

March 10, 2020

Hayden Poon  
Resident of Markham

RE: YRT FARE POLICIES

Dear Regional Council,

I am Hayden Poon, a resident in the City of Markham and a frequent transit rider. In this letter, I am going to express my concerns about YRT's fare policies.

1. Remove the "HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT" requirement for Youth fare

All the local transit in the GTHA except YRT use only an age definition (13-19 years old) for Youth fare. YRT is the only local transit agency in the Presto system with the following additional requirement highlighted in red:

"Youth are 13 to 19, in full-time attendance at a high school (must present valid student I.D.)"

The additional requirement To be a high school student for Youth fare has presented a challenge for a university student age 19 or under. **Everyone should be able to pay the lowest fare they are required to pay.** However, the Presto card cannot be set into a category specifically for university students age 19 or under.

Presto card can currently be set for the following fare categories:

Adult - Adult fare for all agencies

Youth - Youth/student fare for all agencies

Post-secondary(PS1) - **Adult fare for local transit**, student fare for GO transit (a post-secondary pass can be added for the TTC)

Senior - Senior fare for all agencies

Child - Child fare for all agencies (free on TTC, DRT, and GO Transit)

Since **Presto card can only have one single fare category for local transit agencies** (YRT, TTC, Miway, DRT, BT, etc.), it is impossible for a university student age 19 or under to use only one Presto card and paying the lowest possible fare. Of course, university students age 19 or under can use an adult Presto card, but then they will be overpaying a lot in other transit agencies.

You may say university students can use two presto card, one with a Youth setting and the other with a Post-secondary setting to pay the correct fares and receive the correct transit discounts. This is not possible since GO transit provides significant **discounts** for passengers riding **more than 30 rides** in a month, in **one single Presto card**. Therefore, university students age 19 or under are still overpaying using two separate Presto cards.

Also, riders can change their route in the middle of their journey, because of delays and lost connections. A person may choose not to use GO transit but then he/she misses the YRT bus connection so he/she takes a GO bus instead. However, the two different routes require university students age 19 or under to use two different Presto cards, predetermined before they board the first bus, which limits their opportunities to change their routes at various connection points with multiple transit agencies. It may also lead to the student with an incorrect fare type and be fined.

After establishing the fact that university students age 19 or under cannot use one single Presto to pay the lowest fare, there is **the issue of fare enforcement** for such riders. Some fare inspectors said university students age 19 or under can pay Youth fare and they won't ticket them, but some do issue tickets to university students age 19 or under. Getting inconsistent information from different YRT employees creates confusion for riders on what fare they should pay.

Therefore, for the **fare rules to be easily understood and to be consistent with other local transit agencies**, I recommend the council to **amend the YRT fare policy and remove the "HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT" requirement**.

Sincerely,

Hayden Poon