In York Region, we’re building more than transit – we’re preparing the ingredients for great places to live. What makes a city a great place to live? According to some of the most popular surveys, the most liveable cities have top-notch public transportation and infrastructure along with other important things like health care and low crime. Great cities can be very different but have some key common ingredients. They have a vibrant, compact downtown area, a sense of community and lots of options for travelling around town. Each city has made a conscious decision about where they want their population to grow, and has planned accordingly.

A variety of train, bus and streetcar systems serve some of the most liveable cities. Transit-oriented development and increased travel options add a strong sense of community and make mobility easy. Add plantings [as we’re doing on the rapidway projects] for clean air and a welcoming streetscape, and the result will be a prosperous, healthy environment.

York Region is already a great place to live, and having a great transit network in place will ensure it gets even better as our population increases – more amenities, more employers, more places to live and more convenient ways of getting everywhere.

By planning and building infrastructure in our key growth centres in Markham, Newmarket, Vaughan and Richmond Hill, we’ll be ready for long-term growth, armed with fast, convenient travel options, updated utilities and compact, attractive places to walk, shop, and work.
Increasingly we’ve been hearing about people seeking a new, car-free way of life. It’s becoming more popular to live where you can get everywhere you need to on a daily basis without a car. Youth and seniors especially are planning their lives with an everything-at-your-doorstep mentality. People are choosing to live in walkable communities near fast, seamless transit systems.

According to the Canadian Automobile Association, it costs about $10,000 per year to own and drive a car about 18,000 kilometres. The cost savings are there, but it seems to be less about money and more about long-term planning and life choices. The under 35 age group sees the value in living where they can easily take transit or walk to entertainment, shopping and work. Seniors are choosing downtown condos and townhomes for a low-maintenance property where they’ll be able to access amenities without a car. Families are finding new options for living car-free or with one car instead of two, like family transit passes, bicycles and car-sharing clubs.

It’s also about new possibilities. More travel options are making it viable for people to be able to live without using a car every day. In York Region, the possibilities are increasing quickly, with dedicated lanes for Viva giving priority to transit without taking away lanes for other traffic.
The first six kilometres of dedicated lanes for Bus Rapid Transit – rapidways – are in service on Highway 7 in Richmond Hill and Markham, and the remaining 28 kilometres are on the way! This fully funded and approved project has phased start dates so that all the construction isn’t happening at once across the Region, allowing lanes to be kept open as much as possible.

Highway 7 East, Richmond Hill and Markham

Viva is in service from Bayview Avenue to Warden Avenue, with finishing work continuing into mid-2015.

Highway 7 West, Vaughan

Overall, it’s looking great out west. In 2012, work began in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, between Edgeley Boulevard and Bowes Road. With construction moving right along, and significant progress being made so far, we’re on schedule to open this first phase of rapidway in December 2016. Phase two is coming up close behind, with the main work starting in 2016 from Edgeley west to Helen and Bowes east to Yonge Street via the current Viva route on Bathurst Street and Centre Street, opening in December 2019.

Yonge Street, Richmond Hill and Newmarket

The contract has been awarded and pre-construction activities and engineering designs are underway for the rapidway from Highway 7 to 19th/Gamble in Richmond Hill and from Mulock to Davis Drive in Newmarket. Construction is set to begin this year, opening in December 2018.

Davis Drive, Newmarket

Crews are in the final phase of construction, building a centre-lane rapidway from Yonge Street to Roxborough Road [Viva will continue in mixed traffic from Roxborough to Highway 404]. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we’re now in the home stretch… the rapidway will open in December 2015.

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how we got here together

2010 2011 2012 2013 2014

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