



Royal Orchard Ratepayers' Association

General Committee of Markham Council
Markham Civic Centre
101 Town Centre Blvd
Markham, Ontario

March 19, 2021

Dear Honourable Members of Markham City Council,

Re: Yonge North Subway Extension (Option 3) through Royal Orchard neighbourhood

As the local Residents organization, the Royal Orchard Ratepayers' Association (RORA) submits this letter in objection to the decision by Metrolinx to proceed with the Option 3 subway extension plan, veering the subway construction east off Yonge Street through an established neighbourhood filled with homes. This plan will have negative effects for our neighbourhood, both during the construction phase and upon completion.

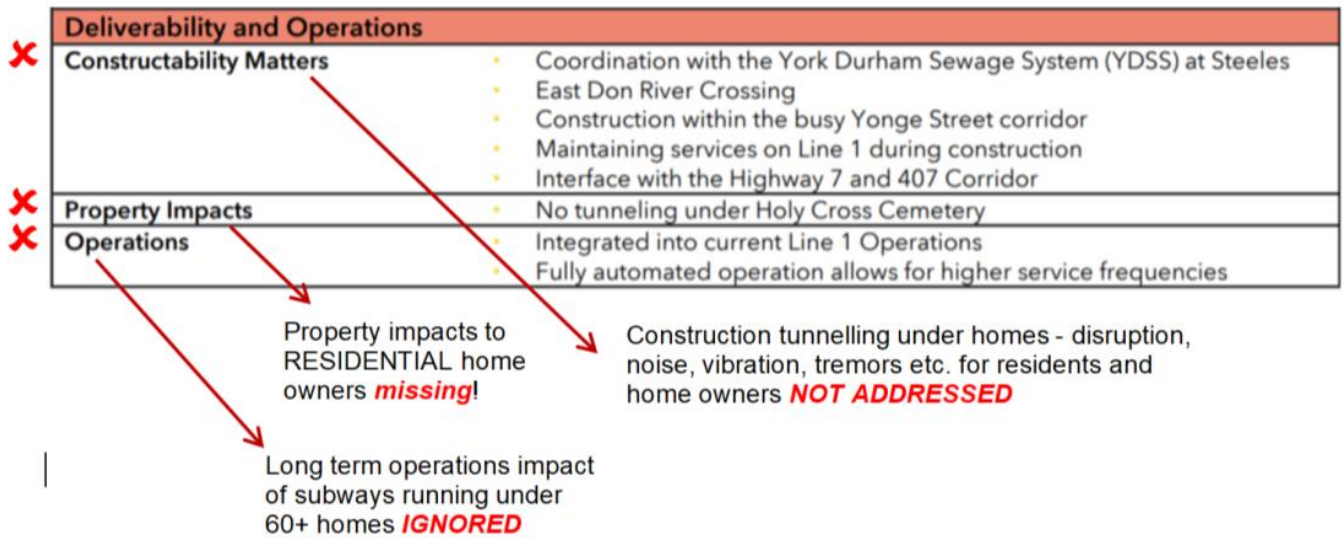
Since no Royal Orchard subway stop is included, it's "all pain, no gain" for the people who live here.

- ***Years of noise / vibration / tremors / possible property damage***
- ***Hundreds of homes - thousands of residents affected***
- ***60 houses to have subway running under them***
- ***And NO benefit – no subway station!***

We have reviewed the Initial Business Case for the Yonge North Subway as well as the Supplemental report, released March 18, 2021. Both of these reports ignore the serious negative impacts to the people living in the homes which will be affected during the construction phase, and upon project completion.

Reading the reports, it is as if there are no serious negative effects, and almost nobody affected. For these reasons, the reports lack a balanced evaluation of all available information.

Every category contained in the Option 3 Refinement summary table (page 7 of report) illustrates that the people who live here, and the disruption and negative impacts they will face, are not being considered. Report table copied below, with our comments.



Our objections to the Option 3 proposal, and the deficiencies in the “business case” follow. Excerpts from the Metrolinx reports are included for ease of reference.

1) Objection: Use of language is misleading and implies few homes will be affected

Metrolinx has elected to proceed with a subway construction plan (Option 3) that routes the new line through the Royal Orchard neighbourhood, under “several low density residential properties” and Kirk Drive. The language in the report implies that few homes would be affected by this proposal.

In fact, many streets full of homes including Donalbain Crescent, Thony Brae Drive, Banquo Road and Kirk Drive will have subways running underneath them, upon project completion.

*Report excerpt (p. 141) “The alignment passes under Kirk Drive and **several low-density residential properties**. To minimize the amount of construction under residential properties, the alignment will travel under **Kirk Drive** for as long as possible.”*

2) Objection: NO rationale to build subway extension through an established neighbourhood

According to the report, the Metrolinx Board selection of Option 3 is based on the location of the Holy Cross cemetery. However, the report does not state that any investigation was actually undertaken related to this issue. What evidence does the Board have that operation of subways near cemetery lands was not a viable option?

To select a path of construction that will detrimentally affect hundreds of homes and thousands of people seems grossly unfair to the people who will be affected. The reports do not mention the people living in the area, where tunnelling will occur under their homes.

*Supplemental report excerpt, p. 5 “Metrolinx recognizes **there could be sensitivities associated with construction and operations on or near cemetery lands.**”*

3) Objection: Inadequate consideration / details pertaining to noise, vibration, tremors, etc.

The business case and supplemental reports provide only passing references to the negative impact construction will have on the homes in the area. Presumably, the expected impacts during drilling, mining activities, hauling of debris, construction of components, as well as increased noise upon completion (operation of above ground portion of subway), are known and quantifiable, but no details are included in the reports.

*Report excerpt, p. 108 “At-Grade alignment along 2 km has a **higher potential for disruption to the natural environment and quality of life (noise, vibration, visual impact).** Impacts and opportunities to mitigate to be further understood during design development.”*

*Report excerpt, p. 141 re: Design of Tunnels “Potential impacts and mitigations will be identified through the Transit Project Assessment Process... **impacts that would have to be addressed would include noise and vibration during construction and operations.**”*

4) Objection: Misleading representation of Royal Orchard Station

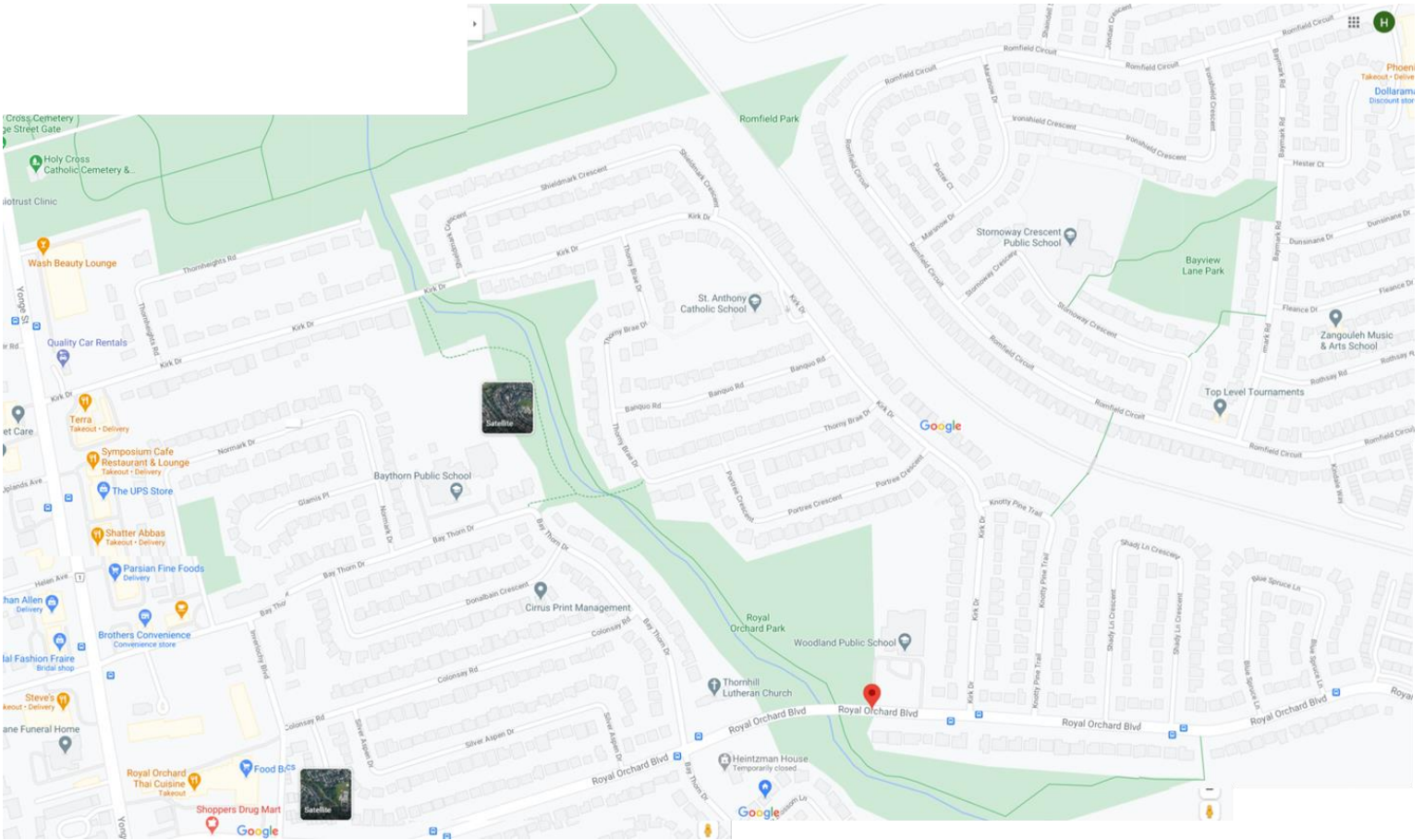
The Supplemental report purports to include a subway station at Royal Orchard, evaluating “Station Access, Royal Orchard”. In fact, the station was not costed for this “business case”; therefore we can only conclude that it is no longer being considered. The absence of a Royal Orchard station significantly impacts our willingness to support this project.

*Supplementary report excerpt, p. 10 “To maintain consistency, the same stations used in the representative alignment for Option 3 in the Initial Business Case were used to model the refined version of the alignment. These stations are Cummer, Steeles, Clark, and Bridge (at-grade). **Therefore, the costs for construction of Royal Orchard Station and its associated benefits were not included in this analysis.**”*

5) Objection: Map of neighbourhood not included in Report

Built in the 1960s and 1970s, the Royal Orchard neighbourhood is not a greenfield site for development. Three local elementary schools make it popular for families. Housing styles range

from detached houses, townhouses, apartments and condo buildings, as well as co-operative subsidized housing. Below is a map that indicates every single home in the neighbourhood.



In Closing

The people who form the Royal Orchard Ratepayers' Association are volunteers. We care about our neighbourhood and our neighbours, whether they own or rent, are new to the neighbourhood or have lived here for decades. The Royal Orchard community is proud of our diversity – we are parents, working people, retired people, and volunteers, from all over the globe. **We support a Yonge North Subway extension that aligns with Yonge Street as was initially proposed by Metrolinx.** We are strongly opposed to Option 3 as we foresee catastrophic negative impact to our well-established community. Let's build the extension properly, for now and the future.

Sincerely,

The Royal Orchard Ratepayers' Association



The Royal Orchard Ratepayers' Association (RORA) is a volunteer-led, membership-based organization. Formed in 2016, we are a voice and an advocate for the Thornhill (City of Markham) community defined geographically by Yonge Street on the West, Bayview Avenue on the East, Ladies' Golf Club of Toronto on the South, and The Holy Cross Cemetery on the North. Our board is comprised of residents of this area.