The first section of Highway 7 east rapidway, from Bayview Avenue to Highway 404, is officially open and it looks wonderful! Residents, riders and drivers alike, are impressed with the finished corridor.

People are getting where they need to go, a little easier and in considerably more comfort than ever before. This section of Highway 7 east is more efficient for pedestrians, cyclists, riders and motorists.

The new dedicated centre lanes for viva vehicles allow riders to enjoy faster and more consistent travel times. Vivastations are designed for safety, comfort and accessibility for all via crosswalks at signalized intersections. The area landscape has been transformed with new trees, shrubbery and other greenery.

With all the exciting changes that are taking place please remember to be aware of your surroundings and obey all posted traffic and pedestrian signs.

While we’re all proud of what’s been done so far, this is just one step in the transformation taking place around York Region. These changes in this urban corridor will help support future growth, manage congestion, and keep York Region as the most inviting place to live, work, shop and play for generations to come.

Take a ride on viva’s new rapidway and enjoy the experience for yourself. Tweet and let us know what you think!
To make a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system function properly in terms of moving people quickly and reducing congestion, a series of well-understood components need to be in place. Your new rapidway along Highway 7 has all of these components: dedicated lanes, close-to-level boarding, advanced traffic signals, and off-board fare collection.

The vivaNext rapidway projects offer more than just those basic BRT components and embraces the entire street level experience. The vivaStation, roadway, sidewalk design, and use of Intelligent Transportation Systems adhere to the “complete street” concept by respecting and balancing the needs of all travellers, whether they’re on transit, foot, bike or car. All streetscape elements, including the lighting, boulevards and planters filled with greenery, have been designed to create a visually cohesive presence along the entire corridor.

Creating this sense of place and vitality requires the presence of civic infrastructure that is confident, welcoming and pleasant for people. Developers are more likely to want to build new condominiums in attractive areas. Employers are more likely to want to locate new offices near well-designed transit and amenities. New services such as restaurants and retail require a steady flow of potential customers. All of this will work together to shape the future in a positive way as York Region continues to grow – provided the infrastructure is there in the first place.

Our mandate is to plan, design and deliver an exceptional rapid transit system attracting, moving and connecting people to York Region’s urban centres and destinations. We have embarked on an exciting journey to York Region’s future, intentionally creating a challenge to all those who want to be a part of that future in shaping our key corridors for generations to come.

What a great investment for York Region!
People love living in York Region and dearly value the high quality of life provided by our friendly communities, our open spaces and the convenience of living near all the amenities needed for daily living. It is important to all of us that our quality of life is continually enhanced.*

The Regional Municipality of York made a commitment several years ago to put improved rapid transit in place. We’re well on our way to keeping that promise. Not only are the transformational elements of the rapid transit system and boulevard visible along Highway 7 in the Town of Richmond Hill, but significant new investments are being made in transit-oriented development along all our major corridors in York Region.

New housing options are being built in the emerging downtowns in the Cities of Markham and Vaughan, and Towns of Newmarket and Richmond Hill. Many of those new developments are being marketed to buyers with the benefit that they’re located near transit. And other new developments – which will offer new jobs, new restaurants and new shopping destinations – are being built or are in the planning stages along the corridors as well.

This influx of development is exactly what York Region’s long-term plan anticipated and was designed to support. Growth is inevitable for the Region, as it is all across the GTA. The challenge for York Region is to create opportunities out of growth, rather than letting it affect our quality of life. The vivaNext plan is a key part of that strategy.

The vivaNext plan, supported by land use policies that encourage Transit-Oriented Development, is to create complete communities within walking distances of transit. With housing, employment, retail, dining, services and recreation all located within a walkable distance, more people will be able to live more of their lives without needing to get in their car. And, when they do want to move around, people will have travel options to match their purpose and destination.

The vivaNext plan will benefit everyone, whether or not they live in the downtown area and whether or not they want to take transit. With every full bus taking the equivalent of 70 cars off the road, more people taking rapid transit means less traffic congestion on the roads for everyone.

* Environics Survey, York Region Summary, Fall 2012

94% of respondents said the quality of life in York Region is good or excellent.
capita basis has been declining for the last several years. In the US, people in their twenties drive about 20% less than their parents did when they were in their twenties.**

Although increasing gas prices and weak economic climates in some countries may have contributed to this trend, researchers feel other longer-term dynamics are the real reason young people are increasingly turning away from the car and finding other ways to get around.

One key theory is that increasing urbanization is a critical factor. In this theory, when people live within walking distance (defined as roughly 500 metres) from transit, it's easier to leave the keys at home and let transit do the driving.

A number of recent studies cite statistics from countries around the world, including the US and Canada, to show that Millennials – people currently in their twenties – are less likely to get their driver’s licence than in previous generations. Young people are more likely to take transit or cycle, and overall, the number of car trips taken on a per capita basis has been declining for the last several years. In the US, people in their twenties drive about 20% less than their parents did when they were in their twenties.**

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How is it built you asked? Rain or shine, tunnel boring machines “Yorkie” and “Torkie” have been hard at work, boring the twin subway tunnels north of Finch Station. On average, they bore at a rate of approximately 15 metres a day and to date, Yorkie and Torkie are 85% complete. Vaughan’s VMC subway station will be the northernmost station, connecting to a variety of other transit services.

TYSSE is scheduled to be in service in 2016 along with vivaNext rapidways on Highway 7 West.