

Dry weather sparks fire ban

Dry weather conditions have prompted an open-air fire ban in Whitchurch-Stouffville, while extra precautions are being taken in Markham.

"Since we are experiencing extreme dry weather, a fire ban is necessary," Deputy Fire Chief Paul Stover said. "The ban is in place until further notice."

The ban was initiated after firefighters checked the dryness of the area.

"Things are just right for a fire," Deputy Chief Stover said. "We needed to take action. Things are just so very dry. We are not issuing any burn permits."

Open-air burning in dry areas could spread flame to fields, brush and forests.

A special concern exists in Whitchurch-Stouffville because the municipality has fields abutting forest lands, Deputy Chief Stover said.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire and Emergency Services is notifying residents who were recently issued a burn permit from the municipality.

"Because of the ban, those with permits are being told they're not allowed to burn," Deputy Chief Stover said.

Anyone violating the open-air ban could face a fine as well as being charged \$350-an hour plus the cost of firefighters.

—Joan Ransberry



viva comes to life

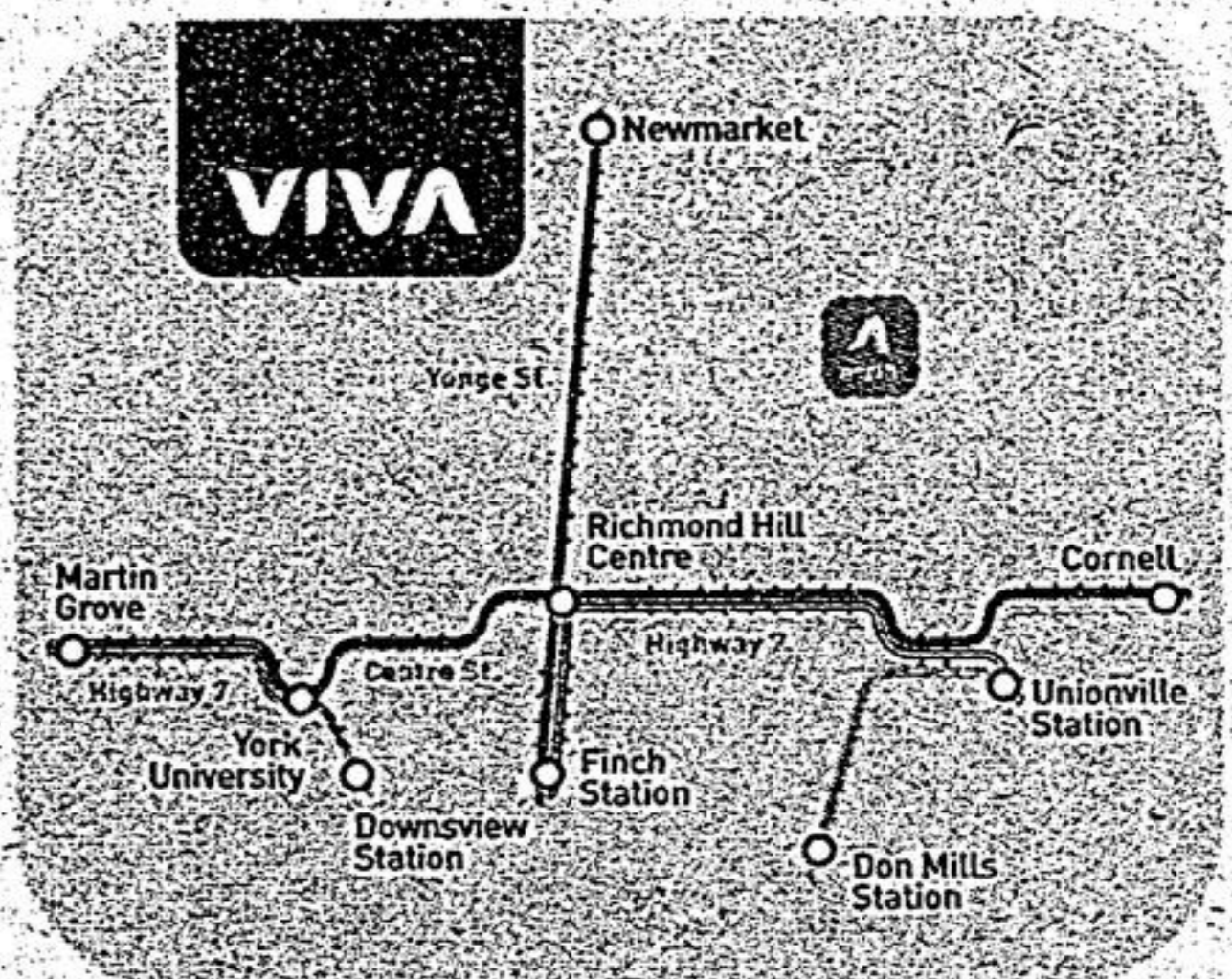
a new era of rapid transit brings rapid improvement

Come September '05, residents of York Region will welcome something totally new to their busy streets as Viva makes its debut.

Viva is an innovative rapid transit system being developed in three phases over a 20-year period, linking Aurora, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan along four key transportation corridors.

The new system promises the Region a frequent, reliable alternative to car-based commuting. Residents will easily be able to get from one end of York Region to another. When the first phase is fully implemented, travel times will be reduced by 15% to 25% during peak periods.

Innovative, unbuslike vehicles called RTVs [or rapid transit vehicles for the acronym-inclined] will stop at futuristic vivastations to pick up and deliver their riders at intervals of 15 minutes or less, 18 hours a day. This first update is a rapid introduction to rapid transit, and of course, a rapid introduction to Viva itself.



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rapid transit? what's that?

Rapid transit is a quick, frequent means of transportation designed to deliver large numbers of people to their destinations. In reality, it's much more—it's a transformation.

Consider its effect on gridlock. Gridlock doesn't just bring traffic to a halt. It brings life to a halt, and dampens a community's spirit by making it difficult to get anywhere. In contrast, a rapid transit system energizes entire regions by whisking people to work, to play, to shop or to the theatre. It improves traffic flow on all roads and thoroughfares. It eases the toll on the environment. It attracts new investment and new business to cities. It could be said that rapid transit brings life to cities and cities to life.



Viva vehicles are so un-buslike, they're called RTVs.



Vivastations are "smart" transit shelters, that are safe, comfortable and well lit.

what makes transit rapid?

Rapid transit systems are often rail-based. But bus rapid transit, [or BRT for the acronym-inclined], gives planners a more affordable, yet equally efficient alternative. BRT systems feature stations every one to two kilometres. Fares are always purchased beforehand to speed boarding and to keep vehicles on the move. Viva goes even further, setting new standards for BRT.

the rtv: the future has arrived

Viva hits the ground running this September, with its custom designed RTVs. Cutting edge satellite technology keeps these sophisticated vehicles on the move, helping RTVs make up time when necessary, lengthening green lights or shortening reds to let approaching RTVs through. The technology also provides real-time updates to passengers in every RTV and at vivastations: RTVs are every commuter's dream ride. Our next update will be a guide to an RTV's most useful features. For a great tour of Viva right now, please visit our Web site at vivayork.com.

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next in our series of updates: rtvs – a user's guide > the new fare system