

**To:** Metrolinx Board of Directors  
**From:** Judy Pfeifer, *Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer*  
**Date:** March 8, 2018  
**Re:** **Communications & Public Affairs Quarterly Update**

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## Community Engagement

We are focused on engaging and informing our neighbours and community leaders on our progress as Metrolinx works to take transit from good to great in our region. We had a number of valuable interactions this quarter, ranging in scope, audience and format.

While we work in these communities, our priority is to ensure safety not only around the project sites but also around the transit we operate - particularly, as we increase service. Earlier in December, our community relations team joined Transit Safety Constable Danielle Kelly at a school in Scarborough to increase awareness of rail safety among our younger stakeholders. The presentations were tailored to two different age groups, and the children demonstrated keen interest and understanding.

In January, the Crosstown team launched their "Transit in your Community" program. Crosstown team members have been visiting schools in the area and engaging with students on the benefits of using transit and all the factors that influence transit planning. Through the program, students participate in activities that encourage them to look at the city with a new perspective and consider possible career options in the field.

Reaching out to the various segments of our community is imperative in ensuring everyone



with a stake feels engaged in our plans and projects for future transit. Along the Hamilton LRT and Hurontario LRT corridors, our Community Connectors address concerns before they become issues and work with businesses and residents to ensure they feel heard and accommodated. Along these diverse corridors, we've learned that offering discussions in a person's native language can result in better clarity and comfort by removing language barriers. In Mississauga, a restaurant owner

was apprehensive of the impact construction would have on his business, but by offering a discussion in Arabic, the Community Connectors were able to have a fulsome discussion and ease his concerns. Nine different spoken languages are represented by the Community Connectors along the Hurontario corridor. In Hamilton, the Community Connectors can collectively speak six different languages, and a Laotian translator was brought in to engage with a woman who had concerns. For approximately 10% of people along the Hamilton LRT corridor, English is not their first spoken language.

## Engagement

33 public meetings  
 225 stakeholder briefings  
 2,038 correspondences  
 121 e-blasts  
 10,231 direct-to-home outreach

We know responding to what we hear is a big part of earning our communities trust. When residents near Agincourt GO Station asked for more privacy and noise mitigation along the active rail corridor, we heard them and acted accordingly. Proper noise walls are planned to go up later in 2018 as part of the project to upgrade Agincourt GO Station, but residents requested an interim solution. As a result, our community teams initiated the construction of temporary wooden hoarding to the appreciation of residents.

Our engagement involves gathering feedback and providing updates. We used a recent Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting along the Union Station Rail Corridor to explore unique solutions for the local area with residents themselves. Based on feedback from the local community, immediate plans are underway to assess noise and vibration and develop potential mitigation options.

Where members of local CAC meetings were recruited ahead of time, our open houses are open to the public. We held open houses in Vaughan and Aurora and along the Finch West LRT corridor this quarter. The Aurora open house offered an opportunity to recruit potential members for future CAC meetings for the Aurora area.

Near some of our projects, we have staffed offices that are open to the public. In addition to the two community offices open along the Eglinton Crosstown project, we opened an office for the Finch West LRT in December.

While we build transit in communities across the region, we are mindful that our projects eventually evolve into public space landmarks. Stop names and station design are a big part of that. Earlier this quarter, we went out to the public for input on stop names for the Finch and Hurontario LRT projects. On [metrolinxengage.com](http://metrolinxengage.com), we had 308 participants for the Finch discussion and 703 for the Hurontario discussion.

Integrating our work into the existing landscape is another way we are aligning community interests. We often work with local leaders to ensure the designs meet community needs. We recently collaborated with West Rouge community on the designs of the improvement to Rouge Hill GO Station. Through the Metrolinx Public Art and Amenities Framework, we

## Ask Metrolinx

### December

Pre-submitted Qs: 170  
 Votes: 733  
 Qs answered: 25  
 In-person attendance: 75+  
 Livestream viewers: 100+

### February

Pre-submitted Qs: 100  
 Votes: 400  
 Qs answered: 25  
 In-person attendance: 42  
 Livestream viewers: 90

are taking a thoughtful, integrated, and high-quality approach to integrated art across Metrolinx and GO Transit facilities. We unveiled the integrated art program for the Eglinton Crosstown in mid-January at the Ontario Science Centre. The launch was preceded with a full-page spread in the Toronto Star. It was a huge success and a sign of things to come.

## Engagement

In December and February, we opened our Head Office doors for a series of public town halls called 'Ask Metrolinx.' Over the course of the events, our executives answered a combination of pre-submitted questions, and questions asked live in-person and online. The event is free to stream online and view after the fact.

## Communications

The end of the year offered an opportunity for us to take inventory of our achievements in 2017. We posted a quiz online, which had over 1,000 visits from transit enthusiasts looking to test their Metrolinx knowledge.

The team supported announcements regarding:

- significant increase of service along the Barrie line
- procurement progress for the Finch West LRT
- opening of the Finch West community office
- start of service at Downsview Park GO Station
- launch of discounted double fare
- 'Click and Collect' at GO stations
- intention to launch a WiFi pilot on GO vehicles

This quarter, we averaged 40-50 media calls per week – a 15% increase over the same period in 2016/2017.

We used the slow holiday period for media to ramp up communications about customer safety (especially during the extreme cold) and issued a warning to the public to protect themselves from a PRESTO scam by only buying cards from authorized dealers. We supported media and social media launches of integrated art and a playful etiquette handbook for transit users.



Respectfully submitted,

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