



A Division of METROLINX

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH PLAN

June 2012 Service Changes

Effective: June 23

Launch date: June 7

Prepared by:

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Approvals:

Name	Approved (Y/N) and/or signature	Date
Nancy Pogue	Y	May 25, 2012
Jessica Kosmack	Y	May 29, 2012

June 2012 Service Changes

Situation

Overview

Multiple times a year, GO Transit implements a series of planned service changes, which vary in function and impact. Service is typically adjusted to meet changing ridership demands (ie. seasonal service reduction on school routes), service expansion to meet increasing demand or to serve new/emerging markets, or reflect actual travel times.

The next series of changes will be implemented on June 23, 2012.

Previously announced:

- Niagara summer GO Train service starts, running to September 3
- A new Niagara-on-the-Lake/St. Catharines GO Bus connecting to the Niagara GO Train service
- Two new weekday Milton GO Train trips
- New Barrie weekend GO Train service pilot starts, running to September 3

New change highlights:

- One eastbound Kitchener line train trip from Bramalea will depart five minutes later, connecting bus trips will be adjusted
- Several new weekday and weekend bus trips across the system
- More GO Bus service for Georgetown GO Station
- Some bus trip times adjusted, including earlier departures

Potential issues

21 – Milton GO Bus: three discontinued bus trips

- *Situation/rationale:* Three Route 21 Milton bus trips departing Union Station at 3:40 p.m. will be discontinued. The newly added 4:00 p.m. Milton train will provide more than 1,850 seats to accommodate Milton line passengers and get them to their destination approximately 20 minutes faster than the bus
- *Issue:* Two of these discontinued bus trips currently serve stops not accommodated by the GO Train: Square One, Meadowvale Town Centre, Derry/Winston Churchill and Main/Milton.
- *Solution/alternative:* Passengers travelling to these destinations can take a GO Bus leaving Union Station at 3:25, or they can take the train and use local transit to complete their journey.
- *Risk:* Low risk – this change may collectively affect 30 people

21 – Milton GO Bus: two trips no longer stopping at Dixie GO

- *Situation/rationale:* The 7:25 p.m. and 7:35 p.m. Milton buses from Union Station will no longer serve Dixie GO; we are, instead, operating a new express trip leaving Union at 7:30, serving only Dixie GO Station.
- *Solution/alternative:* Passengers travelling beyond Dixie GO can continue to take their regular buses, and passengers travelling to Dixie can take the new dedicated trip to Dixie from Union at 7:30.
- *Risk:* Very low – Passengers travelling to Dixie may have to alter their routine by five minutes.

Strategy

Service change communications will be rolled out over a two day period three weeks in advance of the changes taking effect.

On day one, the service change details and schedules will be made available online to support outreach messaging the following day. On day two, we will initiate public, customer, stakeholder and media communications directing audiences to the internet.

Customers are the primary audience for service change communications. It is likely their commute will be impacted by the changes we're implementing, and by providing them with two weeks notice, we allow them time to plan accordingly.

Communicating on a public scale offers the opportunity to reach customers and promote new service to non-regular riders.

Stakeholders and media outlets have the means to circulate our messaging; communicating to these audiences will further our reach and ability to inform our primary audience.

Media relations will follow-up and respond to media inquiries ensuring messaging appears frequently and accurately.

Key Messages

- GO is adding more trips and making some service adjustments across its network to serve you better and make your travel experience with us more comfortable.
 - Additional trains on the Milton line
 - Several routes are expanded to serve more stops
 - Several new trips on weekends and weekdays
- Taking the GO this summer has never been easier with more trips to great summertime destinations.
 - Barrie weekend GO Train service operates June 23 – Sept 3
 - Niagara GO Train service operates June 23 – Sept 3
 - St Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake GO Bus shuttle operates June 23 – Sept 3
- To make way for our additional service and to improve our schedules, we've made service adjustments to some existing trips. We're sorry if you're inconvenienced.
 - Two existing Milton morning train trips will depart five minutes earlier all along the route, connecting bus service may be adjusted
 - Many trips times have been adjusted to reflect actual travel times
 - Three Milton buses have been discontinued on account of the new Milton 4:00 p.m. train
- As part of our Passenger Charter, we promise to keep you in the know.
 - Check gotransit.com for more information on schedule changes and taking GO this summer.
 - We're letting our customers know about new/adjusted service through gotransit.com, On the GO alerts, posters, announcements
 - We're letting non-customers know about new service through advertising, social media, media and promotional partnerships

Service details

Lakeshore West Corridor

11 – Niagara-on-the-Lake/St. Catharines

- (N) New seasonal GO Bus shuttle meets trains in St. Catharines operating express to/from Niagara-on-the-Lake*

12 – Niagara Falls/Toronto GO Train & Bus

- (N) Niagara seasonal GO Train service runs every weekend/holiday until Sept 3*
- (A) Due to construction in Burlington, some bus trip times has been adjusted by five minutes, including earlier departures

* = previously announced

(N) = New service

(D) = Discontinued service

(A) = Adjusted service

(O) = Other

18 – Lakeshore West GO Bus

- (A) Due to construction in Burlington, some bus trip times have been adjusted by five minutes, including earlier departures (Five trips affected)

Milton Corridor

21 – Milton GO Train & Bus

- (N) Two new weekday train trips making all stops between Milton GO Station and Union Station, one eastbound in the morning and one westbound in the afternoon*
- (A) To make room for the new morning train, two existing morning trips will depart five minutes earlier all along the route, connecting bus service may be adjusted*
- (D) Because passengers can now take the new afternoon Milton train, Milton GO Buses departing Union Station at 3:40 p.m. has been discontinued; passengers will save 20 minutes*
- (N) Several new weekend bus trips
- (N) A new weekday bus trip will depart Union Station at 7:30 p.m. and operate express to Dixie GO Station
- (D) With the new weekday dedicated westbound 7:30 p.m. Dixie GO trip, the existing 7:25 p.m. and 7:35 bus trips from Union Station will no longer serve Dixie GO Station.

25 – Waterloo/Mississauga GO Bus

- (A) The weekday eastbound 5:25 a.m. trip from University of Waterloo will now depart at 5:20 to connect with the adjusted Milton line train.

Kitchener Corridor

30 – Kitchener/Bramalea GO Bus

- (A) The weekday eastbound 7:55 a.m. trip from Kitchener GO will now depart five minutes later at 8:00 to connect to an adjusted train at Bramalea GO.

31 – Kitchener GO Train & Bus

- (A) The weekday eastbound 9:35 a.m. train trip from Bramalea will now depart at 9:40, arriving at Union Station at 10:18; times along the route will also be adjusted.
- (A) Some morning weekday bus trip departures from Brampton and Georgetown have changed to connect with the adjusted train. (Two trips affected)
- (N) Three bus trips have been extended to now serve Georgetown GO Station, Norval, Mount Pleasant GO and Hurontario/Bovaird.
- (A) The weekday westbound 6:18 p.m. train from Guelph Central GO will now depart three minutes earlier at 6:15 to reflect the actual travel time between the two stops; all other times along the route remain the same.
- (N) A new weekday westbound bus trip departing Union Station at 10:30 p.m. will serve Malton and Bramalea GO Stations.
- (A/D) To make room for the new 10:30 p.m. trip out of Union, the existing 10:30 p.m. bus trip from Union Station will now depart ten minutes later at 10:40. This trip will no longer serve Malton and Bramalea GO Stations as passengers can now take the new 10:30 trip from Union.
- (A) Due to construction in Rockwood, some trip times have been adjusted by ten minutes. Some trips now require passengers to request stops at University of Guelph and Guelph Central GO Station. (Eight trips affected)

33 – Guelph/North York GO Bus

- (A) Due to construction in Rockwood, the weekday westbound 11:50 a.m. trip from Union will now arrive to Guelph Central GO Station ten minutes later than previously scheduled. Some trips now require passengers to request stops at University of Guelph and Guelph Central GO Station.

37 – Orangeville/Brampton GO Bus

- (A) The weekday southbound 7:50 a.m. trip from Orangeville will now depart five minutes later at 7:55 to connect to the adjusted bus trip at Brampton GO and the adjusted train at Bramalea GO.

38 – Bolton/North York GO Bus

- (A) The weekday southbound 8:45 a.m. trip from Bolton will now depart five minutes later at 8:50 to connect to the adjusted train at Malton GO.

39 – Guelph/Bramalea GO Bus

- (A) The weekday eastbound 8:00 a.m. trip from Guelph Central GO will now depart five minutes later at 8:05 to connect to the adjusted train at Bramalea GO.
- (O) Accessible bus service is now available at Guelph Central GO Station.

Hwy. 407W Corridor**29 – Guelph/Mississauga GO Bus**

- (N) All trips will now serve Guelph Central GO Station.
- (N) 16 new weekend trips in either direction will serve Guelph Central GO Station, University of Guelph, Aberfoyle GO Park & Ride, Milton Park & Ride and Square One.
- (D) Three existing Sunday trips in either direction will be discontinued; passengers may be accommodated by the new trips between Guelph Central GO and Square One.

46 – Oakville/York University GO Bus

- (A) Some weekday trip times have been adjusted within five minutes to reflect actual travel times, including earlier departures. (31 trips affected)

47 – Hamilton/York University GO Bus

- (A) Some weekday trip times have been adjusted within five minutes to reflect actual travel times, including earlier departures. (39 trips affected)

48 – Guelph/York University GO Bus

- (A) Some weekday trip times have been adjusted within five minutes to reflect actual travel times, including earlier departures. (48 trips affected)

North Corridor**61 – Richmond Hill GO Bus**

- (N) Two new weekday trips will depart Union Station at 3:40 p.m.; one will operate express to Richmond GO Station, and the other express to Langstaff GO Station.

65 – Barrie GO Train

- (N) From June 23 to Sept 3, six new weekend train trips will run in either direction: two from/to Allandale Waterfront GO Station, and four to/from East Gwillimbury GO Station.*
- (A) Five weekday northbound train trips will depart Barrie South three minutes earlier. No other times on this trip are affected.

68 – Barrie/Newmarket GO Bus

- (N) Four new weekend trips will operate in either direction making all stops between Barrie Bus Terminal and East Gwillimbury GO Station*

Lakeshore East Corridor**90 – Newcastle/Oshawa GO Bus**

- (A) Some trip times have been adjusted within five minutes to reflect actual travel times. (96 trips affected)
- (A) Several weekend westbound trips will now depart Newcastle five minutes later, and times will be adjusted at all stops along the route. (11 trips affected)

91 – Newcastle/Oshawa Express GO Bus

- (A) Some trip times have been adjusted within five minutes to reflect actual travel times. (8 trips affected)

88 – Peterborough/Oshawa GO Bus

- (N) The Sunday 9:18 p.m. trip from Oshawa GO Station will now operate year-round.

94 –Oshawa/Yorkdale GO Bus

- (A) Several trip times have been adjusted within five minutes to reflect actual travel times, including earlier departures. (82 trips affected)

95 – Oshawa/Finch GO Bus

- (A) Some trip times have been adjusted within five minutes to reflect actual travel times. (40 trips affected)
- (A) Several weekday westbound trips from Oshawa Bus Terminal have been adjusted within five minutes, including earlier departure times. Some times along the route will be affected. (Seven trips affected)

Audiences & stakeholders >> approach & tactics

Audience & Stakeholder chart (at end of doc)

Media relations strategy

Media coverage is a significant way to generate unbiased promotion of the new service and public awareness of any changes.

Six news releases will be developed and distributed based on regional significance. A mass distribution of GO's news releases through Canada NewsWire (CNW) will ensure that the announcement of new service and changes is provided to all media outlets throughout Southern Ontario at the same time.

Communication Tool	Responsible	Timing
GO news release (LSW)	Caroline Busbridge	June 5
GO news release (Milton)		
GO news release (KW)		
GO news release (Hwy407W)		
GO news release (North)		
GO news release (LSE)		

Media relations will follow up the CNW distribution of the news release by sending it to a targeted email group of media outlets, including...

Email distribution list	Release to be distributed					
	LSW	Milton	KW	Hwy407W	North	LSE
Brampton media						
Durham Region media						

Halton Region media						
Hamilton media						
Kitchener-Waterloo media						
Mississauga media						
Niagara media						
Peterborough media						
Simcoe County media						
York Region media						
Assignment desks						
Business media						
Construction media						
City Hall press gallery						
Cycling media						
Editorial board/columnists						
Environmental media						
Family media						
Francophone media						
Mainstream media						
Multicultural media						
Email list 1 (miscellaneous)						
Email list 2 (miscellaneous)						
Email list 3 (miscellaneous)						

Social Media Strategy

Social media will be used to reinforce messaging following the launch. Please see the “Audience & Tactics” chart below.

Marketing Plan

Strategically-placed posters (150) at GO stations will notify passengers of service changes and direct them to visit gotransit.com for more information.

Paid local newspaper advertising and contra ad space in the Metro (Toronto edition), 24 Hours (Toronto edition), and T.O. Night commuter newspapers will be used to communicate the new and adjusted GO service to a broader audience.

The media spend totals \$1548, excluding agency fees. Please see the advertising plan below for placement and cost details.

Evaluation

Accurate and timely dissemination of our key messages is the ultimate objective of this communications effort. Success will be measured on the frequency and accuracy of the repeated messaging in the press and in stakeholders’ communication tools, as well as by the diminished call volume to the GO Contact Centre regarding customer communications and information available.

For any service adjustments, whether it’s new service or a modification to existing service, ridership numbers are a great indicator of successful communications. Please refer to the individual communications plans for target ridership for the Niagara seasonal service, Barrie weekend service and Milton line’s additional train trips.

Stakeholder & Tactics

Audiences		Significance	Strategy/objectives	Tactics		Key messages	Supporting materials		Timeline*
				Tool	Responsible		Tool	Responsible	
Political officials	Mayors, MPPs, MPs in each of GO's six corridors	- Informing this group about GO initiatives promotes trust, demonstrates professionalism and illustrates commitment to serving our customers - These service changes span our entire network, potentially impacting their communities	- Groups/leaders to repeat messaging relevant to their audiences - Continue to build social capital	- Opportunity to include in the weekly distribution of the "Metrolinx report" - Distribution of news releases by region	Stakeholder relations	(refer to key messages above)	News releases	Stakeholder relations	- June edition of Metrolinx report - June 5
Community stakeholders	(see Metrolinx report distribution list)								
GO customers	GO passengers may be impacted by schedule changes	Ensure GO passengers are aware of possible changes to their schedules and direct them to check the schedules at gotransit.com	On the GO alert	Karen/Savio/ Brendon, Customer Communications				June 8	
			Station/driver announcements				June 15		
			PINS				June 15		
			In-station posters	Melissa Crowther, Marketing			June 11- 29		
			Reinforce the Passenger Charter with further improvements to the GO experience	GO website	Caroline Busbridge, Strat Comm		Online timetables	Ken Golden, Planning	June 6
General public	The new and adjusted service may appeal to non-GO riders		Facebook	Transit reporters				June 7	
			Twitter						
			Advertising	Melissa Crowther, Marketing				June 7	
GO staff	Frontline	Inform GO frontline staff in advance of any external communications to ensure they are well-equipped to answer questions in an informed and helpful manner	Department-specific notices	Respective department	Job aid		Jason Allen, Customer Care	May 31	
	All	Informing staff ensures they are aware of the public efforts/initiatives GO is taking, even if the efforts are unrelated to their daily work	Newslinx	Caroline Busbridge, Strat Comm				June 7	

Advertising

Advertising			Applicable corridor		Applicable route #		June					July				August					Total cost
			28	4	11	18	25		9	16	23	30	6	8	13	20	27				
Newspapers																					
Guelph Tribute	KW	Train, 29																\$1,815.42			
Milton Canadian Champion	Milton	Train, 21,29																\$2,364.48			
Mississauga News																		\$7,495.45			
Etobicoke Guardian	All																	\$6,132.25			
Metro Toronto*																		Free*			
T.O. Night*																			Free*		
24 Hours Toronto*	Barrie	Train, 68																Free*			
Ad in This Week in Barrie (Barrie Examiner on Thursday)**																		Free**			
Barrie Advance																		\$30,076.85			
Bradford West Gwillimbury Topic																					
Newmarket-Aurora Era-Banner																					
Vaughn Citizen	LSW	Niagara																\$68,361.53			
Toronto Star Special Edition - Niagara-on-the-Lake																					
Toronto Star - Do It! This Summer																					
The Grid 1/4 page																					
Niagara This Week																					
Magazines																		\$68,361.53			
Toronto Life July issue - alongside best of Ontario Wine Tours feature	LSW	Niagara																			
Niagara Magazine																					
Wine Council of Ontario - 2012 Wine Travel Guide																					
Where Toronto during the Niagara Getaway Guide																					
Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Co. - Ontario Summer Getaways Magazine																					
Pedal Magazine - June & summer issue***																		Free***			
TV																					
TV spots on CTV Barrie (# of spots & schedule TBC)	Barrie	Train, 68																Free**			
Radio																					
Barrie: CIQB FM, CHAY FM (20 spots/station)	Barrie	Train, 68																\$45,293.96			
Toronto: CTN (CILQFM, CFNYFM, CFMJ, CKFMFM, CHBMFM, CIDCFM, CJRT, CFMZ, CFRB, CKDX, CING) (10-15 spots/station)																					
Barrie: KOOL FM and ROCK 95 (# of spots & schedule TBC)**																			Free**		
Outdoor space																					
Back-lit GO station posters - 13 posters x10 weeks (Union Station (x3), Newmarket, Aurora, Rutherford, Maple, King City, Barrie South, Allandale Waterfront, Bradford, East Gwillimbury)	Barrie	Train, 68																\$29,661.08			
Digital ads in TTC stations	LSW	Niagara																\$19,985			
Posters in trains																		\$1,921.00 (printing)			
150 11x17 laminated posters at GO stations	All																	\$370.09 (printing)			
Online																					
Information on City of Barrie website	Barrie	Train, 68																Free**			
City of Barrie social media posts																		Free**			
Facebook Ads (targeted GTA and Niagara, age group 18-34)	LSW	Niagara																\$30,908.82			

*A long-standing relationship between GO and three daily newspapers provides GO with a yearly allowance of ad space, varying in size and placement, in exchange for reduced rates for placing newspaper boxes at GO stations.

**The City of Barrie has provided GO with free ad space to promote the Summer Barrie Weekend GO service

***In partnership with BikeTrain, GO has been provided ad space in Pedal Magazine to promote the Niagara GO Train service (with bike coaches)

\$244,385.93

