

To: Metrolinx Board of Directors
From: Judy Pfeifer, *Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer*
Date: December 7, 2017
Re: **Communications & Public Affairs Quarterly Update**

Engagement Overview

We are focused on engaging and informing our neighbours and community leaders on our progress as Metrolinx moves forward on planning, building and operating regional transit. We had a number of discussions this quarter, ranging in scope, audience and format.

The 32 public meetings, plus our digital engagement, were key components to help us receive notice of completion of the environmental assessment (EA) for network electrification for our **GO expansion program** (Regional Express Rail - RER). Feedback focused on noise and vibration impacts, tree loss and visual impacts from the overhead contact system.

Our Davenport Community Advisory Committee concluded after six meetings and 18 months of work with stakeholders. The project received the support and endorsement of the City of Toronto Design Review Panel in October. The Panel acknowledged the strong relationship forged with the City, Metrolinx and the community, who came together to design infrastructure that is “precedent-setting” in a challenging environment.

A key component of the GO expansion program is engagement with the community:

- Lakeshore East corridor Segment 1 EA (Don River to Scarborough GO station): to support the 30-day public consultation period, we held public meetings hosted by Toronto-Danforth MPP Peter Tabuns and Beaches-East York MPP Arthur Potts.
- Smart Track stations: working with the City of Toronto, we participated at three public meetings, outlining the GO expansion program as well as preliminary designs for the new stations.
- Barrie corridor: Public information sessions were held in communities along the corridor to inform residents of our plans for GO expansion and to seek their input on design of the infrastructure required to expand GO transit service. Consultations on the West Toronto Rail path began in November with stakeholders in the community.
- Niagara expansion: working with the Region and the local municipalities, we participated at four public meetings to seek input on the new service timing and new/upgraded stations.
- Rail safety: In meeting with our various communities, the issue of rail safety continues to be a top concern as we build more infrastructure for more service, and we realized we need a focused approach to this issue. We have launched a new Regional Safety Community Advisory Committee with representation from across the region, to

gather community perspectives that will inform the development of our safety policies and plans for level crossings.

Rapid Transit Projects

Eglinton Crosstown LRT

Progress on the new stations continues, and we hosted nine open houses where the public had the opportunity to learn about work happening locally (Keele Station; Mt. Dennis Station & Eglinton Maintenance & Storage Facility; Chaplin & Avenue stations; Eglinton & Mt. Pleasant stations; Caledonia, Fairbank & Oakwood stations; Leaside & Laird stations; Cedarvale & Forest Hill stations; Kennedy Station & Pharmacy to Ionview stops; Science Centre Station & Sunnybrook Park to O'Connor stops).

One of the key areas of focus for the community relations team is supporting local business. We coordinated photo booths at various locations to engage with local shoppers and community members.

Building on Metrolinx's commitment to integrated art and design excellence, we announced the successful artists and designs for the integrated public art at Crosstown stations.

Community benefits: The Crosstown, and specifically Metrolinx's work with community benefits with the Toronto Community Benefits Network, was prominently featured in a Toronto Star special feature on the United Way. A two-page spread titled "Eglinton Crosstown LRT work draws neighbourhoods closer" focuses on those being given a chance for employment as part of the project and efforts being made by our contractor, Crosslinx, the Toronto Community Benefits Network and other partners such as the United Way.

Crosslinx is committed to making the pathway to Professional, Administrative and Technical (PAT) positions in the construction and trades sector more accessible to historically disadvantaged communities, equity seeking groups and youth facing barriers to employment. In October, Crosslinx reached a milestone of hiring 100 PAT employees through the community benefits program. Current PAT hires number 104.

As per the Declaration regarding Apprentices on the Eglinton Crosstown LRT Project, the aspirational goal is to employ apprentices or journeypersons from historically disadvantaged communities and equity seeking groups for 10% of all trade or craft working hours, on a trade-by-trade basis required to construct the project. The number of apprentices that have been hired to-date total 30. This number is lower than anticipated but is explained by fact that 2017 has been termed the "Year of the Dig" on the Crosstown. More skilled labour will be required for construction activities in 2018 and as a result the number of apprentices that will be brought on-board by Crosslinx and its sub-contractors will increase.

In addition, Crosslinx has supported local businesses along the Eglinton Crosstown corridor (for services such as printing, fleet maintenance, signage and vehicle leasing, totalling more than \$2.9 million), and has procured services from social enterprises (for printing, catering and murals/public art, totalling nearly \$128,000).

Community benefits requirements will also be in the Finch West, Hurontario and Hamilton LRT Project Agreements and will include a commitment to an aspirational target for apprentices, along with government and community stakeholders, within three months of

Financial Close. The actual percentage trade or craft working hours could be different for different projects.

Consideration is also being given to how to include community benefits requirements within the GO expansion program broadly, building on some limited requirements for community benefits (apprenticeship plan) in the East Rail Maintenance Facility contract.

Finch West LRT

As of next week, the Finch West LRT will have a local presence with the opening of our Community Office – our hub to provide residents, businesses, community organizations and others with on-the-ground access to information.

Hurontario LRT

Over the summer months, we expanded our local engagement on the Hurontario LRT. We were on hand at more than 55 events between July 1 and October 31, totalling more than 20,000 interactions in support of the project.

We have established five Corridor Committees in support of the project and they provided their input this fall into our planned communications outreach for the coming months. We are working with these stakeholder representatives to build understanding and awareness of 2018 construction.

We launched the Community Connectors program. Our multi-lingual team of connectors is visiting all businesses and residents along the Hurontario corridor to start an ongoing relationship and provide a point of contact for their questions and concerns.

Hamilton LRT

Community Connectors canvassed nearly 1,400 properties located directly on the corridor through October. Overall, the team has knocked on more than 7,000 doors, providing project updates and acting as liaisons to the project team. The feedback has helped inform us on how to best support businesses leading up to and during construction.

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce – supported by Metrolinx – hosted its final two “LRT Ready” workshops. This four-part workshop series was aimed at preparing businesses ahead of major construction beginning in 2019. The two fall workshops focused on social media, customer relationship management systems and online retail marketplaces.

Other Major Events

- Metrolinx Transportation Symposium – senior-level thought-leaders and influencers in the region shared insights on and strategies to effectively address the region’s transportation challenges, as part of our engagement on the Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- Hydrogen Symposium – symposium for industry leaders and other stakeholders to learn about international advancements in hydrogen power.
- Council updates – the RER 2017 Regional Municipal Tour concluded with presentations at municipal councils in York, Waterloo, Niagara, Halton and Durham Regions and Simcoe County. The goal is to provide annual updates on the comprehensive GO expansion vision for communities across the GTHA and the

infrastructure that will be built to support it. Hamilton council also received an update on LRT engagement, previewing [a video to launch](#) the next wave of canvassing.

- [Metrolinxengage.com](#), our online engagement tool, was overhauled to make the interface and navigation more intuitive and user-friendly. This quarter, we welcomed feedback on the Draft 2041 RTP (30,059 visitors, 3,378 completed surveys, 10,903 comments) and PRESTO privacy policies (256 participants, 330 comments, 70%+ support changes).

Stakeholder Relations

As part of our continued RTP engagement, staff attended nine regional and local Council meetings, hosted our first ever Transportation Symposium, held six regional public roundtable meetings, provided two City of Toronto Councillor briefings, and participated in stakeholder meetings and events to present the content of the draft plan and allow the general public, elected officials and stakeholders the opportunity to ask questions and provide their comments and feedback.

The fourth Regional Stakeholder Forum took place on October 25. This forum brought together representatives from city building, economic, labour relations, real estate, health, education and trades organizations from across the GTHA to discuss and provide feedback on transit and transportation initiatives underway throughout the region. We reconvened the seven Corridor Committees throughout November, which have a similar mandate but with a distinctly local perspective brought by members who include MPPs, MPs, Mayors and Regional Chairs. Presentations from each meeting can be reviewed on our [website](#).

Corporate Communications

The appointment of our new CEO has been of interest both inside and outside the organization. Internally, we have been sharing a [multimedia series](#) with staff for them to familiarize themselves with our new leader.

The team supported announcements regarding:

- procurement progress for several expansion projects including the Rutherford GO Station, Hwy. 401/409 tunnel, Kipling Bus Terminal and Cooksville GO Station
- opening of Ajax pedestrian bridge, Oshawa GO Station building and Renforth Station

This quarter, we averaged 50-60 media calls per week – a 38% increase over the same period in 2016. Media impressions continue to increase over last year, rising by 75%. An increase in social media efforts has helped drive interest and engagement in Metrolinx construction projects and public consultations underway. Audiences are most intrigued by visual presentations of our work, whether photos, renderings or videos.

Respectfully submitted,

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