

June 26, 2009

Regional Councillor Vito Spatafora, Chair  
York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee  
c/o Town Clerk's Office  
Town of Richmond Hill  
Box 300, 225 East Beaver Creek Road  
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 4Y5

Dear Regional Councillor Spatafora:

**Re: York Region Transit  
Mobility Plus Customer Satisfaction Survey Results**

Regional Council, at its meeting held on June 25, 2009, adopted the following recommendation of the Transit Committee regarding the report entitled "York Region Transit Mobility Plus Customer Satisfaction Survey Results":

1. This report be forwarded to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for information.

A copy of Clause No. 2, Report No. 7, of the Transit Committee is enclosed for your information.

Please contact Caroline Berryman, Marketing Supervisor, Transit Branch, at 905-830-4444, ext. 5644, if you have any questions with respect to this matter.

Sincerely,

Denis Kelly  
Regional Clerk

B. Bridle  
Attachment

Copy to: Don Gordon, General Manager, York Region Transit



Clause No. 2, in Report No. 7 of the Transit Committee was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting on June 25, 2009.

## 2

### **YORK REGION TRANSIT MOBILITY PLUS CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS**

The Transit Committee recommends:

1. **Receipt of the presentation by Diana MacDonald, Senior Research Associate, Environics, Caroline Berryman, Marketing Supervisor and Sharon Doyle, Manager, Mobility Plus, York Region Transit; and**
2. **Adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated June 4, 2009, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services.**

#### **1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that:

1. This report be forwarded to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for information.

#### **2. PURPOSE**

This report updates Regional Council on the highlights of the 2008 Mobility Plus Customer Satisfaction Survey.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

**As part of the on-going effort to measure customer satisfaction with Mobility Plus, a customer satisfaction survey is undertaken bi-annually**

Previous surveys were conducted in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2006. These surveys established a benchmark for customer satisfaction with Mobility Plus services.

The customer satisfaction survey for Mobility Plus was conducted between December 2 and December 8, 2008.

A Customer Satisfaction Improvement Team comprised of YRT staff will be responsible for reviewing the results of the customer satisfaction survey and identifying areas of improvement. The team will work with staff groups within YRT and the service contractors to recommend solutions for consideration by senior management.

#### 4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

##### 4.1 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

##### **In December 2008, a total of 551 telephone interviews were conducted with registered system users**

Environics Research Group was selected to conduct, co-ordinate and analyze the results of the survey. The most current contact information for all registered Mobility Plus users was provided by YRT. The surveys were administered by telephone by Environics. Registered Mobility Plus customers were chosen randomly and interviewed in proportions reflecting actual ridership populations by municipality. Each survey took approximately twenty minutes to complete. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included as *Attachment 1*.

A representative sampling of riders by percentage of ridership in each local municipality was obtained (see Table 1 below). Survey sample size and interview length are similar to past surveys.

**Table 1**  
 Surveys Completed by Municipality

<b>Community</b>	<b># of Riders</b>	<b>% of Riders</b>	<b># of Interviews</b>	<b>% of Interviews</b>
Vaughan	2,025	26%	130	24%
Markham	1,787	23%	143	26%
Richmond Hill	1,477	19%	106	19%
Newmarket	871	11%	64	12%
Georgina	448	6%	34	6%
Aurora	420	5%	26	5%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	369	5%	24	4%
East Gwillimbury	148	2%	14	3%
King	133	2%	10	2%
Other	5	<1%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,685</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>100%</b>

The 2008 survey was based on the 2006 model, with some minor updates. The survey covered:

- Customer satisfaction and commitment level.
- Important service attributes (timeliness, rider safety and security, vehicle cleanliness and driver behaviour, knowledge and driver assistance).

- reasons for using/not using the service.
- Frequency and patterns of service usage.
- Fare usage patterns and availability.
- Accessibility to services and information, including trip booking and call centre.
- Demographics.

## 4.2 RESULTS

### **Overall, 91% of Mobility Plus customers are satisfied or very satisfied with the ability of YRT Mobility Plus to meet their specialized transportation needs**

The overall figure is the same as the previous survey in 2006, but strongly expressed overall satisfaction has increased from 56% to 64%, and is at its highest level since tracking began in 2002. Although satisfaction has declined since 2006 for some specific aspects of Mobility Plus Services and Call Centre, such as vehicles arriving on time, cleanliness of the vehicle, and calls being answered promptly, only 3% of people say that they are dissatisfied with the service. Even though specific services are down, this has not affected overall satisfaction with Mobility Plus to meet the needs of their customers.

Mobility Plus continues to be highly appreciated by customers. Overwhelming majorities express overall satisfaction with Mobility Plus service and the Call Centre, and with the ability of Mobility Plus to meet specialized transportation needs. Mobility Plus services were given excellent ratings in the areas of:

- Vehicles being well-equipped.
- Courteous drivers.
- Operating hours.
- Cost of fares.
- Friendliness and knowledge of Call Centre staff.
- Call Centre hours.

## 4.3 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### **Customers give low ratings to timeliness of vehicles and calls being answered promptly by Call Centre staff**

Those who are dissatisfied complain about scheduling issues, vehicles not arriving on time or arriving too early. Given that customers' main reason for using Mobility Plus service is for medical reasons, arriving at their destination on time is important. Calls being answered promptly is an area that receives a relatively lower score than other areas of the Call Centre. Most of the dissatisfaction is related to long wait times and being kept on hold. This is a result of the volume of calls received and the time it takes to answer each call.

### **There are opportunities for improvement in overall satisfaction levels**

The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone system, which was introduced in March 2009, has already improved the service level by taking approximately 350 Mobility Plus calls per day out of the queue, reducing the length of time that customers have to wait or be kept on hold for the next available staff person.

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) will be installed in all contractor vehicles by late summer or early fall of 2009. This system will enable staff to monitor the location of contractors' vehicles and make adjustments to schedules as required, thereby improving timeliness of vehicles.

### **Recommendations for improvement will be developed by YRT's Customer Satisfaction Improvement Team**

This team will work to target areas identified in the customer satisfaction survey having a low satisfaction rating and produce a list of recommended initiatives to improve customer satisfaction. This list will be brought to the YRT management team for consideration.

### **Relationship to Vision 2026**

The 2008 YRT/Viva Customer Satisfaction Surveys supports the Region's Vision 2026 initiative: Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region. The survey engages the Region's citizens and encourages their feedback for services that affect their lives, such as transit.

The information provided in the surveys is used to help YRT/Viva improve its services. By conducting performance measurement surveys, YRT staff are taking accountability for service performance.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Improvements and enhancements identified by the Customer Satisfaction Improvement Teams will be presented for consideration in the current or upcoming year's budget.

With the implementation of IVR in March 2009 and the impact it has had on reducing call volume, Mobility Plus was able to reduce call centre staffing by one full-time position, saving approximately \$60,000 annually.

## **6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

Transit customers and stakeholders from the local municipalities will benefit from the customer satisfaction survey, as it identifies specific areas in need of improvement.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The 2008 Mobility Plus Customer Satisfaction Survey identifies areas in which our customers would value improvement to this service. It is also used as a tool to measure contractors' ongoing performance under the performance-based contracts.

The improvement in customer satisfaction levels in specific survey areas is a direct reflection of the significant investments and improvements made in public transit in York Region. Customers appreciate the Region's commitment to improving their overall experience with Mobility Plus. Customer satisfaction surveys will take place every two years and the next survey is scheduled to take place in the fall of 2010.

For more information please contact Caroline Berryman, Marketing Supervisor at extension 5644.

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