

**To:** Metrolinx Board of Directors  
**From:** Judy Pfeifer, *Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer*  
**Date:** September 14, 2017  
**Re:** **Communications & Public Affairs Quarterly Update**

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## Overview

As Metrolinx advances on planning, building and operating regional transit, our various teams continue to keep our neighbours, stakeholders, the media, and the general public engaged and updated on our progress.

Over the past few months, the Communications & Public Affairs team supported a variety of milestones, such as:

- procurement progress for several key expansion projects including the Union Station Enhancement project, Hwy. 401/409 tunnel, early GO station improvements, Hurontario LRT, Davenport Diamond, Lakeshore East corridor central segment grading, and Stouffville corridor stations
- the completion of Dufferin bridge
- investment toward bike parking at some GO stations

## Highlights, Updates & Announcements

### Rapid Transit Projects

In collaboration with Crosslinx Transit Solutions, we launched Gallery City, an art crawl and contest. Nearly 50 local businesses between Weston Road and Laird Drive exhibited the work of 12 local artists this summer. In keeping with the community art theme, the hoarding at the Laird Station site now features a youth-inspired mural created by the kids of the Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office Youth Centre.



The team hosted a barbecue at York Memorial Collegiate to celebrate the completion of the first stage of Keele station. Communities along the corridor can look forward to these 'thank you' events as we complete phases of construction.

Community outreach along Eglinton continues as construction progresses. With a focus on safety, team members were on the ground to inform and direct pedestrians and transit users as crosswalk and sidewalk closures altered local walking routes around Eglinton West Station. September prompted the annual back-to-school outreach to local schools, reminding teachers, parents and students about pedestrian safety around construction areas.

Over the summer, the community relations team participated in four local street festivals put on by Eglinton Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and local communities.

The Crosstown community relations team continues to meet and engage regularly with community members, businesses and elected officials, including monthly gatherings of the eight construction liaison committees, meetings with our local Councillors and MPPs, and monthly meetings with the corridor's BIAs.



For the Hurontario LRT project, the team carried out a comprehensive public awareness campaign with a project-focused kiosk at summer community events, including the Tour de Mississauga, Muslimfest, and Buskerfest. Team members met with local businesses and resident's associations to garner key support for the project.

Planning is underway to implement door-to-door engagement this fall. Similar to what we are doing in Hamilton, Community Connector teams will visit businesses and residences along the corridor. However, the Hurontario program will also include temporary information kiosks in office towers along the corridor to raise awareness among employees, who are potential future LRT users. Permanent information stands will be introduced to libraries, community centres and key transit stops near to or intersecting with the LRT line.

The Hamilton LRT Community Connectors completed their first canvass of the new 3-km section of the corridor, from Queenston to Eastgate. The team achieved a 100% engagement rate with all accessible properties in Ward 5 of the section. The team also completed their third canvass of the original corridor. Since the program's inception, the team has knocked on doors more than 6,000 times, had over 2,100 conversations with residents and businesses, and received nearly 1,700 completed surveys.

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, supported by Metrolinx, hosted their second "LRT Ready" workshop in August. Local business owners were taken to Kitchener-Waterloo to hear first-hand from local business owners who survived construction and eagerly await ION service. Representatives from the Uptown Waterloo BIA and members of the project team also spoke with attendees about business support efforts and what to expect.

The team attended eight multi-day festivals this summer to share information and updates about the project, and they continue to meet regularly with various stakeholders, community groups and committees of Council. Online the team has

pushed out a series of videos featuring testimonials from various developers, business owners and organizations along the corridor that see the benefits of LRT in growing communities and anticipate its arrival.

### Regional Express Rail (RER)

Progress continues with several community-level working groups whose objective will be to ensure our projects reflect the needs of the communities where we are building:

- the Davenport Diamond Integrated Art sub-group, comprised of Community Advisory Committee members (local community associations, elected officials and project staff), is exploring ways to integrate art into the Davenport Overpass along the Barrie corridor in Toronto's Davenport neighbourhood
- the recently formed region-wide Community Advisory Committee focusing on rail crossing safety met for the first time in September

This quarter, the RER team continued with the Regional Municipal and Community Tour with formal presentations conducted at municipal councils in Durham Region

and all of York Region and Simcoe County, with positive media coverage in local sources. Presentations have also been booked for the fall in Waterloo Region and the Municipality of Clarington, and we are reaching out to lower-tier municipalities along the Niagara Expansion corridor.



### Stakeholder Relations

Over the last four months, staff addressed 85 inquiries from stakeholders, and reached out to 600+ stakeholders with key announcements, updates and the introduction of incoming Metrolinx CEO Phil Verster. Staff tracked approximately 40 transit-related items at municipal councils and the provincial/federal government, and supported 12 stakeholder and public meetings, and 5 speaking engagements.

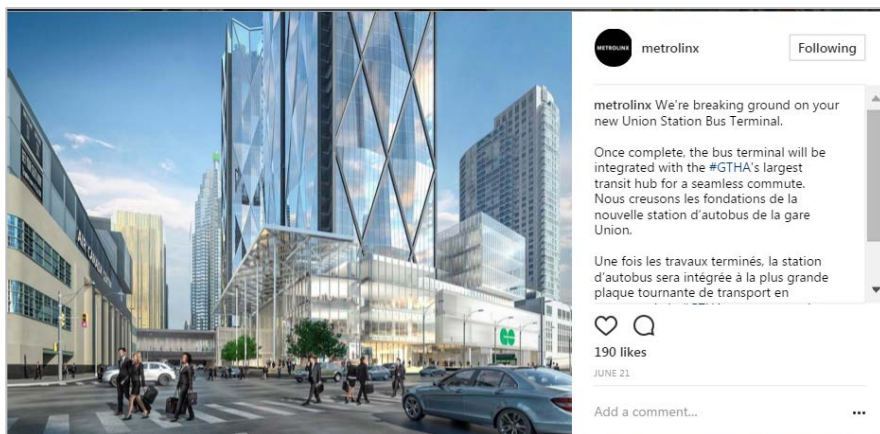
The fourth Regional Communicators Table took place on June 29. This event brings together communications executives from transit agencies across the region to discuss the implementation of projects supporting the Regional Transportation Plan, to learn about the key transit and transportation initiatives underway in each municipality and to create opportunities for coordinated communications strategies.

Staff attended the annual Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) conference in Ottawa August 13-16. Judy Pfeifer, Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer, and Leslie Woo, Chief Planning Officer, presented an overview of what has been achieved through the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) since 2008, and also an update on the new RTP and public outreach planned for the fall. The AMO conference was a key

opportunity to meet with GTHA mayors and regional chairs to gather advice and feedback on the review of the RTP and address local issues and upcoming stakeholder and public engagement. Staff held eight formal meetings and hosted an information booth in the Exhibitor Hall for the duration of the conference where they engaged with about 200 delegates on issues including the new RTP, GO Expansion, and PRESTO.

### Media & Social Media

The media team averaged 50-80 media calls per week in the past quarter – a 32% increase over the same period in 2016. Most calls were service-related but media interest continues to be strong regarding the delivery of LRVs, processes around project approvals and PRESTO privacy. Coverage of the light rail projects across the region has also increased. In Hamilton, with council approval of the project in the spring, the media focus has shifted to what comes next, from land purchases to potential operators of the line. Construction on the Crosstown line is also driving significant interest. Interest in Regional Express Rail is building, as local media cover stories about the local impact of rail expansion. Finally, three Metrolinx workers earned laudatory coverage for their efforts helping a couple of families who were in a serious crash on the QEW. The employees were on their way back to Union Station when they pulled over to help. Media impressions (number of people who potentially saw media stories or articles about Metrolinx) continue to increase over last year, rising by 50%. An increase in social media efforts has helped drive interest and engagement in Metrolinx construction projects. Audiences are most intrigued by visual presentations of our work, whether photos, renderings or videos, which in turn, builds engagement and channel growth. Social media continues to be a strong channel for community and audience engagement.



Respectfully submitted,

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