



The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Transportation Services

April 10, 2025

FOR DECISION

Report of the Commissioner of Public Works York Region Transit 2024 System Performance Report

1. Recommendation

1. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to advocate for the continuation of the One Fare Program beyond the initial 2-year term which ends in March 2026.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerks of local municipalities.

2. Purpose

This report provides Council with an overview of York Region Transit (YRT) 2024 system performance and includes an update on ridership, revenue, service reliability and accomplishments.

Key Points:

- Ridership reached a record high of 23.7 million in 2024, a 12% increase compared to 2023
- On-time performance reached 93-96%, exceeding targets and continued investments in asset management is required to maintain service reliability while travel patterns change and demand increases
- Key initiatives were delivered, including 108 service improvements, and completing several technology and asset management-related programs to provide customers with safe and reliable transit services
- Launched the provincial One Fare Program, eliminating a double fare between York Region Transit (YRT) and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) within a permissible transfer window, and resulted in increasing cross-boundary trips by 27.6%
- Continue to advocate for continuation of the One Fare Program and continued funding by the Province, beyond the initial 2-year term which ends in March 2026

- In 2024, the Region purchased an additional 80 battery electric buses as a part of the Zero Emission Transit Fund (ZETF) project and will begin to receive these buses in Q3 2026
- Received six awards for implementing artificial intelligence technology on YRT buses to automatically inspect bus stops and proactively develop work orders

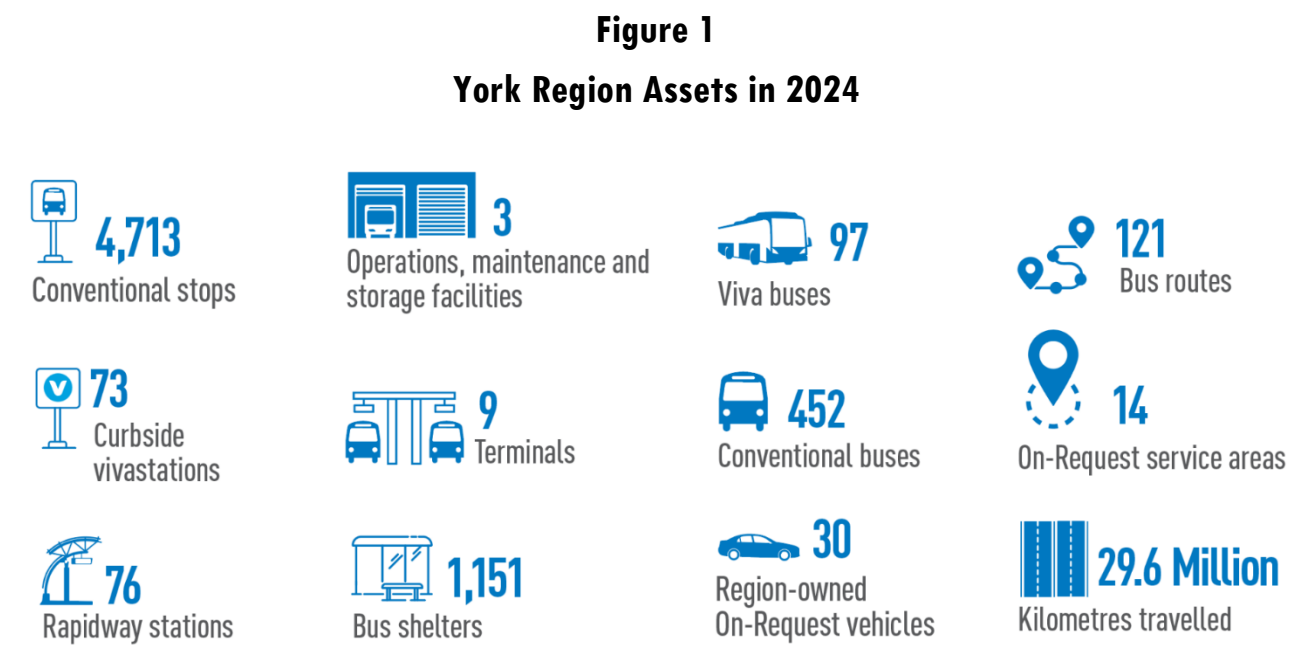
3. Background

York Region Transit delivers a variety of services to meet the unique needs of communities across the Region

The Region provides a blend of equitable, economical, and innovative transit services to meet the varying needs of all nine local municipalities within its large geographical service area. Private contractors operate a variety of YRT services, moving approximately 86,000 travellers daily:

- Viva bus rapid transit
- Base routes – Operate on major arterial corridors
- Local routes – Operate in neighbourhoods
- High school specials – Provide direct service to high schools
- Express routes – Provide limited-stop, direct service to key destinations
- YRT On-Request – On-demand transit service within a defined geographical area where demand for transit service is low
- Mobility On-Request Paratransit – Door-to-door, shared-ride, accessible public transit service for people with disabilities

The Region owns and maintains a wide variety of assets to service York Region residents, as shown in Figure 1.



4. Analysis

York Region Transit reached a record high ridership of 23.7 million in 2024

In 2024, ridership reached 23.7 million, a 12% increase compared to 2023. This increase is a result of increased travel on Viva and base routes throughout the week, to and from schools and on weekends for leisure travel to key destinations. Viva and base routes provide connections to the TTC subway, industrial areas, and key destinations along major travel corridors.

YRT's system-wide ridership distribution varies throughout the week, with the highest weekday daily boardings occurring from Tuesday to Thursday, primarily due to hybrid work practices. Total boardings on weekdays increased 16%, Saturdays increased 18% and Sundays increased 12%. Continued investment in service levels on weekdays and Saturdays will be important to address growing demand on these days.

A comparison of monthly system-wide ridership for 2023 and 2024 is shown in Appendix A.

Ridership increased 25% on both York Region Transit On-Request and Mobility On-Request services

In 2024, YRT's demand responsive, and paratransit services were rebranded as YRT On-Request and Mobility On-Request (MOR), respectively, and the services were promoted to residents and businesses across York Region.

YRT On-Request is a cost-effective and flexible service delivery model designed to provide service to travellers in low-demand areas and connect these areas with higher-order transit services. MOR is a specialized transit service available across York Region for people with disabilities who are unable to use conventional transit service for all or part of a trip. Staff will assess each requested trip for ability to use conventional transit service. Integrating conventional services and specialized transit supports cost efficiency and promotes independence, inclusion and use of the Region's accessible fleet. In 2024, YRT On-Request ridership increased 25% to 133,244 and MOR ridership increased 25% to 416,996.

York Region Transit On-Request service availability and customer experience continues to improve

YRT On-Request services continued to be adjusted to improve service availability. Ten service areas were consolidated to provide expanded service hours and days, and one new service area was implemented to expand service area coverage. Additionally, YRT On-Request services continued to migrate onto a new technology platform providing customers with an enhanced trip booking experience and staff with efficiencies to manage dispatcher, operator, and vehicle resources. Appendix E provides further details.

Service hours increased 10% in 2024, and service adjustments were made as travel patterns changed and ridership increased

Service hours increased from 1.3 million in 2023 to 1.4 million in 2024, representing a 10% increase, as shown in Appendix B.

The 2021-2025 YRT Business Plan and annual Transit Initiatives continued to guide service expansion supporting ridership growth. Service increased on several major corridors, such as those identified as part of York Region's Frequent Transit Network, Express Bus Network and Viva system, and connections were improved to GO trains, TTC subway lines and the Viva system. Annual system-wide ridership and service hours from 2015 to 2024 are shown in Appendix C.

York Region Transit continued to exceed on-time performance targets in 2024,

On-time performance is a measure of the quality of service operated by YRT. Operating schedules are compared to real-time operating data and adjusted six times per year. Service is monitored in real-time through the Centralized Control Centre. This allows for immediate service adjustments to address delays and reduce traveller wait times. In 2024, staff continued to adjust schedules in response to changing travel patterns and increasing travel demand. On-time performance reached 93% for conventional service, 96% for Viva and 93% for On-Request, meeting Strategic Plan targets, as shown in Appendix D. Additional resources will be required to maintain service reliability to mitigate impacts of major capital projects, including the Yonge North Subway Extension. Under the One Fare Program, 7.64 million cross-boundary trips were made between YRT and the TTC.

In [November 2023](#), Council authorized the Region to participate in the One Fare Program, and granted authority for the Commissioner of Public Works to negotiate and execute associated

agreements on behalf of the Region. The provincial One Fare Program launched on February 26, 2024, and eliminated the double fare between YRT and the TTC within a permissible transfer window. Fare integration with the TTC is a result of years of advocacy by Council and staff as well as collaboration with the Province, Metrolinx and partner transit agencies.

In 2024, approximately 7.64 million cross-boundary trips were made between YRT and the TTC under the One Fare Program, representing 32.3% of YRT's system ridership, and YRT received \$15.87 million in reimbursements from the Province to offset the free transfers. Cross-boundary trips have increased 27.6% compared to the start of the program. Better coordinated fares have made cross-boundary travel and transfers more attractive and affordable for riders, simplified the transit experience for customers, and helped to grow ridership.

Staff continue to advocate for the continuation of the One Fare Program and continued funding by the Province, beyond the initial 2-year term which ends in March 2026

Staff will continue to monitor changing ridership patterns resulting from the One Fare Program, implement necessary service improvements, and leverage the program to enhance service integration with the TTC. Staff will continue to work with the Province and partner transit agencies on the Fare and Service Integration Collaboration Table to advance additional fare and service integration initiatives. The One Fare Program agreement with the Province includes language to renew, following the initial 2-year term which ends in March 2026, subject to confirmation of funding from the Ministry of Ontario (MTO).

York Region purchased an additional 80 battery electric buses as part of the Region's Zero Emission Transit Fund project

In December 2020, Council approved the Transit Bus Fleet Electrification Plan. In 2022, the Region was approved through the Zero Emission Transit Fund, for a \$76 million grant from Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities Canada (HICC) and a low-interest loan up to \$136 million from Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB), to support the purchase of approximately 180 electric buses and associated infrastructure. Contribution and debt agreements with the respective agencies have been finalized. In 2023, the Region purchased 75 battery electric buses, with an additional 80 buses purchased in 2024 in support of the Transit Bus Fleet Electrification Plan that will see all YRT buses converted to zero-emission technology before 2051. YRT is expecting to begin receiving the first battery electric buses from the 2023 order in May 2025 and from the 2024 order in Q4 2026.

York Region is an eligible recipient for the Baseline Funding of the Canada Public Transit Fund

In September 2024, the Region submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Baseline Funding application of the Canada Public Transit Fund. The Baseline Funding Stream of the CPTF will provide approximately \$500 million annually to transit systems across Canada. In October 2024, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada (HICC) confirmed that York Region is deemed an eligible recipient for the Baseline Funding. The HICC provided the Region with confirmation of the annual Baseline Funding allocation and the equivalent 10-year allocation for the amount of \$95.7M

for the period of 2026 to 2036. Staff will be submitting a Capital Plan and working with HICC on the associated Contribution Agreement.

York Region, through the leadership of York Region Rapid Transit Corporation (YRRTC), is a partner in the EOI to be submitted by the Province in 2025 on behalf of the Greater Golden Horseshoe for the Metro-Region Agreement Stream of the CPTF. Metro-Region Agreements will support long-term development of public transit infrastructure in large urban areas. Through these agreements, the federal government will allocate funding and work with partners to support the planning and construction of a broad range of projects, including major expansions. YRRTC is pursuing \$1.7B for priority BRT projects on Jane Street in Vaughan and the extension of Highway 7 East in Markham.

Staff continue to explore additional provincial and federal funding opportunities.

Key initiatives delivered in 2024 focused on improving traveller experience, affordability, and the environment

In 2024, York Region Transit continued to offer innovative services, reflecting York Region's responsiveness to growing ridership, changing travel patterns, and diversifying community needs. Appendix E outlines key initiatives, such as completing expansion of the maintenance and storage facility at 55 Orlando Drive, completing two customer satisfaction surveys, and introducing contactless payment for iOS devices, delivered in 2024 to enhance customer service, improve affordability, lower emissions, improve technology and ensure assets are in a state of good repair.

5. Financial Considerations

This report does not present current or anticipated financial changes to the Region's budget or fiscal position.

Revenue-to-cost ratio recovered to 39% due primarily to ridership growth

In 2024, fare revenue totaled \$85 million compared to \$72 million in 2023. In 2024, revenue-to-cost ratio recovered to 39%, up from 36% in 2023, primarily due to ridership growth. Revenue-to-cost ratio has nearly reached the pre-pandemic level of approximately 40% and has recovered from a pandemic low of 21%. Other key factors impacting the revenue-to-cost ratio recovery in 2024 included service resumption costs, inflation, fuel prices, and a fare increase in July 2024. The approved 2025 operating budget includes a 3% transit fare increase in July 2025.

Staff continue to review fares, fare structure, funding opportunities as well as the impact of the Yonge North Subway Extension construction to operating costs in an effort optimize delivery of the right mix of sustainable transit services.

This report contains financial information but no potential decision that could create a fiscal impact.

6. Local Impact

In 2024, 108 service improvements were implemented to expand services, grow ridership, and respond to changing travel patterns.

Well-planned transit services help shape and connect communities. The Region's continuing investment in public transit provides travellers with a safe, effective, and reliable transportation choice and supports provincial housing targets, specifically in Official Plan Major Transit Station Areas.

York Region Transit received over 1,400 comments from the public about the proposed 2025 service changes and the planned changes were presented to all nine local Councils

YRT staff met with stakeholders and presented to all nine local Councils on proposed 2025 service changes and upcoming projects. Public engagement occurred virtually, on-bus and on-street. YRT staff received over 1,400 comments and completed surveys on the planned service changes. A total of 35 improvements have been identified as part of the 2025 Transit Initiatives to improve frequency, provide more direct travel options, and expand secondary school travel options.

Staff continue to install amenities to enhance customer experience, and ensure all assets stay in good state of repair, including replacement buses, expansion buses, bus stop upgrades (e.g., bike racks, waste units, benches) and solar variable messaging signs.

7. Conclusion

In 2024, York Region Transit delivered key initiatives including the launch of the One Fare Program, purchase of 80 battery electric buses, and completion of several technology and asset management-related programs. YRT maintained a high level of service reliability through changing travel patterns and increasing travel demand.

In 2024, transit ridership reached a record high of 23.7 million, with growth concentrated on weekdays and Saturdays, and on routes providing connections to the TTC subway, industrial areas, and key destinations along major travel corridors.

York Region Transit will continue working with Greater Toronto, Hamilton Area transit agencies and the federal and provincial governments to provide safe and reliable transit service and advance fare and service integration opportunities.

For more information on this report, please contact Richard Montoya, Director, Transit at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75928. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



Recommended by:

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Commissioner of Public Works



Approved for Submission:

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Chief Administrative Officer

March 24, 2025

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Appendix A - Monthly System-Wide Ridership for 2023 and 2024

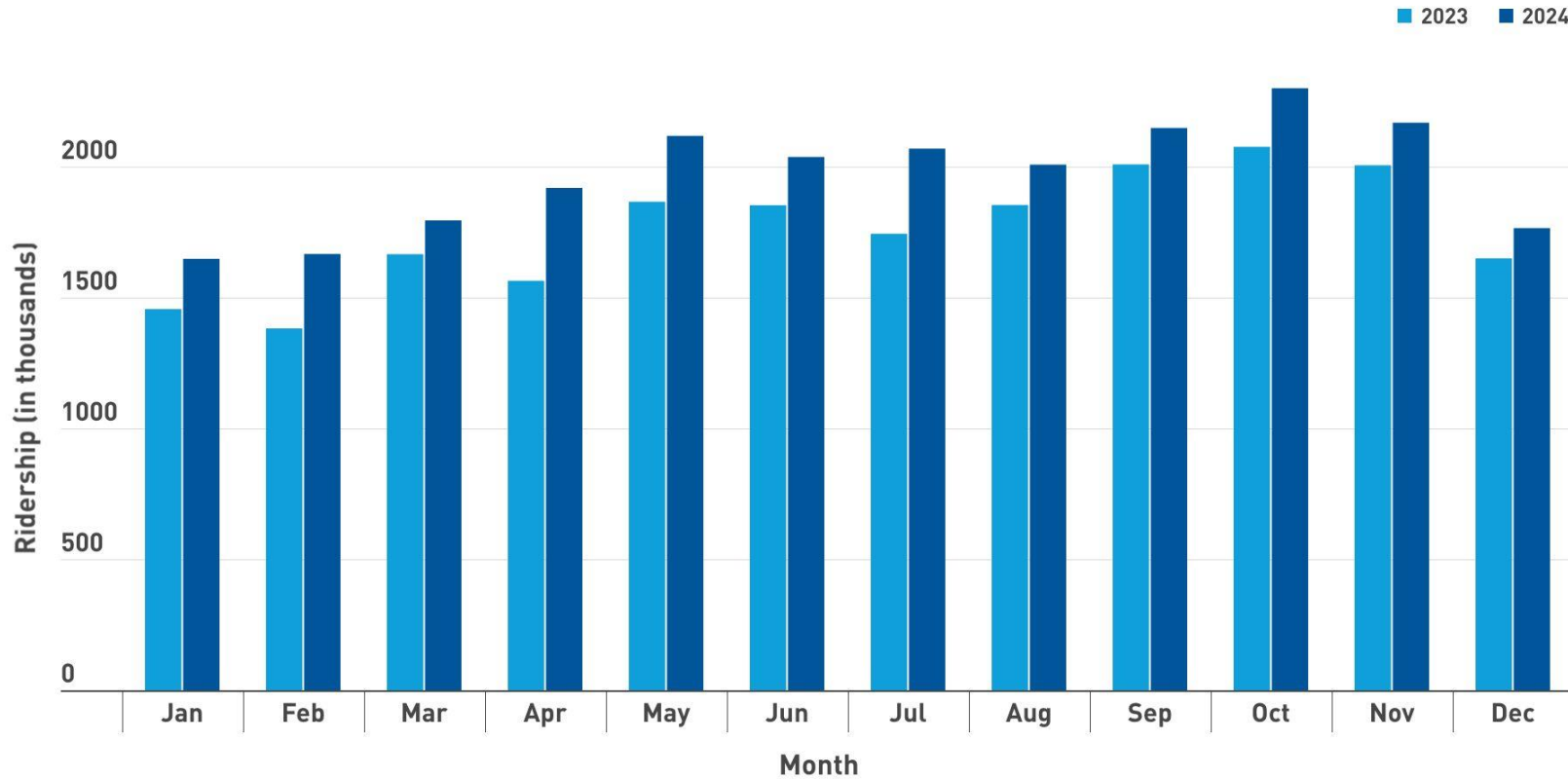
Appendix B - Monthly System-Wide Service Hours for 2023 and 2024

Appendix C - Annual System-Wide Ridership and Service Hours for 2015 to 2024

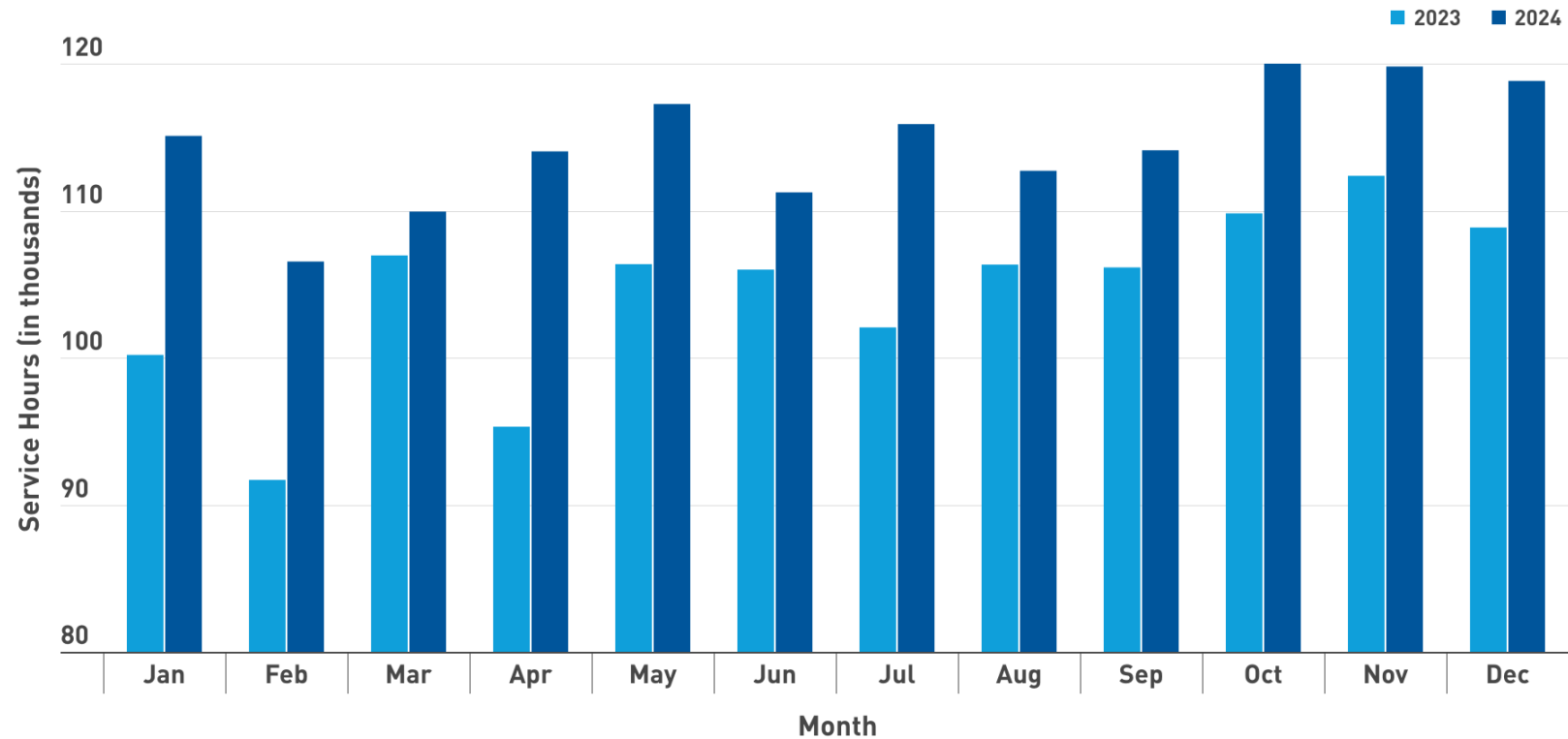
Appendix D - On-Time Performance for 2022 to 2024

Appendix E - Key Initiatives Delivered In 2024

York Region Transit 2024 System Performance Report
YRT System Ridership Comparison 2023 to 2024

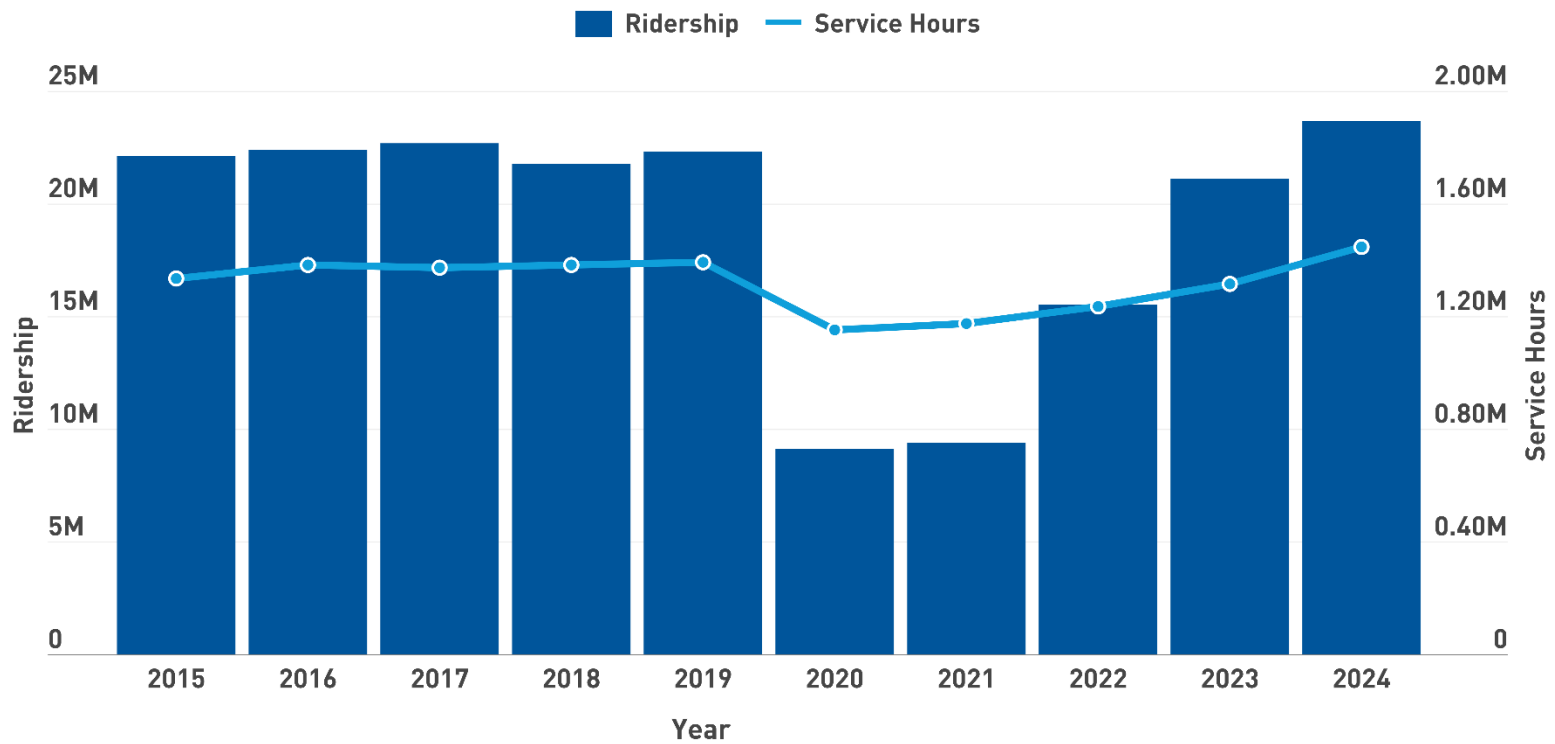


York Region Transit 2024 System Performance Report
YRT Service Hours Comparison 2023 to 2024



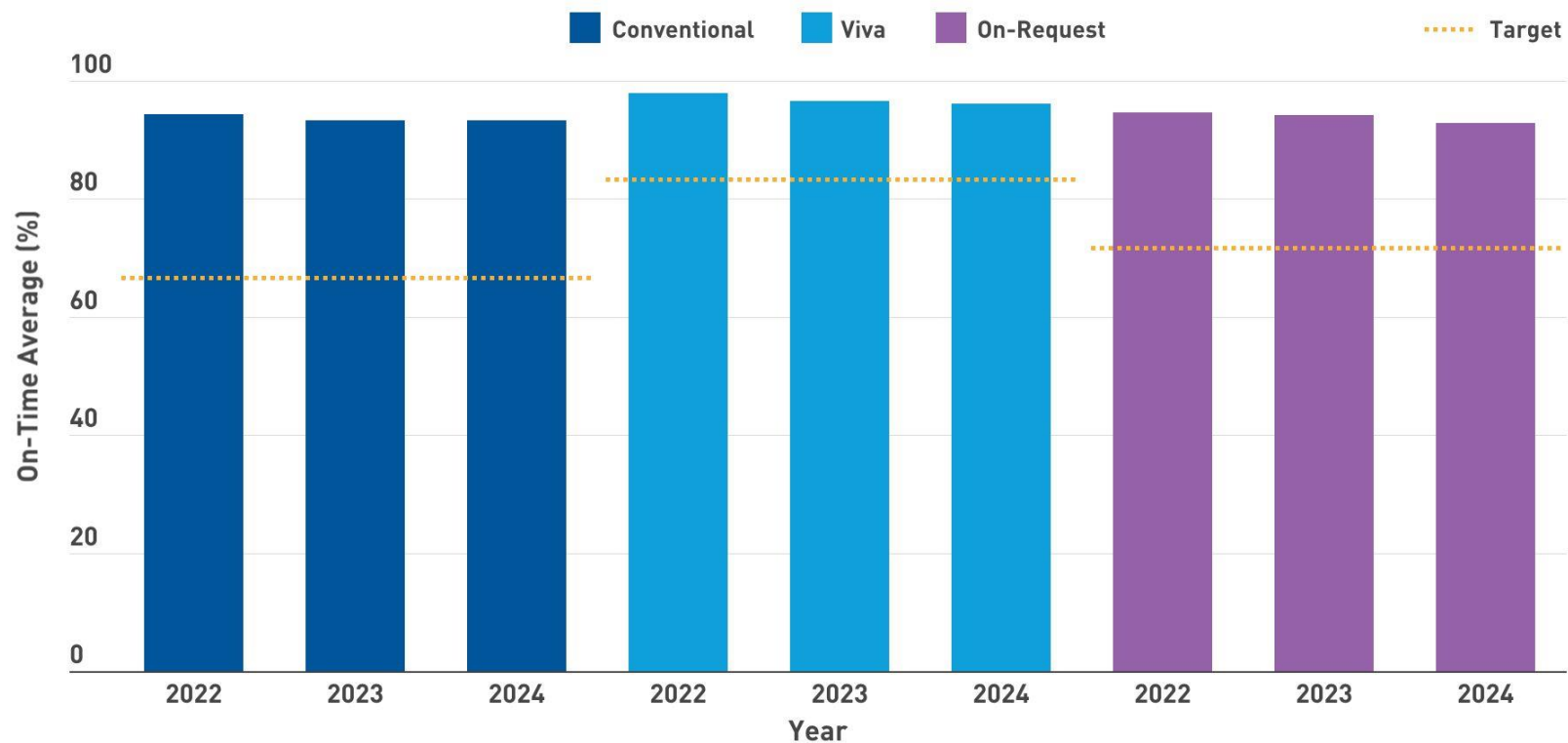
York Region Transit 2024 System Performance Report

YRT System Ridership and Service Hours 2015 to 2024



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Revenue-to-Cost Ratio	40%	40%	40%	40%	41%	21%	21%	29%	36%	39%

York Region Transit 2024 System Performance Report YRT On-Time Performance 2022 to 2024



KEY INITIATIVES DELIVERED IN 2024

Assets

- Completed construction for expansion of the Region's LEED gold certified operations, maintenance and storage facility located at 55 Orlando Avenue to increase garage capacity
- Designed the maintenance and storage facility expansion at 8300 Keele Street to increase garage capacity
- Refurbished 89 buses through asset management programs to keep aging fleet in a good state-of-repair
- Replaced 30 concrete bus stop pads, installed 17 new pads, and 13 new shelters throughout the Region to improve accessibility and customer comfort

Service and Operations

- Implemented 108 services improvements to expand services, grow ridership and respond to changing travel patterns
- Continued work to advance the Yonge North Subway Extension into York Region and associated transit-oriented communities

Affordability

- One Fare Program was introduced, eliminating the double fare for cross-boundary trips between YRT and the TTC
- Launched fare capping for all age categories, removing the upfront cost of a monthly pass
- Approximately 2,000 customers participated in the Transit Assistance Program and 2,600 in the Transit Discount Program

Customer Experience

- Enhanced customer experience by making real-time information easily accessible through digital self-service options
- Completed two customer satisfaction surveys to assist in planning services and budgeting for future improvements
- Awarded two MarCom Gold Awards for the 2025 Transit Initiatives campaign
- Launched a new Print Your Schedule tool on YRT's Trip Planner to enhance the user experience when printing bus schedules
- Provided travel training to 379 customers through the myRide Travel Training program

Technology

- Awarded six distinct recognitions for implementing artificial intelligence technology on YRT buses to revolutionize bus stop inspections
- Migrated all On-Request services on the YRT On-Request app, to improve trip booking experience, vehicle monitoring, and operational efficiencies, resulting in doubling the adoption rate of the app and increasing shared rides to nearly 50%
- Developed integration of YRT On-Request into the Transit App and Citymapper for trip planning and booking, which launched in early 2025
- Expanded PRESTO contactless payment for iOS devices on YRT vehicles
- Launched PRESTO e-Ticket on YRT, replacing the YRT Pay mobile application