

Connecting Communities with Jobs & Training

After three years of organizing, the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) is expecting to see residents from some of Toronto's Neighbourhood Improvement Areas trained to work on the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit line later this year.



Work is expected to begin on the western end of the 19km line this spring. Construction along Eglinton for the past few years has been related to digging the tunnels for the line and moving utilities. Last July Metrolinx awarded the multi-billion dollar contract to Crosslinx Transit Solutions, a consortium that includes Montreal based engineering firm SNC-Lavalin and Toronto construction firms EllisDon and Aecon.

Labour Council affiliated projects, Labour Community Services and the Labour Education Centre have been instrumental in building the TCBN, which has over 40 member community, labour and workforce development organizations. Last July the TCBN held nine resident engagement meetings from Weston Road to Scarborough for residents that are interested in joining building trade unions as apprentices and to work on the line. Work has been funded by the Metcalf and Atkinson Foundations, the United Way and by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. It is hoped that some 6-800 apprentices will work on the line over 5 years of construction of a construction force of up to 3,000 workers.

An objective of the TCBN is to diversify the make-up of the construction workforce on the

line. Many of the participants in the TCBN engagement meetings are from the Somali, Filipino South Asian and other communities that are under-represented in the industry. All are expected to enter the training centre of the relevant Building Trade training centre.

Co-ordination of the recruitment effort is done through the Community Benefit Working Group composed of Metrolinx, CTS, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, and the TCBN. Work is expected to be complete by the end of 2021.

The TCBN has also ensured that internationally trained professionals are finding work with CTS, and that social enterprises are receiving contracts to provide services.

Metrolinx is expected to release a Request for Proposals to build a second, shorter LRT line along Finch West in the next few weeks. It will run from the soon to be opened (2018) TTC subway stop at Keele and Finch to Humber College. Work on the Finch line is expected to start in 2017, the TCBN has begun to work with Finch communities for a similar community benefits program.

More information about the Toronto Community Benefits Network available from www.communitybenefits.ca

A graphic poster for International Women's Day 2016. At the top, two white doves with olive branches fly towards the center. Below them, the words "ALL WOMEN RISE UP" are written in large, bold, black capital letters. In the center, a brown fist is shown holding a yellow banner that reads "PROUD & STRONG" in white capital letters. There are small yellow stars around the fist. At the bottom, there is a black box with white text: "NO TO VIOLENCE & HATE | RISE TO RECONCILIATION NOW NO TO RACISM & ISLAMOPHOBIA | BLACK LIVES MATTER NO TO POVERTY | JUSTICE ON THE JOB INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2016 RALLY, MARCH & FAIR | SATURDAY, MARCH 5 LOCATION: 05E, 322 BLOOR ST. W. RALLY AT 11AM, MARCH AT 1PM | FAIR: 575000, 55 SGOULD STREET AT 3PM". Below this, there are logos for organizing and funding partners, including the Country for Women and Trade People, the IWD Organizing Committee, and funding from CPIL/IFABS, CUPE, and UNIFIL. At the bottom, the website "IWDTORONTO.CA" and hashtag "#IWDTORONTO" are listed, along with accessibility icons for a wheelchair and a hearing aid.