

Community Benefits

METROLINX LAUNCHES COMMUNITY BENEFITS PROGRAM

Framework targets employment, apprenticeship, and local supplier opportunities

Metrolinx recognizes that its major infrastructure investments should also provide benefits for the communities in which it works, including employment, apprenticeship, and local supplier opportunities where possible. It has therefore committed to include a community benefits program for the Toronto Transit Projects beginning with the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rapid Transit line (LRT).

“Metrolinx is pleased to support the concept of building Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) into our major infrastructure projects and we have worked closely with the Toronto Community Benefits Network to finalize a framework for the Eglinton Crosstown project,” said Bruce McCuaig, Metrolinx President and CEO. “Metrolinx, in collaboration with Infrastructure Ontario and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities have agreed upon a framework to be included in the Crosstown RFP and Project Agreement.”

The Crosstown will run across Eglinton Avenue between Mount Dennis (Weston Road) and Kennedy Station. The 19-kilometre corridor will include a more than 10-kilometre underground portion between Keele Street and Laird Drive. It will have 25 stations and stops, linking to bus routes, three subway stations and various GO Transit lines.

The Crosstown represents a \$5.3 billion (2010) transit improvement investment – the largest in the history of the region. When in service, the Crosstown will bring fast, reliable and comfortable transit to Toronto residents, integrate transit services and create tens of thousands of design and construction jobs. Construction on the Crosstown began in 2011 with the west launch area at Black Creek Drive and Eglinton Avenue. Tunneling from the west began in June 2013 and two tunnel boring machines are in operation. In November 2013, the east tunnels contract was awarded and construction on the east launch area east of Brentcliffe Road has begun.

In December 2013 Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario released a request for proposals to the consortia pre-qualified to deliver the balance of the Crosstown project, an integrated system consisting of stations, trackworks, signaling, communications and other required infrastructure.

As part of their bid proposals, qualified consortia must include plans for increasing apprenticeship training on the Crosstown, providing significant opportunities for local companies, and ensuring design excellence and community benefits.

[Download our PDF version of the Metrolinx Benefits Framework.](#)

COMMUNITY BENEFITS PROGRAM – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is a Community Benefits Program and how does this apply to Metrolinx and its Rapid Transit Implementation (RTI) projects?

Metrolinx recognizes that major infrastructure projects, should also include additional benefits for the communities in which we work; including employment, training, apprenticeship, local supplier and social procurement opportunities, where possible.

Metrolinx, in the *Investment Strategy*, notes the following:

- Metrolinx continues to meet with community benefits organizations to discuss how local jobs and training programs can be optimized during the construction, operations and maintenance phases of The Big Move projects. Metrolinx will work with local and regional organizations to develop and implement strategies to ensure communities that are hosting the transit facilities realize not just the transportation benefits of the infrastructure, but also receive social and economic benefits from the investment that is being made.

Who is involved with this Community Benefits Program, and what does it include?

Metrolinx has committed to include a Community Benefits Framework in partnership with the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) for the Toronto Transit Projects (LRT along Finch, Sheppard and Eglinton Avenues), beginning with the Eglinton Crosstown LRT line.

The purpose of Metrolinx's Community Benefits Program is to provide opportunities and other benefits for local residents, (equitable hiring practices, training, apprenticeship, local supplier and social procurement opportunities, where possible).

When will the Metrolinx Community Benefits Program start?

Metrolinx's Community Benefits Program started with the hiring of the Community Benefits Specialist position and by working closely with key stakeholders, such as the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) to ensure that plans and actions are prepared and delivered.

The delivery of Metrolinx's Community Benefits Program will ultimately be included as part of the Project Agreement between Metrolinx and ProjectCo set to be selected in spring, 2015.

How will the public be made aware about this program?

Metrolinx is committed to provide progress reports and updates to keep the public and all audiences informed. Metrolinx is also committed to making the information about employment, training, apprenticeship and procurement opportunities readily available to residents, businesses, and social enterprises.

Is this the first time Metrolinx is embarking on this type of initiative?

The Community Benefits program builds on the achievements of the GTS Project, which has, in partnership with the City of Toronto's Employment and Social Services Division, supported thousands of design and construction jobs, and continues to develop and support career opportunities in the communities along the Georgetown South rail corridor.

- The program also builds off of the Hammer Heads program, a co-sponsored construction training class with the Central Ontario Building Trades Hammer Heads program to help link young men and women along the Georgetown South Project rail corridor with an opportunity to pursue a career in the construction industry.

How many jobs has the GTS Project created? Are specific numbers/information available to validate the success of the project?

To date, over 600 community members have attended several career fairs and networking events. This initiative has provided guidance and support to over 100 individuals, through a City of Toronto Career Specialist working out of the GTS community office. This initiative has also resulted in the posting of over five dozen employment opportunities with 14 local community members getting job interviews and six community members were hired.

- Through this partnership, Metrolinx and the City of Toronto are co-sponsoring a class of 15 youth to attend an intense 12-week construction pre-apprenticeship training program

through the Central Ontario Building Trades Hammer Heads program.

- Metrolinx has embarked on new ground to ensure that the communities in which we work and serve realize not just the transportation benefits of The Big Move but also social and economic benefits from investment.