

To: Metrolinx Board of Directors
From: Jamie Robinson
Acting Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer
Date: February 7, 2019
Re: **Communications & Public Affairs Quarterly Report
December 7, 2018 to February 7, 2019**

Recommendation

That this report be received for information.

Recent Highlights

- The Ask Metrolinx Town Hall program received an AVA (Audio and Visual Arts) platinum award for Interactive Communication – Citizen Engagement on February 1. The AVA Digital Awards, administered by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, is an annual international competition that recognizes excellence by creative professionals responsible for the planning, concept, direction, design and production of digital communication.

- Crosslinx Transit Solutions achieved a milestone of employing 100 apprentices through our flagship Community Benefits program on the Eglinton Crosstown project. This



program is a key component of the project which allows the project team to engage impacted communities socially and economically.

Communications and Public Affairs continues to execute a robust engagement strategy to ensure proactive outreach to employees, residents, businesses and stakeholders.

Here are our engagement numbers from the month of December:

- 17 public meetings
- 15 stakeholder briefings
- 528 pieces of correspondence related to GO Expansion & Rapid Transit projects
- 57 e-blasts
- 72,684 direct-to-home outreach
- 18 blog posts



Community Relations

- Our teams proactively engaged communities in project areas throughout the holiday season. Two Public Information Centres were hosted in December by the Finch West Community Relations team. The team also hosted a Business Opportunities and Workforce Expo, attended by more than 140 people. Transit In Your Community presentations took place at schools in the Hamilton, Hurontario and Finch West corridors.



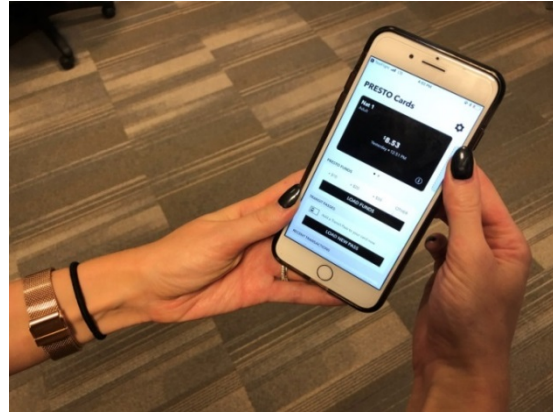
- We hosted an engaging and interactive Eglinton Crosstown display at the Ontario Science Centre from December 22nd to January 6th. The display attracted more than 51,000 in-person visitors, while the live feed on Facebook had more than 1,900 views. Overall social media engagement totalled more than 63,000 impressions on Twitter and 39,863 impressions on Facebook.

- The Crosstown community relations and communications teams provided both strategic and on-the-ground support for the planned

Bathurst St. full road closure, which was ultimately cancelled in response to community and stakeholder feedback.

Communications Planning

- We executed communications plans and supported announcement events for the launch of the PRESTO beta app and for GO service changes including new service to Niagara and Kitchener.



Media Relations and Newsroom

- From December to February, we saw a 22% increase in media calls over the same period a year ago. Key areas of interest were GO expansion including the first-ever weekday Niagara service and popularity of new off-peak Lakeshore line service, Crosstown progress and arrival of the first vehicle. Interest from community and regional media remains high as excitement builds for new service throughout the GTHA.
- There was considerable media interest and negative coverage related to the Kitchener service changes, potential Bathurst Street closure and York University bus service changes. The media team was responsive and delivered key messages to reflect the company's commitment to addressing customer concerns.
- Our teams continue to share Metrolinx stories through our digital channels. These stories are growing our audiences significantly. Since December, we've had more than 19,000 page views on the Metrolinx blog *The Link*. Our top story was the restoration of century-old bridges along the Lakeshore West line, followed by our look at the new Tier 4 locomotives. A significant portion of *The Link's* readership is Metrolinx staff, reflecting our efforts to share our best stories internally as well as with our customers and the public.
- We had 12 stories picked up from the blog, such as our lost and found piece which highlighted the honesty of our customers in turning in valuable items, and the sometimes strange things left behind. Media also picked up the post on the Christmas day rescue by a Transit Officer who pulled a man from the tracks, as well as the story on what it takes to become a GO train conductor.



Stakeholder Relations

- In support of Strategic Objective #13, aimed at building positive partnerships and impressions of Metrolinx, we worked with Market Research to develop a pulse survey targeted at Metrolinx's stakeholders and partners, and conducted via email. Approximately 300 respondents provided key insights, allowing us to begin developing action plans with the goal of strengthening our relationships. A more fulsome annual stakeholder survey will take place in the spring.
- We responded to more than 200 questions from the public following the November 28th Ask Metrolinx Town Hall.
- We hosted a Stakeholder Forum on December 10, led by members of Metrolinx senior management and attended by 13 Presidents and CEO's of organizations from around the region. The tone was very positive and lots of engaging discussion took place. This is slated to become a biannual event.

Internal Communications

- We are continuing to improve communication within Metrolinx in our efforts to support greater employee engagement. We've seen a significant increase in subscriptions to Yammer, our new workplace social media network. At the end of December, we had 1,725 users. In January, we started a road show to our numerous work locations across the region to introduce this communications application.
- We are working with Human Resources to support engaging and effective communication to employees on a number of initiatives, including updates to Metrolinx's Fit for Duty policy, a program to automate and integrate back-end administrative systems, and an Indigenous Internship program led by the Diversity & Inclusion team.



Respectfully submitted,

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