



York Region Briefing Note

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

Date: November 22, 2023

Prepared for: City of Richmond Hill Council

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Summary:

This memo provides a summary of York Region Transit's (YRT) 2024 Transit Initiatives for the City of Richmond Hill, for inclusion in the City's Council meeting on November 22, 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 delivers the 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
- Mobility On-Request (MOR) is a flexible service delivery model providing service to travellers in low-demand areas or during low-demand times of day, and connects travellers to key destinations including Hillcrest Mall, Mackenzie Health hospital, and Yonge Street corridor

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 City of Richmond Hill as part of YRT's 2023 Transit Initiatives are shown in Table 1

Table 1. 2023 Transit Initiatives in City of Richmond Hill

Route/Service	Implemented Service Change
Viva blue	Improved weekday rush hour and Saturday frequency
Viva purple/purple A	Improved weekday rush hour frequency
Viva orange	Improved weekday rush hour frequency
25 – Major Mackenzie	Improved weekday rush hour frequency
85 – Rutherford	Improved weekday rush hour frequency
88 – Bathurst	Improved weekday rush hour frequency [^]
90 – Leslie	Improved afternoon rush hour frequency [^]
91 – Bayview	Improved afternoon rush hour frequency [^]
300 – Business Express	Improved afternoon rush hour frequency [^]
450 – St. Theresa School Special via Tower Hill	Extended service along Jefferson Sideroad [^]
Mobility On-Request Aurora and Oak Ridges	Extended weekday and Saturday service hours

[^] 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 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 Richmond Hill for the 2024 Transit Initiatives.

Table 2. Stakeholder and Public Consultation for City of Richmond Hill

Consultation	Date (2023)	Location
Student Transportation Services	April 21	York Region office
Business sector	May 1	Virtual
Neighbouring transit agencies	May 5	York Region office
Public outreach event	May 8	Richmond Hill Centre Terminal
City of Richmond Hill staff	May 9	Municipal 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

Staff engaged with more than 325 residents during the public outreach event at Richmond Hill Centre Terminal, in addition to receiving feedback from virtual engagement and surveys. Highlights of feedback received through public consultation include:

- Support for improved fare integration between YRT, the TTC and GO Transit
- Support for improved rush hour frequency on Route 16 – 16th Avenue
- Support for Saturday service on Route 25 – Major Mackenzie
- Support for improved Saturday frequency on Route 88 – Bathurst
- Support for extending late night weekend service on Route 90 – Leslie
- Support for introducing MOR Gormley to provide connections with GO Transit service at Gormley GO Station
- Request for increased service to Richmond Hill GO Station
- Request to extend Route 16 – 16th Avenue to Richmond Hill Centre Terminal
- Request for improved frequency on Route 80 – Elgin Mills
- Request for improved signal priority on Viva routes
- Request for regular bus service in Oak Ridges and West Gormley

Public feedback received was considered alongside thorough analysis of operational feasibility and budget availability. Service changes in City of Richmond Hill as part of YRT’s 2024 Transit Initiatives is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. 2024 Transit Initiatives in City of Richmond Hill

Route/Service	Proposed Service Change
16 – 16 th Avenue	Improve weekday rush hour frequency
25 – Major Mackenzie	Improve frequency during weekday non-rush hour and introduce Saturday service
88 – Bathurst	Improve frequency on Saturdays
90 – Leslie	Improve span of service on weekends/holidays
Mobility On-Request Aurora and Oak Ridges	Introduce Sunday/holiday service
Mobility On-Request Gormley	Introduce a new service connecting Gormley industrial area to Route 24 – Woodbine, 90 – Leslie and Gormley GO Station

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

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

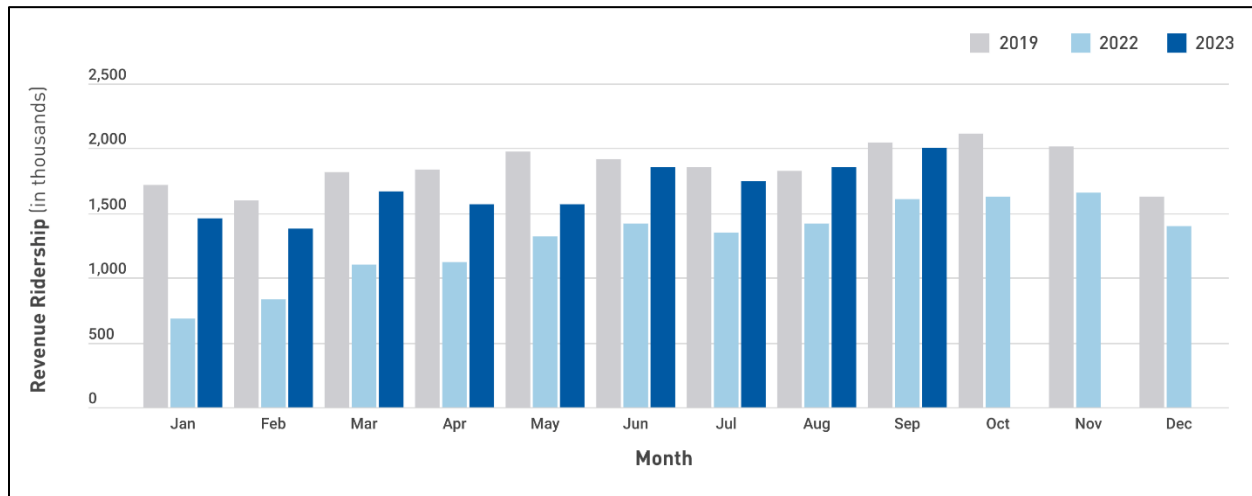
- Accelerating the purchase of electric buses through Infrastructure Canada’s Zero Emission Transit Fund
- Update MOR Plan to guide future delivery of MOR services across York Region
- Replace monthly passes with fare capping for all fare categories, per the YRT Fare Structure and Policy Update endorsed 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

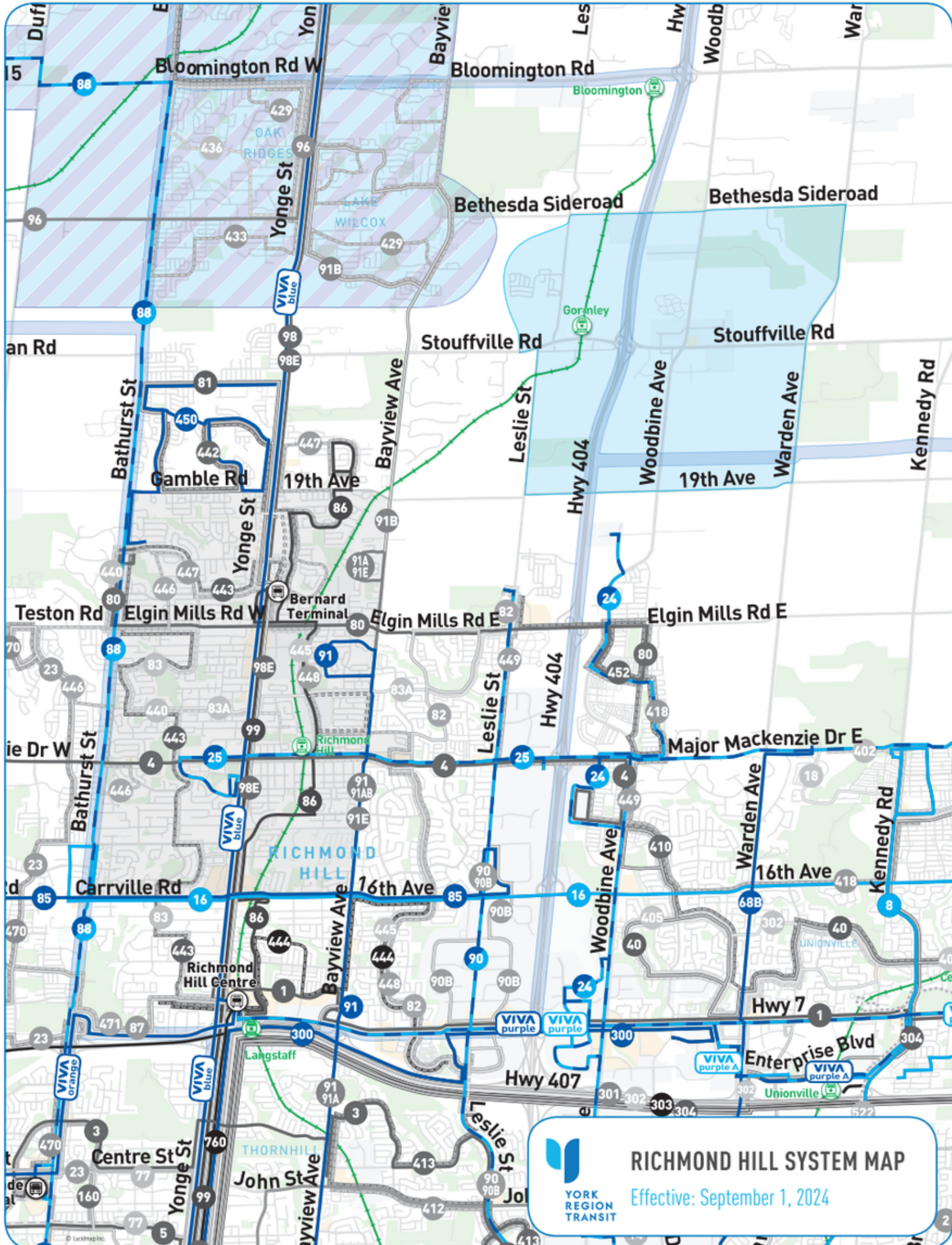
YRT's ridership continues to grow and is recovering faster than originally forecasted. In August 2023 ridership recovery surpassed pre-pandemic levels, as shown in Figure 1. Ridership continues to grow most notably on weekends and on routes providing connections to the TTC subway, industrial areas, and 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 Richmond Hill



Transit Services - Richmond Hill

- 1 - Highway 7
- 4 - Major Mackenzie
- 16 - 16th Avenue
- 25 - Major Mackenzie
- 80 - Elgin Mills
- 81 - Inspiration
- 82 - Valleymede
- 83/83A - Trench
- 86 - Newkirk-Red Maple
- 87 - Autumn Hill
- 88 - Bathurst
- 91/91A/91B - Bayview
- 91E - Bayview Express
- 96 - Keele-Yonge
- 98 - Yonge
- 98E - Yonge Limited Express
- 98/99 - Yonge (Late Night)
- 99 - Yonge
- 429 - Cardinal Carter / Aurora SS
- 433 - Cardinal Carter SS via Kingshill
- 436 - Cardinal Carter SS via Parker
- 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 via 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 - orange
- Viva - purple
- MOR Aurora and Oak Ridges
- MOR Gormley
- MOR Richmond Hill

MOR 65+ and Paratransit services are available to all eligible travellers across the Region.

- GO Rail
- Municipal Boundary
- 2023 Transit Initiative Changes
- 2024 Transit Initiative Changes
- 2023 & 2024 Transit Initiative Changes

RICHMOND HILL SYSTEM MAP
 Effective: September 1, 2024
 YORK REGION TRANSIT

Attachment 1 - YRT service plan for City of Richmond Hill

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.