

SCARBOROUGH TRANSIT *ACTION*

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Lawrence East Smart Track Station bad for transit riders, advocacy group says

85% of surveyed transit riders unaware that Lawrence East SRT station will close

Transit advocacy group Scarborough Transit Action is calling on Mayor Tory's Executive to abandon the Lawrence East Smart Track station and get on with building the seven-stop LRT to Malvern.

After surveying riders at the Lawrence East SRT station, STA discovered that just over 85% of respondents are not aware that their station will close, to be replaced with a SmartTrack station. Furthermore, 50% of respondents indicated they are traveling elsewhere in Scarborough from that station; trips that Smart Track will do little to serve.

"The Lawrence East Smart Track station will not make up for the elimination of rapid transit access for the 10,000 riders who currently use the Lawrence East RT station. We will be waiting longer on more crowded buses and that's not right," says East Scarborough resident, Leonie Thelwell.

The Metrolinx Initial Business Case (IBC) pointed out adding a stop at Lawrence East to the GO line would only make things worse. It would actually result in a net loss of 490 riders and put even more cars on the road. It would result in more congestion, more accidents and more greenhouse gas emissions. The evidence does not support this station, which is why the IBC said it should not be approved.

The 54 Lawrence East bus currently drops riders off at the Lawrence RT station. The 39 Finch East and 199 Finch Rocket will provide similar access if the proposed Finch SmartTrack station is built. But for riders to get on the Lawrence East SmartTrack, it will no longer be as convenient. They will be required to get off at the Lawrence East overpass and walk down several flights of stairs. Instead of waiting four minutes at no extra cost, they will have to pay a GO fare (minus \$1.50), wait fifteen minutes and they will only be able to get downtown, not to Scarborough Town Centre or other places in Scarborough the way they do now.

"With Lawrence East SmartTrack and one-stop subway to downtown, Scarborough's low income neighbourhoods and campuses are being deprived of the rapid transit they would have had with an LRT network, *that* is what the city has failed to address with this plan", says Scarborough Transit Action co-chair Vincent Puhakka.

The Toronto Auditor General's investigation into the TTC Briefing Note on the Scarborough LRT concluded that construction could begin in 2018. The seven-stop Scarborough LRT would retain the Scarborough RT stops and add two new ones at Centennial College Progress and Sheppard Avenue East.