



METROLINX

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To: Metrolinx Board of Directors
From: Judy Pfeifer
Vice President, Strategic Communications
Date: March 3, 2015
Re: **Strategic Communications: December 2014 – March 2015**

RECOMMENDATION

That this report be received for information.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

Strategic Communications continues to build awareness and understanding of Metrolinx projects, and in the last quarter, we supported more than a dozen significant milestones. Some examples include the announcement of the Union Pearson Express fares, increased Milton train line service, Eglinton GO Station improvements, the Eglinton Crosstown boring machine reaching Allen Rd. (*pictured at right*), and the GO-TTC fare pilot. All were supported by robust communications plans that ensured a coordinated stakeholder, media, social and marketing approach.



We marked the conclusion of 2014 with “The Metrolinx Top Ten” – our annual online list of projects that made a significant impact to the region the previous year. The 2014 list was shared through our social channels and was 64% more popular than 2013’s.

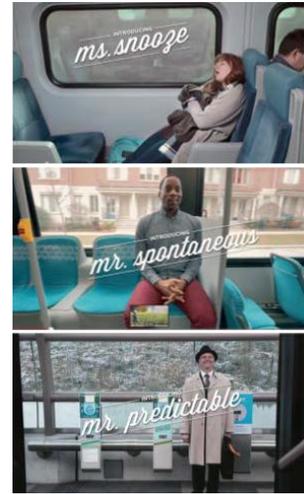
MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

UP Express Train Reveal & Fare Announcement

An event was held at Pearson Airport in early December to unveil the UP Trains and announce details of the service’s fare structure. The event generated substantial media coverage and online discussion. There were 113 hits from media outlets, and 993 total mentions on social media. This has been our single largest announcement on Twitter to-date. During the announcement, “UP Express” trended on Twitter in Toronto and across Canada, with about 10% of people who saw our tweets engaging with them.

Launch of Metrolinx Projects Social Media Campaign

In January, we launched a project-based social media campaign that highlights some of our major projects and their benefits to our customers and communities. Each video over the six-month campaign will promote a milestone for Metrolinx by emphasizing the personal impact of our work. In the early weeks, the first campaign video, *Ms. Snooze*, generated 25,726 engagements on Twitter and nearly two million impressions on Facebook – representing an unprecedented result from a simple yet effective campaign. Through promoted social media posts and with content that resonates with our audiences, our social engagement strategy aims to connect broad progress themes to specific examples of Metrolinx delivery.



MEDIA & DIGITAL STRATEGY

Metrolinx continues to build and enhance its social media presence across all of our growing channels. Our coordinated approach within Metrolinx and the divisions continues to see an increase in engagement – something we recognize as a true driver of social media success. The social media channels are also becoming more important as the key first channels people use for information.

The number of media calls remains steady, averaging 40 calls per week. Topics of interest include the UP Express fare announcement, Regional Express Rail, PRESTO rollout on TTC, safety, UP media tours, Crosstown boring machine breaking through at Allen Rd. and the GO-TTC fare pilot.

MARKETING & BRAND

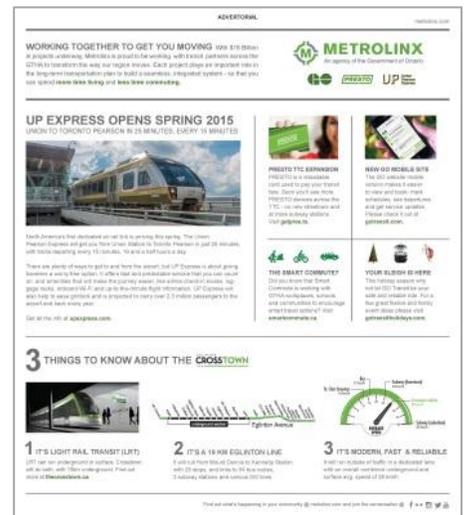


Construction Signage

We expanded our construction signage program even further and developed branded hoarding to visually connect our major projects with Metrolinx. This began with a presence at Union Station in December and continues across the region with other projects underway.

Print

A new channel we launched in December was reaching out to communities through the free dailies our customers read en route. The first two full-page advertorials in the Metro newspaper highlighted Metrolinx projects and initiatives spanning the region; we reached over one million people across the GTHA.



COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS



Eglinton Crosstown

Furthering our efforts to promote shopping on Eglinton during construction, we secured a billboard for the Eglinton Way BIA for the month of January. Through January and February, the team hosted three tele-townhall meetings to address questions from residents living along a section of Eglinton Avenue. By providing an information session and site tour, the team also supported the Request for Interest process for the development of the future Mount Dennis Station at Black Creek Drive.

Georgetown South Project

With the Georgetown South Project nearing completion, the focus is now on installing security fencing and 10 km of noise walls that were designed in partnership with the community through the eight noise wall community advisory committees, which included a total of 36 public meetings and many hours of consultation with hundreds of community members.

We are in the process of procuring public art for up to 14 displays across the rail corridor to beautify our transit infrastructure. The community has been involved in helping to guide the artwork to ensure it reflects the character of the surrounding neighbourhood. We expect to have all the noise walls/fencing and public art installed by mid-2015.



Stakeholder Relations

The Stakeholder Relations team proactively engaged with over 1100 stakeholders regarding upcoming announcements, project updates, GO Transit service changes, and construction/community notices with the goal of being open and providing as much advance information as possible about the work we're doing. We continued to address elected official inquiries relating to Metrolinx, our operating divisions, and programs, and facilitated a number of meetings between GTHA elected officials and Metrolinx regarding current or upcoming projects in their ridings or wards.

Respectfully submitted,

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