

**From:** Stephen Cockle

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 19, 2022 11:02 AM

**To:** Clerks Richmondhill <[clerks@richmondhill.ca](mailto:clerks@richmondhill.ca)>

**Subject:** Response to Ontario Government's EMZO for TOCs at Yonge St & Highway 7

Good Morning,

I understand that Richmond Hill council is holding a special meeting on Tuesday 19 April to discuss the city's response to the Enhanced Minister Zoning Order (EMZO) issued on Thursday 14 April by the Ontario government with respect to plans for Transit Oriented Communities (TOCs) developed by outside agencies for the area around the northern end of the planned Yonge subway extension. Evidently the government is intent on pushing these projects through despite formal protests from the cities of Markham and Richmond Hill and from numerous local citizens who will be forced to live with the consequences.

I wish to put on record for this council meeting that I strongly condemn the Ontario government's exercise of these over-riding powers for two reasons. Firstly, this EMZO ignores serious objections by local municipalities and their duly elected officials, and circumvents traditional planning processes laid out in the Ontario Planning Act. It is authoritarian, autocratic and should not be countenanced in a democratic country like Canada. It is intolerable that the Ontario government should hand down its orders without meaningful consultation with municipalities that are already charged with orderly development of their communities. This action is an insult to, and shows contempt for, our lower levels of government and smacks of direct rule whatever the locals might think. What we need for a successful outcome is full collaboration with local government, not decrees from on high.

Secondly, the monstrous plans for the Bridge and High Tech TOCs are totally ill-conceived, proposing unheard of vertically-oriented developments and excessive population densities with no employment nodes, insufficient public infrastructure, and no affordable housing requirements. In short, there is complete disregard for the wider fallout of these developments on the surrounding communities. There is nothing wrong with the concept of TOCs, with regard to the need to limit urban sprawl and preserve green space and farm land, but there is everything to be said for integration of such projects with local official development plans, as both Markham and Richmond Hill have been working on for years, to be sure that we sustain liveable communities in the face of inevitable growth. Such integration is what these

TOCs ignore.

I therefore strongly urge that Richmond Hill Council bring a motion to condemn the Ontario government's imposition of an EMZO with respect to process, and its endorsement of totally inappropriate TOC development plans with respect to substance.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Cockle  
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Richmond Hill