

To: Metrolinx Board of Directors
From: Mark Childs
Chief Marketing Officer
Date: November 28, 2024
Re: Marketing Quarterly Update

Metrolinx has sustained 8-month ridership recovery momentum aligned with our four T-R-I-P growth strategies: *Tourism and leisure momentum, Returned rider frequency, Increase commuter and business travel, and Pull in new audiences*. September's record 6.7M post-COVID ridership, supported by flexible schedules, returned university and college bus routes and Fall event demand generation, increased September GO recovery to 93.6 per cent and UP at 98.7 per cent compared to 2019.

As more customers return to transit, Metrolinx continues to bring to life regional and strategic partnerships that enhance the journey experience. Our most recent customer satisfaction (CSAT) reached a historic September high of 86 per cent for GO, and UP sustained 87 per cent.

Ridership Highlights

This Fall, Metrolinx bolstered support for destination and event leisure travel and returning school and business customers. We achieved impressive weekend ridership recovery at 157 per cent compared to 2019, with added rail and bus services and early promotion of leisure travel to key Fall destinations and events, including the Toronto Fall Home Show, Fall Canadian Pet Expo and Toronto International Film Festival.

Metrolinx met customer needs for sporting events across the region with exciting partnerships and convenient service frequency, positioning GO as the smoothest ride to big sports events, including the Toronto Blue Jays end of season and Toronto Football Club (TFC). Incremental weekend ridership to TFC games increased by 25 per cent compared to 2023.

Business traveller campaigns, peak rail and bus service, and strategic partner offers to incentivize weekday travel, including Amex and Simplii, drove September peak recovery to 74.3 per cent, ahead of office occupancy at 69 per cent. A Starbucks commuter coffee promotion launched in November, to inspire weekday trip frequency by rewarding customers taking three return trips per week with free Starbucks treats.

Our Back-to-School campaign engaged students and youth at the Ontario Universities' Fair and via social media campaigns, including partnerships with content creators, to encourage them to choose GO Transit and amplify awareness of youth concessions and services for weekday and weekend travel. In September, we achieved 68 per cent growth in Gen Z ridership compared to 2019.

Our GO integrated Newcomer campaign, which included targeted advertising and multicultural events, built awareness and engagement with the region's newcomer population, with 1.6 million newcomer ridership year-to-date. UP Express continues to welcome inbound travellers with inclusive activations, including an onsite photo booth for Diwali and in-language promotion for the Mid-Autumn Festival.

Customer Experience

Customers were excited to enjoy the best of the fall season with expanded PRESTO Perks customer offers, including recent dining partnerships with Kinton Ramen and Hazukido. This year, PRESTO perks has delivered 131 offers and over \$2 million in customer savings.

This fiscal year, we developed strategic partnerships that increased customer food and beverage availability across our GO network, increasing great-tasting and convenient vending machine offerings to 126 across 49 locations. In October, a GO | Voila by Sobeys offer and an interactive LEGO Toronto installation were launched at Union Skywalk.

Following our support of the Taylor Swift concerts with adjusted services and engagement, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and Reel Asian Film Festival in November, plans are underway to celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa in the coming months. We look forward to welcoming customers to the best of the region's seasonal events, including holiday parades with GO Bear, Kids on the GO activations, Niagara Festival of Lights, Winterfest in Barrie and Hamilton, Cavalcade of Lights, the Toronto Christmas Pet Show, and the One Of A Kind Winter show.

And, as 2024 draws to a close, we encourage our customers to choose GO and UP for safe, convenient, and free New Year's Eve service after 7 p.m. again this year in partnership with Forty Creek.

Enjoy the ride.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Childs
Chief Marketing Officer