



A Baker's Dozen of Key Environmental Questions to ask your Provincial Candidates

1. How would your government re-establish clean energy programs and investments to meet Ontario's carbon reduction strategy?

The current government has spent \$231 Million taxpayer dollars to cancel green energy projects, such as the wind turbine project in Prince Edward County. This government also eliminated the Cap & Trade program which worked in collaboration with Quebec and California to cap carbon emissions (Mike Crawley on CBC News, November 19, 2019). As well wasting taxpayer money to fight carbon pricing. Investments in Green Energy generation appear to be at a standstill.

2. Will your party restore environmental accountability by reinstating the office of the Environmental Commissioner and restoring the power of Conservation Authorities?

The current government eliminated the position of Environmental Commissioner and degraded the powers of the Conservation Authorities to provide environmental direction. As a result we no longer have a measure of greenhouse gas emissions past 2017.

3. Will you make emissions reduction an all Government/all Ministry's priority?

Ontario is not on target to reach 30 per cent below 2005 levels by the end of the decade. Not all ministries are working collectively on lowering GHGs. Thanks to the previous Liberal government and the elimination of coal-fired generating stations, as of 2017, Ontario was already 21 percent below 2005 levels. Because the "Environmental Commissioner of Ontario" was shut down by Ford, we do not have more recent data.

4. Will your party eliminate all carbon sources (natural gas) of Ontario's power generation?

This will mean shutting down the remaining natural gas facilities and migrating to non-carbon sources. There are a variety of ways to expand our clean sources of power generation such as wind, solar, biomass, and reaching out to other jurisdictions such as Quebec Hydro/Manitoba Hydro should be explored. Engagement with the federal and provincial governments to create a cross Canada energy grid should be a key focus for your party.

5. Will your party make Regenerative agriculture a primary tool in its strategy to reduce Greenhouse Gases (GHG's)?

Enhancing the stature of the Ministry of Agriculture to provide support, ideas, policies and funds to assist in the transition to sustainable agricultural practices can create enduring successes for our farming communities and rural economies and significantly reduce GHG's.

6. Will your party enhance the protection of natural spaces to act as carbon sinks and protect biodiversity?

Natural spaces (forests, wetlands, grasslands) mitigate and diminish GHG increases acting as significant carbon sinks. Preservation of natural spaces and leveraging Indigenous stewardship of significant areas of land and water are clear strategies that should be adopted.

7. Will you create an electric transportation infrastructure and specific policies to migrate toward non-carbon emission transportation?

Transportation and buildings are the largest carbon emitters in Ontario

8. Will you stop the overuse of Ministerial Zoning Orders (MZO's)which sidestep the democratic process and often override municipalities' Official Plans?

MZO's are meant to be used rarely for extenuating circumstances. They have been used frequently many times to override environmental concerns.

9. Will you commit to stop urban sprawl and prohibit residential and industrial development on White Belt land, currently used for agriculture?

Green spaces are important for sequestering carbon and ensuring biodiversity and farmland will continue to be fundamental to feeding Ontario and a robust rural economy.

10. Will you initiate high density residential development on available land within municipalities that access public transit?

Denser, walkable communities have less costly infrastructure, better liveability for residents and less carbon emissions.

11. Will your party foster a zero or near zero carbon new building code and create incentives to upgrade existing buildings to reduce their carbon footprint?

In Ontario transportation and buildings are the highest contributors to carbon emissions.

12. Will you foster circular economic principles in the construction/development sector by revising the Ontario Building Code to encourage the use of existing buildings and of building materials acquired through building deconstruction?

When buildings are demolished and the waste materials end up in landfill, they release vast amounts of carbon. (See the Embodied Carbon report within the resources section of our website: drawdownnewmarketaurora.org).

13. Would your government move ahead with current plans to push through Highway 413 & the Bradford ByPass?

The Provincial government ignored the advice of its own consultants in their plans to build two highways, the 413 & the Bradford ByPass. Their own consultants advised that these highways should not cross through Ontario's protected Greenbelt because they would destroy hundreds of hectares of important environmentally sensitive conservation land and farmland. (Toronto Star Tuesday, April 14, 2022, P. A14)