



TRANSPORT ACTION ONTARIO

(formerly Transport 2000 Ontario)

Advocating for Sustainable Public and Freight Transportation

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Media Release on Scarborough Subway Extension and Federal Announcement

This morning, the Government of Canada will announce details of their funding commitment to the Scarborough Subway. Transport Action Ontario is pleased to see the federal government invest in GTHA transit infrastructure, but at the same time must express some concern about the risks that have been raised by the City of Toronto and TTC during the July Council debate.

City staff warned that the network impacts of extending the Bloor-Danforth Subway were a concern, but were not yet well understood at the time of the debate. The ridership projection they presented in their report assumed the Downtown Relief Line, a multi-billion dollar project, was in place. They stated that they had yet to determine whether or not the Relief Line would be a prerequisite for the Scarborough Subway. They noted that in the absence of the Relief Line, network capacity enhancements would be required such as Automatic Train Control on the Bloor-Danforth line, expansion of Bloor-Yonge station, and expanded capacity between Bloor and Union stations on the Yonge line. None of those were part of the \$2.3 billion estimate for the Scarborough subway, and each of those upgrades would cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

This is why the Transport Action Ontario report "*GTHA Regional Rapid Rail: A Vision for the Future*," released July 15, proposed using the GO corridor, electrified, as a means of alleviating the subway network. By tying the nearby GO rail network into Scarborough Centre and further through northeastern Scarborough, both the Kennedy and Bloor-Yonge transfers could be eliminated for Scarborough commuters, if done in combination with Lakeshore GO electrification (already a Metrolinx Next Wave project). That would attract riders away from the subway due to the transfer-free trip downtown and the higher speed of electric multiple-unit GO vehicles. This would be of great benefit to both the Toronto transit network as a whole and to Scarborough commuters, who have some of the longest commute times within Toronto. As such, we urge this electric GO option, a "surface subway," be considered, given its network relief potential that responds to the concerns raised in the staff report to Council.

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