

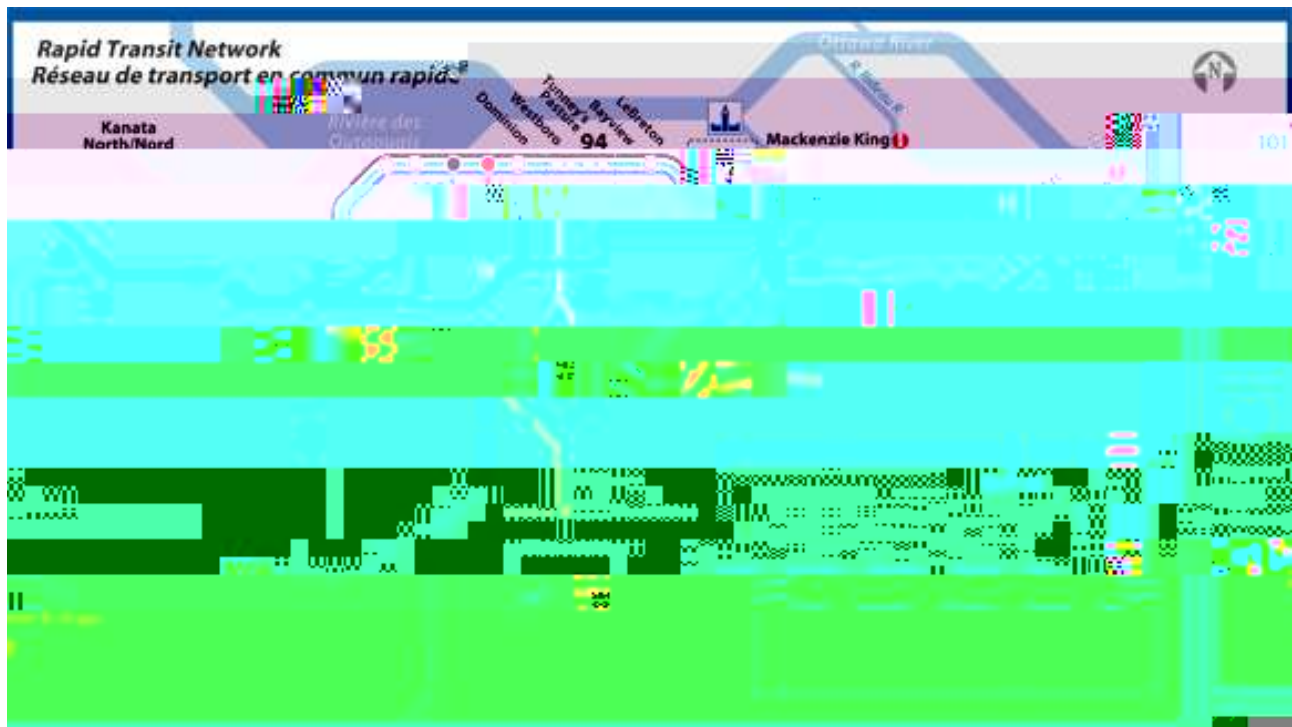
Background

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

system in 2005. VIVA currently runs on five routes and uses articulated buses which are branded as specialized rapid transit vehicles. The goal of VIVA is to increase transit mode share in York Region, as well as to support Transit Oriented Development and attract new riders to bus transit. Phase One of VIVA is complete, and Phase Two is currently underway, which consists of the development of five separated running ways to increase service efficiency and reliability.

ity and is located in Eastern Ontario, adjacent to the Quebec border. Ottawa is considered to have one of the best BRT systems in North America, due to its development of the Transitway. The Transitway opened in 1983 and comprises of over 30 kilometers of separate roadway specifically for buses. The Transitway currently spans across the entire City, serving approximately 100 million passengers every year (See Figure 2). The success ay is due to early transit supportive policies in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as a lot of government funding.

Figure 2



Methodology

This report

The two systems are compared based on seven common BRT criteria extracted from two Transit Cooperative Research Program (TRCP) reports and include: running ways, stations and bus stops, vehicles, fare collection, route structure and servicing, ITS technology and marketing and branding. Data was collected using three methods: document review, observations and interviews. Each criteria contains common features and elements that are compared and displayed in a variety of tables. A summary of the general comparison is outlined below in Table 1.

Analysis

BRT Criteria	York Region Transit	OC Transpo
Running ways	x No running ways present - VIVA buses run in mixed traffic	

Conclusions

The most significant difference between the two BRT systems is the running way criteria; OC Transpo has a famous Transitway system which consists of a separate roadway for buses only. In contrast, YRT currently has no running ways. However, YRT has managed to provide a rapid bus service that is more reliable and efficient compared to the conventional bus and is currently in the process of developing five rapidways. The two systems have many of the same supported rapid transit years ago, before York Region Transit even existed. Lastly, this research has demonstrated that both YRT and OC Transpo can learn from each other. Each system has key strengths, but also areas for improvement. The lessons learned from each BRT system is translated below into recommendations.

The use of qualitative methods has demonstrated the role that BRT has in the public transportation industry, including the specific features that this type of bus service offers, compared to a conventional bus system. Learning about the strengths and weaknesses of both transportation, including ridership levels.

Recommendations

Recommendations for York Region Transit

- x Transitway
- x Connect and expand future rapidways to allow for greater running way service
- x Install security telephones and/or public telephones at all Viva stations
- x Provide trash cans at every Viva station
- x time and upcoming intersection at the next stop
- x Install two ticket vending machines at all Viva stations
- x Offer a wider variety of peak-hour and express routes
- x Add more traffic signal priority measures
- x Develop and implement a Transit Priority Task Force
- x Create a YRT/VIVA customer service centre located in a high passenger volume area
- x Offer more marketing and advertising campaigns (e.g. reduced rate for university students and free transit to seniors on a specific day)

Recommendations for OC Transpo

- x Install real-time information at all Transitway stops and stations
- x Improve branding for the Transitway and Transitway vehicles
- x Provide more on-board passenger information (e.g. maps, brochures, or advertisements)
- x Implement a two-hour use on all fare purchases
- x Consider the possibility of implementing fare zones for the entire system