

To: Metrolinx Board of Directors

From: Martin Gallagher
Chief Operating and Safety Officer (GO & UP)

Re: **Operations (GO & UP) Quarterly Report (FY 2023 / 2024 Q1)**

Executive Summary

Operations (GO & UP) achieved several major milestones this quarter, from the launch of the GO Transit Train Control System (GTCS) on the Richmond Hill Corridor, to the takeover of the Cherry Street Control Tower from Toronto Terminals Railway (TTR). Phase One of Regional Express Bus began in April - focusing GO service where customer need is greatest, and two new electric buses entered revenue service. The inaugural meeting of the Metrolinx Safety Certification Committee was also held in April to help promote the safety, efficiency, and protection of our transit system by ensuring appropriate structures, practices and policies are in place for any changes to our network.

From August 2022 to June 2023, monthly GO Rail On-Time Performance (OTP) has improved steadily, reaching 93.65 per cent at the end of Q1, and trends indicate sustained month-over-month improvement. Trespass activity within the rail corridor continues to be the leading cause of OTP erosion. Actions underway to reduce trespass risk include added fencing, deterrence in the form of overt/covert patrols, fines, surveillance, and rolling out campaigns to educate individuals who live or work near our rail network, about the dangers of trespassing and what to do if they observe unsafe behaviour. UP Express (UPE) On-Time Performance (OTP) was 99.2 per cent at the close of Q1, well above the target of 97 per cent. Monthly UPE punctuality has met the 97 per cent target every month, except for one, since July 2022. GO Bus delivered an on-time performance of 95.4 per cent in June, down from 96.5 per cent in April and 96.3 per cent in May due to road congestion. Seasonal and leisure travel combined with sporting events, concerts, and other events across the GTA contributed to a significant increase in traffic related delays, up 20 per cent from May to June. Various routes were restructured to allow for a shift from bus to rail, to provide more predictable and consistent travel times for our customers.

GO Transit Train Control System

For more than a century, three control towers within the Union Station Rail Corridor (USRC) have relied on an old electro-mechanical system of train control to safely move rail traffic in and out of Union Station. Since acquiring the Union Station Rail Corridor (USRC) from Toronto Terminals Railway (TTR) in 2000, Metrolinx has contracted out the rail traffic control function within the USRC back to TTR. But with GO Expansion delivering improvements during the next decade that will allow for four times the number of train trips for GO customers, Metrolinx is assuming control of Rail Traffic Control (RTC) on Metrolinx-owned corridors to provide more operational flexibility and efficiency for train movements. Metrolinx has also begun the deployment of a new, Metrolinx-owned train control system - the GO Transit Control System (GTCS).

In April, a significant milestone was achieved within the deployment of the GTCS on the Richmond Hill corridor and on July 1, operational control of the tower at Cherry Street will transition from TTR to Metrolinx as part of a staged transition. Responsibility for the second and third towers at Scott Street and John Street will be transitioned to Metrolinx over the next year.

Service Enhancements and the Launch of Regional Express Bus

In April, new GO rail and bus services were rolled out across the network, including additional peak frequencies and intermodal shifts on select corridors during off-peak hours. New, two-way weekend GO rail service was introduced on the Kitchener Line, giving customers the ability to travel between Brampton and Toronto all week long. Hourly service in both directions was introduced between Mount Pleasant GO and Union Station, supported by new weekend GO Buses servicing Waterloo, Kitchener, and Guelph to seamlessly connect with GO Trains at Mount Pleasant and Bramalea GO Stations.

The number of weekday trips increased along the Kitchener and Milton Lines during peak hours and in May, weekday service to Niagara Falls increased by two daily roundtrips. Weekend service to Niagara also increased for a total of 21 roundtrips per week and rail service to St. Catharines resumed, unlocking new travel opportunities for both Toronto and Niagara-bound customers. Additional bus and rail service adjustments were also made periodically to support increases in ridership for special events such as Pride and Toronto Blue Jays games.

As part of these enhancements, Metrolinx began implementing the first phase of the Regional Express Bus (REB) strategy which aims to transform the GO Bus network into a high-frequency network that will enable “show-up and go” service with 15-minute service on core bus routes. Select GO Bus services are being streamlined and consolidated to improve reliability, simplify the bus network, provide customers with faster and more consistent service patterns, and reduce service duplication with local transit and GO Rail services.

Increases in service frequency corresponded to a growth in ridership. At the close of Q1, ridership on GO Transit and UP Express recovered to 70.7 per cent and 85.4 per cent respectively compared to pre-COVID levels. Even with temporary track closures along the Lakeshore West and Barrie lines to advance capital works, for the first time since 2020, weekly boardings surpassed one million each week in the month of June.

On-Time Performance and Customer Satisfaction

As new and more frequent trips were added, we remained focused on delivering a punctual and reliable service for our customers. GO rail delivered an on-time performance above 95 per cent in April and May, while punctuality in June decreased slightly to 93.7 per cent. UP Express on-time performance improved from 98.8 per cent at the start of the quarter to 99.2 per cent in June. UP Express monthly on-time performance has exceeded the 97 per cent target every month except for one since July 2022. GO bus delivered an on-time performance of 95.4 per cent in June, down from 96.5 per cent in April and 96.3 per cent in May due to road congestion. Seasonal and leisure travel combined with sporting events, concerts, and other events across the GTA contributed to a significant increase in traffic related delays - up 20 per cent from May to June. After analyzing travel times, traffic

conditions, construction schedules, and ridership data, we made changes to our routes to ensure optimal service reliability for customers. Various routes were restructured to allow for a shift from bus to rail service to provide more predictable and consistent travel times and we continue to work closely with local municipalities to develop traffic plans during special events and road construction.

These changes combined with ongoing punctuality, translated into strong customer satisfaction scores this quarter. Customer satisfaction scores for GO rail reached 88 per cent at the end of Q1, while GO bus customer satisfaction was 84 per cent. In April, the overall CSAT score for UP Express was 88%, however, this number dropped to 83% in June due to crowding, seat availability and service frequency.

Charging into a greener future

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing a safe and reliable transit system that delivers environmental benefits, two zero-emission battery electric double-decker GO buses launched into revenue service on May 15. Each bus is powered by nine batteries with 648kWH of total energy and can be fully charged in approximately three to four hours. These buses can travel 225km in colder temperatures and 300km in warmer temperatures without needing a charge. As Metrolinx continues to test electric vehicle technology, customers travelling on GO bus routes 19, 27, 92 and 96B may have the opportunity to ride on one of the two electric buses that not only offer a quieter ride but are also equipped with USB ports for customers to charge their personal devices and additional luggage storage.

As an organization, we will continue to explore opportunities to better-serve our existing customers, attract new riders to our network and increase revenue, while advancing capital projects across the region to support their on-time delivery.

Respectfully submitted,

Martin Gallagher
Chief Operating and Safety Officer (GO & UP)