

Subject: FW: Fares and UP Express

From: Mike Sullivan [REDACTED]
Sent: June-25-19 2:12 PM
To: Vesna Dobric
Cc: Chair of Metrolinx
Subject: Fares and UP Express

Attn:
Metrolinx Board of Directors.

Your Board meeting on Thursday June 27 includes an item called Fares. It is in the closed session, so I cannot see what is being discussed. However it would seem an appropriate place to revisit the decision taken in April.

At your April 10, 2019 Board Meeting, you approved a number of changes to fares on the GO and UP systems, resulting in increases in costs for persons travelling between Weston, Bloor and Union Stations. You reduced the fares for GO transit and removed the discount for persons using UP Express from Weston or Bloor and connecting to or from the TTC. You also removed the 40 trip loyalty program for those using UP Express.

The President referred to capacity issues and 'value proposition' for Bloor and Weston stations and UP express.

Capacity on UP express is stunted by the decision to run alternately two and three car trainsets on UP, even during rush hour. I have often found the trains to be over capacity even from the Airport, when only two-car trainsets are used. It is not the fault of passengers joining at Weston or Bloor. Metrolinx purchased 18 cars from Sumitomo, yet apparently only use 10 of them for passengers. The plan originally was to have 4- 3 car sets in use and a spare 3 car set and a 3 car set for maintenance. But apparently 5 cars are off line all the time, with a three car spare set. This leads to overcrowding, which in turn has apparently led to the fare changes.

The intention seems to be to 'suggest' to riders that they use GO rather than UP. However, GO does not run as frequently when it does run, or at all in counter-peak, evening or weekend hours. We were promised that the massive expenditure to build the corridor (\$1.2 Billion of which you say \$456 Million was for UP) was to allow for all day 15 minute GO service. That has not happened. We would love to save money and take GO, but have not been given the service.

Therefore can you please re-think the decision to raise costs for patrons from Weston and Bloor? If the GO service was there to replace it, I could understand. But it is not.

I also note that the original announcement of funding for the TTC discount was for both GO and UP patrons. Has Metrolinx given the province back the money assigned for the UP portion of that announcement?

Thank you,

Mike Sullivan
Weston
[REDACTED]



Office of the President & Chief Executive Officer

Phil Verster

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July 15, 2019

Mike Sullivan

Via email: [REDACTED]

Hello Mr. Sullivan,

Thank you for your feedback about fares.

Fares on UP Express remain unchanged. Customers will however need to tap on UP devices when riding UP trains. Furthermore, some of the benefits consistent with commuter travel, such as the GO loyalty program, are only available on GO. The change between UP and GO fares reflects the different purpose of the UP Express service, which is primarily about getting customers to and from the airport as quickly and efficiently as possible.

We appreciate your input on the Discounted Double Fare (DDF). As you may know, due to high popularity and demand, the program is expected to exceed its budget. The current funding agreement was designed to be temporary for the initial transition period, which is why a new agreement is needed between Metrolinx and the TTC. As a result, Metrolinx has proposed a revised strategy where both Metrolinx and the TTC share the cost in providing the discount and mutually benefit from the revenue generated through increased ridership.

With respect to the UP Express, to ensure the service continues to run reliably on a 15 minute schedule, 5 trains in constant cycle are required. The UP trains are in service for 21 hours per day, and in order to keep them at a high performance level, we have adjusted train combinations from 3 car trains to a combination of 2 and 3 car trains. We try to maximize the number of 3 car trains but maintenance needs does require us to use 2 car trains. Generally, a total of 13-14 cars are available for passengers, with the remaining cars either available as back up in the event that train cars in service experience issues, or out for scheduled or unscheduled maintenance. The train configuration does not change during rush hour.

Finally, Metrolinx is committed to two-way, all day service on the Kitchener line. This is a key priority of our GO Expansion program and we are working hard toward fulfilling that commitment. For example, we recently introduced a new rush hour trip, which leaves Bramalea GO Station at 7:55 a.m., serving all stops, including Weston GO and Bloor GO stations, before arriving at Union Station. Also, as of June 29, the 3 p.m. trip from Mount Pleasant GO to Union Station will include stops at Weston GO and Bloor GO.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Phil Verster', with a stylized, looping initial 'P' and a trailing flourish.

Phil Verster
President & CEO