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**Subject:** Yonge North Subway Extension

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Metrolinx Board of Directors  
Mr. Donald Wright, Chair  
Metrolinx  
97 Front Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M5J 1E6

Sent via email: [chair@metrolinx.com](mailto:chair@metrolinx.com)

August 27, 2021

Dear Mr. Wright and Metrolinx Board of Directors,

**RE: Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE)**

The Royal Orchard Rate Payers' Association (RORA) supports the Yonge North subway extension but strongly opposes the planned Option 3 reference alignment through our community. In March 2021, our community was shocked to learn that the planned Yonge North Subway extension would be tunneling under our existing 50-year-old neighborhood instead of the original planned and Provincially approved routing to follow Yonge Street in its alignment. This information was not communicated to us in a formalized way; we learned of the new alignment via people in the neighborhood who heard that this was happening through word of mouth. Three options were reviewed by Metrolinx in a confidential business case, and no public input, with Option 3 being the preferred option by Metrolinx.

Option 3 has been voted against by Markham Council and Vaughan Council and members of this Royal Orchard Community. **Option 1 which was the Provincially approved option and avoids tunneling under existing homes remains the preferred routing by the existing members of the communities that will be impacted by the extension and as indicated as the best-case scenario outlined in Metrolinx's own business case.**

The Metrolinx Mission Statement states "Getting you there better, faster, easier". As per Metrolinx's very own Business Case, the Option 3 alignment does not get the highest number of

people moving and does not get the highest number of vehicles off the road. Option 3 does not get people moving faster. Option 3 does not connect communities in an optimal way (two stations are planned a mere 400m apart). **Option 1 does. How can Option 3 be supported if it does not meet your vision for optimal transit planning?** How can providing no assurances that the existing neighborhood homes will not be negatively impacted “be better”? There are no objections to Option 1, it is “the better” way to connect communities through transit.

Metrolinx’s preferred Option 3 will be tunneling under an existing mature neighborhood. Repeatedly, staff have been asked questions related to specific routing, examples of residential homes where current technologies have been used to tunnel under, placement of emergency exits, information on noise and vibration impacts, plans for expropriation of homes. To date, responses are evasive, non-specific or absent.

Metrolinx’s value statement “Play as a Team” suggests a consultative model when working with communities. Our community has never been consulted. “Playing as a Team” requires efficient and effective communications. We found out about the change in original routing by word of mouth and **were told** that Option 3 is selected as the route of choice. Our voices were not considered or heard. After the fact we were provided an interactive platform via Zoom to engage with staff, but with limitations. Our opportunity for questions was limited in length, responses by staff were generalized and vague and limited in scope. We have not been informed of any future meetings. Metrolinx staff have avoided answering many of our questions, some of which date back to April 2021. We have resorted to a Freedom of Information request which has been delayed by Metrolinx and approaching 15 weeks. Answers that we do receive from Metrolinx are vague and do not specifically address the context of the question. A Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was established, in theory, purportedly to facilitate more open lines of communications amongst a smaller team. The team has met once with no further dates or agendas outlined. As a community that will be impacted negatively by a proposed subway extension, we expect a timeline of regular communications on the project status and next steps. We have been told that Metrolinx is still looking at other options. We want to be informed of what the considerations are and why. We want to be consulted. We expect our voices to be heard when determining “the better” transit option.

As representatives of the Royal Orchard Community, we question Metrolinx’s integrity shown by their disregard in keeping with their Mission and Value statements, and so far demonstrated in the planning and execution of the YNSE. We expect better. The lack of communications and dismissal of the community’s concerns for our neighborhood is extremely disappointing.

We respectfully request that:

- Metrolinx return to the original proposed Provincially approved alignment that follows Yonge Street and that does not impact existing homes, schools and greenspaces.
- Staff respond to emails and information requests timely, effectively and thoroughly
- The Royal Orchard Community be informed of timelines and context of preparation work that impacts our neighborhood
- The Royal Orchard Community be provided with a timeline of regular engagement with Metrolinx staff to ask questions, with an opportunity to provide input into agenda items

Members of the Stop Option 3 Steering Committee attend a Board Meeting to elaborate on our position

Thank you for your consideration of our passion to create an optimal subway extension in York Region.

Ian Reid  
Co Chair



Keith Irish  
Co Chair



Stop Subway Option 3 Steering Committee (SSO3)  
Royal Orchard Rate Payers' Association (RORA)

Cc Hon Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation  
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