

April 4th, 2017

Kathleen Wynne, Premier
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

The Honourable Glen Murray
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change
2nd Floor Macdonald Block, 900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1N3

Dear Premier Wynne and Minister Murray,

We are asking that you require that the one-stop Scarborough Subway Extension (SSE) project be evaluated in comparison with the five-stop Scarborough RT and with the seven-stop LRT that was originally planned to replace the Scarborough RT.

As you are aware, the Environmental Assessment for the SSE is scheduled to commence shortly. Ontario's Transit Project Assessment Process provides for the Premier and the Minister to take action if there is "potential for a negative impact on a matter of provincial importance that relates to the natural environment." Accordingly, we believe:

- the SSE has the potential to exacerbate, rather than reduce, Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions
- that building the seven-stop LRT instead, would reduce Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions arising from transportation.

Ontario faces a stiff challenge in achieving its climate change targets. The [2016 Annual GHG Progress Report](#) of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario warns that Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan is unlikely to achieve the province's 2020 target for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It cautions that "transportation is Ontario's highest and fastest growing source of GHGs, "having increased over 27 per cent since 1990" and concludes that "reducing transportation emissions, must, therefore, be Ontario's highest climate change priority."

There are numerous grounds for concern about the potential for negative environmental and social impact of the SSE:

- **Design, construction and operation of the proposed 1-stop subway will not help reduce GHG emissions in a timely fashion.** A recent [study: The net greenhouse gas impact of the Sheppard Subway Line](#) by University of Toronto researchers measured the emissions generated by using large amounts of concrete and metal rebar as well as energy in subway construction and found it will take anywhere from 18 to 33 years for the line to offset its emissions. The study's recommendations include laying line above ground when possible, so as to reduce the polluting inputs. Similarly, the SSE is expected to take an enormous amount of concrete and other materials, because of the complexity and depth of its design and will run under capacity for decades. In contrast, constructing and

operating a seven-stop LRT, built mostly above ground, would generate significantly fewer emissions during construction and attract more riders therefore offsetting its emissions much sooner than the SSE.

- **Costs of the SSE have increased to such an extent there is no money left for other priority transit lines for Scarborough.** At just the five percent design stage the SSE has consumed almost the entire envelope of money that the three levels of government had earmarked for higher order transit for Scarborough, which has left the 18-stop Eglinton East LRT unfunded. With so many unfunded transit projects in Toronto and elsewhere in Ontario, there is no guarantee that if the SSE is built that any other rapid transit project will appear any time soon in Scarborough. If the seven-stop LRT were to be built, there would be money left in the envelope to build the Eglinton East LRT. This would create a genuine network, linking a large part of Scarborough with rapid transit, further reducing the need for car travel and therefore, reducing emissions.
- **Unnecessary delay in providing rapid transit alternatives to personal auto travel.** Construction of the SSE is not expected to start until 2020 and won't be running until 2026 at the earliest, whereas the seven-stop LRT would only take four to five years to build.
- **LRT would carry more riders at peak times, 8,000 persons/hour, compared to just 7,300 persons/hour for the SSE.** Also, the latest city [report](#) shows an almost 50% drop (from 4,500 down to 2,300) in the SSE's ability to attract new riders.
- **With its above-ground design, the LRT option would encourage more dense development along its stops, more jobs and greater walkability.** It would maintain current RT station locations, as well as adding two new ones, which allow greater interface with the existing transit network and thus, more opportunities for people to use transit instead of their cars. But the SSE, with just one stop, will eliminate stations that are currently used by more than 12,000 riders per day and reduce connections with other transit.

So, Premier Wynne and Minister Murray, there is a lot riding on the decision of which option should be built in Scarborough. At the very least, there should be a careful comparative evaluation of the three options. Everyone in Ontario needs to know that scarce public funds are being used to maximize social, economic and environmental benefits.

Yours sincerely,

Scarborough Transit Action

TTCriders

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