

Clause 4 in Report No. 6 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on April 20, 2017.

4

2016 Transit System Performance Update

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendation contained in the report dated March 23, 2017 from the Commissioner of Transportation Services:

1. Council receive this report for information.
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Report dated March 23, 2017 from the Commissioner of Transportation Services now follows:

1. Recommendation

It is recommended this report be received for information.

2. Purpose

This report provides Council with the 2016 York Region Transit (YRT/Viva) ridership and overall system performance information.

3. Background

Annual operating statistics are used for internal and external reporting to measure system-wide performance

YRT/Viva collects real-time information that is transformed into statistical data and then reports system performance, both operational and financial based. Common transit measurements of performance include:

- Ridership - number of travellers using the system, by route, time of day and day of week - Table 1
- Net cost per capita - cost to operate transit services compared to the population - Table 2
- On-time performance - reliability of the service provided to the traveller – Figure 1
- Revenue-to-cost ratio - cost recovered through revenues collected on the system – Figure 2

In 2016, YRT/Viva traveller boardings and revenue ridership increased, and on-time performance remained high. Revenue ridership is tracked monthly, and influencing factors are analyzed to track trends and provide insight for ridership patterns. On-time performance measures service reliability, and are key indicators for Transit on the overall success of the Operation and Maintenance Contracts.

4. Analysis and Implications

YRT/Viva revenue ridership increased from 22.5 million in 2015, to 22.8 million in 2016; a 1.4 per cent increase

In 2016, 137 YRT/Viva routes and 548 Region-owned buses provided service across York Region's large geographic landscape.

YRT/Viva revenue ridership growth is consistent with other Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area transit agencies, as represented in Table 1. Agencies seeing higher than average ridership, such as Brampton Transit and The City of Mississauga's MiWay, have recently introduced new bus rapid transit services.

To compare, York Region saw similar ridership increases with the launch of Viva in 2005/2006.

Table 1
Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area 2016 Revenue Ridership

Transit Agency	Change (+/- %)	Revenue Ridership	
		2015	2016
Burlington Transit	- 2.7	1,949,813	1,898,105
Hamilton Street Railway	- 1.7	21,859,266	21,480,017
Durham Region Transit	-1.2	10,315,877	10,189,642
Oakville Transit	+ 0.6	2,833,827	2,851,369
Toronto Transit Commission	+ 0.7	534,005,000	537,595,000
YRT/Viva	+ 1.4	22,505,053	22,822,806
GO Transit	+ 1.6	65,784,470	66,838,152
MiWay (City of Mississauga)	+ 4.1	37,460,924	39,014,497
Brampton Transit	+ 9.2	21,178,343	23,129,596

Viva service saw an overall increase of five per cent in 2016

In 2016, Viva services experienced the highest overall ridership increase with 470,000 additional boardings.

Viva yellow on Davis Drive in Newmarket completed its first full year of service and carried over 1,300 travellers per weekday. This represents 69 per cent of all boardings on the corridor in 2016, while conventional YRT services carried the other 31 per cent.

Overall, Viva carried an average of 35,000 travellers per weekday in 2016. This is an increase of 1,500 travellers per weekday over 2015.

Conventional services experienced an overall ridership increase of 0.5 per cent

Express Services, High School Specials and routes operating on major corridors carried the most travellers on conventional transit services. Key destinations in 2016 included: TTC subway stations, Vaughan Mills Mall, York University and Canada's Wonderland.

In 2016, the YRT conventional system carried an average of 80,000 travellers per weekday. Boardings on YRT services totalled 20.9 million in 2016, representing an increase of 103,000 boardings over 2015.

Mobility Plus services experienced an overall ridership increase of seven per cent

In 2016, Mobility Plus carried on average of 1,475 travellers per weekday or 407,832 travellers in total, representing an increase of seven per cent over 2015.

New rapidways and the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension are expected to increase the number of travellers on the YRT/Viva system

In southern York Region, ridership levels were affected on routes operating along roads under construction. A decrease in ridership ranging from eight to 12 per cent was reported on some routes due to traffic delays from construction.

With the completion of new roads, rapidways and the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension, ridership growth is anticipated to increase as transit travel times are expected to decrease making transit use more appealing.

This trend was seen when service began operating on the Highway 7 east rapidway in the Town of Richmond Hill and City of Markham, ridership grew by 11 per cent; and the Davis Drive rapidway in the Town of Newmarket, ridership grew by 68 per cent.

Attachment 1 provides a 2016 ridership summary by route.

Transit ridership across Canada is being reported as stable while in the United States it has declined

Annually, transit statistics are collected by the Canadian Urban Transit Association to identify trends throughout the transit industry. In recent years ridership across Canada has remained stable with no obvious indication as to why it is not increasing. As a result, in 2017 the Canadian Urban Transit Association will work on identifying what may be causing the current ridership trends, and will be updating members with the findings.

The American Public Transit Association has recently reported significant ridership declines across the United States. Trends and possible factors affecting ridership have been identified, such as decreased gas prices, unemployment rates, and population demographics. These trends have not yet been substantiated. Like the Canadian Urban Transit Association, the American Public Transit Association intends to study and analyze the issues further and present their findings.

YRT/Viva services align with other transit systems operating in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area

The Canadian Urban Transit Association provides data related to net cost per capita for Canadian transit agencies, which are used to identify trends across systems.

Net cost per capita is driven by population, geography and the cost to deliver transit services. YRT/Viva's net cost per capita is slightly below the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area average of \$97.18, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2
Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area 2015 Net Cost per Capita*

Transit Agency	Net Cost per Capita	Net Cost per Passenger	Net Operating Cost	Population
Burlington Transit	\$51.69	\$4.65	\$9,086,073	175,779
Durham Region Transit	\$59.53	\$3.74	\$39,334,131	660,765
Oakville Transit	\$79.70	\$5.30	\$14,984,253	188,000
Hamilton Street Railway	\$84.86	\$1.90	\$46,319,241	545,850
YRT/Viva	\$94.28	\$4.56	\$109,954,188	1,166,300
Brampton Transit	\$112.18	\$3.08	\$65,133,648	580,600
MiWay (City of Mississauga)	\$113.48	\$2.30	\$86,406,861	761,400
Toronto Transit Commission	\$181.70	\$0.91	\$513,587,395	2,826,498

* Based on 2015 Canadian Urban Transit Association date

On-time performance is a key indicator of success

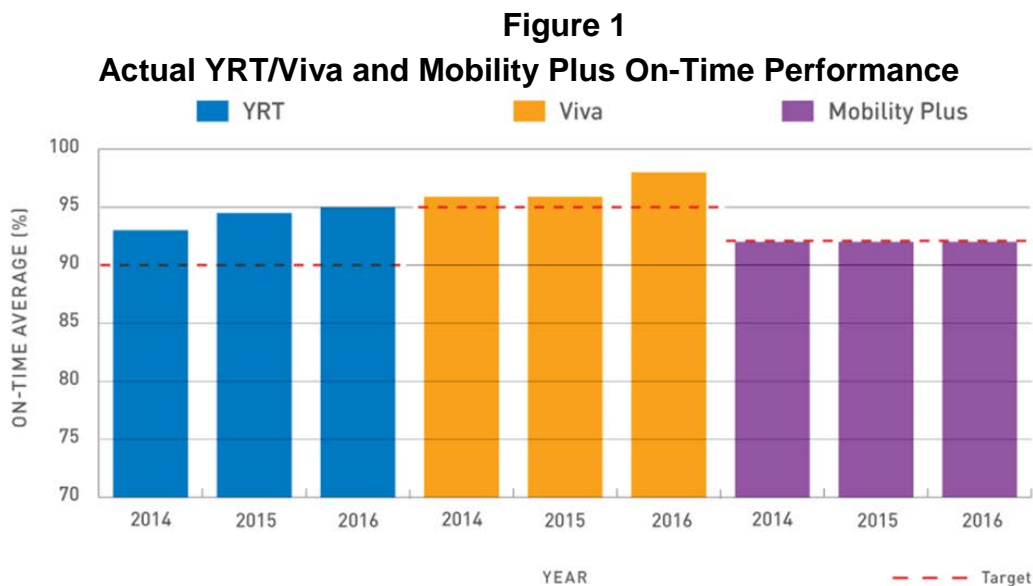
On-time performance is the percentage of time a transit vehicle starts and ends a scheduled trip, on-time, and is a common industry key performance indicator.

The level of on-time performance for any transit agency is an important measure on the effectiveness of the overall system. If a bus does not depart or arrive at the scheduled time, travellers cannot rely on the system.

To measure on-time performance, staff monitor all routes, both on-street and through the Centralized Control Centre, and a sophisticated business intelligence system provides operating data for every trip, on every bus, system-wide.

Monitoring and data collection allows staff to determine the overall reliability of every timing point on every route, make system adjustments, and measure each contractor's on-time performance commitment.

Overall on-time performance targets for conventional transit are 90 per cent; for Mobility Plus 92 per cent; and for Viva 95 per cent, as shown in Figure 1.



YRT/Viva emphasizes the importance of high-quality traveller information and a clean, safe and well-maintained transit system

YRT/Viva strives to offer more than a basic transit service with the aim to grow and diversify the traveller base. By providing an easy to navigate, convenient, and comfortable experience, the discretionary traveller base has the potential to grow.

Transit staff continues to implement elements into the system that are important to travellers, including:

- Real-time bus arrival information on-street, online, through dedicated and third-party apps, and through transit social media channels
- Solar powered bus shelters, charging stations, heated terminals and vivastations, Wi-Fi on select routes and terminals, bathroom facilities, bike-rack amenities and bike repair stations, waste and recycling containers

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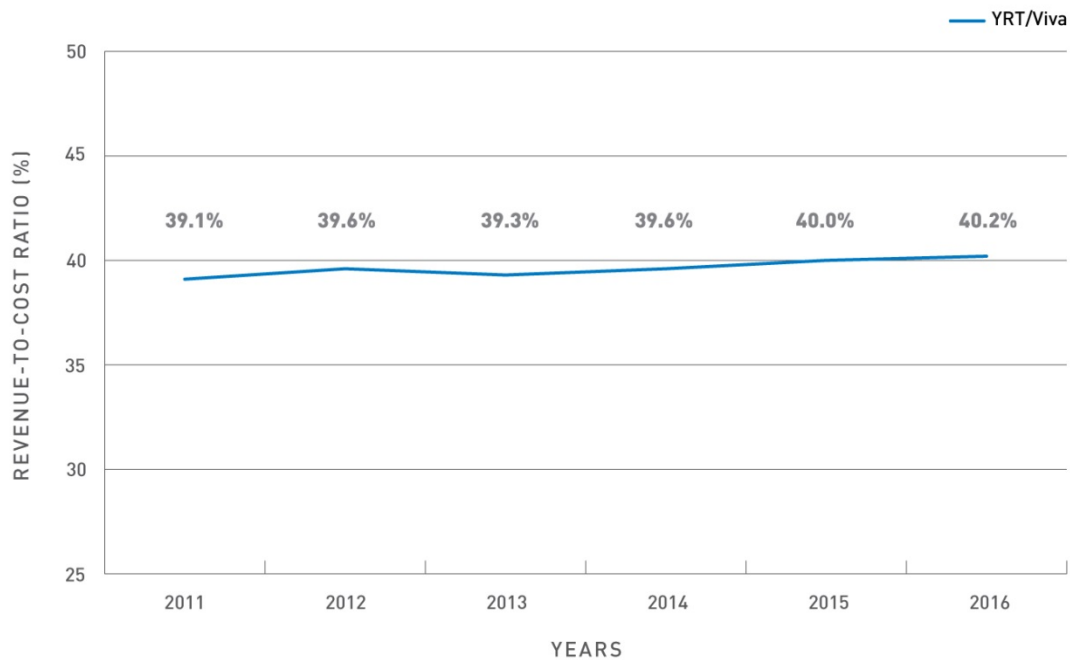
- Advanced on-bus technology to improve traveller and bus driver safety, and optimize operational performance
- Advanced fare payment options with PRESTO and mobile fare payment
- Well-trained, friendly, courteous bus operators and staff
- Advanced Family of Services and on-demand programs
- Travel-training programs and dedicated Customer Service staff
- Traveller safety, comfort, security and revenue protection
- Extensive community outreach programs

In 2016, YRT/Viva's revenue-to-cost ratio was 40.2 per cent

The YRT/Viva revenue-to-cost ratio measures how much of Transit's operating budget is collected through fares. It is calculated by dividing total revenues/subsidies collected through fares, charters and advertising, and is divided by the total, direct operating expense of the system. This is consistent with the Canadian Urban Transit Association calculation formula.

In 2016, the revenue-to-cost ratio averaged 40.2 per cent, an increase of 0.2 per cent over 2015 as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
YRT/Viva Annual Revenue-to-Cost Ratio



In November 2016, Council approved the 2017-2020 YRT/Viva Fare Strategy. The strategy included maintaining the revenue-to-cost ratio at 40 per cent over the next three years. It outlined that revenues generated by fare adjustments, new programs and transit expansion projects would help maintain this target.

5. Financial Considerations

YRT/Viva 2016 fare revenue totalled \$68.5 million; revenue specifically from increased ridership totalled \$2.2 million

To support service improvements identified in Annual Service Plans and annual service adjustments, revenues collected through fares are reinvested into the transit system.

Conventional bus advertising resulted in an additional \$1.2 million in non-fare revenue

In 2016, Pattison Outdoor Advertising successfully completed the first full-year of their five-year contract selling advertising on conventional YRT buses.

The first year of the contract brought in over \$1.2 million in non-fare revenue for the system. In 2017, Transit staff will look at expanding non-fare revenue opportunities through increased advertising at vivastations, terminals and on vehicles.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Well-planned transit helps to shape and connect communities. The Region's investment in public transit provides citizens with an enhanced, efficient and reliable transportation choice.

Reliable, safe, traveller-friendly transportation options attract new citizens, businesses and investors to York Region and provide an economic benefit.

7. Conclusion

Transit staff will continue collecting and monitoring ridership data, and analyzing trends and patterns to determine the best way to improve the overall traveller experience.

A ridership increase of 0.5 per cent is being forecasted for 2017 as services are realigned to support the opening of the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension, at the end of this year.

Ridership Growth Strategy will be presented to Council in 2017

The Ridership Growth Strategy will be presented to Council by the end of 2017, and identifies four themes to support transit ridership, including:

- Partnerships
- Marketing and Communications
- Planning and Economic Development
- Destinations

The strategy will include information on future transit options for York Region, expanded marketing and communications, evaluation of costs, risks and probability of success involved in achieving increased transit ridership.

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For more information on this report, please contact Ann-Marie Carroll, General Manager, York Region Transit at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75677.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

March 23, 2017

Attachments (1)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

