

Executive Summary

Purpose of GO Rail Station Access

GO Rail Station Access is a pillar of Metrolinx’s GO Expansion Program, which is bringing faster all-day, two-way rail service to communities across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). GO Rail Station Access supports enhanced GO station access, improves options for customers, and increases the capacity of GO stations to accommodate ridership growth in a way that is sustainable and financially efficient to 2041.

GO ridership will double over the next two decades, even accounting for the long-term COVID-19 pandemic impacts of remote work.

In the past, Metrolinx accommodated ridership growth by increasing parking to almost 73,000 spaces in total at stations across the rail network. However, continued growth of parking at this rate is financially and environmentally unsustainable. As a result, Metrolinx needs to accommodate more customers by encouraging a major shift in modes of access and limited parking expansion.

Metrolinx’s 2016 GO Rail Station Access Plan, built upon the foundations laid in the 2013 GO Transit Rail Station Access and Parking Strategy, emphasized that ridership growth could not

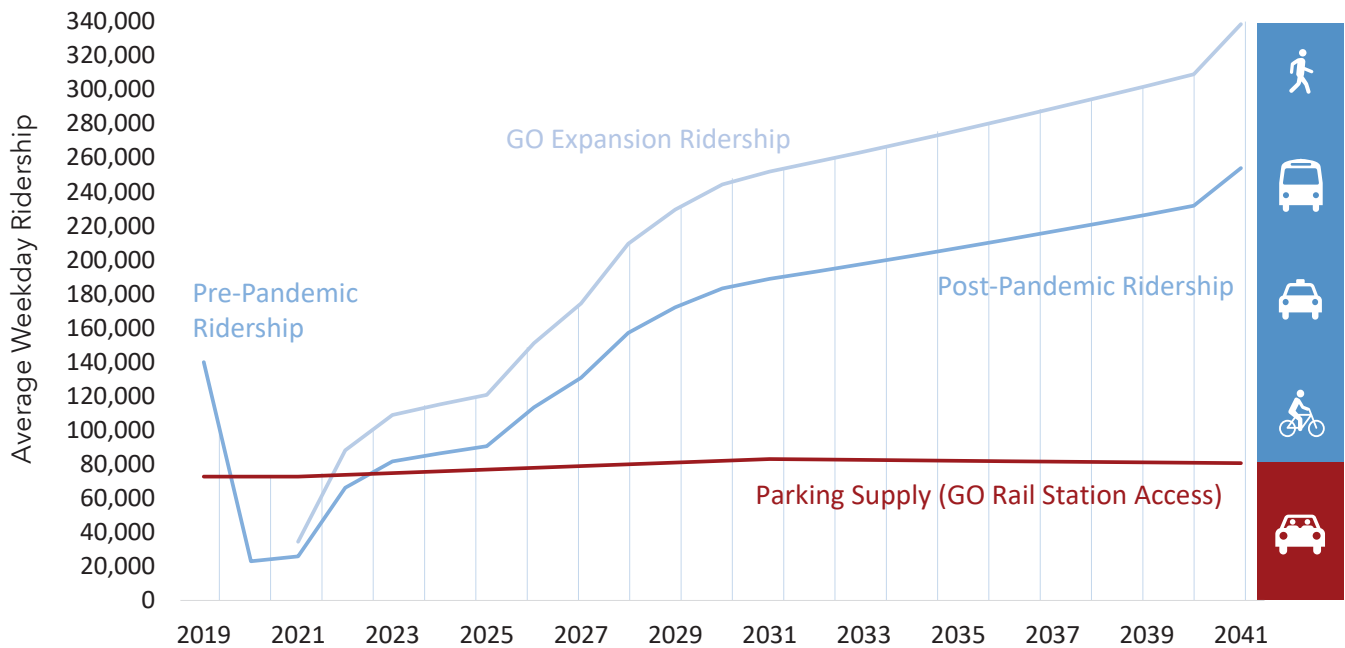


Figure 1 Existing and forecasted future GO Rail ridership accounting for short- and long-term COVID-19 impacts on regional travel.

Sources: 2017 and 2019 GO Rail Passenger Survey, Greater Golden Horseshoe Model, 2020 Statistics Canada Canadian Survey on Business Conditions, 2020 Toronto Regional Board of Trade Survey of Downtown Workers, 2018 GO Expansion Full Business Case, and 2022 Station Access Model.

continue to be accommodated with unlimited parking expansion, and that at the same time, increasing station access capacity was critical for managing ridership growth. It also identified distinct costs and benefits associated with different station access strategies. Metrolinx has also observed a distinct shift toward alternative modes of access across the network, such as walking (from 8.5% to 11%) and local transit (from 8.5% to 18%), and a reduction in the overall prevalence of drive-and-park (64% to 46%) since 2015.

Approach to Managing Growth

GO Rail Station Access maintains the incremental change approach introduced in the 2016 GO Rail Station Access Plan but extends the planning horizon to 2041 and incorporates updated provincial priorities, such as the Transit-Oriented Communities program and pandemic recovery measures to address impacts on regional travel patterns.

Station-Specific Requirements

GO Rail Station Access identifies station-specific requirements to guide investment in all existing and in-delivery (i.e. under construction) GO Rail stations. These requirements include Metrolinx-led improvements on GO station lands (to be implemented independently or in partnership with third parties), and municipal- or developer-led improvements around GO stations on their respective lands. Off-site opportunities are also identified through extensive consultation with municipalities and municipal service providers (MSPs), and reviews of municipal plans.

GO Rail Station Access also includes mode share targets for each station that contribute to mode-specific infrastructure recommendations and Metrolinx’s decision-making on access-related programs and investment.

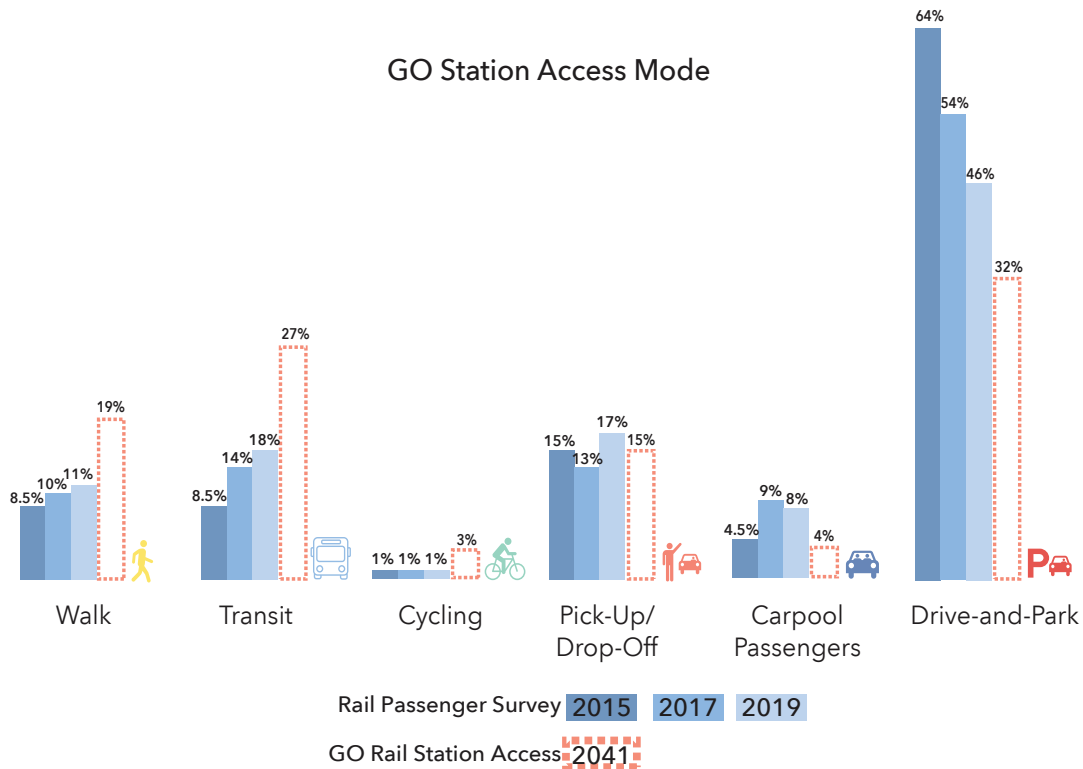


Figure 2 Network-wide mode share of average weekday ridership (excluding Union Station)
 Source: 2015, 2017, and 2019 GO Rail Passenger Survey and 2022 Station Access Model

Analytic Process

To update GO Rail Station Access, station ridership and mode-share were evaluated using Metrolinx's Station Access Model, which calculates the utility (i.e., estimated attractiveness) of each mode of access at individual GO Rail stations. The model considered existing travel patterns and observed historical behaviour (i.e., from the 2017 and 2019 GO Rail Passenger Surveys), unconstrained station ridership (i.e., based on the Greater Golden Horseshoe Model), Metrolinx's GO bus plans, long-term municipal transit service plans, the anticipated COVID-19 outlook and impacts (i.e., based on the Statistics Canada Employer Survey), and other station-level and mode characteristics (i.e., travel time, cost, walk score, and bike score).

Results from the Station Access Model were then used to determine the appropriate size of facilities and identify where additional investment may be required to support future ridership growth.

How to Read this Document

Part 1 of this document include the following sections:

- **Section 1** provides an introduction to this document, including its purpose, use, and relevant policies and plans.
- **Section 2** presents the station-specific requirements, including detailed tables for each GO Rail station, the methodology used, and the process for making amendments.

Part 2 provides four supplementary chapters:

- **Supplement A** describes off-site opportunities for every existing and in-delivery GO Rail station, including those identified by municipalities.
- **Supplement B** presents the foundations of GO Rail Station Access, including the vision, principles, and policies that supported its development and will inform its implementation. It provides a framework for prioritizing access enhancements to support the efficient use of assets, equitable access, and sustainable ridership growth.
- **Supplement C** identifies station access types and additional mode-specific considerations, including guidelines to inform GO Rail station site planning and design by Metrolinx, planning for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) by municipalities, and the preparation and review of lands within MTSAs by private developers.
- **Supplement D** introduces Metrolinx's GO Rail Station Access implementation strategy, including the decision-making framework for on-site improvements, and a monitoring process to measure progress on the shared implementation of access requirements.