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VIVA PHASE 2 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, April 4, 2008, from the Vice-President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council authorize the sole source award of a contract for the Implementation of the Phase 2 Communications Strategy (Task 4) to York Consortium 2002.
2. Council authorize the Regional Chair and Clerk to execute a contract with York Consortium 2002 for the amount of \$630,000 (net of GST), on a cost-plus-fee basis, for Task 4 of the Phase 2 Communication Strategy implementation, in a form acceptable to staff and legal counsel.

2. PURPOSE

This report seeks approval to award the implementation of the next phase of the communications and outreach strategy to York Consortium 2002 (YC2002) for work to be completed in 2008.

3. BACKGROUND

The Phase 2 Viva communication strategy was endorsed by Council on May 24, 2007

On May 10, 2007, the Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee was presented with a report from the Vice-President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation that outlined the 2007 and 2008 communications and outreach strategy. Council endorsed the report, contained in Regional Council Report No. 4, Clause 5, on May 24, 2007. At that time, a budget of \$300,000 was established. The work was allocated to YC2002 for communications activities to be completed from October 2007 to spring 2008 (Tasks 1 through 3, outlined below), after which, staff would request approval to proceed on the balance of the work to the end of 2008 (Task 4).

In 2007, YC2002 provided YRRTC with a work plan for the communications and outreach strategy. The work plan provides for the development and articulation of an over-arching strategy, and the development of key messages and interim tactical

deployment. This plan is designed to continue building community support for the next phase of the Viva system expansion, leverage York Region's position to secure Metrolinx funding, and provide context for the work undertaken in each project segment.

Task 1, strategy development, is near completion

The communications strategy, to support the next phase of Viva rapid transit service expansion, is in development and nearing completion. Its aim is to develop a message platform and strategy to position the next phase of rapid transit infrastructure improvements appropriately in the minds of the various stakeholder groups, as well as to develop a communications implementation plan to reach and influence these stakeholder groups and all residents of York Region.

The strategy supports a fully integrated multi-media communications programme that will build excitement and support for infrastructure improvements and develop a hierarchy of related messages to address the specific needs, issues, and aspirations of the various stakeholder groups and the public.

Task 2, key message development, was completed in March 2008

This task identified the key messages required to communicate the current status and upcoming activities of the next phase of the Viva programme.

Specific elements within this task included:

- Identification of all project stakeholders to whom the message must appeal.
- Identification of stakeholder objectives and interests, where known.
- Development of a series of messages/message options.
- Testing message options against stakeholder list and evaluating the suitability of each toward meeting stakeholder objectives/interests.
- Preparing a recommended message or message set.
- Development of a strategy for deploying the interim messages, short term.
- Identification of key target markets for the messages.
- Identification of appropriate media through which to communicate to targets.

Key messages identified during this task include:

- Rapid transit is a vehicle to guide growth in York Region and help it become a great future city – global cities don't just happen, they're planned.
- A key piece of growth involves and builds on transit.

These key messages provide input to the communications planning process and are the basis for the creative development of actual messages to be used in the market.

Task 3, Interim tactical deployment continues

The goal of this task was to continue the dialogue with the public regarding the next phase of Viva prior to the full development, approval and deployment of the overall communications strategy. Activities included the development and distribution of a fall/winter Viva newsletter and electronic Viva holiday card. Work in progress includes a fact sheet focused on the introduction of rapidways in Newmarket, a spring newsletter and a video focused on the benefits of subway, and bus rapid transit introduction in the Vaughan transit corridor that utilizes animation assets produced by York Region's GIS Department.

Task 4, Phase 2 strategy implementation is to take place from April through to December 2008

The rollout of the communication plan will provide for needed materials to support upcoming public meetings and presentations throughout the spring, summer and fall. The timing for the release of materials will take into account the Metrolinx timing for capital funding announcements.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The award of the implementation of the Phase 2 Communication Plan to YC2002 will leverage their project history and success

YC2002 has provided communications and public consultation support for *Quick Start* construction and Y1 preliminary engineering, and continues to provide similar support for Y2/H3 preliminary engineering.

The development of Phase 1 was supported by a comprehensive communications strategy that sought to introduce a new concept of transit to residents of York Region.

The Phase 1 launch of Viva was extremely successful. Strong recognition of branding was evident among riders and non-riders, particularly the distinctive blue colour and, importantly, the distinctive "V" logo, vehicles, stations and terminals. This range of visual clues is working in tandem with a positive perception of the Viva service to reinforce and elevate the brand in the public's eye and is clearly reinforcing the brand on a daily basis as riders and non-riders are exposed to them.

Current business arrangements allow YC2002 first right of opportunity to undertake future work

In the Go Forward agreement between YC2002, York Region and York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, YC2002 has a right of first opportunity to undertake future Project work in accordance with the Go Forward and Master Agreements.

The rates to be used by YC2002 for this work programme are the agreed upon rates used for the Y2/H3 work programme. These rates have been benchmarked against industry standards and have been deemed acceptable.

Roughly 75% of the work will be conducted through subcontractors with YC2002 providing a project coordination and management role. YRRTC's cost-confidence model encourages competition by requiring that the procurement of goods and services valued over \$100,000 be tendered to three or more bidders and YC2002 will be following the guidelines of the by-law in its procurement practices.

Rollout of activities in 2008 are targeted at both stakeholders in the rapid transit corridors and residents of York Region

The Viva Phase 2 communications roll out for 2008 outlines a dynamic series of outreach activities targeted at both the impacted corridors and the residents of York Region in general. In 2008, communications will be focused on expanding the vision of rapid transit's role in delivering transit-oriented development and place making.

YC2002 rates are competitive and provide good value

In order to deliver this program as cost efficiently as possible a portion of the work will be delivered and project managed internally by YC2002 at rates that are much more affordable than external outsourcing. In addition, the rates for the boutique communications firms engaged by YC2002 are extremely competitive when compared to the rates charged by some of the larger firms. Previously, larger firms that have quoted on specific Viva projects have proposed creative fees that are significantly higher (in some cases in excess of 100%) than YC2002 rates.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Spending is approved in the 2008 rapid transit capital budget

The proposed budget for Task 4 of Viva Phase 2 communications is \$630,000 (net of GST). An initial \$300,000 was budgeted and awarded to YC2002 for Tasks 1 through 3 through the 2007 rapid transit capital budget process. Staff will endeavour to secure a

proportion of, if not all, funding of project communications from senior levels of government through various funding agreements.

Metrolinx Quick Win, Tranche 2 (part of MoveOntario 2020) and the Federal and Provincial FLOW announcements provide opportunities to recover such costs. Contribution agreements will be developed as the project components under each announcement are formalized through Provincial and/or Federal approved funding sources. The FLOW funding announcement was made on March 6, 2007, for a total of \$255 million to be shared equally between the Federal, Provincial and York Region governments. Quick Win, Tranche 2 funding in the amount of \$110 million, was approved in the 2008 Provincial budget on March 25, 2008. One-hundred percent of eligible expenditures will be recoverable from the Province.

A breakdown of the cost allocations is provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Project Costs – Phase 2 Communications

Task	Task 4	Total (\$)
Tasks 1 to 3		150,000
Task 4 – Implementation:		
Public Benefit Campaign		
- Mass Media	300,000	
- Advertorials	100,000	
- Events	75,000	
- Ambient media	75,000	550,000
Information Tools		
- New website	100,000	
- VivaNext Video	75,000	
- Newsletters	15,000	190,000
Other Spending		
- Collateral, presentations, etc.		40,000
Total	780,000	930,000
Funding Sources		Award
Total Budget – 2007 and 2008		930,000
Amount Previously Awarded		300,000
Current Request to Award		630,000

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Viva Phase 2 Communications Strategy implementation is being closely coordinated with local planning activities along the transit corridors, as well as with economic development strategies.

7. CONCLUSION

The communications programme for 2008 aims to build on and extend the positive perception of Viva. Activities to occur from April 1 through to the end of the year, relate to Task 4 – the implementation of the Phase 2 Communications Strategy. The approved 2008 Capital Budget provided for \$630,000 (net of GST) for this activity.

YC2002's success with Viva Phase 1 communications, as well as that for the preliminary engineering communications and community support for Y1, and the initial stages of Y2/H3, positions them well for continuing the implementation of the Viva Phase 2 Communications Strategy.

Hourly rates for YC2002 will be based on the Y2/H3 work programme rates. Any work valued over \$100,000 will be competitively tendered by YC2002.

For more information on this report, please contact Mary-Frances Turner, Vice President of the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation at 905-886-6767, Ext. 2226.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.