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Our Vision: Focus on Well-being

We aspire to an Ontario where every single person is living a happy, healthy life, where they can achieve their big dreams.

This campaign is about well-being. It's about improving the standard of living of **all Ontarians**, so that they are fulfilled, healthy and successful.

Ontario is one of the richest places in the world, and our economy continues to grow. Yet there is evidence that this abundance is not shared: many Ontarians feel life is less affordable, over 400,000 of our children still live in poverty, the majority of minimum wage earners in Ontario are women, and we have not addressed persistent problems within the sectors that shape our everyday lives, from education to health to climate. This is especially the case for the most vulnerable of us.

Economic growth is a necessary precondition to Ontario's progress, but the growth rate of the economy should not be the exclusive measure of our success. Growth by itself isn't enough - not when it isn't shared, when it isn't used to ensure equity and access to opportunity for all Ontarians.

A focus on well-being does not come at a cost of economic growth, it in fact enhances it, as a happy, healthy and equitable province is a more productive one.

In order to enhance the lives of Ontarians, we need better data and better measures of the health of our society, and of a Premier's performance, and we believe well-being provides that frame.

While a well-being focus is new to Ontario, it is an approach adopted by other progressive leaders around the world, from Prime Minister Katrína Jakobsdóttir in Iceland to Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern in New Zealand. We need a made-in-Ontario approach to well-being, which will mean doing things differently in our great province. It's not enough to outline where we want to go: **it matters how we make it happen.**

We want to see a government that gets us there by listening to people, by collaborating widely to solve hard problems, and by giving people the tools they need to have a meaningful impact on the issues they care about.

We also need to prioritize. Over the past months, I've travelled across the province and talked to thousands of everyday Ontarians. They told me about their dreams and the barriers preventing them from achieving their goals. They also spoke to me about the problems keeping them up at night. Based on those discussions, we have decided to prioritize four areas of well-being we believe would be meaningful to the lives of Ontarians and where we can have an impact.

Our four well-being priorities demonstrate a broadened definition of prosperity for our province: they incorporate not just the health of our finances, but also of our people, our communities, and our planet.

Well-being Priority #1: Empowering Ontarians where they live

We need to empower people to make choices that work for them, where they are.

A theme that came up repeatedly in my conversations with Ontarians is a feeling of being “stuck” and of lacking options. They feel that they, and their communities, are affected by big global forces from climate change to automation to the opioid crisis, but they don’t have the means to respond. They want to enter the workforce, but lack the transportation needed to get there. They want to reduce their carbon footprint, but lack affordable ways of doing so. They want to return to work after having children, but lack childcare options that make it possible.

Too many Ontarians also believe that political participation has no real effect on what happens to them and their communities. They see political leaders come up with high-level ideas that aim to address issues that we collectively face across the province. But the exact same implementation of even a brilliant policy rarely makes sense in downtown Toronto AND Sarnia AND Attawapiskat.

Ontario is a province of very different places and experiences: that’s what makes us great. We can harness that fully when we recognize that communities are best positioned to implement solutions that make sense in their context.

Politics is not about taking power: it’s about giving power. Local leaders should shape the way that we operationalize provincial policy. Provincial politicians don’t always need to be experts, but they should be enablers and convenors: when people are doing good things, it should be their job to clear a path and create conditions for them to keep doing it, right where they are. When the right people aren’t working together, it should be their job to bring them together to work on local solutions. This is the case on issues from transportation to healthcare to education.

Ontarians should also have a choice about how our democracy works, and how it can work better, including how they vote in their government.

Our two metrics for success

Ontario currently lacks the data needed to know how well we are performing. We commit to partnering with the international agencies that collect this data for other jurisdictions, so Ontarians can know how well the province, and their government measures up.

Having a say in government: The OECD measures “having a say in government” through responses to the following statement: “People like me don’t have any say in what the

government does." On this measure, Canada lags behind many countries, including Denmark, Sweden, the United States and New Zealand. We would work with the OECD to collect this data at a provincial level.

Freedom of choice and control: The World Values Survey (WVS) measures "freedom of choice and control" through responses to the following question: "Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. Please use this scale where 1 means "no choice at all" and 10 means "a great deal of choice" to indicate how much freedom of choice and control you feel you have over the way your life turns out." The WVS does not collect data for Canada or Ontario; we would work with them to collect this data.

Well-being Priority #2: Creating good, meaningful jobs

Ontarians' quality of life is fundamentally shaped by the work we do and the conditions in which we do it: we need jobs that generate both wealth and meaning.

A job is more than a source of income, it provides meaning and purpose to life. Wanting a steady job, but not having one, causes substantially reduced wellbeing and diminished mental health.

While Ontario's unemployment rate is currently low, that does not tell the full story, as it does not include the far too many Ontarians who have given up looking for work due to a lack of jobs or structural barriers that prevent them from joining the workforce. At a regional level the Windsor, Peterborough, St. Catharines-Niagara and London areas have among the highest percentage of adults without a job of anywhere in Canada. Women in Ontario are far less likely to have a job than their counterparts in Quebec. Employment gaps persist for new Canadians, First Nations, and Ontarians with disabilities and too many others.

We need more good jobs, we need more of the right jobs, and we need more rewarding jobs.

We need more good jobs: jobs that pay wages and benefits that can sustain a decent quality of life, that aren't precarious, that allow for family planning and retirement planning.

We need need more of the right jobs: jobs created to meet the needs of a rapidly changing world economy and rapidly developing tech, environmental, and manufacturing sectors.

We need more rewarding jobs: jobs that people find fulfilling, challenging, and that develop their human potential.

Our two metrics for success

Employment: The employment rate (the percentage of the working-age population with a job) for each region of the province.

Job quality: Market income by quintile.

Well-being Priority #3: Becoming carbon neutral

Emission reducing job production is the key to the new global economy.

Well-being requires an optimism for the future and a sense of bettering the conditions around us: in short, helping to create a world we want our kids (and their kids) to live in. To do this, our collective action on reducing carbon needs to match the scale of the climate crisis we are facing. It is not enough to champion “the green sector”: we need to support *all* of our sectors to become green.

In many sectors, Ontario performs quite well compared with our national (and international peers), with emissions falling steadily over the past few decades. Two sectors, however, have seen their emissions grow in Ontario by over 25% since 1990: transportation and buildings. These must be the focus of our climate change efforts.

The good news is that going carbon-neutral will be a boost for Ontario: this is where the global economy is going, and we will have the opportunity to be leaders in a multi-trillion dollar industry. Ontario has immense assets to bring to bear, from our manufacturing companies and infrastructure, to our autoworkers, to leading academic institutions.

Ontario can either shape the climate economy, or Ontario’s economy will be shaped by the climate: more floods, fewer jobs, and less financial stability. Transforming our economy to thrive in the new climate reality won’t just create economic growth, it will improve our quality of life.

Our two metrics for success

GHG emissions from transportation: Transportation accounts for 35% of Ontario’s emissions; in 1990 it was 23%.

GHG emissions from buildings: Buildings account for 22% of Ontario’s emissions; in 1990 it was 16%.

Well-being Priority #4: Making life more affordable

We need to make sure all Ontarians can afford to live the kind of life that they value.

Ontario is one of the most prosperous provinces in one of the most prosperous countries on earth. So how is it that so many people still feel like they need to choose between groceries or rent? Between taking care of children, or pursuing a career? Between making a tuition payment, or making sure a sick parent is cared for?

We need to make sure we have the means to not only get by, but to live the lives we aspire to live. It means not only having the ability to afford housing, food, and education, but enough to visit your kids on the other side of the province. It means when unexpected costs come up, we aren’t worried about making ends meet. It means having money left over to save for retirement.

We also want to make sure our money takes us farther.

That means cheap and convenient transit that actually takes us where we live, north of Bloor or north of Peterborough. That means affordable, accessible childcare that doesn't feel like a second mortgage. That means broadband availability that allows your side hustle to *actually hustle* at more than 8 megabits per second.

We want to ensure that incomes continue to rise, faster for those at the bottom than at the top. This is especially the case for those who earn the minimum within our society.

Our two metrics for success

Non-mortgage debt service ratio: The percentage of household disposable income that is devoted to making required interest and principal payments. In Canada, this recently went above 8%, levels not seen since 2009. No such data exists for Ontario; we would work with Statistics Canada to collect this data.

Household discretionary income: The amount of income that is left over at the end of the month after the necessities of life are paid for.