



MOVING TO
2020

**YRT/VIVA 2016-2020
STRATEGIC PLAN**

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Letter from the General Manager

In 2001, four municipal transit systems amalgamated to form York Region Transit (YRT). Viva bus rapid transit (BRT) services were launched in 2005 and today we are known as YRT/Viva. We operate a diverse, reliable Family of Services consisting of Local and Base routes, Viva BRT on dedicated rapidways, Mobility Plus specialized transit services, Dial-a-Ride, Express and Community Bus routes, GO Shuttles, and High School Specials. The network provides transit services to a large geographic area including urban, suburban and rural communities.

This document provides a summary of our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan which describes how YRT/Viva will address the Region's transit needs over the next five years. Since amalgamation, ridership and service hours have more than tripled. As YRT/Viva continues to grow, we will continue offering innovative service opportunities to the residents of York Region. Together with the annual service planning process and capital and operating budgets, YRT/Viva will translate the strategic direction outlined in this Plan into actions that will improve public transit.

The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan refines existing service guidelines, improves the stakeholder communication process, and identifies new ways to enhance services. The Plan addresses the Spadina Subway Transit Strategy, and other high-order transit initiatives such as rapidways and connecting to expanded GO Transit train services. YRT/Viva will also be supporting the Metrolinx Regional Express Rail (RER) initiative, developing a fare strategy, implementing PRESTO system-wide, and identifying non-fare revenue opportunities to support transit initiatives.

Going forward, YRT/Viva will continue to grow its service and to provide York Region residents with transit services that are safe, reliable and customer friendly. This is our commitment to the Region.

Ann-Marie Carroll

General Manager
York Region Transit (YRT/Viva)





Moving to 2020

On January 1, 2001, the Regional Municipality of York assumed the responsibility for funding and operating public conventional and specialized transit services throughout York Region. Since 2001, YRT/Viva has progressed through multiple phases of the **Transit Life Cycle**, and is now a vital transportation network in the Region.

In the **Start Up** phase, YRT/Viva amalgamated local transit services, developed standards and policies, and expanded service into new development areas.

In the **Rapid Growth** phase, the system focused on expanding service and increasing ridership by implementing Viva service and more innovative technologies that improved service delivery.

The **Realignment** phase focused on improving service efficiency, planning and constructing Viva rapidways, and improving the accessibility of all services.

YRT/Viva is now entering the 2016-2020 **GTA Rapid Transit Integration** phase. **The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan will guide YRT/Viva through this phase of the Transit Life Cycle.**





Vision

York Region's vision is about people. It's about the places where people live, the systems and services that support and sustain the community, the economy, and the environment. It's about creating and connecting a strong, caring and safe community.

YRT/Viva shares York Region's vision and understands the importance of transportation in achieving this shared vision. YRT/Viva wants to empower people with mobility options and access to the places they want to go.

“As a transportation leader, we will be recognized as the customer's choice and essential to the Region's success.”

Mission

York Region staff are committed to providing cost effective, quality services that respond to the needs of the Region's growing communities.

York Region's Transportation Services department plans, builds, and operates roads and transit services that respond to the needs of the Region's growing communities.

With a vision to be the preferred choice for travel in and around York Region, YRT/Viva's mission is focused on providing safe, reliable, and convenient transit services that connect people, jobs, and communities.

“To provide quality public transit services which support the economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and health of the Regional community.”

Achievements

In 2001, four municipal transit systems amalgamated to form York Region Transit.



3.7x increase in annual service hours from 354,000 to 1.3 million

2.9x increase in annual ridership from 7.7 million to 22.5 million



“The most innovative transit organization in North America”

Launched Viva in 2005 and won the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) 2006 Innovation Award for quickly getting from vision to reality



90 kilometres of Viva was implemented, providing fast, reliable, and frequent service along key corridors

Opened the first rapidway segment in 2011 on Enterprise Boulevard from Warden Avenue to Birchmount Road in Markham



Became fully compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 standards and continue to identify, remove, and prevent barriers of using YRT/Viva



Used trending social media and creative communication methods to reach out to customers and the community, including real-time alerts and information on the YRT/Viva mobile app, yrt.ca, talk2yrt.ca, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube

Launched PRESTO in 2011, allowing riders to “Tap Green, Ride Blue” and easily transfer to other transit systems in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area





Strategy

YRT/Viva's Strategy has seven objectives.

Service Delivery

Expand and improve services to meet growing demand and changing customer needs. Increase system productivity by attracting new riders and improving the allocation of resources.

Customer Satisfaction

Engage customers in the planning process and adapt services to meet their needs and expectations.

Innovation

Pursue transit industry best practices to explore and adopt new strategies that enhance transit services.

Environmental Sustainability

Increase ridership, decrease environmental impact, and reduce York Region's carbon footprint.

Asset Management

Plan and manage capital assets effectively and efficiently, while ensuring they are maintained in a state of good repair.

Financial Sustainability

Strive for operational cost efficiencies and look to increase sustainable funding sources.

Performance Measurement

Measure performance and be accountable.

Service Delivery

YRT/Viva's core business is providing quality public transit services. For continued success, YRT/Viva must expand the system to accommodate population and employment growth, adapt to changing travel trends, and increase system productivity.

“Expand and improve services to meet growing demand and changing customer needs. Increase system productivity by attracting new riders and improving the allocation of resources.”

Key Initiatives

Viva Network Expansion Plan

Improve service reliability and travel times across the Viva network by implementing the Viva Network Expansion Plan (VNEP), which enhances existing services and provides new Viva services along the Major Mackenzie Drive, Leslie Street, and Jane Street corridors.

Spadina Subway Transit Strategy

Restructure the YRT/Viva network to connect with new subway stations and York University when the TTC Spadina Subway Extension opens. Integration will focus on route directness, service frequency, and ease of fare payment.

Frequent Transit Network

Develop a Frequent Transit Network (FTN) of Viva and Base services along key corridors with service frequencies of 15 minutes or less, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days per week. The FTN will be supported by Local, Express, Shuttle and Community Bus services.





Park & Ride

Develop a Park & Ride Implementation Plan to increase market share to 10 per cent transit access through Park & Ride and Kiss & Ride. Identify the size, location, and implementation of new Park & Ride facilities.

Low Demand Transit Strategy

Implement a Low Demand Transit Strategy to improve transit services in low demand areas. Define a service boundary and develop a combination of conventional, Dial-a-Ride, Mobility Plus, and other transit service strategies to better meet the mobility needs of low demand areas.

Connections with GO Transit

Restructure existing services and provide new services that support GO Transit's all-day schedules and the Regional Express Rail (RER) program. YRT/Viva will improve access to GO Transit and improve regional mobility.

Mobility Plus

Improve Mobility Plus productivity by increasing integration with the YRT/Viva Family of Services, which will result in an overall alignment of service offered by conventional and specialized transit services.

Accessibility Plan

Ensure that all services meet and/or exceed Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards. Pursue full integration of the Family of Services to ensure fully accessible services are provided throughout the service area.

Service Expansion

Continue expanding services into new developments.

Regional Integration

Continue to coordinate services with other transit agencies, improving regional transit integration across the York Region boundary.

Customer Satisfaction

The passenger experience at every stage of a transit trip is important. YRT/Viva values its customers and is committed to providing safe, reliable, and convenient service.

“Engage customers in the planning process and adapt services to meet their needs and expectations.”

Key Initiatives

Customer Engagement and Communication

Engage customers and stakeholders throughout the transit planning process, using a variety of techniques. Enhance customer communications with new digital tools and capabilities to inform and connect with customers.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Conduct customer satisfaction surveys to better understand customer and non-customer needs.

Regional Integration that puts the Customer First

Continue discussions and agreements with other transit agencies to improve connectivity of routes, services, and fare payment.

Customer Experience

Continue to enhance existing technology and find new ways to improve the customer experience.

Customer Safety and Security

Provide a safe environment for customers by deploying Enforcement staff and technology 24/7.

Track Contact Centre Performance

Track progress in reaching the Contact Centre's performance indicator targets.



Innovation

YRT/Viva will identify innovative opportunities that improve transit management and planning processes, and will apply advanced technologies that improve the customer experience, and the effectiveness and efficiency of the system.

“ Pursue transit industry best practices to explore and adopt new strategies that enhance transit services. ”

Key Initiatives

Improve the Customer Experience

Use social media and state of the art digital tools to connect and communicate with customers. Install WiFi on YRT/Viva buses and at terminals.

Improve System Effectiveness and Efficiency

Use the most effective vehicle scheduling methods to ensure efficient fleet use. Use innovative service planning methods to ensure the most effective matching of service delivery methods to customer demand.



Environmental Sustainability

Transit plays a critical role in protecting the environment. It improves air quality, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, saves energy, lowers land consumption, and supports more compact development.

“Increase ridership, decrease environmental impact, and reduce York Region’s carbon footprint.”

Key Initiatives

Increase Transit Ridership

Increase service to attract more transit trips from single occupancy vehicles, and to reduce the carbon footprint per person in York Region. Improve access to transit through active transportation and the complete streets reconstruction of the Viva corridors. Encourage new ridership and increase the transit market share by promoting Park & Ride.

LEED Certification

Certify all new buildings and facilities under Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), an internationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings, or equivalent criteria.

Alternative Fuels

Decrease the environmental impact of transit operations by researching and implementing alternative fuel and vehicle technologies.

Anti-Idling Program

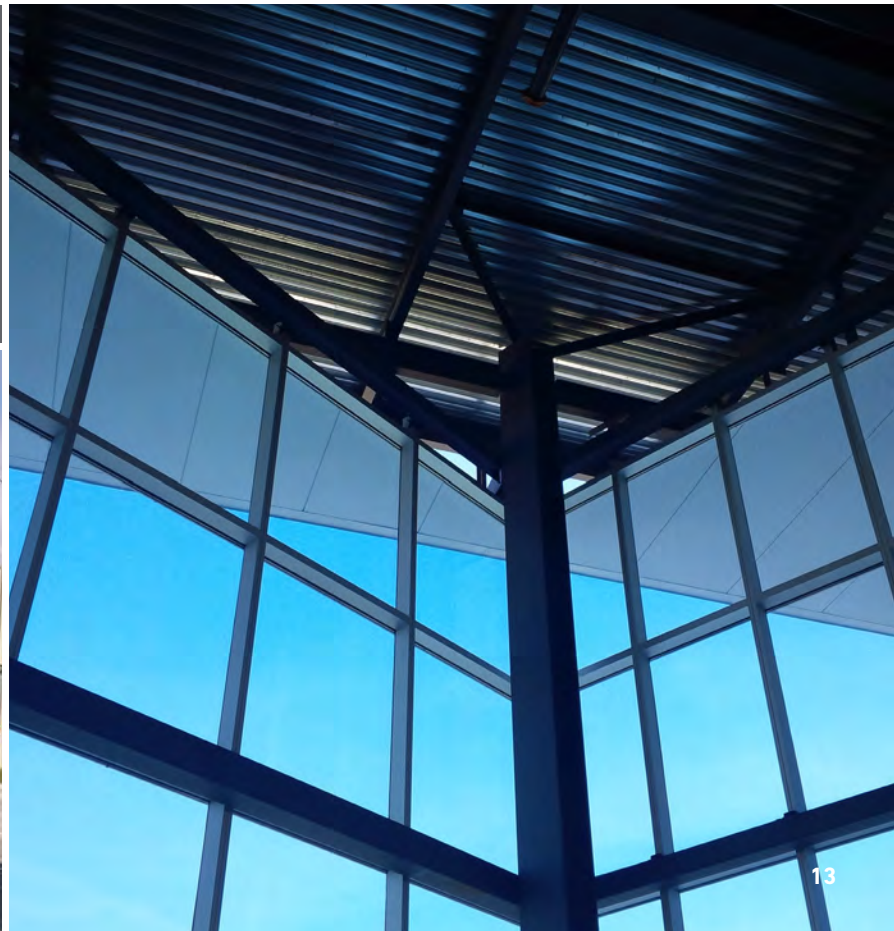
Further reduce exhaust emissions, fuel consumption, and noise impacts, and improve air quality through the Anti-Idling program, restricting buses to a maximum idling time of three minutes.





The new Operations, Maintenance and Storage Facility near Leslie Street and 16th Avenue was designed and constructed to achieve LEED Silver certification. The building includes energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly features such as harvesting rain water for washing buses.

With the Bike'n'Bus program, bikes ride for free on all YRT/Viva routes. There are two bike racks on every bus, and at 91 vivastations and bus stops.



Asset Management

Sustain performance of the Region's assets, maintain life cycle costs, and deliver the service levels customers desire and regulators require.

“Plan and manage capital assets effectively and efficiently, while ensuring they are maintained in a state of good repair.”

Key Initiatives

Maintain Assets in a State of Good Repair

Maintain capital assets in a state of good repair to ensure the capacity, functionality and value from the investment. Ensure the cleanliness of facilities and vehicles to provide a safe and comfortable customer experience.

Ownership and Control of Fleet and Facilities

Own all operating, maintenance, and storage facilities for more control and flexibility of fleet and facilities.

Spare Ratio

Manage the fleet at the 30 per cent spares contractual requirement.

Centralize Heavy Maintenance

Contract out or consolidate all heavy vehicle maintenance to achieve higher efficiencies in maintaining and managing vehicle assets.

New Technologies and Methods

Monitor transit industry trends and benchmark YRT/Viva's performance. Pursue best practices in the transit industry, adopting new technologies and methods to enhance services and improve customer experience.

Contract Management

Achieve good value in business relations by being diligent in developing and administering all contracts.



Financial Sustainability

YRT/Viva's operations must be financially sustainable in a manner that emphasizes productivity, while also ensuring social equity and service coverage.

“Strive for operational cost efficiencies and look to increase sustainable funding sources.”

Key Initiatives

Updated Cost Recovery Target

Achieve an operational cost recovery ratio of 45 per cent by 2020.

Fare Restructuring

Establish a new fare structure and fare levels that are simple to understand, reflect the cost of service, and meet revenue targets. Continue working towards fare and service integration with other Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) transit service providers.

Explore and Increase Alternative Funding

Increase funding from non-government and non-passenger revenues from less than one per cent to seven per cent to establish a diversified funding structure.

Revenue Protection

Continue proof of payment initiatives to maintain a fare evasion rate of less than two per cent.



Performance Measurement

To understand and improve YRT/Viva services, it is critical the performance of each route and the system as a whole are measured, and benchmarked with peer transit agencies.

“Measure performance and be accountable.”

Key Initiatives

Updated Transit Service Guidelines

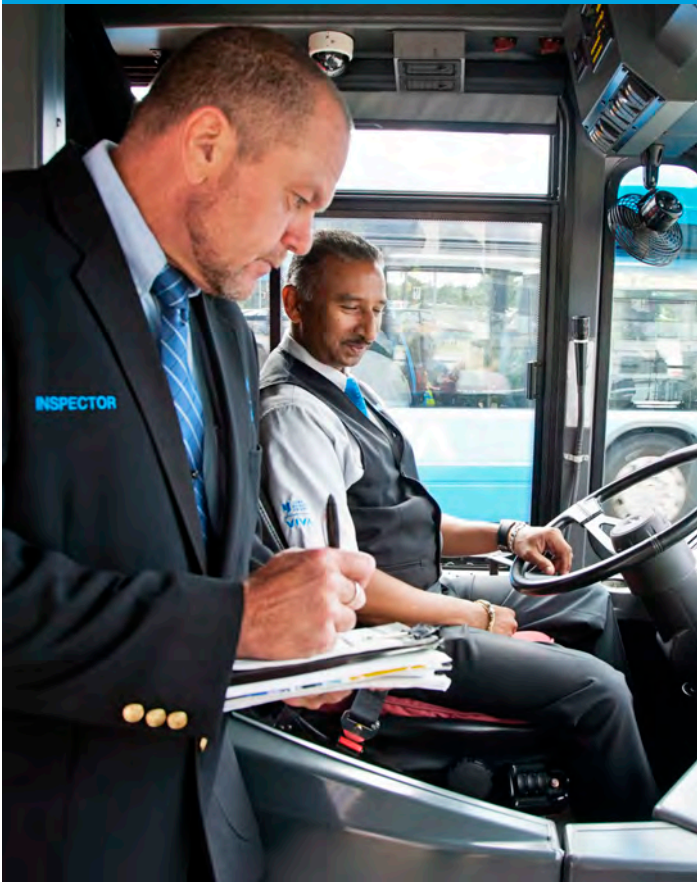
Use the updated Service Guidelines to establish new services and evaluate existing services while balancing performance and financial requirements in a transparent and equitable manner.

Updated Performance Indicator Targets

Use the updated System and Route Performance Indicator Targets to set higher goals for the amount of service provided, service effectiveness, and system productivity.

Transit System Performance

Track progress in reaching the system and route performance targets and continue tracking Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with industry standards.



YRT/Viva at a Glance

YRT/Viva serves a region of 1,776 square kilometres, with a population of 1.1 million and 0.6 million jobs. YRT/Viva provides conventional and specialized transit services across nine municipalities, including the Town of Aurora, Town of East Gwillimbury, Town of Georgina, Township of King, City of Markham, Town of Newmarket, Town of Richmond Hill, City of Vaughan, and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

22.5 million passenger trips



1.3 million hours of service



30.5 million kilometres of service

128 bus routes



5,129 bus stops **24** rapidway vivastations **106** curbside vivastations

123 Viva buses **391** conventional buses **101** Mobility Plus vehicles

MOBILITY PLUS  **358** thousand trips **8** thousand registrants 

**Based on 2014 year-end data*

76,431

passengers on an average weekday

AVERAGE WEEKDAY RIDERSHIP ON THE BUSIEST ROUTES:

VIVA  **VIVA** 

VIVA BLUE

13,353

VIVA PURPLE

5,705

77 

HIGHWAY 7

3,366

88 

BATHURST

3,159

20 

JANE

2,446

91 

BAYVIEW

2,853

4 

MAJOR MACKENZIE

2,410

85 

RUTHERFORD

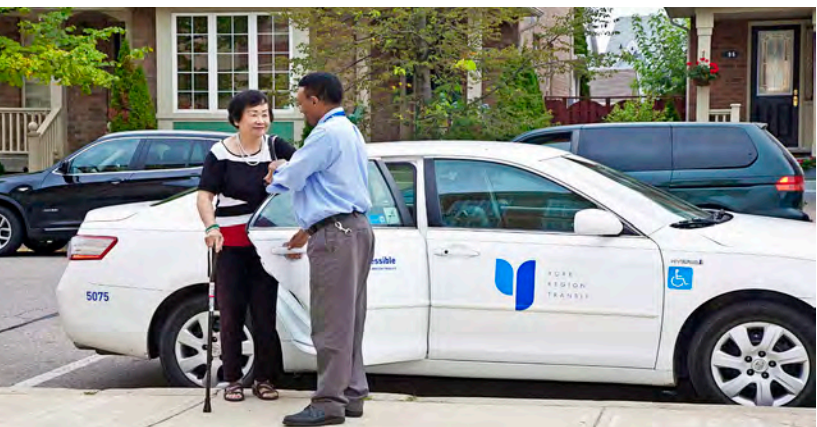
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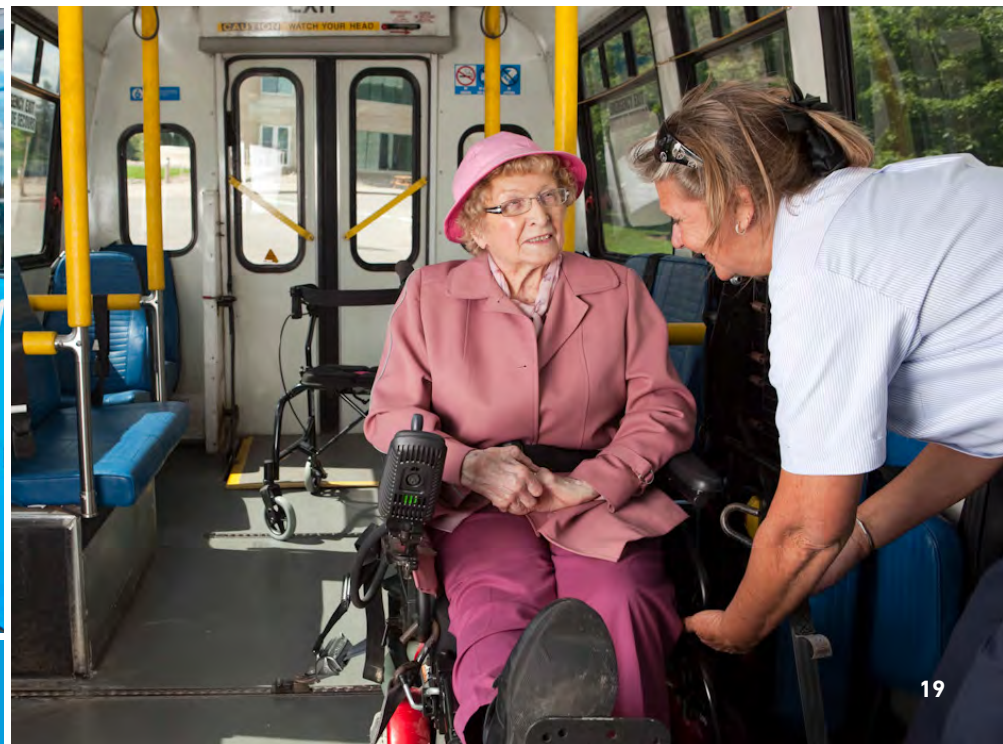
Our Commitment

The YRT/Viva 2016-2020 Strategic Plan is a commitment to customers. YRT/Viva takes great pride in the delivery of the Family of Services, and is proud to be a part of the economic development and community vitality of all nine municipalities in York Region.

The plan is attainable. YRT/Viva is driven to improve and strengthen the operation of the transit network for all users, and to achieve new milestones in the years to come. YRT/Viva will continue to collaborate with partners to look for new opportunities to improve the GTHA's regional transit network and integration between municipalities.

Together with the annual service planning process, and the operating and capital budget programs, **YRT/Viva will translate the strategic direction into actions that will continue to improve public transit in York Region.**







MOVING TO 2020

YRT/VIVA 2016-2020
STRATEGIC PLAN



For more information, visit yrt.ca

Accessible formats or communication supports for this document are available upon request.

Please email transitinfo@york.ca or call 1-866-668-3978 or TTY (for the hearing impaired) at 1-866-276-7478.

