

Light Rail Transit FAQ's

LRTS, SUBWAYS and the SCARBOROUGH RT

Is the Scarborough RT an LRT?

An LRT uses a different technology from the Scarborough RT (SRT). For pedestrian safety, the SRT requires an elevated track because it gets power from below, through linear induction which means it cannot accommodate pedestrian crossings directly over the tracks. An LRT gets power from above and it can run on the road, much like a street car or on its own separate, elevated or underground track, all winter long. They run LRTs all winter long in Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa and Waterloo.

LRTs are the same as streetcars aren't they? LRTs use a similar technology as street cars but they are wider, faster and can carry more people. They also have their own dedicated lane and signal priority so they don't get stuck in traffic the same way a streetcar does.

Wouldn't a subway be better than an LRT?

When we redirect funding for an LRT to a subway, we end up with a much shorter line, with fewer stops. Plus, a Scarborough subway would operate at a loss due to insufficient ridership, which drains money away from our already underfunded TTC services eg. Sheppard subway costs us \$10/ride and the Toronto York Spadina Extension to Vaughan costs us \$24/ride. LRTs are well suited to Scarborough's spread out, car-oriented urban design. The Eglinton East LRT is 27 km with 20+ stops. It is within walking distance to a lot more people.

I would be OK with the Eglinton East LRT if it were underground.

An underground LRT comes with exactly the same issues as a subway: huge costs with stations farther apart.

LRTS AND CARS

With an LRT I won't be able to make left turns.

Left turns will be possible at most intersections with traffic lights. In some places the LRT won't change anything anyway: Kingston Road already has a median. The light cycles will probably have "advanced green" signals that will make left turns safer. In some cases, you'll need to use an "advanced green" to make a U-turn to double back and make a right. On the plus side, there will be fewer dangerous left turns across traffic.

The LRT will increase congestion along Eglinton, Kingston, and Morningside.

With its own right of way, and a capacity of up to 250 people per car, an LRT will be able to move far more people. It could actually eliminate the need to drive and if more people choose transit there should be less congestion.

Because of the LRT and the congestion, people will be making shortcuts on side streets (aka “traffic infiltration”). Ensuring that people are not speeding down your side street is a big issue. Lots of neighbourhoods have dealt with this problem through lower speed limits, one-way streets, curb extensions, and speed bumps.

The LRT should be elevated so that it’s out of the way. Like the Vancouver SkyTrain, the Chicago L or the Scarborough RT.

If built as an elevated line, there will be huge pillars in the road; it won’t be out of the way. The stations will be complicated. People will need ways to get up and down, requiring elevators and escalators which increases costs and reduces the number of stops.

The LRT will cause us to lose bus stops.

Correct. The trade-off is that the LRT will move much faster than buses do today. If you are traveling between two places that are close to major intersections, your trip would be much faster on an LRT than one of the buses today. If you are headed to a place that is far from a stop then you will have to walk further, but your trip will still probably be faster on the LRT.

The LRT will be slow because of the traffic lights; what happens if there is an accident?

The traffic lights will be synchronized to let the LRT vehicles through without waiting. It will sometimes happen that there are accidents at intersections and this will block the LRT line. This even happens on the subway too – when a train breaks down or there is a suicide. There is no reason to think that the LRT line will be blocked often, but we will be pushing the TTC to have backup plans when this happens.

This will be just like the “St. Clair West streetcar disaster”.

There is no disaster on St. Clair West. No one who lives near St. Clair West talks about a disaster. It is a bustling, thriving part of the city. The shops that are closed on St. Clair West are mostly those in buildings that will soon be knocked down for new condos. Right now this is happening near Winona Drive. The St. Clair streetcar carries 38,000 people/day. This is nearly as many as the Sheppard subway (80%) with way fewer costs and way more stops

LRTS AND PROPERTY VALUES

The LRT will cause our property values to go down.

Chances are, property values will go up. Housing prices are skyrocketing around good rapid transit.

The LRT will cause our property values to go up. Gentrification will force low-income residents out.

This is a very real possibility and we will have to push back so that affordable housing is integral to redevelopment along any new rapid transit corridors in Scarborough. That said, the LRT should still be built. Join us to ensure housing affordability near good transit.

During construction the LRT will cause our businesses to suffer. Construction of any new transit infrastructure can adversely affect business. In the case of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT the city provided some [financial relief](#). It helps to stay informed about the project and to pool resources with other businesses through your local BIA.

MODES OF PUBLIC TRANSIT

	Frequency	Distance between stations/stops	Peak hour Capacity	Speed km/h	Located
BUS	10 - 30 mins	250 m	900 - 3000	10-20 km	road
STREETCAR	10 - 20 mins	250 m	1,000 - 3,250	10-20 km	road
Scarborough RT	4 mins	1 km	4,000	35 -50	Separate - elevated ground
BRT	90 secs	500 metres	1,2000 - 10,000	30	dedicated lane
LRT	90 secs	500 metres	3,100-18,000	15-30	Dedicated lane, separate or road, elevated, tunneled
SUBWAY	90 secs	350 m - 2.5 km	13,000 - 30,000	25 - 50	Fully separate ground or tunneled
GO TRAIN	8 - 15 mins	2.5 km Less in urban areas	2,000 - 20,000	30 - 50	Separate - ground

http://www.metrolinx.com/thebigmove/Docs/big_move/RTP_Backgrounder_Transit_Technologies.pdf
https://www.ttc.ca/PDF/Transit_Planning/TTC_Service_Standards.pdf
http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en18/v1_307en18.pdf

BOMBARDIER FLEXITY OUTLOOK



TTC STREETCAR

- Type – multi-articulated, six-axle
- Height– 3.84 m
- Seats– 70
- Weight– 48,200kg
- Length– 30.20m
- Speed– max 70km/h
- Width– 2.54 m
- Planned Service Loads: 70 seated; 130 maximum

Courtesy of Toronto Transit Commission