

(ANSWERS RECEIVED FROM NDP, Sept. 19, 2011)

Mississauga – Questions for Provincial Parties

What actions will your party take to help fund and grow transit? Will your party commit to financial support of the Mississauga LRT?

NDP will invest over \$900 M over four years to fund 50% of the operating subsidy for municipalities that freeze their transit fares. We will continue to move forward with investments in public transit under the Big Move and Move 2020. We will announce specific measures soon.

Will your party commit to developing a new, long-term, sustainable infrastructure investment plan for Ontario municipalities?

We are committed to \$35 billion in infrastructure investments in municipalities over the next three years. We will make a new three-year \$210 million investment in the repair of roads and bridges. We will continue with the scheduled upload of provincial services to free up municipal funding for capital and operating costs.

Will your party agree to change the rules of arbitration and make arbitration settlements more affordable to communities?

We have no plans to change the arbitration process. We believe that the independence of arbitrators from government is crucial to the collective bargaining process. We believe that further provincial interference in this process is problematic, could contravene legal requirements, and does not constitute an easy fix to municipal funding challenges.

Will your party honour the commitment by the province to develop a shared vision for the OPG site as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding and continue to work with the City of Mississauga to redevelop Lakeview as visualized by the parties to the MOU, the citizens of Mississauga, the landowners, and the rest of Ontario?

We will honour the government's commitment and work collaboratively with all stakeholders to move this vision ahead.

Will you party continue to honour the existing post-secondary funding commitment?

Yes. We will honour current funding agreements. We will invest in new university and college infrastructure as part of our 3-year, \$35 billion infrastructure plan. We will invest \$950 M over four years to support universities in return for a tuition fee freeze to help make post-secondary education more affordable.

Will your party agree to the implementation of an air-zone management program with a pilot project in the Oakville-Clarkson area, and take action to see that they are fulfilled in the next provincial government mandate?

Yes, we will move ahead with the announced pilot project on air-zone management. We have a long way to go in this province towards strengthening the protection of air quality. Unfortunately, the current government has backtracked on air quality protection, for example by reducing requirements for certificates of approval, public comment and public right of appeal under its Open For Business Act. The Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, Canadian Environmental Law Association and Ecojustice called for “major revisions” to the Act “in a manner which ensures the protection of the environment, human health and the public’s right to participate in the environmental decision-making process in Ontario.” The NDP proposed such amendments to the Act, but the McGuinty government refused to incorporate them. The McGuinty government has also failed to make progress in ensuring that cumulative impacts of air emissions from proposed facilities are considered to ensure that new emissions do not compromise already stressed airsheds. In the words of the Canadian Environmental Law Association: “The government has not yet addressed this fundamental weakness in Ontario’s air pollution laws, despite being repeatedly asked to do so.”

Will your party ensure a full Environmental Assessment is conducted on the Greenfield South Power Plant proposal? Will you as a Provincial candidate oppose the construction of the Greenfield South power plant?

The NDP believes that there is significant potential for expanded energy efficiency and conservation in Ontario. The Ontario government has only pursued two-thirds of all cost-effective measures. We also believe that there is significant long term potential for the expansion of renewable energy, whereas the McGuinty government plans to phase out all new renewable energy projects in 2018 to make room for new nuclear reactors. Our plan also significantly expands high efficiency Combined Heat and Power plants, quadrupling the Liberal government targets. All of these options are preferable to building new gas plants near residential areas. We are calling for a full environmental assessment of the Long Term Energy Plan (a requirement which the McGuinty government quietly removed in 2006) in order to ensure that the plan is cost-effective and has the least possible impact on health and the environment.