



# METROLINX

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**To:** Metrolinx Board of Directors  
**From:** Judy Pfeifer, *Vice President, Strategic Communications*  
**Date:** September 22, 2015  
**Re:** **Strategic Communications: July – September 2015**

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## RECOMMENDATION

That this report be received for information.

## MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

Strategic Communications helped facilitate, execute and create materials for close to 15 events and announcements in the last three months – proof of the continued trust in Metrolinx to plan, build and deliver transit across the region. Marketing efforts to support these announcements, as well as build awareness for Metrolinx and its projects were evident with events like the Regional Event Tour.

Metrolinx launched seven corridor committees and a stakeholder committee in support of Regional Express Rail (RER), as well as hosting eight RER public meetings.

## MAJOR EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Pan Am/ Parapan Am Games

The Pan Am /Parapan Am Games put a spotlight on the region and presented an opportunity to shift the conversation around congestion. Together with the Province of Ontario, municipalities, and Games

organizers, Metrolinx promoted tools to help people across the region make better travel choices. Smart Commute's online carpooling tool saw a significant increase in users, and throughout the Games, the TripLinx trip planning tool had an average of 10,000+ users daily. Riders on regular GO bus routes using HOV lanes and the special event GO service, were seen as big winners of these Games.

### Off-Peak Kitchener GO Train Service

Metrolinx hosted an event in Brampton on August 25 to announce off-peak two-way GO train service between Brampton and downtown Toronto, beginning this September. This addition of off-peak GO train service on the Kitchener corridor, along with the launch of UP Express this past June, are proof of the positive impact the Georgetown South infrastructure project has had



on rail service. There was substantial, positive coverage from the event and news release; a dozen major outlets covered the new service, and there were 1.1 million impressions on social media.

### Bike Share Partnership

In July, representatives from Metrolinx, the Province and the Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) came together to announce a partnership to expand Bike Share Toronto. The event resulted in positive coverage from six major outlets on the day of the announcement, and the story continued to resonate throughout the month; editorials in popular local outlets like Spacing and InsideToronto.com appeared days and weeks following the announcement. The news release was also ranked in the top ten most viewed releases on newswire.ca for the week of July 5.



## **MEDIA & DIGITAL STRATEGY**

Media Relations continued to average 50+ media calls per week this quarter, with the focus on the Pan Am transportation plan, UP Express ridership, increased service on the Kitchener line, interest in strategic partnerships, and service-related issues. Media reach continues to rise with monthly impressions averaging 45 million.

Metrolinx continues to perform well on social media, averaging over 3,500 mentions per month across all channels and almost 45,000 impressions on Twitter over the quarter.

## **MARKETING & BRAND**

Corporate Marketing efforts continued to focus on building awareness and understanding for Metrolinx and its initiatives as they are delivered. The new Metrolinx 11-stop Regional Event Tour launched July 31 at Kempenfest in Barrie, reaching 200,000 people with 4,000 personal interactions. The launch of the 4th social media awareness video (PRESTO-focused “Mr. Relaxed”) has had 300,000 views, bringing total campaign impressions to 2.5 million; while a new initial awareness-based RER social campaign garnered 50,000 impressions via Twitter and 400 engagements across Metrolinx social channels.



In addition, the July print advertorial in Metro reached 500,000 readers across the GTHA with highlights of recent progress milestones (UP, York Concourse, RER commitment); the region-wide Metrolinx branded construction wraps continued (300+ installed to date); and a Bloor/Weston four week billboard campaign supported UP/GO/PRESTO, generating 3.6 million impressions.

## COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

### Georgetown South Community Relations

As one of our largest infrastructure projects nears completion, it is important to recognize the work of the Georgetown South Project's community relations staff, who established new ground for the organization. Since 2010, they have accomplished milestones, including:

- Over **400,000** visits to GTS website
- Over **3,200** tweets & over **1,000** followers
- Engaged with over **13,000** community members
- **86** monthly e-newsletters to over **3,000** subscribers
- Attended **80** community events
- Hosted over **55** public meetings

With major construction complete, the community relations team continues to support the installation of the security fencing and noise walls.

### Regional Express Rail (RER) Community Relations

Metrolinx has launched a RER Regional Stakeholder Committee, as well as seven RER Corridor Committees. These multi-sector committees, consisting of elected officials from all levels of government; academic; health care; United Way; Labour; business associations and development are intended to provide updates on RER projects and provide feedback opportunities.

Supporting the future Davenport Diamond grade separation project, the Metrolinx-facilitated Davenport Residents Reference Panel met in late June to present an overview of their 89 recommendations and provide some context for how they arrived at those final recommendations. Further east in the region, Metrolinx launched an environmental assessment to address current service levels at Markham GO Station on the Stouffville corridor; 40 residents attended a community meeting in June for an overview of the project.

### Crosstown Community Relations

This summer, the Crosstown Communications and Community Relations Team participated in several community events to connect with residents. The team participated in three summer festivals, reached out to many local residents and continued to show their support for the various Business Improvement Areas (BIAs') efforts to promote local businesses during construction. The "Your Questions, Answered" video series launched at [thecrosstown.ca](http://thecrosstown.ca) to address frequently asked questions about the project.



Respectfully submitted,

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