

SCARBOROUGH TRANSIT **ACTION**

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Scarborough Transit Action requests investigation of group partnering with Oxford Properties

Yesterday, Scarborough Transit Action, a transit advocacy group, in support of an LRT Network, lodged a request with Toronto's Auditor General to investigate an organization called Connect Scarborough. Although it portrays itself as a community advocacy group, Connect Scarborough's address is that of Temple Scott Associates, a downtown lobbying firm.

Its spokesperson, Mr. Ryan Singh, is also registered with Toronto's Lobbyist Registrar as representing Temple Scott, seeking support for the Scarborough Subway Extension, on behalf of its client, Oxford Properties Group. Oxford Properties owns the Scarborough Town Centre.

According to Lobbyist Registrar by-laws, if a "not-for-profit organization is funded by a for-profit entity....to advance the financial or commercial interests of the for-profit entity", they need to register. "We think Connect Scarborough should be more up front about its intentions. Also, we think the question of whether this group should be registered with the Lobbyist Registrar needs to be examined", said Scarborough Transit Action member, Vincent Puhakka.

Mr. Singh is listed on the website of the Scarborough-Rouge River Provincial Liberal Association as President. And Mayor Tory referred to him as a "pro-subway resident", rather than a lobbyist at a press conference at Kennedy Station last week.

"There is a lot of cross pollination between Connect Scarborough, the Ontario Liberal Party, the Mayor's Office and Oxford Properties. I can't help but wonder, who we are building transit for? Is to to bring rapid transit to as many transit riders as possible or to promote development exclusively around Scarborough Town Centre?" said Brenda Thompson, Scarborough Transit Action chairperson.

A seven-stop Scarborough LRT would also bring economic development to Scarborough Town Centre. In fact it would increase the redevelopment potential and rapid transit access because there would be more jobs and more stations within walking distance.

The cost of the one-stop Scarborough Subway Extension has jumped to \$3.35 billion eating up any money that could be used to fund the seventeen-stop Eglinton East LRT. Meanwhile the number of new riders the subway will attract has dropped from 4,300 to 2,300.