

2014 ONTARIO ELECTION: WHAT THE PARTY LEADERS ARE SAYING ON INVESTING IN TRANSPORTATION

CivicAction asked the leaders of the four major political parties in the 2014 Ontario Election where they stand in terms of supporting greater investment in transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

CivicAction is encouraged to see a historic commitment to creating a dedicated transportation fund in the platform of every major Ontario political party.

Here are their responses to the three questions in the questionnaire see below for the full letter to the four political parties:

1. Yes or No: Will you commit to improving our daily commutes by delivering dedicated and sustainable funding for new transportation services and infrastructure in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area?

Andrea Horwath – Ontario NDP

Yes. Andrea Horwath and an Ontario NDP government will bring better public transit to cities and towns across Ontario. We are committed to the Big Move. To get the next wave of projects under way, we will create a dedicated fund of \$29 billion over 10 years for transit and transportation projects across the province. We will also prioritize high impact transit projects and kick-start transit relief with an additional \$250 million annually. While the Liberals refused to allocate any funds to specific projects in Budget 2014, we will begin flowing funds immediately to the Downtown Relief Line, Scarborough transit, Clean Trains Now on the air-rail link, all-day two-way GO train service to Kitchener-Waterloo, and year-round daily GO train service to St. Catharines and Niagara Falls. We are also the only party committed to fully funding the Hamilton LRT.

Tim Hudak – Ontario PC Party

The Ontario PC Party responded to our questions by pointing us to their platform through a letter enclosed below.

Mike Schreiner – Green Party of Ontario

Yes.

Kathleen Wynne – Ontario Liberal Party

Yes. The 2014-15 Ontario Liberal budget proposed a new dedicated fund to help address congestion in the GTHA. If given another mandate, the Wynne government intends to pass the budget. Since 2003, we've also provided municipalities with \$2.7 billion for transit infrastructure under our now-permanent gas tax program.



2. How will you ensure that this funding is transparent and accountable, so taxpayers know that their dollars are being spent wisely?

Andrea Horwath – Ontario NDP

Andrea Horwath and an Ontario NDP government will restore accountability for transit spending. Long-term funding for transit depends on support from all Ontarians. It requires public trust based on proper independent oversight and real results for all regions. People need to know that their tax dollars are being respected and invested responsibly.

The Ontario NDP will get a Financial Accountability Office up and running – and will ensure all long-term project financing options, including green bonds, are reviewed by the Financial Accountability Officer. This office will guarantee proper independent oversight of transit spending plans. After all, wasteful spending should be prevented, not just uncovered years later by the Auditor General.

We will also stop the government's self-promotional advertising, saving millions of dollars that will be better invested in frontline transit service. Metrolinx should be guaranteeing completion dates for GO service to communities like Kitchener-Waterloo and Niagara Falls, not promoting themselves on television. A NDP government will also improve accountability by establishing travel time and performance targets to help reduce commute times.

Tim Hudak – Ontario PC Party

The Ontario PC Party responded to our questions by pointing us to their platform through a letter enclosed below.

Mike Schreiner – Green Party of Ontario

The GPO will work with other parties to implement dedicated revenue tools that are fair and progressive, such as congestion charges, gas taxes and parking fees, to raise \$3 billion a year to build and operate transit communities across Ontario.

We believe we must have the courage to say that we are willing to pay for what we need.

Kathleen Wynne – Ontario Liberal Party

Once the funds are established, the Wynne government would track new spending on projects, ensuring transparency and accountability for all Ontarians. An online portal would report publicly on project funding and implementation progress.



3. How will you take steps to create immediate relief for commuters, while we wait for longer-term infrastructure projects to be completed?

Andrea Horwath – Ontario NDP

Congestion is costing all of us too much in lost time, lost profits, and lost opportunities. We need to build transit projects for the next decade and the next generation, but we also need to improve service right now. Delays have plagued our transit system for too long under the Liberals. It's time to invest in immediate service improvements and get shovels in the ground on priority projects. The NDP is the only party committed to kick-starting transit relief with an additional \$250 million in annual funding. This commitment is on top of the dedicated \$29 billion 10 year fund for priority projects. We will also restore funding for new buses in 127 communities across Ontario, which Kathleen Wynne cut. By investing \$60 million per year, we will get new buses on the road and serving families across the province. These quick-win investments are crucial to cutting commute times, cutting the cost of gridlock, and improving service in all communities for today's families.

Tim Hudak – Ontario PC Party

The Ontario PC Party responded to our questions by pointing us to their platform through a letter enclosed below.

Mike Schreiner – Green Party of Ontario

There are a variety of steps we could take, including a tax credit for transit users (to push more people to take transit NOW), immediately invest in buses and streetcars to expand transit choices and lower wait times, while we look at longer term solutions such as listed above. We also want to invest in our local communities to create active living communities, having 2% of the current infrastructure budget be allocated to walking and cycling infrastructure. We also would support local community growth to lower commuting needs.

Kathleen Wynne – Ontario Liberal Party

Ontario Liberals will build on the success of 30 minute all-day, two way service on the Lakeshore GO line and make immediate improvements such as expanded GO service to Waterloo Region and Barrie. We will also expand Presto integration, new parking facilities at GO stations, and move forward with the continued expansion of bus rapid transit in Brampton, Mississauga, and York Region. We have also provided the TTC with funding for 204 new streetcars that will begin rolling out in August 2014.



May 22, 2014

Will you deliver a better transportation network for us all?

CivicAction works with leaders from across all sectors to tackle some of the Toronto region's toughest social, economic, and environmental challenges. A key part of the solution to each of these challenges is a better regional transportation network.

Residents of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) have amongst the worst commute times in North America, making traffic congestion one of the region's defining issues. It's affecting our quality of life and our collective economic, social, and environmental prosperity.

[CivicAction](#) and its [Move the GTHA](#) partners have engaged millions of residents and civic leaders to call for new, dedicated revenue sources to fully fund and implement a seamless regional transportation network, and the public and political support is there.

- With the highest backing to date, the results of an April Angus Reid Forum poll* show that **87%** of GTHA residents want to see transportation as a regional spending priority, and **83%** said they would more likely support new taxes or fees if they were put into a dedicated fund for transportation. **Nearly 60%** are more likely to support a political leader who brought in new funding sources for transportation improvements.
- **More than half of all politicians (192)** representing the GTHA have signed CivicAction's Pledge to Get a Move On at www.your32.com, including close to **60% of GTHA MPPs**.

As Premier, you will have a mandate to tackle congestion and deliver to residents a more prosperous economy and better quality of life. We are asking the leaders of all major political parties in Ontario to complete the following questionnaire and return it by **Friday, May 30, 2014**. We will share the responses to the questionnaire on the websites of [CivicAction](#) and [MovetheGTHA](#), a coalition of organizations calling for new, dedicated funding for a better transportation network.

- 1. Yes or No: Will you commit to improving our daily commutes by delivering dedicated and sustainable funding for new transportation services and infrastructure in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area?**
- 2. How will you ensure that this funding is transparent and accountable, so taxpayers know that their dollars are being spent wisely?**
- 3. How will you take steps to create immediate relief for commuters, while we wait for longer-term infrastructure projects to be completed?**

About CivicAction's Your32 campaign - CivicAction and its 50+ team of civic [Champions](#) and Regional Co-Captains have built support for a better regional transportation system and new sustainable ways to pay for it. For more information, visit www.your32.com.



About CivicAction

For the past 10 years, the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance (CivicAction) has brought together senior executives and rising leaders from all sectors to tackle some of our region's toughest social, economic, and environmental challenges. For more information, visit: www.civicaction.ca, @CivicActionGTA

* Survey conducted from April 4-7, 2014 with 1042 GTHA-resident members of the Angus Reid Forum. For more information go to www.movethegtha.com

LETTER FROM THE ONTARIO PC PARTY:

May 26, 2014

Ms. Sevaun Palvetzian,
Chief Executive Officer
CivicAction
110 Yonge Street, Suite 1800
Toronto, ON, M5C

Dear Ms. Sevaun:

Thank you very much for your letter. We appreciate the opportunity to listen to your priorities for Ontario. We share your commitment to Ontario's future and believe that with more and better jobs, we can do what's necessary to bring about the change Ontario needs.

I'm excited about our *Million Jobs Plan*—a plan to bring jobs back to Ontario, stop overspending, balance the budget and keep our debt from growing. Our plan relies on the notion that government should be smaller, but what it does, it does better. Our priorities for this election can be found at www.millionjobsplan.com

We need to face our challenges honestly and compassionately. It won't be easy, but it can be done and it will be worth it. I know we can build a previously unimagined Ontario, but it's going to take some courage and a willingness to challenge the failed status quo. That's what our Ontario PC *Million Jobs Plan* delivers. We are asking government to tighten its belt, the way everyday Ontarians have, so that one million men and women out of work will have a shot at solid, good-paying jobs.

We've got a job to do. It's time to get Ontario working better.

Sincerely,

Tim Hudak
Leader, Ontario PC Party