1
YORK REGION TRANSIT
FIVE-YEAR SERVICE PLAN (2006-2010) - DRAFT SUMMARY REPORT

The Transit Committee recommends:

1. **The presentation by Irene McNeil, Manager, Service Planning and Dennis Fletcher, Entra Consultants be received; and**

2. **The recommendation contained in the following report, December 21, 2005, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be adopted, subject to adding Recommendation 2 as follows:**

   "2. Staff prepare a plan to incorporate further public consultation in order to receive additional comments."

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The York Region Transit Five-Year Service Plan (2006-2010) – Draft Summary Report be received, and the Regional Clerk forward the Draft Summary Report to the local municipalities in York Region, GTA transit systems including GO Transit, the Toronto Transit Commission, Brampton Transit, Durham Region Transit, York Region School Boards, Transportation Management Associations, Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce, with a request for comments by March 31, 2006.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Regional Council with the final draft of the updated York Region Transit Five-Year Service Plan and to request authorization to formally circulate the plan to our municipal partners, stakeholders and other Greater Toronto Area (GTA) transit service providers.

3. BACKGROUND

On January 1, 2001, The Regional Municipality of York assumed responsibility for the funding and operation of public transit (conventional and specialized transit services) throughout York Region. As part of the amalgamation process, a Five-Year Service Plan (2002-2006) was developed and finalized in 2002. The original Five-Year Plan included the development of standards, strategies and processes to guide YRT through its first five years.

The new Five-Year Plan is basically an update to the original Plan along with a more detailed service strategy for the 2006/07 period. The new Five-Year Plan examines current application of standards and practices, provides direction for future service assessment and identifies key areas for service development within the Region over the next five years. The result is a Five-Year Plan (2006-2010) for the growth of transit ridership and services in York Region.

The new Plan also includes a review of gaps or opportunities for service improvements including route extensions, frequency improvements, unmet or untapped markets, etc.

It should be noted that the new YRT Five-Year Service Plan Draft Summary Report has been prepared with the assistace of ENTRA Consultants and addresses conventional transit services only (i.e. including Viva corridors, but not Mobility Plus services).

The following major components are included in the Plan:

- Analysis of existing conventional transit services
- Review of current service standards and major planning processes with the intent to update and improve
- Development of a Transit Service Guidelines Summary Report
- Review of planning and consultation process with local area municipalities, stakeholders, Transportation Management Associations (TMA's), and general public
- Review of existing and future committed vehicle fleet and infrastructure from an accessibility standpoint
- Development of strategies for alternative and innovative service delivery
- Review of fare structure, fare integration, and future GTA Smart Card impacts
- Review of intelligent transit technologies and integration issues
- Development of a detailed phasing plan for both capital (fleet) and operating budget requirements for each of the next five years (2006-2010)

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Five-Year Plan study process was guided by a technical advisory team consisting of York Region Transit staff with representation from the Region's Transportation Planning group. In addition, several consultation meetings were held with our GTA partner systems including TTC, GO Transit, Brampton Transit and representatives from Durham Region. In early November, a series of public open houses were held in Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan to present initial findings and solicit general comments from the public. Materials presented at the public information centres have also been posted on the YRT website for public review and comment.

The next step is to formally circulate the Plan to stakeholders for comment.

4.1 Plan Report Structure

The YRT Five-Year Service Plan - Draft Summary Report summarizes the findings of the study thus far. It should be noted that a series of more detailed technical *Background Papers* accompany the Summary Report and cover the following topics:

- Service Standards Technical Analysis
- Existing Service Review Details
- Consultation and Communication Plan
- Transit Service Guidelines – A Customer's Perspective
- Fare Technology and Integration
- Fleet and System Accessibility
- Transit Technology Applications

4.2 Key Findings

The new Five-Year Plan addresses a number of key areas including the adoption of consistent service policies, standards and guidelines. The main objective of the Plan is to ensure that services are being delivered efficiently while at the same time opportunities for ridership growth are identified and implemented.

4.2.1 YRT Family of Service

Due to the large geographic size of the Region, the varying nature of urbanization and densities and the resultant travel patterns, it is necessary to customize transit services to meet customer needs in a responsive and efficient manner. As a result, distinct service models have been identified with a series of standards and guidelines carefully developed to ensure effective service delivery. The following is a list of the service models identified:

- Base Service
- Viva Service
- Local Service
- Express Services (Commuter and Business)
- Shuttles (GO and School)
- Community Bus Service
- GO Fare Integration Services
- Small Bus Services (Zone or Dial-a-Bus Options)

4.2.2 Service Standards

A series of service standards has been updated or newly developed in order to better facilitate the analysis, assessment and recommendation for service improvements. Service standards reviewed include:

- Service levels and spans of service
- Vehicle loading
- Individual route performance
- New service criteria
- Route design guidelines (directness, bus stop location)
- Service review guidelines
- Data collection guidelines

4.2.3 Consultation Plan and Customer Guide to Service Standards

A comprehensive consultation plan has been developed including direction for stakeholder consultation, timeframes/schedule and formats. In addition, a customer guide to transit service standards has been developed with the intent to provide a "Public Transit 101" document for those stakeholders interested in understanding how a public transit system is designed, what service options are available and how standards are applied.

4.2.4 Review of Existing Services

As part of the Plan, a comprehensive review of existing services was completed with the intent of categorizing services into the new service categories, identifying those routes/services that are performing at high levels, those that are in need of performance review and opportunities/strategies for service expansion.

The Five Year timeframe was then broken down into short term (1-2 years) and medium term periods. Service improvement options were carefully identified based on the updated service standards and guidelines, and recommendations made, complete with operating and capital resource requirements. Fleet and system accessibility was also taken into consideration during this stage of the study.

4.3 Relationship to Vision 2026

The primary reason for developing a multi-year service plan is to ensure that transit services are monitored, adjusted and delivered in a comprehensive, consistent and systematic manner. YRT's Five-Year Plan (2006-2010) sets specific targets including ridership, service levels and service coverage. YRT's mandate also includes a major role in contributing to an increase the Region's transit market share (modal split).

Vision 2026 includes a goal statement relating to the development of Infrastructure for a Growing Region, which states that:

"In 2026, York Region will have effective, efficient and environmentally sensitive transportation, waste management and water systems."

To support this goal, the Region has identified specific action areas. The following action areas have been considered for this report:

- Continuing to improve service and infrastructure for successfully integrated transit service.
- Developing an optimal mix of transit service types.
- Promoting transit usage as a practical and wise alternative to private vehicle use.

By endorsing a new Five-Year Plan to guide the growth of YRT family of services, York Region continues to develop a transit supportive environment and thus contribute to the development of a more balanced transportation network.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The York Region Transit Five-Year Service Plan outlines an annual service strategy complete with all associated operating costs and capital (fleet) requirements for each of the next five years. It is estimated that annual gross direct contractor operating costs will increase from a base of $56.2 million (2005) to approximately $99.2 million by 2010. The fleet expansion projections are estimated to increase from the current 347 buses to over 420 buses. Table 1 illustrates current costs and service levels with projected increases over the five-year outlook.

Table 1
Cost and Service Level Outlook (2006 – 2010)

	2005 Year End	**Annual Additions**				
		2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Annualized Revenue Hours	738,979	280,000	82,000	70,000	59,000	61,000
Viva	56,319	190,000	70,000	55,000	45,000	45,000
YRT	682,660	90,000	12,000	15,000	14,000	16,000
Operating Cost	$56 million	$21 million	$7.2 million	$5.6 million	$4.6 million	$4.6 million
Vehicles	348	22	18	14	14	14
Viva	85	5	5	4	5	5
YRT	263	17	13	10	9	9
Capital Cost	-	$9.7 million	$8.0 million	$6.25 million	$6.33 million	$6.33 million
Annual Ridership	14,803,000	19,390,000	22,100,000	23,930,000	26,350,000	28,365,000
Viva	1,355,000	7,360,000	8,580,000	9,060,000	10,030,000	10,675,000
YRT	13,448,000	12,030,000	13,520,000	14,870,000	16,320,000	17,690,000

This increased investment in public transit services will result in a net cost per capita expenditure of approximately $51/capita, up from the current $45/capita, which is still one of the lowest in Canada for transit systems of this size.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Local municipal Councils are being requested to formally comment on the updated Five-Year Plan. Implementation of the strategies outlined in the Draft Plan will provide improved service levels and access to transit services throughout the Region.

7. CONCLUSION

Upon receipt of comments from all stakeholders, York Region Transit staff will prepare a final report for the consideration of Transit Committee. The York Region Transit Five-Year Service Plan (2006-2010) will serve as the framework document for guiding the direction of transit operations in York Region over the next five years with the ultimate goal of increasing ridership and, more importantly, increasing overall transit market share.

The Five-Year Plan (2006-2010) – Draft Summary Report is attached and is intended for full circulation to all stakeholders. The technical Background Papers will also be available for circulation, should stakeholders request.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the January 19, 2006 Committee meeting.)