



A Division of METROLINX

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Summer 2012 Barrie Line Weekend Train Service Pilot

Situation

As a pilot, this summer GO Transit is running trains along the Barrie line on weekends, in addition to the regular weekday peak service. The trial weekend service will operate between June 23 and September 3.

On Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, this service will include:

- Two southbound trips from Allandale Waterfront GO Station to Union Station
- Two northbound trips from Union to Allandale Waterfront
- Four southbound trips from East Gwillimbury GO Station to Union
- Four northbound trips from Union to East Gwillimbury

For the East Gwillimbury trips, GO Buses will complete the journey making all stops between East Gwillimbury and Barrie Bus Terminal. As track capacity is limited on the Barrie line, only a limited number of trips can go as far as Allandale Waterfront. The GO Bus service between the Barrie Bus Terminal and East Gwillimbury will accommodate passengers travelling to/from Bradford, Barrie South and Allandale Waterfront GO Stations, as well as the intermittent stops along the 65 GO Bus route.

On our weekend Lakeshore train service, summer weekends provide an opportunity to significantly increase “off-peak” ridership due to the number of events in downtown Toronto. The Barrie line pilot moves GO further in the direction of serving a larger, non-commuter market, and supports the economy, regional tourism and the communities along the rail corridor.

Non-Responsive Information

This seasonal pilot is a step toward long-term regular weekend service for the line, and it tests the viability of Barrie two-way all-day service. It will also help gauge the feasibility of offering similar service on other corridors in the summer months.

Previous Barrie expansion activity

The Barrie line was extended north in January 2012 with the completion of Allandale Waterfront GO Station. The station was a welcomed addition to the community, serving 150 passengers daily and increasing.

For the first time, GO ran train service along the Barrie line on Sunday, November 22, 2011 for the Toronto Santa Claus parade. The service was considered a success as the ridership exceeded targets with approximately 750 passengers.

In September 2011, GO added a fifth train on the Barrie line for the weekday morning and afternoon commutes. The added trips were very successful; ridership increased by 8% between spring and fall 2011, and as of fall 2011, the average capacity across all morning trips was 93%, and 82% for the afternoon.

Objectives

- To effectively communicate and promote the Barrie line weekend train service

GO Transit • Toronto • Ontario • Canada • (416) 869-3600 • www.gotransit.com

- To meet ridership objectives
- To highlight GO's continuing commitment to passenger comfort through the Passenger Charter
- To leverage GO marketing efforts and add value for riders through strategic promotional partnerships.

Strategy

It is recommended that the Ministry make an official announcement on May 7. Immediately following the announcement, general information will be available on gotransit.com.

Note: The launch of the Niagara-on-the-Lake shuttle is the same day, and the extra Milton train service will begin two days later on June 25. There is opportunity for one combined announcement on or around May 7.

On June 4, detailed service change communications will roll out to give customers enough time to trip plan and/or take full advantage of the new service; schedule information will be made available on the Schedule Changes page on gotransit.com and promoted from the homepage, and direct customer communications will be delivered the following day.

There is an opportunity on launch day, June 23, for the Ministry to participate in the inaugural train trip or distribute a news release. Follow-up customer communications will remind customers of the new weekend service.

Key Messages

- This summer, GO is running a pilot weekend train service along the Barrie line.
- Barrie line weekend train service will run Saturdays, Sundays and holidays between June 23 and September 3.
- Two southbound train trips departing Allandale Waterfront GO Station at 10:20 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. will make all stops to Union Station
- Two northbound train trips departing Union Station at 5:25 p.m. and 12:10 a.m. will make all stops to Allandale Waterfront GO Station.
- Four southbound train trips departing East Gwillimbury GO Station at 1:20 p.m., 4:12, 8:03 and 10:55 will make all stops to Union Station
- Four northbound train trips departing Union Station at 12:10 p.m., 3:01, 6:50 and 9:41 will make all stops to East Gwillimbury GO Station.
- GO Buses departing the Barrie Bus Terminal at 11:46 a.m., 2:39 p.m., 6:29 and 9:24 will make all stops to East Gwillimbury GO Station and connect there with the weekend GO Trains making all stops to Union Station.
- GO Buses to Barrie Bus Terminal will depart East Gwillimbury at 1:19 p.m., 4:10, 7:59 and 10:50 and connect the weekend GO Trains arriving from Union Station.
- This pilot service may result in regular weekend service for the Barrie line, but the feasibility to operate regular weekend service will be better understood after a season of operation.
- It is not known at this time when weekday two-way, all-day GO Train service may be offered along the Barrie corridor as rail infrastructure improvements are required and the date for implementations of those is yet to be determined.

Audiences

- General Public
- GO Transit passengers
- GO Transit staff
- Media partners
- Stakeholders

Tactics

Stakeholders:

Communication Tool	Responsible	Due
MTO Comm roll-out	Trina Melatti	Complete
See Stakeholder Plan		

GO Transit staff:

Communication Tool	Responsible	Due
Job aid (for front-line staff)	Jason Allen	May 3
Q&As (for media/stakeholder inquiries)	Malon Edwards	May 3
Department-specific notices	Respective department	May 3

GO Passengers and General Public:

Communication Tool	Responsible	Phase 1*	Phase 2*	Phase 3*	Phase 4*
MTO announcement/event	Ministry of Transportation	May 7	n/a	June 23	n/a
gotransit.com (Schedule Changes)	Caroline Busbridge	May 7	June 4	June 25	n/a
On the GO alert (Barrie corridor)	Karen Warner Savio d'Gama Rose Brendon McGibbon	n/a	June 5	June 28	August 1
CSA/Driver/Station Announcements	Karen Warner Savio d'Gama Rose Brendon McGibbon	n/a	June 5	June 28	August 1
PINS Board messaging	Karen Warner Savio d'Gama Rose Brendon McGibbon	n/a	June 5	June 28	August 1
Facebook	Transit reporters	n/a	June 5	June 28	August 1
Twitter	Transit reporters	n/a	June 5	June 28	August 1
Promotional in-station posters	Stephanie Trendocher	n/a	June 5	n/a	n/a
Advertising	Stephanie Trendocher	n/a	TBD		

**dates are subject to change*

Media partners:

Communication Tool	Responsible	Phase 1*	Phase 2*	Phase 3*
Ontario news release	MTO	May 7	n/a	June 23
GO news release	Caroline Busbridge	n/a	June 4	n/a
Media pitches	Malon Edwards	n/a	June 3	n/a

**dates are subject to change*

Evaluation

Quantitative and qualitative measures to determine whether communication objectives were achieved:

- Increased amount of positive coverage and media impressions
- Ridership targets obtained
- Promotional partnership objectives met

Written by: Caroline Busbridge

Approved by:

Date: April 18, 2012