

Transit plan has local leadership

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

Markham has lost its planning commissioner — temporarily — to the task of arranging a private-sector partnership for York Region that will be worth billions.

Mary-Frances Turner recently left her post to serve as executive co-ordinator for what is being called the York Rapid Transit Plan.

The plan involves choosing a private partner, probably next month, that would build rapid transit routes in the next 10 years along four of the most crucial high-volume corridors in the region.

The fast connections, made either by a train or buses in separated lanes, would carry their passengers along Hwy. 7, on a route from Downsview to Vaughan's new corporate centre, along Yonge Street as far north as Newmarket and on the "Warden corridor," a new connection from Markham to Toronto's Fairview Mall.

In an interview, Ms Turner said the region's goal is to boost transit's share of the trips we take from 8 to 22 per cent during the next 30 years, a period in which York's population is expected to double.

"It is achievable," Ms Turner insisted, if the right rapid transit system is built and people are given the right incentives to use it.

For most of the working week, she now leads a group of staff examining competing bids by five private consortia.

On the two days a week she spends in Markham, she's concentrating on finishing the town's transportation strategy and on development of Markham Centre, a massive mixed community that will depend heavily on transit use.

The region is basing its plan on equal cash contributions from the regional, federal and provincial governments, but Ms Turner admitted that Ottawa has made no promises.

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4th Annual Ideas for Mental Wellness Day

Stress in the Workplace: THE CHALLENGES AND THE CHOICES

Speaker:
Dr. Mark Berber
Psychiatrist, Markham Stouffville Hospital
Lecturer, University of Toronto

Tuesday, May 7, 2002
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Markham Stouffville Hospital Auditorium

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Presented by:
Department of Psychiatry
MSH Mental Health System

IN RECOGNITION OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

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- Markham Fire Emergency Services
- York Region EMS
- Markham Hydro
- Police Canine Unit
- Canadian Forces

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- rappellers
- falling hydro poles
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