



December 11, 2023

To residents of the Royal Orchard community,

The Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE) project has passed several key milestones thus far in 2023, including the start of early works construction at Finch Station; initiating advance utility relocations along Yonge Street; the release of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the advance tunneling contract; the designation of Transit Corridor Lands; and the [recent release of the Request for Proposals for the advance tunneling contract](#) on December 1, 2023. We are moving forward with this important project that will connect communities and improve transit options for residents in the growing region of York.

We recognize that construction can be temporarily disruptive to the local community. Once complete, the Yonge North Subway Extension will have a lasting impact for generations to come. The extension will make it faster and easier for more people to travel between York Region and downtown Toronto while reducing traffic congestion and pollution.

Throughout Metrolinx's engagement with the Royal Orchard community (including the [December 15<sup>th</sup> 2021 open letter from CEO Phil Verster](#) and November 2022 Royal Orchard Town Hall presentation), we have reaffirmed our commitment to using floating slab technology along the entire Royal Orchard community portion of the alignment, and achieving targeted noise and vibration levels during construction and once the subway is in operation. The intent of this letter is to provide additional and up-to-date written assurance of Metrolinx's commitments regarding noise and vibration levels, and other issues of concern to the Royal Orchard community, as we move forward with procurement for this project.

We are committed to being a good neighbour and ensuring that our staff and our contractors exhibit a high degree of professionalism and courtesy while carrying out their work. In addition to meeting specific assurances outlined below, we are committed to proactively mitigating potential disruptions in advance and to promptly addressing any issues that do arise.

### **Noise and Vibration Levels and Mitigation Measures**

Metrolinx will use floating slab track, a proven technology that reduces the noise and vibration at the track level, in the tunnels under the Royal Orchard community.

With this proven technology, Metrolinx will ensure that, once operational, noise levels from the subway in homes in the Royal Orchard neighborhood are no louder than 30 dBA and vibration levels inside a single-family home are no more than 0.05 mm/s (average vibration). Metrolinx has taken steps to minimize noise generated from service equipment in the tunnel during construction of the tunnels. For example, we have prescribed that rubber-tired vehicles be used in the tunnels to transport tunnelling supplies to the tunnel boring machine. From experience on projects such as the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension, which is being built in west Toronto, these vehicles have been beneficial in mitigating noise normally generated from traditional temporary steel track service equipment.

The operation of the tunnel boring machines (TBMs) can result in some perceptible vibration generally related to a person's proximity to the TBMs or localized geological conditions. This vibration will subside as the TBMs advance. Based on the rate of advance of the TBMs, vibration at a given location could last for approximately one week for each of the two TBMs.

On the surface, Metrolinx will continuously monitor noise levels and where possible use tools like equipment silencers and temporary noise barriers to reduce noise. We will do our best to ensure noisy activities occur during daytime and plan vehicle access routes that will minimize on-site movement and avoid travel on residential streets, where possible. Communities will be notified well in advance of any upcoming construction work.

Metrolinx will deploy an experienced field services team that will be responsible for monitoring progress in delivery and adherence to specifications including Metrolinx standards as well as municipal and federal quality and safety requirements.

In addition, Metrolinx worked with 12 homeowners in the Royal Orchard community in 2022 to gather noise data within their homes, and the results of these studies have been shared with them. This information establishes a baseline of the noise levels before the project. We will return to these homes, with owners' permission, to measure levels during construction and operation and to ensure we achieve our commitments. We are also constructing a new YNSE Community Office in Richmond Hill that will include an immersive sound lab that will allow members of the public to experience what it will sound like when a subway train passes below homes, and how that would compare to current noise levels.

Metrolinx will maintain accountability for the YNSE track infrastructure and assets once operational and will have maintenance standards in place to ensure track assets are maintained to a quality level consistent with noise and vibration requirements. We will continue to work with all partners to address any concerns promptly.

### **Tunnelling Depths**

Our commitment in the Royal Orchard community is that the bottom of the tunnels will be a minimum of 21 metres below the ground surface. This minimum depth is maintained from Yonge Street to approximately where the existing railway corridor meets the southern boundary of Holy Cross Cemetery.

Where the route crosses below Pomona Creek, beyond where homes are located, the tunnels will still be at a depth of at least 14 metres. This slightly shallower depth is because the ground level here is significantly lower than the surrounding land in the neighbourhood. From here, it will gradually rise to meet the surface rail corridor just south of Langstaff Road.

### **Royal Orchard Station**

Metrolinx is committed to building a modern and accessible subway station in the vicinity of Yonge Street and Royal Orchard Boulevard, to ensure that existing and future communities can easily enjoy the benefits of fast and reliable transit.

## **Emergency Exit Building Design**

Emergency exit buildings (EEBs) are key components of the passenger safety strategy for the subway extension. Current plans are to locate two EEBs in the Royal Orchard community (EEB-5 and EEB-6). Metrolinx is working to finalize locations of EEBs based on engineering and safety requirements and minimizing the number of private property owners who are affected. We will then initiate discussions with affected property owners.

Metrolinx is committed to ensuring that EEBs are as minimally disruptive to the community as possible, and to engaging with community members for their input on the final look and feel of EEBs as we get closer to final design and construction.

## **Community Engagement**

Metrolinx remains committed to ongoing and active engagement with Royal Orchard residents, as well as residents and businesses along the entire YNSE route. We will work collaboratively with communities to anticipate and mitigate concerns and issues as we approach construction, and to seek input into certain elements of the project. We look forward to continuing to work with stakeholders such as the Royal Orchard Ratepayers Association, local businesses, and school boards to plan engagement opportunities like Community Liaison Committees, community walks, and town hall meetings.

## **Moving Forward with the Best Project**

Metrolinx remains confident in the business case for this transit investment, including Bridge Station; a new multimodal hub at the centre of all current and future rapid transit services in southcentral York Region. The project will support the continued prosperity of York Region as a vibrant community and growing part of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The project will spur economic activity, create good jobs and connect more people to more opportunities to succeed.

Once complete, we estimate that the YNSE will:

- Transport more than 94,000 daily riders;
- Save riders up to 22 minutes on a trip from York Region to downtown Toronto;
- Put more than 26,000 people within a 10-minute walk of transit; and
- Reduce auto trips by at least 7,700 kilometres during morning rush hour, contributing to a 4,800-tonne reduction in yearly greenhouse gas emissions.

Ensuring the benefits offered by the Yonge North Subway Extension are achieved is critical to our success. We will continue to explore every opportunity to increase the benefits provided by the extension as we proceed through project implementation.

## **Next Steps**

Our most recent project milestone was the [release of the Request for Proposals on December 1, 2023](#). As we review proposals, we will be looking for a project company that has demonstrated excellence in delivering the above-noted project requirements and

meeting expectations outlined in this letter. Early upgrade work at Finch Station - where the new route will connect with existing Line 1 service - is now substantially complete, and advance utility relocation work along Yonge Street is continuing.

We are also planning future community engagement opportunities, such as re-establishing a Royal Orchard Community Liaison Committee and continuing to meet with Royal Orchard residents to address their questions and concerns. We are always happy to hear feedback on what types of engagement activities might be most meaningful and effective in your community. Our goal is to make sure that the YNSE project respects the unique character and needs of the Royal Orchard community and enhances the quality of life for residents in all of York Region for decades to come.

Sincerely,



David Panici

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