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MYRIDE TRAVEL TRAINING PROGRAM UPDATE

The Transportation Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated March 22, 2011, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides an update on the progress and training results of the myRide transit travel training program after a full year of completion.

3. BACKGROUND

myRide is a travel training program that prepares people to travel on public transit independently increasing independence and access to the community

The myRide travel training program targets people of all ages and abilities who need additional knowledge and skills in order to use YRT/Viva services effectively. The program responds to individual needs and abilities with services ranging from familiarization group sessions on how to use transit to intensive one-on-one training. By empowering and encouraging transit use, myRide travel training enables people to participate more fully in their community. Further, the myRide travel training program assists Mobility Plus riders to access the entire family of transit services offered by YRT/Viva.

The myRide program will encourage people with disabilities to use more independent forms of public transportation (i.e., conventional transit) as outlined in the proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

myRide travel training program delivered through community partnership and collaboration

The program is delivered through partnerships with various service providers in the Region including CNIB, Ontario March of Dimes, Community Living York South, Epilepsy York Region and both public and separate school boards. Transportation Services Department staff provide training sessions for the partnering agency in order for these agencies to have the tools to train their clients directly on how to use YRT/Viva. The Program also provides ongoing support with training materials, handbooks and fare media (for training purposes only) for the trainer to conduct the actual client training.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Interest in the myRide travel training program continues to grow with over 22 agencies participating in 2010

In 2010, 15 staff from seven new community agencies were trained for the program. The new agencies provide services to a wide range of clients including new immigrants, seniors and people with cognitive, intellectual and physical disabilities. The new partners are:

- Human Endeavour – Vaughan / Markham
- Job Skills (Immigrant Info) – Newmarket
- Shining Through Centre – Vaughan
- Vaughan Community Health Centre - Vaughan
- York Central Hospital / Central East Autism Service – Richmond Hill
- York Region Catholic District School Board Mobility Specialist
- Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto – Vaughan

In addition to expanding the partnership with the above agencies, staff have made presentations and distributed training materials to seniors and new residents at several group sessions and classrooms. The total number of myRide travel training partners now totals 22.

429 individuals participated in the myRide program, with over 80% now using YRT/Viva with increased confidence and greater independence

In collaboration with the 110 trainers from our partnering agencies, 429 individuals participated in the myRide program during 2010. Through the program, 170 (39%) of the individuals are now able to use the YRT/Viva system independently and 173 (40%) are able to travel with some assistance or able to ride one or two routes with no assistance. The remaining 86 participants are progressing in acquiring the necessary skills to ride YRT/Viva.

Travel training provides independence, inclusivity and increases access to a variety of community programs and services

In a survey conducted for the myRide program, travel trainers indicate that for many of their clients, learning to use the transit system is a skill that increases independence and dignity. As a result, many agencies have taken the initiative to include the myRide program as part of the life skills component of their respective programs. For example, both public and separate school boards have included the myRide program as part of the student's individual education plan.

In order to support and enhance the travel training experience for both trainers and clients, a travel training video and a newsletter have been developed (*see Attachment 1*).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

myRide program is an important element of YRT/Viva's family of services and contributes to efficient service delivery

The myRide program contributes to increasing YRT/Viva trips that may otherwise use the Mobility Plus service. For instance, the operating cost per passenger trip on the Mobility Plus service is \$33.07, as compared to \$6.83 cost per passenger on YRT/Viva.

Based on the training results from 2010, 170 people are now able to use YRT/Viva independently (this includes existing and potential Mobility Plus riders). This results in a cost avoidance of over \$190,000 annually, calculated by factoring the average number of trips per registrant/per year and the average trip cost on Mobility Plus service ($34 \times \$33.07 \times 170 = \$191,144.60$). This analysis is conservative, given that a rider could conceivably make more than 34 trips throughout the year and this calculation does not account for the cost avoidance due to the increasing use of family of services as a result of the myRide travel training program.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

York Region residents can benefit from the myRide program as it will increase their level of independence and ability to access the community using YRT/Viva services. Transportation Services Department staff will continue to promote the myRide program to community service agencies.

7. CONCLUSION

The myRide program continues to be well received by a variety of community agencies. The program is an important element in facilitating independence and access to community services and programs.

For more information on this report, please contact Piragal Thiru, Planner – Accessible Services at Ext 5826.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)

riderprofile



The following is an excerpt from a letter we received as the result of myRide's success in training a new user.

Dear Piragal Thiru:

In May 2010 I had contacted you to discuss the possibility of assisting us in teaching a young child with autism to be able to ride the bus with her mother.

Her inability to ride the bus limited family outings with her mother as they relied on friends to drive them everywhere.

Wanting to improve the quality of life for the family, I contacted you for any information or assistance in regards to the use of public transit.

myRide and me Riding the bus is a reality for a young girl

You provided me with a workshop about the myRide program, which assists individuals with special needs, as well as other individuals, about how to ride a bus, bus routes and times.

For the family/client I work with, the myRide program was individualized specifically for her to achieve the goal of riding public transit.

We have been very successful in getting this young girl to ride the bus without problem behaviours or anxiety with both her mother and therapists.

Her Mom is very thankful that a program like this exists because budget concerns within the family would have restricted them from being able to teach this skill on their own.

The myRide program has made this family's goal of riding the bus a reality.

On behalf of York Central Hospital, the Central East Autism Program and the family, I would like to thank you for the information and assistance you have provided.

We would not have been able to accomplish this incredible goal without your assistance.

Sincerely,
Devon Jones and
Kupa Gunabalasingam

safetytip

Request a Stop

If you ride York Region Transit after 9 p.m. (including TTC vehicles operating north of Steeles Avenue), you can get off between stops, closer to your destination. Just let your bus driver know where you wish to get off at least one stop ahead. To meet your request, your driver must be able to stop safely. For added safety and security, please exit by the front doors.

Please note that Request Stop is not available on Viva service. To maintain frequent schedules, Viva vehicles can only stop at designated vivastations.

welcomeaboard

We welcome our new myRide Training Partners

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health,
Central East Autism Program, Human Endeavour, Job Skills,
Vaughan Community Health Centre, Zareinu Educational Centre
of Metropolitan Toronto

what's new?

PRESTO is coming to York Region



YRT/Viva will implement PRESTO this spring. PRESTO is the electronic fare card system being introduced in phases across transit systems in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

PRESTO allows customers to use a smart card to pay their fare and seamlessly transfer within or between participating transit systems.

The reloadable cards will eventually eliminate the need for paper tickets and passes.

How does PRESTO work?

The PRESTO fare card carries a dollar value preloaded by the customer. Customers tap their PRESTO fare card on a payment device and the appropriate fare is deducted from the card's stored value. PRESTO fare payment devices will be installed on YRT buses, at YRT/Viva terminals and vivastations.

The PRESTO card is the size of a credit card. It can be conveniently reloaded when the stored value runs low, on the phone or in person at select locations or online.

Where can I purchase the PRESTO card?

PRESTO cards are only available in areas where PRESTO has already launched. PRESTO cards will be available through select YRT/Viva fare media agents closer to the York Region PRESTO launch this spring.

Where can I get more information on PRESTO?

PRESTO information and details are available through the following methods:

- > PRESTO website:
www.prestocard.ca
- > PRESTO Contact Centre:
1-8-PRESTO-123
(1-877-378-6123)
- > PRESTO TTY:
#711 (1-800-855-0511)
- > YRT/Viva Contact Centre:
1-866-MOVE-YRT
(1-866-668-3978)

traveltip

When is the next bus coming by your stop?

To find out, simply follow these steps:

- **Call YRT/Viva Information line at 1-866-668-3978**
 - Press 1 for automated schedule
 - Press 1 again for the next few buses
 - Enter your four-digit bus stop number to find out the next arrival

York Region

PRESTO training schedule:

Training sessions for Travel Trainers will be held at the Corporate Learning Centre at 50 High Tech Road, Richmond Hill

Monday, January 17, 2011
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Monday, January 24, 2011
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Space is limited. To register contact Piragal Thiru at 905-762-1282 ext. 5826 or email: piragal.thiru@york.ca

The training will include:

- Background on PRESTO card
- Purchasing and activating the card
- Using PRESTO on the transit systems
- Managing your PRESTO card account
- Training tips and tools for myRide partners

* Refreshments provided