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VIVA PROGRESS REPORT October 2005

The Joint Transit Committee and Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report October 13, 2005, from the Vice President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides a general description of the progress made in delivering the York Region Rapid Transit Plan during September 2005. The first stage of Viva Phase 1 went live on September 4, 2005 and this report describes the balance of the work required to bring the last three stages on stream, as well as preparatory EA work in support of Viva Phase 2.

3. BACKGROUND

The June 27, 2002 contract, as amended, required York Consortium 2002 (YC2002) to file monthly progress reports with York Region.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Year One Work Plan

The original Stage One (Year One) agreement entered into between York Region and YC2002 in June 2002 is illustrated in Table 1. The majority of the Stage One work plan components are complete and the only outstanding work, which continues, relates to the Environmental Assessments (EAs), and the current status of each is summarized below.

4.1.1 South Yonge Corridor

The EA Report was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment on August 5, 2005 and recently completed a seven week public and agency review on September 23, 2005. The majority of comments received relate to further work and involvement during the detailed design phase of the project. Comments were received from six members of the public, one First Nations group and a number of government agencies. Staff are working with MOE to address all of the comments received.

4.1.2 Highway 7 Corridor / Vaughan North-South Link

The EA Report was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment on September 2, 2005 and is undergoing a seven week public and agency review which will be completed on October 26, 2005. If there are no delays in the 30-week review process, a final decision by the MOE on the EA is expected by early April 2006.

4.1.3 Markham North-South Link

The six week draft EA Report pre-submission circulation will commence mid October, with final report submission to MOE anticipated during December 2005. EA Study approval is expected by mid 2006.

4.1.4 North Yonge Corridor

Phase I (Alternatives to the Undertaking) of the EA Study is continuing towards completion by the end of November 2005. The remainder of the EA is subject to the approval of the next phase of the Viva work program.

4.2 Viva Phase 1 Design-Build Contract

Kiewit / Ellis Don anticipates billing 79.0% against the Viva Phase 1 Design-Build GMP contract valued at \$69.9 million at the end of September 2005. This report provides a general overview of the progress to date under the Design-Build Contract. A number of change orders have been processed to date for the Design-Build contract with some representing an increase in the GMP while others represent a decrease. Overall, the total change orders will be within the \$150 million budget. The information in sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 sets out a general overview and description of the progress made with respect to the delivery of the various components of the system. Of course, the status of these matters is being more fully addressed under the various relevant contracts for the purposes of formally documenting the legal rights and obligations of the parties in connection with these matters. Design-Build activities during September are described in Table 1.

Table 1
Viva Phase 1 Design-Build Contract

Component	Activity	Progress
Detailed Design		
Intersections	· All stops on the system are at the issued for construction stage.	· 100% Complete
Terminals	· Finch Terminal: Design complete	· Complete
	· Newmarket Terminal: Exterior design has been completed and interior design work is being handled by GO Transit.	· Complete

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	· Pedestrian bridge design 75% complete. Site plan submitted to Richmond Hill. Construction to commence after approval of site plan. Anticipated early spring of 2006. · York University: Design complete · Langstaff: Design complete	· Behind Schedule · Complete · Complete
Fare Collection Equipment	· Modifications to hardware and software on the Stage 1 Fare Collection devices are being implemented to address enhanced equipment performance. · 90% of the Fare Collection devices (oneRide, multiRide and vivaNow) required for Stage 2 handover (Subroutes D and E) have been manufactured, installed and tested in the field. · System testing for the Stage 2 Fare Collection devices commences in late September with completion scheduled for early October.	· On Schedule
ITS	· Handover of the transit control ITS system (both hardware and software) took place at the end of August and the system went live as scheduled. · Installations of ITS components for Stage 2 have been ongoing through September and will be complete and tested for early October · Variable Message Signs (VMS) for Stage 2 have been manufactured, installed and tested. · Testing of 'in-vehicle' INIT equipment is ongoing for Stage 2.	· On Schedule
Transit Signal Priority (TSP)	· Traffic and traffic signals are being monitored now that the system has gone live. · The fine-tuning of the TSP parameters on the live system is under way.	· On Schedule

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Construction	Stops	Sub-routes A (Yonge Street from Finch to Bernard.) and C (Highway 7 from Town Centre to York University): Handover occurred on August 29, 2005. Sub-routes D (Vaughan N/S Link from Downsview to Martin Grove) and E (Markham N/S Link from Don Mills to Unionville Station): Handover date is October 10, 2005. - Deficiencies list work has already commenced and no delays are anticipated. Sub-route B (Yonge Street from Finch to Eagle Terminal in Newmarket: Handover date is November 18, 2005. - Civil work has commenced on all stops - No delay is anticipated	- Complete - On Schedule - On Schedule
	Terminals	Finch Terminal: - Interior: In Service. - Exterior: Viva equipment is in service. - Additional external work is being handled by GO Transit -. canopy construction is delayed. Richmond Hill Centre Terminal: In Service Newmarket Terminal: - Exterior construction commenced in July with anticipated completion in late fall 2005. - Interior work by GO is delayed and interior progress is being monitored for impact on the KED contract. York University: In Service Bernard Terminal: In Service Cornell Terminal:	- Complete - Complete - Delayed - Complete - On Schedule - Delayed - Complete - Complete - Delayed
	Stations	Shelter, Modules and Fin installation continues on non-commissioned routes and no delays are anticipated.	On Schedule

4.3 Viva Phase 1 Vehicle Contract

A contract was entered into with Van Hool on March 24, 2004 for the purchase of 22 sixty-foot vehicles and 55 forty-foot vehicles and an option to purchase 3 additional sixty-foot vehicles and 5 additional forty-foot vehicles has been exercised. In total 40 of the 60 forty-foot vehicles and 19 of the 25 sixty-foot vehicles were received up to the end of September. The vehicle manufacturer has scheduled production to meet the delivery targets required to achieve the scheduled sub-route start up dates. Deliveries will continue through the fall with the last vehicles scheduled for delivery in January 2006.

4.4 Viva Phase 1 Support Activities

Table 2
Viva Phase 1 Operations & Maintenance Related Support

Component	Activity
O&M Contract	· Stage 1 of Viva operations was successfully implemented on Sept 4. · Mobilization continues for the implementation of Stage 2 on October 16 and subsequent stages. · Mobilization meetings with Connex are held weekly and service implementation is underway according to plan. Connex continues to hire and train drivers and staff.
Off-Board Fare Equipment	· Fully operational with a number of adjustments being made to equipment and media to ensure optimal system performance.
Viva Phase 1 O&M Facilities Newmarket Maintenance Facility	· Fully operational.
South Maintenance Facility	· Fully operational.
Viva Phase 1 O&M Planning Support	· Service schedules have been completed in Trapeze and INIT for stages 1 and 2. · Service schedules for stages 3 and 4 for Trapeze and INIT are under development.

4.5 Communications and Launch of Rapid Transit

4.5.1 Marketing Communications

Service Launch Event

Communications activities in September were focussed on the launch of the first stage of Viva. Although Viva service began on Sunday September 4, 2005, the official launch event was held on Tuesday September 6, 2005. Approximately 250 invited guests attended the event held at Richmond Hill Centre Terminal, during which a commemorative plaque was unveiled, a ribbon cut and Viva was officially launched.

Joining Chair Fisch and members of Regional Council were special guests including the Hon. Belinda Stronach, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the Hon. Greg Sorbara, Ontario Minister of Finance, Hon. Harinder Takhar, Ontario Minister of Transportation, and Michael Roschlau, President and CEO of the Canadian Urban Transit Association.

Viva Greeters

In order to welcome customers aboard the new service, over 60 Team Viva Greeters were deployed to each of the first stage opening vivastations and terminals to provide on-site tech support with a human face. Greeters handed out brochures, route maps and the viva rider's manual to thousands of customers, guiding them through the workings of the new service and changes to fare policy affecting both Viva and YRT.

This group of lively and energetic people has helped customers purchase tickets at oneRide and multiRide machines, validate tickets at the vivaNow validators, encouraged boarding through all doors and generally offered assistance. They project a fun, lively, and people-oriented image that effectively communicates the Viva brand character and values.

Viva Greeters continue to staff the two high volume terminals, Finch and Richmond Hill Centre, and will again be deployed at all the new vivastations opening on each of October 16th and November 20th.

Advertising

The service launch advertising campaign has now been fully deployed pursuant to the plan approved by Council last March, save for the ongoing rotation of ads in the local York Region News Group papers. Ads will continue to run weekly through September and October, tapering to bi-weekly thereafter. The opening weekend papers featured a double page spread special advertorial that explained how the new service works. This same advertorial was translated to Chinese and "Indian English" and ran for four weeks in several ethnic papers throughout the month of September.

On the weekend of September 24th and 25th, Viva Rider's Manuals were delivered to 150,000 households across the region in special door hanger bags.

Presentations

On September 20, the public sector's role in planning and implementing the three phases of York Region's rapid transit system was presented to the Ontario Regional Facilities Management Association.

Two new presentations were prepared to promote the launch of Viva service to key target markets in York Region during the coming months. A business community presentation, designed to increase awareness and ridership among employees, was tested with a local company on September 14 and updated to incorporate employee feedback. A presentation for seniors' associations was also developed, and the first presentation was made to Markham seniors on September 20.

E-Communication

The vivayork.com website has been busy in September as people seek to learn more about the new service offering as well as in response to a quiz which generated a great deal of interest in both the website and the new service.

Launched late in August, the Viva Quiz ran for four weeks. It gauged a participant's travel personality based on a set of key questions and multiple-choice answers. The questions and multiple-choice answers associated transit with cool, eco-friendly, comfort-conscious, smart consumers who value their time and money. The questions used language that was spirited, fun and entertaining as well as graphics and iconography with subtle animation to illustrate each question.

Daily winners were given a set of 10 system tickets and a grand prizewinner received a year's worth of monthly passes to ride Viva/YRT.

Before the contest began, the daily average number of hits to the website was about 8,000/day. Since the contest, the daily average number of hits to the site is now 19,000/day with 61,000 hits on September 6th, the day of the official service launch.

Entry to the site was solicited through a purchased list of approximately 4,000 email addresses, in York Region within our predefined demographic: 15 to 45 years old who live and work in the York Region. We expected our permission database of 400 subscribed website visitors (those who registered at vivayork.com before any mailings were sent out), to grow by at least 1,200 contest entries (based on a 30% click through rate from our purchased list) to yield approximately 1,600 addresses in total. The actual results significantly outperformed our expectations.

In total, 3,479 contest entries were received, yielding almost 3,000 members – an increase of 740% from our initial 400 names. The demographic breakdown of entrants

was as follows: 47% were male, 53% were female, 50% were students and 50% were employed. In order to become part of the database, entrants were required to double opt in (to ensure that permission was given). More than 900 additional entries remain unconfirmed, so our total number could continue to grow making this an almost record breaking online campaign.

The success of this campaign yields a tremendous opportunity to communicate with our target audience and further encourage them to ride public transit. It also reconfirms this as a key medium through which to reach our target audience of potential riders.

Other enhancements to the website in the month of September included an interactive vehicle tour that allows visitors to scroll over an image of a Viva vehicle and learn about its key features.

4.5.2 Media Update

This was an historic month for York Region. September marked the launch of Viva and the beginning of the first rapid transit system of its kind in the GTA. The significance of Viva was not lost on the media and they filed stories leading up to and following the service launch.

Prior to the official launch on Tuesday September 6, 2005 there were several broadcast and print stories focusing on different aspects of the Viva service. These included stories filed by A Channel, Rogers TV, Fairchild TV, OMNI TV, Seneca College TV, the Toronto Star, YRNG, the Toronto Sun and York University Newspaper. The headlines were:

- “York Region transit launches new rapid transit service” Excalibur Newspaper, August 31, 2005.
- “Viva test case for TVs” YRNG, September 1, 2005.
- “York takes a flyer” Toronto Star, September 3, 2005
- “An idea whose time has finally arrived” Toronto Star, September 3, 2005.
- “Idea born on the open road” Toronto Star, September 3, 2005.
- “York’s traffic problem turning the corner?” Toronto Sun, September 4, 2005.
- “Rush hour service ideal for students” Era Banner, September 4, 2005.
- “Balancing act” Metro newspaper, September 6, 2005.
- “Rapid transit set to roll” Thornhill Post, September 2005.

The launch event on September 6th was well attended by the media with representatives from the Toronto Star, the York Region Newspaper Group, the Toronto Sun, The Globe and Mail, The National Post, CTV, Global TV, A Channel, Fairchild TV, OMNI TV, Rogers TV, Seneca College TV, 680 Radio News, CFRB Radio, and the York University Newspaper Excalibur, resulting in extensive local, regional and provincial coverage. The headlines were:

- “Bus riders treated to laptop of luxury” National Post, September 7, 2005.

- “Viva the blue bus” Toronto Sun, September 7, 2005.
- “Bus riders find bearings” Toronto Star, September 7, 2005.
- “Subway extension not ‘if’ but when” Toronto Star, September 7, 2005.
- “York super buses no panacea but welcome” Globe and Mail, September 7, 2005.

In the days following the service launch, reporters have been filing follow up stories on a regular basis. TV crews from Aurora cable and TVO came out to shoot stories. There were also stories filed by Barrie Radio, Windsor Radio and in the YRNG, the Toronto Star, the National Post, and the Auran.

- York Region on a roll” Toronto Star editorial, September 9, 2005.
- “Viva arrives in (selected parts of) York Region” Auran, September 13, 2005.
- “GO eyes changes in wake of Viva” YRNG, September 15, 2005.
- “Who are Viva buses carrying?” the Toronto Star, September 19, 2005.
- “Pondering riders’ bottom line”, the Toronto Star, September 23, 2005.
- “A York commuting test: bike, car and high-tech VIVA”, National Post, September 23, 2005.

4.6 Government Relations

During the month of September rapid transit staff sent key Federal and Provincial Government staff a copy of our Viva service launch news release and backgrounder. We also emailed flash updates to ensure Viva stays top-of-mind.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There are no local municipal implications associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION

YC2002 and York Region staff continued to advance the Viva implementation program through September with Stage 2 anticipated to go-live on October 16, 2005.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.