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**METROLINX (GO TRANSIT) ROUTE 64 (NEWMARKET-YORK UNIVERSITY)
SERVICE UPDATE**

The Transportation Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated May 27, 2010, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report updates Regional Council on York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva's efforts to evaluate existing transit services and find alternate solutions to accommodate customers affected by the cancellation of the GO Transit Route 64 (Newmarket-York University) service.

3. BACKGROUND

GO Transit advised their Newmarket–York University bus service would no longer operate effective Monday, April 26, 2010

GO Transit informed customers and residents in York Region that GO Route 64 (Newmarket-York University) bus service would be cancelled effective Monday, April 26, 2010. This service operated direct routing between Newmarket and York University via Yonge Street, King Road and Keele Street. Although this change does not affect customers of GO's existing train services between Newmarket and York University during weekday peak periods, existing customers who use the GO Route 64 bus service are adversely affected by the cancellation of bus service that operated during off-peak periods.

YRT/Viva has received numerous requests to meet the needs of commuters who previously relied on the availability of GO Route 64 bus service.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Since GO Transit's announcement of the Route 64 cancellation, YRT/Viva has been working to evaluate potential alternative solutions to be implemented in September 2010

Staff is currently investigating the option of implementing a new branch of existing YRT Route 22 (King City), where routing would be similar to GO's Route 64 bus route, would provide direct service between Newmarket and York University, and would link the communities of Newmarket, Aurora, Oak Ridges, King City and Vaughan. Travel times on this branch would also be similar to GO's shorter travel times.

Based on the information received, YRT/Viva staff are considering operating three to four trips from Newmarket in the late morning and four to five trips from York University in the late afternoon/evening. These trips would service all stops through King City and also increase the capacity to the existing Route 22 service.

To reduce cost and minimize duplication of service, it is proposed that this YRT service option operate at times where most demand is focused, based on historical ridership data provided by GO Transit, and by survey results which will be forthcoming.

In consultation with York University staff, YRT/Viva conducted an on-line user survey to better understand travel needs of York University students and staff

YRT/Viva staff met with York University staff to discuss existing YRT/Viva services, and to seek clarification regarding the needs of its staff and students. To better understand such needs, YRT/Viva staff, in consultation with York University staff, developed an on-line web survey whereby York University students and faculty staff can advise YRT/Viva of their travel needs for the fall. York University advised users of this on-line survey which was administered by YRT/Viva. The survey ran on the yrt.ca website from May 6, 2010 to May 21, 2010.

YRT/Viva staff will analyze the results of the online survey and other feedback received from existing customers will assist staff to confirm the most suitable service option. The service option recommended will be implemented for the September 2010 service change.

GO Transit's 2009 ridership statistics for the months of June, July and August indicate there are approximately 100 passenger trips on an average weekday (50 passengers southbound in the morning and 50 passengers northbound in the afternoon). Of the 50 passengers boarding in either a southbound or northbound direction, it is estimated that 35 of the 50 passengers will board or alight the bus in the Newmarket or Aurora areas. These passengers have the option of travelling on the Viva blue or YRT's Route 98/99 service. The remaining 15 passengers boarding and alighting in the King City and Maple

areas will have the option of travelling on YRT's Route 22 and/or the TTC Route 107 service. In both cases, it is estimated that passengers will experience an additional 15 to 30 minutes added to their trip time.

Passengers will pay less to travel on the YRT/Viva service as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Fare Comparison for Newmarket to York University

	GO Transit	YRT (2-zone)
Adult Single Ride	\$6.20	\$4.25
Adult Monthly Pass	\$205.00	\$150.00
Adult 10-ride/10 tickets	\$57.25	\$36.00
Student Monthly Pass	\$161.00	Not eligible
Student 10-ride/10 tickets	\$52.75	Not eligible

Relationship to Vision 2026

In response to GO Transit's decision to cancel their Route 64 bus service, the implementation of a new branch of YRT Route 22 for September 2010 would support Vision 2026 by:

- Making transit more accessible and convenient.
- 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.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on preliminary estimates, the annualized cost to operate a new YRT Route 22 branch with limited service availability (three to four trips southbound from Newmarket and four to five trips northbound from York University) is \$285,000. The approximate cost to operate the proposed service from September to December 2010 is \$95,000. There are sufficient funds available in the 2010 Operating budget to cover the cost of operating this service from September to December 2010 with the annualized cost being included in the draft 2011 business and budget plan.

The current revenue to cost ratio for Route 22 is 25%. It is anticipated with the additional operating cost and increased ridership the revenue to cost ratio for the modified Route 22 will improve to 27%.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

In response to GO Transit's decision to cancel their Route 64 bus service, the implementation of a new YRT branch of Route 22 for September 2010 will help to address concerns expressed by numerous York Region residents who were previously serviced by GO Transit, and will provide such residents with alternate and more convenient access to York University from key points in York Region, particularly King City, Oak Ridges, Aurora and Newmarket.

7. CONCLUSION

Since GO Transit has decided to cancel their Route 64 bus service effective April 26, 2010, YRT/Viva recognizes that numerous customers residing in York Region have been inconvenienced by this change, and further recognizes the need to provide a suitable service alternative that will address their concerns. Given the opportunity to meet the needs of affected residents, as well as to take advantage of new potential ridership, it is appropriate to pursue work on developing a suitable service alternative in lieu of GO Transit's cancelled Route 64 bus service.

For more information on this report, please contact Rosanna Agostino, Supervisor, Customer Service at Ext. 5613.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.