

SCARBOROUGH TRANSIT *ACTION*

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Auditor General to investigate TTC Briefing Note and overall cost effectiveness of Scarborough Subway Extension

Members of the transit advocacy group, Scarborough Transit Action (STA), met with Toronto's Auditor General to lodge a complaint regarding a lack of evidence-based decision-making for the Scarborough Subway Extension. The group alleges that political gain, not sound transit planning and economic criteria, have driven the decision-making process. As a result, Council has never had the benefit of full, accurate and unbiased information with which to guide decisions on which technology will be used to replace the aging Scarborough RT.

The group and two allies have asked the Auditor General, Beverly Romeo-Beehler, to investigate the entire decision-making process to determine if the mayor's office and council have properly exercised their responsibilities for stewardship of public funds.

"We think that from the beginning the process has been guided more by political goals than value for money", said STA member Khalidha Nasiri. "We are concerned, for example, that the conclusions in the TTC Briefing Note were based on inaccurate assumptions about the LRT option, in order to justify moving ahead with the Scarborough Subway Extension."

"If it weren't for all the political finagling, people would be getting around Scarborough now on a modern seven-stop Light Rapid Transit system, fully paid for by the provincial government", said Scarborough Transit Action member, Vincent Puhakka. "Instead we are stuck with an

ill-informed decision for a one-stop subway that won't provide the local service that our neighbourhoods need, will take at least six more years to deliver and will cost billions of dollars to build and maintain.”

The cost of the one-stop subway has already increased to such an extent that at only five per cent design, it will consume the funds for the Eglinton East LRT (EELRT) that were freed up with the switch from three stops to one stop. It was the EELRT that allowed Mayor Tory to refer to the plan as a transit network.

"It's time we shine a light on what is really going on at city hall", said Brenda Thompson, STA Chair. "Especially now, with Toronto's budgetary constraints, the public needs assurance that we are providing the most rapid transit to the most number of transit riders, especially transit riders in our underserved neighbourhoods."