



York Region Briefing Note

Subject: York Region Transit's 2024 Transit Initiatives – City of Markham

Date: November 14, 2023

Prepared for: City of Markham Council

Prepared by: Kyle Catney, Director, Transit Operations, York Region Transit

Summary:

This memo provides a summary of York Region Transit's (YRT) 2024 Transit Initiatives for the City of Markham, for inclusion in the City's Council meeting on November 14, 2023.

Background:

- YRT's annual planning process includes design, planning and monitoring of new and existing transit service
- Extensive research, analysis, field investigation and consultation are conducted to build an innovative, reliable and customer-focused transit system in York Region
- Annual Transit Initiatives translate strategic direction in [YRT's 2021-2025 Business Plan](#) and [York Region's Transportation Master Plan](#) into specific actions and service initiatives for implementation
- Implementation of any transit initiative is dependent on ridership levels and travel patterns
- Service changes are communicated to travellers through collaboration among key stakeholders and using various channels of digital and print communication

2023 Transit Initiatives

- Transit plans are developed through an extensive review of ridership data, development applications, and customer and stakeholder feedback
- In 2023, service adjustments were implemented to expand services, improve service reliability, and provide safe and convenient connections. Service changes in the City of Markham as part of YRT's 2023 Transit Initiatives are shown in Table 1

Table 1. 2023 Transit Initiatives in City of Markham

Route/Service	Implemented Service Change
Viva purple/purple A	Improved weekday rush hour frequency
24 – Woodbine	Improved frequency all day, seven days a week
25 – Major Mackenzie	Improved weekday rush hour frequency
TTC 68B – Warden	Improved frequency all day, seven days a week [^]
90 – Leslie	Improved afternoon rush hour frequency [^]
91 – Bayview	Improved afternoon rush hour frequency [^]
TTC 129A – McCowan Road	Improved afternoon rush hour frequency [^]
300 – Business Express	Improved afternoon rush hour frequency [^]

[^] Note: Unplanned service change to address changing travel patterns

- The following key programs were implemented in 2023:
 - Launched open payment (debit/credit fare payment) on YRT
 - Made Mobility On-Request (MOR) 65+ a permanent service in January 2023, allowing travellers 65 and older to book a trip to and from a destination within five kilometres of their home
 - The Transit Assistance Program (TAP) was approved as a permanent program for eligible York Region residents ages 18 to 64 years old; participants receive a 50% discount on their YRT fare using a PRESTO card
- Through the myRide Travel Training Program, YRT continues to provide travel training and facilitate presentations for York Region residents, newcomers, people with disabilities, seniors and students on how to use the YRT system and assist with cross-boundary travel to neighbouring municipalities

2024 Transit Initiatives

- The annual planning process includes extensive stakeholder and public consultation. Table 2 outlines the consultation completed in City of Markham for the 2024 Transit Initiatives

Table 2. Stakeholder and Public Consultation for City of Markham

Consultation	Date (2023)	Location
City of Markham staff	April 13	Municipal office
Student Transportation Services	April 21	York Region office
Business sector	May 1	Virtual
Public outreach event	May 2	Cornell Bus Terminal
Neighbouring transit agencies	May 5	York Region office
On-bus survey	May 16 to 17	Route 25 – Major Mackenzie
Virtual public engagement and Accessibility Advisory Committee	May 1 to 31	yrt.ca/TransitPlan or YRT Contact Centre
On-street survey	October 3	Route 8 – Kennedy

- Staff engaged with 138 residents during the public outreach event at Cornell Bus Terminal, in addition to receiving feedback from virtual engagement and surveys. Highlights of feedback received through public consultation include:
 - Support for extended service span on Frequent Transit Network routes
 - Support for extending Route 8 – Kennedy evening service on weekdays and Saturdays to accommodate ridership demand with future opening of York University Markham Campus
 - Support for restructuring Route 8 – Kennedy to improve service to Markham Mon Sheong Court and Milliken GO Station
 - Request for Route 9 – 9th Line to be extended to Steeles Avenue
- Public feedback received was considered alongside thorough analysis of operational feasibility and budget availability. Service changes in City of Markham as part of YRT's 2024 Transit Initiatives is shown in Table 3

Table 3. 2024 Transit Initiatives in City of Markham

Route/Service	Proposed Service Change
8 – Kennedy	Improve span of service on weekdays and Saturdays and restructure route to Milliken GO Station
16 – 16 th Avenue	Improve weekday rush hour frequency
24 – Woodbine	Improve span of service on weekdays and weekends/holidays
25 – Major Mackenzie	Improve frequency during weekday non-rush hour and introduce Saturday service
90 – Leslie	Improve span of service on weekends/holidays

YRT’s service plans for City of Markham are shown in Attachment 1.

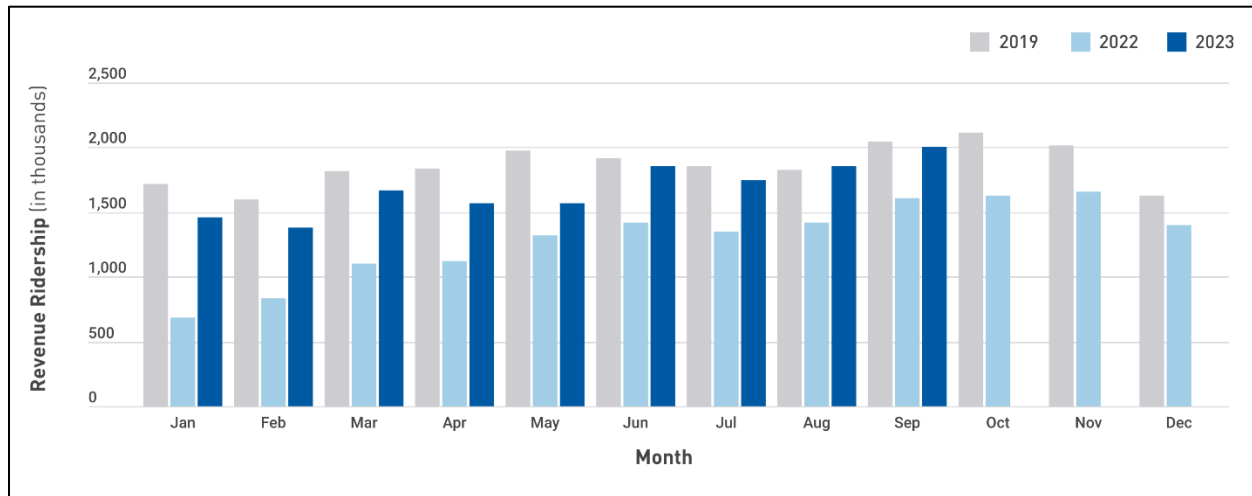
YRT will continue to undertake a series of programs to support travellers including:

- Accelerating the purchase of electric buses through Infrastructure Canada’s Zero Emission Transit Fund
 - Update MOR Plan to guide future delivery of MOR services across the Region
 - Replace monthly passes with fare capping for all fare categories, per the YRT Fare Structure and Policy Update endorsed by York Regional Council in [June 2023](#)
 - Continue to work with the Province, Metrolinx, partner transit agencies, and internal stakeholders to finalize implementation details for fare integration improvements, including the removal of the double fare when transferring between YRT and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)
-
- York Region staff are committed to providing cost effective, quality services that respond to the needs of the Region’s growing communities
 - Together with the annual service planning process, and annual operating and capital budget programs, YRT will continue to improve public transit in York Region

Ridership Trends in York Region

- YRT’s ridership continues to grow and in August 2023 ridership recovery surpassed pre-pandemic levels, as shown in Figure 1
- Ridership continues to grow most notably on weekends and on routes providing connections to the TTC subway, industrial areas, and key destinations along major travel corridors. Weekday ridership growth is slower with fewer commuter travellers, likely due to continuation of hybrid work practices

Figure 1. YRT System Ridership Comparison (January 2019 to September 2023)



Next steps:

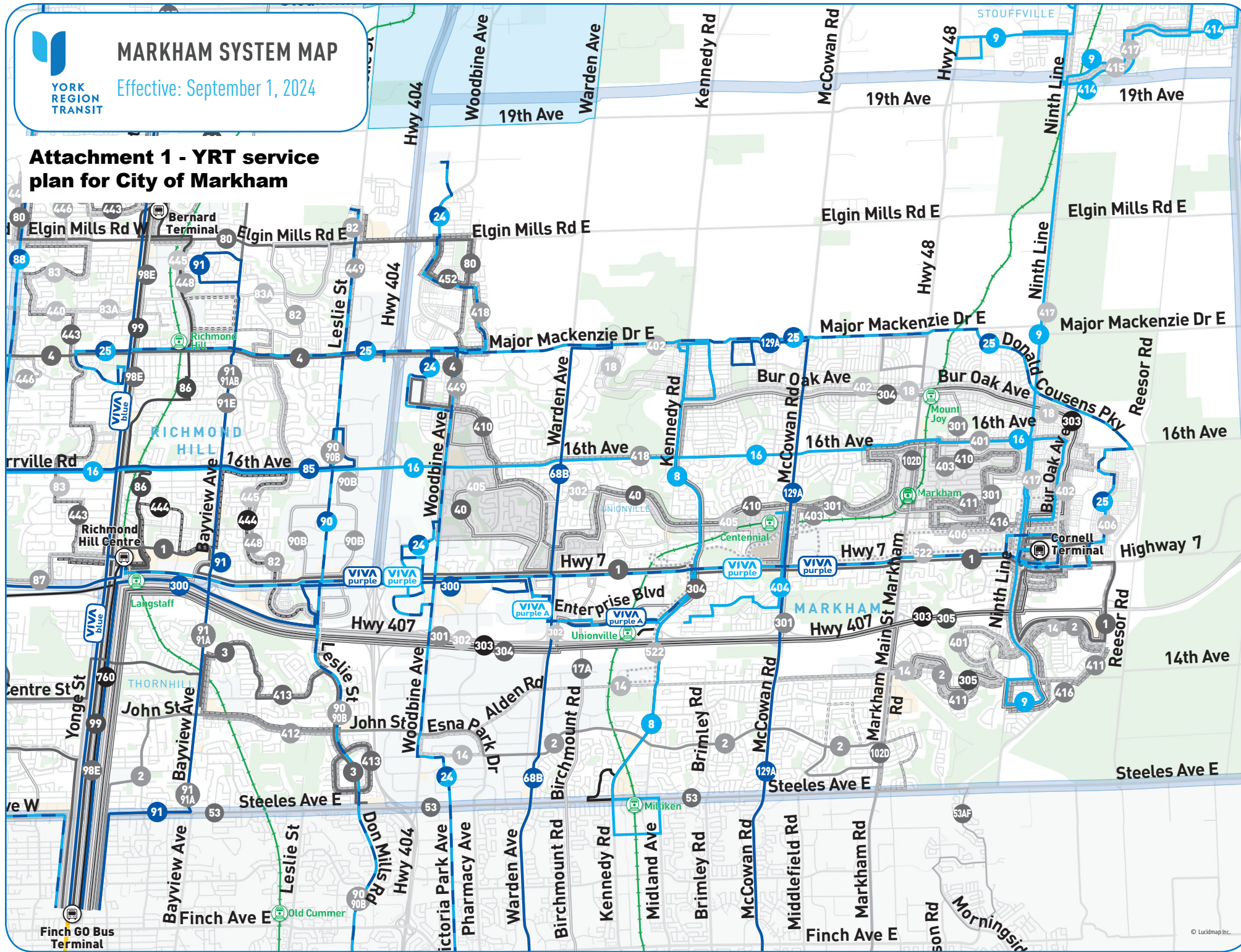
- In December 2023, obtain York Regional Council approval of 2024 Transit Initiatives through operating and capital budget approval process
- In early 2024, communicate 2024 Transit Initiatives to customers and residents
- Commence 2025 Transit Initiatives annual planning process with next round of public and stakeholder consultation in spring 2024, by working with local municipalities throughout the process, including City of Markham



MARKHAM SYSTEM MAP

Effective: September 1, 2024

Attachment 1 - YRT service plan for City of Markham



Transit Services - Markham

YRT Routes

- 1 - Highway 7
- 2 - Milliken
- 3 - Thornhill
- 4 - Major Mackenzie
- 8 - Kennedy
- 9 - 9th Line
- 14 - 14th Avenue
- 16 - 16th Avenue
- 18 - Bur Oak
- 24 - Woodbine Avenue
- 25 - Major Mackenzie
- 40 - Unionville Local
- 80 - Elgin Mills
- 82 - Valleymede
- 83/83A - Trench
- 85 - Rutherford
- 90/90B - Leslie
- 91/91A/91B - Bayview
- 91E - Bayview Express
- 98E - Yonge Limited Express
- 98/99 - Yonge (Late Night)
- 99 - Yonge
- 300 - Business Express
- 301 - Markham Express
- 302 - Unionville Express
- 303 - Bur Oak Express
- 304 - Mount Joy Express
- 305 - Box Grove Express
- 401 - Brother André SS via Box Grove
- 402 - Bur Oak / Pierre Elliott Trudeau SS
- 403 - Brother André SS via Raymerville
- 404 - Markville SS
- 405 - St Augustine SS
- 406 - Markham District SS
- 410 - Markham District SS via Carlton
- 411 - Markham District SS via Box Grove
- 412 - Thornlea SS
- 413 - St Robert / Thornlea SS via John
- 414 - St Katherine Drexel SS
- 416 - Markham District SS via Riverwalk
- 417 - Bill Hogarth SS
- 418 - Pierre Elliott Trudeau SS
- 440 - St Theresa SS via Mill
- 442 - Richmond Hill SS via Gamble
- 443 - Langstaff SS via Shaftsbury
- 444 - Langstaff SS via Bayview
- 445 - St Robert SS to Bernard Terminal
- 447 - St Theresa SS via Jefferson Forest
- 448 - Richmond Hill SS via Valleymede
- 449 - Richmond Green SS via Hillmount
- 450 - St Theresa SS via Tower Hill
- 452 - Richmond Green SS via Hazelton
- 522 - Markham Local

Viva - blue

- Viva - blue
- Viva - purple / purple A
- MOR Bur Oak
- MOR Gormley
- MOR Markham Local
- MOR Unionville Local

TTC Routes

- 17A - Birchmount
- 68B - Warden
- 102D - Markham Rd
- 129A - McCowan North

- MOR 65+ and Paratransit services are available to all eligible travellers across the Region.
- GO Rail
- TTC Subway Line 1
- Municipal Boundary
- 2023 Transit Initiative Changes
- 2024 Transit Initiative Changes
- 2023 & 2024 Transit Initiative Changes

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.