

**To:** Metrolinx Board of Directors  
**From:** Mark Childs  
*Chief Marketing Officer*  
**Date:** June 29, 2023  
**Re:** Marketing Quarterly Update

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### **Executive Summary**

In the first quarter, the Marketing team continued to focus on recovery through new and innovative partnerships with business and leisure programs that support ridership growth and demand. Recent weeks have reported a new milestone of 72 per cent GO ridership recovery, the highest since pre-pandemic.

We have continued to expand food and beverage options for our customers. Recently, we partnered with Fleets Coffee to bring mobile food and beverage service to our passengers for the summer at Aurora GO Station.

Additionally, we continue to roll out vending machines across our network with 88 machines for a quick snack, beverage, health & beauty and travel products. The new *Chatr* vending machines are located at Union Station Bus Terminal, UP Express, Oshawa GO, Bramalea GO, and Pickering GO. Our Purolator partnership continues to expand with the recent addition of parcel lockers at Cooksville GO to allow customers to securely pick up and drop off packages.

We held a March Break activation at UP Pearson platform on March 9 providing travellers with fun activities, which included chances to win travel accessories (e.g., sleep masks, smart tags, etc.).

In May, UP customer satisfaction (CSAT) at 86 per cent, driven by more frequent service to our customers and the positive impact this had on perceptions of crowding. There were key GO service changes in April, including adding weekend service on the Kitchener line and replacing rail service with bus service on the Barrie and Stouffville corridors. GO CSAT in May was at 84 per cent.

### **Ridership Performance**

In April, both GO bus and rail ridership recovery was at 63.4 per cent. Our brand communication and promotions continue to add more convenient and exciting reasons to choose GO, UP and PRESTO for youth and students, returning commuters and business customers to events and tourism in the region.

For UP Express, ridership recovery increased to 76 per cent in April, up from 62.7 per

cent in March. This was supported by increased UP Express frequency to 15 minutes all-day service, which resulted in ridership boosts of 25 per cent on weekends and 18 per cent on weekdays (month over month).

We continue to meet increased customer demand for weekend and leisure travel to allow GO customers to travel to destinations such as Niagara Falls and attend events like the Canadian International Auto show and the Toronto Comicon, where we partnered and offered combo tickets and over 4,500 PRESTO Perks redemptions.

In support of our continued multicultural outreach in 9 languages, our GO Eid campaign from April 14-27 received high engagement to deliver 3.7M impressions and in May, we also returned to Toronto Newcomers Day.

PRESTO Perks partnership lists continue to grow with 49 PRESTO Perks including partnerships in the food, health and wellness industries. Metrolinx partnered with Power Yoga Canada offering customers 15 per cent off single or class packages. Metrolinx also partnered with Mikey's Smash Burger and Amano Italian Kitchen at Union Station where customers can receive 20 per cent off all their meals.

### **Customer Experience and Business Development**

On April 11, Budweiser sponsored free transit on GO Transit and UP Express, from 9:00 pm until the end of service to celebrate the Blue Jays Home Opener. Customers had a positive experience with Budweiser, GO Transit, UP Express and Blue Jays brands. Media sentiment was extremely positive and the story was picked up by 41 outlets with a reach of 20M.

The soft launch of the new GOtransit.com gave customers the opportunity to provide feedback. On May 11, it was fully deployed, and we are already seeing great customer feedback and early results. Site sessions are up 15 per cent and intention to ride rate increased to 63 per cent (vs. benchmark of 47 per cent).

GO Wi-Fi Plus has been improved to provide easier and reliable access to the internet and our entertainment portal. All users now receive 200MB free data and we recently launched premium content including blockbuster movies and high-profile TV shows.

We continue to invite customers to join many community festivals and events at local GO stations and parking lots including the return of the Halal Food Festival at Milton GO and Dixie GO, with two more scheduled in June at Ajax GO and Bramalea GO. We also partnered with Eats Theme Park Events at Dixie GO station.

As we head into the summer, we continue to encourage our customers to use the new GOtransit.com to plan their ride with us so they can enjoy many new and returning events with easy access to destinations across the region.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Childs

*Chief Marketing Officer*