Re: Markham Fair requests YRT to operate an appropriate transit service to and from the annual Markham Fair, as part of their ongoing operation. This is in keeping with the previous arrangements Markham Fair had with Markham Transit before the inception of the YRT.

ABOUT MARKHAM FAIR:

Markham Fair is run for four days each year on the weekend before Thanksgiving and it is run at the Fair Grounds at McCowan Rd. and Elgin Mills Rd. in the Town of Markham and close to the border of Stouffville.

The Fair is run by Markham and East York Agricultural Society and it dates back to the 1800's when there was a political East Riding of York. It continues to be a fair that features agricultural and home craft competitions and exhibits.

Additionally there are a myriad of events for all ages.

- Opportunities to compete and showcase your music, gymnastic and other talents
- Horse pulls, horse competitions, livestock shows and competitions
- Tractor pulls and car derbies
- Horse races and midway entertainment
- Antique implements and displays
- Police motorcycle precisions rides and BMX bicycle shows
- Lumberjack shows, rodcos and fireworks
- Commercial exhibits and Old MacDonald's Farm

Markham and East York Agricultural Society

10801 McCowan Road
Markham, Ontario L3P 3J3
Telephone: (905) 642-FAIR
Fax : (905) 640-8458
Email: office@markhamfair.ca
Website: www.markhamfair.ca

General Manager
Dan O'Brien

1st Vice-President
Blair Purcell

President
Paul Donahoe

2nd Vice-President
Blair Seeley

- The fair has over 700 volunteers on 70 committees to showcase the fair. It is touted as the largest volunteer organization of its type in the Region and possibly in the Province.
- The year round operation of the 110 acre site is carried out by 24 volunteer Directors, 6 of whom are 26 yrs or younger. The Fair has 3 paid employees
- Attendance is in the range of 60,000 – 70,000 over the 4 days
- 100 bus loads of school children attend the Fair
- *The fair operates on a close to break even basis financially and money can be made or lost according to the weather at Fair time.*
- The fair is also a main fund raiser for many, many community groups who operate booths. Groups such as Lions, Rotary, sports clubs, churches and so on.

MARKHAM FAIR PROMOTES THE REGION OF YORK:

Throughout the year Markham Fair is the host site to other major & minor shows:

- Markham Fair
- Home show
- Craft show
- Ribfest
- Vintage and Antique Car Shows
- Cross country trailer rallies
- Regional and all Ontario horse shows, livestock shows and dog shows
- Community dances and Fund raisers

Many of these shows, along with the Fair, are well promoted in the media and we believe about 350,000 people a year come to the fair grounds and they come from all over the Region of York and the Province.

ABOUT (Y.R.T.) YORK REGION TRANSIT and MARKHAM FAIR:

History:

- Fair moved to current site in 1977 and transit was by school bus. The Town of Markham subsidized \$1,000 towards this cost.
- Subsequently, Markham Transit ran their buses to the Fair. Transit kept the fares and there was no cost to Markham Fair.
- As Y.R.T. came into being, YRT considered that Markham Fair was chartering buses and we believe the rate was \$40/hr. Markham Fair always took the view that it was subsidizing YRT to extend their service to the Fair. In either case, the Fair paid YRT about \$1,000, as well as giving YRT concession space during the Fair. YRT also collected the fares from the fare box.
- About two years ago, the YRT charter rate went to \$60/hr and Markham Fair paid \$2,000 to YRT.

- With a proposed \$80/hr charitable charter rate, the rates are going up faster than our ability to pay them and if the YRT ever decided to decline and pay for display space at the Fair, the invoice would be higher still.

A DECISION TO NOT RUN YRT SERVICE TO MARKHAM FAIR WOULD IMPACT NEGATIVELY ON BOTH YRT AND THE FAIR:

- 2,000 rides would have to be done some other way.
- Some residents of the Region and from Toronto would simply be unable to get to the fair.
- Markham Fair would probably run school buses from the fair grounds to McCowan & Major McKenzie (1 1/4 miles from the Fair Grounds) or McCowan & Bur Oak where it would meet up with the existing YRT system and overload it, particularly on Friday and Saturday night.
- It would be almost impossible for Stouffville residents to get to & from the Fair by transit and 500 - 700 rides are on the Stouffville bus.
- We anticipate both the Fair & YRT & Regional Council would receive complaints from residents.

IN CLOSING:

- *Markham Fair wishes to commend Don Gordon and thank him and his staff for their co-operation and efforts over the years.*
- *To our knowledge there is no other Fair or Festival in York Region that has the history and transit service requirements of Markham Fair.*

OUR REQUEST TO TRANSIT COMMITTEE AND YORK REGION COUNCIL:

That council recognizes the value of Markham Fair and its site to the Region of York and to the residents of York and that, in consideration of this recognition, YORK REGION TRANSIT would be authorized to run transit service to and from the Fair each year as part of its operation.

SIGNED:


DAN O'BRIEN, GEN. MANAGER

SIGNED:


DENNIS SEELEY, CHAIRPERSON,
TRANSIT COMMITTEE