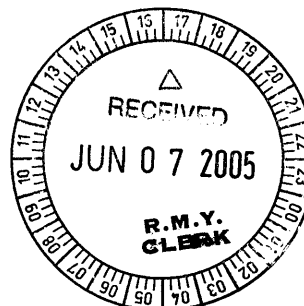


Office of M.P.P. Mario G. Racco

FAX

Chair
Cao
RT → KRAIN

To: Mayor and Members of Council – Town of Markham
Mayor and Members of Council – City of Vaughan
Bill Fisch, Regional Chair and CEO – Region of York
Members of Regional Council – Region of York



From: Mario G. Racco, M.P.P. Thornhill

CC: Minister of Transportation – Harinder Takhar

Date: June 6, 2005

Re: VIVA Statement to the House

REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE

FILE No. - 909

Please see the attached statement, which I made to the Legislature today.

Yours truly,

Mario G. Racco
M.P.P. - Thornhill

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Mario G. Racco, M.P.P.
Thornhill

Statement to the House Monday June 6th, 2005

Mr. Speaker:

On Monday May 30 I had the pleasure of joining my colleagues the Hon. Minister Takhar, the Hon. Tony Wong along with several York Region politicians to unveil the new Viva rapid transit vehicle.

Viva will link the Region's urban centers of Markham, Vaughan, Richmond Hill 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.

Viva rapid transit service will officially begin in September, and will be opened in four stages between September and December.

These rapid transit buses are quiet, roomy and comfortable. The vehicles are fully accessible, with wide doors, low floors and ramps to accommodate wheelchairs and strollers.

Mr. Speaker, they also operate on clean burning diesel and meet the latest emission standards.

This new modern vehicle is the first of its kind in the GTA, and I can assure everyone when Viva begins operating this September it will provide a fantastic ride and a unique transit experience.

VIVA will ensure the current rider-ship remains while attracting new Public Transit Users. It is estimated these initial improvements will lead to a 30 per cent increase in transit rider-ship or an additional 4.5 million riders – moving 7,000 cars a day off the major arterial roads.

The Viva rapid transit system is designed with passengers in mind, offering a service that's frequent, flexible and comfortable. Rapid transit vehicles will arrive every five to 10 minutes during peak periods.

This is only the beginning and governments at all levels now need to focus on planning and designing Phase Two. In the short-term Viva needs \$7.3 million from each level and York Region has already committed it's 1/3. This will truly put the "rapid" in rapid transit.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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