



**Mississauga East-Cooksville
Provincial Liberal Association**

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Response

From: Peter Fonseca
Member of Provincial Parliament, Mississauga East
Ontario Liberal Party Candidate, Mississauga East-Cooksville

To: The City of Mississauga

Regarding: Questions that Mississauga is asking local candidates

1. Reduce Gridlock, More Buses, Cleaner Air

Working together with the Mayor's office, City councillors and City staff we have made great progress on a plan to fight gridlock, reducing greenhouse gases, and keep our economy going.

Mississauga is the 6th largest city in Canada, and continues to grow at a very fast pace. In order to attract more families and more businesses a solid infrastructure is a necessity. That's why the Government of Ontario has invested \$3.6 billion in infrastructure and committed \$17.5 billion dollars to MoveOntario 2020. The government's plan included many projects to meet the future demands of Mississauga.

In the Mississauga East area we have seen the refurbishment of the Cooksville Go Station, the Dixie Go station, and many new environmentally friendly buses added to our streets. We are also delighted the Dundas West LRT (light-rail transit) line, the Eglinton LRT line and other important projects to Mississauga are included in the MoveOntario 2020 plan.

These key initiatives are intended to keep Mississauga and Ontario moving forward. We are dedicated to public transit not only to reduce gridlock, but work towards reducing greenhouse gases and making the air that we breathe easier.

Furthermore, the creation of the Greater Toronto Transit Authority (GTTA) will better help manage, plan and coordinate an integrated GTA system with innovative solutions like the introduction of the Presto one fare card. Making public transit more user friendly.

2. Revamping the Property Tax Assessment System

Mississauga East-Cooksville has over 50,000 homes and encompasses Mississauga City Centre one of the most densely populated areas in our city with many new homeowners. Homeowners need property taxes to be predictable and also feel reassured that those in starter homes, or on fixed incomes should not be subsidizing those with the means to live in large, expensive homes, which is what is being proposed by the Tory Party.

Current-value assessment with a four-year phase-in period will deliver that predictability and fairness.

Prior to the 2007 Provincial budget, the property tax system and subsequently its results were unpredictable, and with this unpredictability the hard working people of Mississauga suffered with unknown property tax assessments and rates.

In the 2007 budget we introduced a number of reforms which will see property tax assessments phased in over a four year period. The people of this province work hard to fulfill their dream of home ownership. They deserve the comfort and peace of mind that comes from a model of fairness and stability, and that's exactly what these changes to the property tax system bring.

3. Uploading not downloading, the elimination of the GTA pooling program

During the years of the Conservative government, many social services were unfairly downloaded. The downloading of the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program, and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) for social assistance recipients was one of the worst injustices on municipalities in the history of Ontario. These programs should never have been funded by property taxes, and Ontario is taking them back in full. The upload will begin this coming January, and will be fully-implemented by 2011. Ontario will also upload some \$540 million of business education taxes during the next seven years.

Our government has taken a number of strides to reverse the many of the downloaded services. For example in 2004 Public Health funding was shared 50:50 between the province and cities, in 2007; Ontario now funds 75 percent of Public Health. Land ambulance will be funded on a 50:50 basis by 2008. We are also undertaking a broad assessment of how many of our services are funded and delivered. The review is looking at all our vital Human Services like housing, health and social services, as well as public infrastructure.

When talking too many of the residents of my riding of Mississauga-East they were very angry with GTA pooling. The GTA pooling program will be phased out

by 2011 and it will bring about \$200 million a year back into the coffers of municipalities, and reduce the burden placed on the Mississauga taxpayer.

Some ask if these things can be done quicker. Our government also has a responsibility to both manage Ontario's finances prudently and to ensure that our hospitals, schools, power grid and infrastructure remain reliable and state-of-the-art. After the inherited \$5.5 billion deficit that the previous Conservative government hid and denied, Ontario's finances are now back into a sustainable surplus. We need that surplus to meet the growing needs of Ontarians, and to ensure that the baby boom generation retires with dignity and receives the health care that North America's biggest demographic segment will require as they age.