

JOHN TORY Comments

from TEA's Green Action Agenda Candidate Survey



Prepare for Severe Weather and Climate Change

1. I have put forward the most comprehensive tree canopy program of any of the candidates. It will bring philanthropic and City funds together to return the canopy to 2012 levels. This involves a massive increase in planting.
2. It only makes sense to me that if we have these bylaws prescribing how and what trees are planted as either part of new projects or part of removing ones are required to be moved, that the City have the appropriate staff resources to enforce the bylaws. We know the value of investments in trees.
3. I believe that the City needs to do more to understand and quantify the impacts of both mitigation and adaptation of climate change, and that's why I have committed to appointing a senior staff person to the position of the Environment Advocate, and within the first 90 of taking office, I am creating the Mayor's Sustainable City Advisory Board of industry experts to assist me and the Environment Advocate on the development of a strategy on the impact of climate change on the city and a plan on mitigate and adapt to climate change. We need to ensure that we are building resilient infrastructure going forward.
4. I indicated that I have made commitments to appoint an Environment Advocate, create the Mayor's Sustainable City Advisory Board, request a report on strategy on climate change, and create an annual Sustainable City report on the environment.

Improve Air Quality

5. The current commercial arrangements seem to be working well at Billy Bishop Airport, and I support the value that the current airport is bringing Toronto.

Any further attempts to expand commercial air service at the airport need to have corresponding impact reports attached with them, and I look forward to reviewing those assessments. I will make my decision based on the facts.

6. I support the idea of developing neighbourhood air quality monitoring across Toronto by 2016. It makes sense to me that people know the quality of air we breathe in these communities.

I've yet to see the capital or operational costs of that plan and the length of time to roll it out. I believe that it is a worthwhile exercise to explore the strategy and better understand more importantly what we do with the data when we identify challenges in various air sheds. I would look forward to engaging multiple stakeholders to better understand the uses of the data going forward.

7. I have set out in very great detail my plans for SmartTrack, surface transit, traffic congestion, and cycling. I will leave it to others to determine the precilignment of my plans with those prepared by any individual group.

Improve the TTC

8. I have committed to freezing fares for the first year in office, and cannot commit to anything beyond that. I have been clear that I am open to supporting tax increases at or below the rate of inflation.

9. The growth in ridership from different parts of Toronto through SmartTrack will enable the TTC system to run more efficiently with more revenue in the system. Public transit needs to be affordable and practical for more people to want to get out of their cars and take it, and I am committed to insuring that TTC service levels are improved from current levels, beyond simply keeping pace with organic ridership growth.

10. I support the use of a tax increase dedicated to paying for capital portion of the Scarborough subway line. I am proposing that for SmartTrack we use Tax Incremental Financing for the capital and operating portions of SmartTrack, in addition to federal and provincial funds for public transit. I don't believe that additional municipal sources are required, other than what is currently in the City arsenal.

11. Along with Council, the federal and provincial government, I support the Scarborough subway line. I do not support converting it to an LRT line. I think it's disingenuous to propose to scrap the subway for an LRT then propose to keep the tax increase for other projects.

Reduce Waste

12. Council has adopted a resolution supporting a waste diversion rate of 70% by 2020, and it is not meeting it. We need to understand those challenges, address them and ensure that we are focused on meeting that target.

I am committed to setting higher targets once council has a better understanding of how we achieve 70% diversion, as well as the effort and strategies to achieve higher levels. To that end, I will request staff report back on new diversion target and requirements to achieve it, as we respond to the current diversion rate strategies.

13. Our city has removed most of the value in our waste streams that may be valuable for conversion for energy, and I can say that combusting of waste is not a priority for my administration.

14. I am committed to improving the strategies and tactics to achieve the city's waste diversion target of 70%.

One of the strategies I believe I can assist in achieving greater success in waste diversion rate, is recognizing success in our city of the residents, rate payers groups, Business Improvement areas, industrial and commercial businesses through an award recognition program that makes it a badge of honour to do more for this city.

I believe that we need to better engage our stakeholders, and it's no wonder why residents away from the city's core feel isolated. They don't feel they're part of the city's decisions, and recognition for their successes, in waste diversion and other areas, will help heal and create one Toronto.

15. I already know that since the election of the Fords, less emphasis and effort has been placed on waste diversion in the multi-unit sector. That has to change, and I look forward to discussing the experts recommendations.

It is reported that multi-unit complexes have been the main challenge of achieving the city's 70% waste diversion goal, and it is unacceptable that to-date programs haven't dealt with it. We need leadership at the top.

Detox Toronto

16. It only makes sense to me that when additional toxins and pollutants make their way into our water stream or can now be better detected in our water system that we react accordingly. So long as industry are part of a consultation process to better mitigate the impacts of any new additions of toxic chemicals to the list of "subject pollutants", I would look forward to reviewing and approving those recommendations.

17. If we want to make our city more liveable, it means we need to continue to progressively deal with issues like a toxins reduction strategy. I would be pleased to review recommendations by our experts to tackle those issues.

18. I do not wish to organize a new City department or function in this space. Rather, I would improve outputs in existing functions as regards City-owned assets. As for non-city-owned assets, I would work with Toronto Hydro, TAF and BBP. These are great examples of city organizations that can focus on the noncity assets. With appropriate leadership, we can move forward in this area.