

To: Metrolinx Board of Directors
From: Mark Childs
Chief Marketing Officer
Date: September 9, 2021
Re: Marketing Quarterly Update

Executive Summary

GO and UP ridership sees consistent growth since May. This growth is supported with our Ready to Ride plan aligned with service re-introduction, and easing lockdown measures as vaccinations rollout. Ready to Ride welcomes customers back to transit with refreshed GO and UP Safety Never Stops messaging, newly launched GO Beyond leisure trip campaign and new multicultural Find Your GO Time online videos.

Plans to regain ridership, including service re-introduction and marketing initiative timing, are anchored in customer research, international trend trends and data-driven ridership insights. Ridership growth and a strong Customer Satisfaction score of 87% in July, shows our customers appreciation for the GO Safety Never Stops reassurance campaign.

We continue to monitor ridership, customer insights and feedback and the Delta variant trends to adapt our plans as appropriate.

Ridership Performance

GO & UP ridership is at pandemic high, with July reaching 15.3% of pre-COVID levels, growing 131% since May.

Growth is especially strong on weekends and with e-tickets. GO weekend ridership reaches 36% of pre-COVID ridership, aligned with our GO Beyond campaign to encourage customers to explore the region. In the past two months, E-Tickets have become an important fare media choice for customers, moving from 1.5% to 7.6% of weekly ridership, with sales growing 168% since June. The new weekend pass offering, digital marketing campaign and update to web pages has supported E-ticket sales growth.

The re-introduction of rail schedules and new service to West Harbour, including weekend and weekday service frequency are meeting customer needs- attracting leisure travel in the summer, and business and school travel for the fall.

UP Express ridership recovered to 13% of pre-COVID ridership, with 300% growth since May. With airline travel restrictions easing, growth is expected to continue with more demand for domestic and international travel.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction with GO Transit scored 87% in July. Customers continue to recognize the importance of personal health and safety measures and communication reassurance, sustained on time performance, and improved customer service and communications. As ridership increases and restrictions lift, customers are asking for more service so they can get to their desired destinations.

Non-Fare Initiatives

Non-fare initiatives continues to stay on track to improve amenities and customer experience including the opening of the Union Station Bay Concourse new Tim Hortons location, re-opening of Balzac's at UP Express, and Purolator pick-up and drop-off locations.

The Metrolinx Online Store launched in July and recorded with early impressive sales and customer feedback for branded merchandise such as water bottles, clothing, accessories as well as masks and the classic mini GO Bear.

In recent months, we are proud to have supported over 30+ community events at many of our GO station locations including Tamildfest, Taste of the Caribbean, Beaches Jazz Festival drive-in concerts, and other family focused experiences.

As we continue to rebuild customer confidence and ridership recovery, we will adapt our plans to inspire with new travel ideas, reassure with Safety Never Stops messaging and delight with new experiences. Welcome Back.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Childs
Chief Marketing Officer