



# GOODERHAM & WORTS

## NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

July 10, 2023

Toronto and East York Community Council - Subcommittee on Metrolinx's Ontario Line Construction  
Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

**Via email**

Attention: Cathrine Regan

### **SUBMISSION RE: TM5.1 - City of Toronto Recommendations for Metrolinx's Ontario Line Construction within the Toronto and East York District**

Dear Councillors Fletcher, Malik & Moise:

On behalf of the Gooderham & Worts Neighbourhood Association, I would like to voice our strong support for the recommendations in Staff's Report regarding ways to address the challenging shortcomings in Metrolinx's approach to Ontario Line construction to date that have been deeply concerning our community.

Our residents live in and around the Distillery District, between two of the Metrolinx Ontario Line Construction Sites (Corktown Station / First Parliament Site and the Don Yard / Mill St. School Site). We have consistently endeavoured to understand Metrolinx's and Infrastructure Ontario's plans and have been involved in staged "public consultations" about the planning of these sites. We have been deeply frustrated by the lack of substantive detail about plans and meaningful consultation with both Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario, despite many attempts at communications and meetings.

While Metrolinx continues to try to delay Community Liaison Committees awaiting site turnovers to specific project contractors, our residents have already been living with active works at both the Corktown/First Parliament Site and Don Yard/Mill Street School site for close to a year. Through our involvement with the BOLD Coalition we have come to understand that the challenges we have faced with Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario appear systematically across wards along the path of the future Ontario Line. Community groups around the Grange, Osgoode Hall, Moss Park, Riverdale and Leslieville and Smalls Creek, among others have struggled to get Metrolinx to engage in useful 2-way collaboration.

We would like to emphasize a few points:

**Community Benefits:** The awarding of more than \$10B of contracts without any clearly measurable commitments to Community Benefits is unconscionable given the solid history of positive impacts from Community Benefit Agreements that were baked into past major projects in Toronto.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' report released just last week titled "A rising tide does not lift all boats – Ontario's colour-coded labour market recovery" provides clear quantitative evidence of continuing serious disparities and inequities in employment levels and wages for Black, racialized and women workers.



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GWNA supports the additional specific actions called for by TCBN including quantified hiring targets for Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving groups, spanning construction and Professional / Administrative / Technical positions.

**Community Engagement:** We welcome the recommendation to ensure Construction Liaison Committee (CLCs). We strongly believe that CLCs should be active before any works occur at a site, including so called “early works”, and that there should be continuity of regular meetings. It has been a mighty struggle to get Metrolinx to two meetings over the past year. We believe there should be community influence over the geographic scope of a CLC since it is problematic to have multiple CLCs around a neighbourhood simply because of how Metrolinx has divided up work packages between different project contractors.

We advocate strongly for a collaborative model with a community co-lead working with a Metrolinx designate to shape session agendas to ensure coverage of topics of concern to the community. Metrolinx delivering 60 minutes of slide presentations online following an agenda of their choosing is not community engagement.

Based on our experiences working with Waterfront Toronto’s development partners on the West Don Lands redevelopment we have found that in addition to the broad, widely inclusive participant forum suggested in Staff recommendations, it is also vital to have a complementary smaller group of representatives from the community and project contractor team who can work more closely on an ongoing basis to effectively manage the day-to-day work impacts.

**Traffic and Construction Management:** In addition to Staff recommendations, GWNA would like there to be a “hotline” mechanism for a CLC representative to be able to quickly and directly reach a project contractor to report problems arising around work sites.

**Affordable Housing and Rental Replacement:** GWNA wholeheartedly supports setting clear measurable targets that at a minimum are line with the City’s Inclusionary Zoning targets, and provide for long-term, rent geared to income affordable rental units.

We are deeply concerned that Infrastructure Ontario’s “Transit Oriented Community” proposals are simply Transit Oriented Development, and will not yield anything vaguely resembling healthy complete communities. To date Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario have only removed badly needed planned community facilities from our area, by expropriating land for the facilities envisioned as part of the First Parliament Site Master plan, and land set aside for construction of a school as part of the West Don Lands redevelopment. There should be Parks and Neighbourhood Investments to replace and compensate for those green spaces and community facilities destroyed and removed for Ontario Line construction.

Sincerely,

Neil Betteridge  
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