

# Compare the election platforms and promises from Ontario's 4 major parties

Ontarians go to the polls on Feb. 27 in a snap winter election. Here's a look at how the Ontario PCs, NDP, Liberal and Greens compare on some of the most pressing issues for Ontarians.

Sources: [ontariopc.ca](http://ontariopc.ca) | [ontarioliberal.ca](http://ontarioliberal.ca) | [ontariondp.ca](http://ontariondp.ca) | [gpo.ca](http://gpo.ca)

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## Education

### Progressive Conservatives

PC Leader Doug Ford's party hasn't released any details of its education plans. The government announced \$1.3 billion in spending to build or expand 45 schools just before the election, which is happening more than a year before Ontarians expected to go to the polls.

### NDP

Leader Marit Stiles's party wants to spend \$830 million more per year to take care of the province's school repair to-do list. It would hire more staff, make a province-wide school food program featuring fresh products from the province, end streaming (making students choose "applied" or "academic" tracks) and spend in French education and school transportation. It would add \$1,500 in funding per elementary and secondary school student. The party says it would permanently increase base funding for Ontario's post-secondary sector, better fund the Ontario Student Assistance Plan (OSAP), wipe out student loan interest and convert loans to grants. It would fund the Université de Sudbury.

### Liberals

The Liberals under Bonnie Crombie say they will fund post-secondary schools so they don't have to rely on international student tuition. They'd also cap international student enrolment at 10 per cent of each school's student body. The party would eliminate OSAP loan interest and not require payback until recipients make at least \$50,000 a year. They would support 40,000 new, paid co-op, internship and apprenticeship positions by cutting taxes for their employers.

### Greens

The education policies for the Greens and leader Mike Schreiner include boosting post-secondary funding by 20 per cent, fund it based on enrolment rather than performance, with increases tied to inflation. They'd convert OSAP loans to grants for lower-income students and take interest off student debt. They would add \$1,500 in funding per elementary and secondary school student and "properly" fund student support, including ending streaming, capping class sizes in the mid-20s and bringing in a provincewide school program by 2030. The party also says it will clear the public school repair backlog and make sure rural families can afford child care.

# Energy

## **Progressive Conservative**

The Progressive Conservatives are promising that, if elected, they will ban Chinese components from all future energy procurements. The pledge extends to banning state-owned Chinese companies from buying equity in Ontario government energy, major infrastructure or critical minerals, the party said.

## **Liberal**

The Liberals promised to waive HST from heating and hydro bills (see taxes).

## **New Democratic**

The Ontario NDP has promised to offer free or discounted electric heat pumps to households with a rebate of up to \$19,500 depending on household income.

## **Green**

The Ontario Greens have pledged to increase carbon pricing on large industrial emitters, a fee that would continue to rise. Fossil fuel companies would also be charged to use public land. The party has also promised to provide a free heat pump to households earning less than \$100,000 and give interest-free loans to all other homes. The Ontario Greens would create interest-free loans and grants for energy retrofits for private households, co-op or non-profit builders and municipalities. The party said it would phase out natural gas plants in Ontario by 2035 and end the moratorium on off-shore wind energy. It would maintain the existing Bruce and Darlington nuclear power plants. The Greens would also remove HST from several energy-related items (see taxes)

# Environment and climate change

## **Progressive Conservatives**

The party is working to expand nuclear and hydroelectric power and open battery storage plants for these kinds of energy.

## **NDP**

The party says it will bring back electric vehicle rebates, install more EV chargers and bring in building code requirements to support these vehicles. It will provide heat pump rebates up to \$19,500 depending on household income, with more money for homes switching from propane, oil or coal.

## **Liberals**

The party hasn't released any details of its environmental plans.

## **Green**

The Greens will give a free heat pump to households making less than \$100,000 a year and offer zero-interest heat pump loans to those making more. They'd take HST off greener infrastructure such as heat pumps, solar panels and EV chargers, offer EV rebates and require all new homes be able to support an EV charger. They're committing to phasing out fossil fuel electricity by 2035. Part of that would come from allowing more wind turbines on bodies of water. They'd ban single-use plastic water bottles and coffee cups and would also ban food waste from landfills, expanding composting to match. They'd put bottle return deposits on non-alcoholic drink containers. The Greens would retrofit 40 per cent of homes and workplaces to be net zero by 2035 and do them all by 2045. That would lead to hundreds of thousands of jobs, they say. The party wants to establish a Food Belt to protect farmland and a Bluebelt to protect lakes, rivers and wetlands. It wants 30 per cent of Ontario's natural areas to be conservation land by 2030. They'd funnel \$2 billion a year to help communities protect infrastructure from climate change and pay farmers to adapt part of their properties into locally useful habitats such as wetlands and shrublands. They'd end subsidies for fossil fuel companies, saying it would save \$625 million a year, and charge industrial emitters more.

# Healthcare

## Progressive Conservatives

They're proposing \$1.4 billion in new funding for a \$1.8 billion plan to connect two million more people in Ontario with a primary care provider, by creating more than 300 new primary care teams, part of the work to have everyone waiting for a family doctor get paired with one by next year.

## NDP

They're guaranteeing every Ontarian will have a family doctor. A plan costing about \$1 billion a year over four years would bring in 3,500 new doctors, reduce medical paperwork, make it easier for 13,000 internationally trained doctors to work in Ontario, increase medical residency spots and set up a northern Ontario command centre to focus on care in the region. The party would lean on care teams and has a list of changes for its first 100 days that includes approving new teams and how referrals to specialists work. It wants to hire at least 15,000 nurses over three years and require "safe nurse-to-patient staffing ratios," while also moving away from for-profit nursing agencies. The NDP wants to have the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) compensate workers more and for longer. It would fund universal mental health care and clear the youth waitlist. For the opioid crisis it would both fund treatment beds and bring back closed harm-reduction spaces. Locally, it says it would build a new hospital in Brantford, speed up a new one in Scarborough and fund the planning of a new Kitchener-Waterloo hospital. It would add services to the Welland Hospital, to the Fort Erie and Port Colborne urgent care centres and improve 911 service in northern Ontario.

## Liberals

They guarantee every Ontarian will have a family doctor close to home by the end of their first term. The plan is to invest \$3.1 billion to attract and retain 3,100 family doctors by 2029, partly by doubling medical school spots, integrating internationally trained doctors more quickly, luring qualified family doctors working in other fields and incentivizing doctors near retirement to stay. Those doctors would have technology such as AI and eliminating fax machines to more efficiently do paperwork, and they could be part of care teams that work evenings and weekends. The Liberals vow to pay all nurses and personal support workers a living wage. Kitchener-Waterloo's new joint hospital would happen faster, they say.

## Greens

The party wants to recruit 3,500 family doctors to set everyone up with one in the next three to four years. No matter the community or health-care setting, Greens would pay nurses, doctors or personal support workers the same wage, saying it would better serve remote areas. They would also cover travel for health-care workers to treat people at home, cut back administrative work and hire more Indigenous health-care workers. They'd make more nursing program spaces and approve international health-care workers faster. This would allow them to cut back on use of nursing agencies. The party would expand public, 24/7 non-urgent clinics as an alternative to emergency rooms and would start phasing in non-profit long-term care so it can end the for-profit model. A Green government would cover the cost of all mental health care, expand the number of supervised drug consumption sites and create 24/7 mental health crisis teams at a cost of more than \$1.1 billion over four years. They want to cut the cost rural communities pay for new hospitals in half and build new hospitals for Bracebridge and Huntsville.

# Housing

## Progressive Conservatives

The party hasn't released any details of its housing plans. Trying to create conditions to build more homes was a major focus in its last term.

## NDP

It's promising to build or acquire at least 300,000 "permanently" affordable homes, as part of a plan to build 1.5 million new homes over a decade through grants, using public land, taking over the cost of affordable housing from municipalities and more. The NDP would set up 60,000 supportive housing units for people living in tents or shelters, give them more housing benefits, double social assistance and have the province cover shelter and homelessness prevention costs. They're looking to legalize fourplexes in residential areas and taller buildings near transit. The party would bring rent control to newer buildings, ban increases above guidelines and tie increases to the unit, not the tenant. It would limit short-term rentals to people's main home and improve the Landlord Tenant Board.

## Liberals

Their \$3.6 billion housing plan would cut development charges on some new construction and reimburse municipalities for it. They would waive the provincial land transfer tax for first-time buyers, seniors and non-profits. Re-zoning properties could be done more easily, the party says, for example by legalizing fourplexes on residential-zoned land. They'd bring rent control laws to newer buildings while still resetting rents between tenants, vastly speed up the Landlord Tenant Board process and offer short-term, interest-free loans to vulnerable tenants facing eviction. Part of the money would come from eliminating the Building Ontario Fund to attract investment.

## Greens

The Greens would build two million urban homes over 10 years and allow single-family homes to be divided into condos. They'd loan homeowners \$25,000 to add affordable rental units. They would legalize fourplexes and four-storey buildings everywhere and bump that to sixplexes for cities with more than half a million people, or 11 storeys along major transit routes and on main streets. Smaller homes in urban areas wouldn't carry development charges, which the Greens would pay municipalities back for. First-time homebuyers wouldn't pay the land transfer tax. Municipalities would be forced to allow pre-approved building designs, to implement a vacant unit tax, to densify areas around transit and to ban short-term rentals both outside main homes and where vacancy rates are low. A Green government would take over community housing and shelter costs, build at least 250,000 non-profit and co-op rental homes by leveraging public land, renovate another 305,000 community housing units, build 60,000 supportive homes, fund 22,000 Indigenous owned and operated homes and increase funding for women's shelters. They would install rent control on newer buildings, ban rent increases above guidelines and cut Landlord Tenant Board wait times to one month.

# Spending

## Progressive Conservatives

The PCs want to top up a \$190-billion plan for roads, transit and other infrastructure they set out in the 2024 budget by another \$22 billion. Most of that new money would speed projects along or offer provincial money to attract other investments. They are still against the federal carbon tax and will make the 2022 gas tax cut of more than five cents a litre permanent. And they will continue to increase Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) rates with inflation each July. Fewer than two weeks before officially triggering the election, and as talk of an early vote ramped up, the government started sending out \$200 cheques they'd promised in October "to help address the high cost of the federal carbon tax and high interest rates." The party hasn't released a costed platform.

## NDP

The NDP is proposing a varying monthly grocery rebate it says would cost the province just under \$5 billion a year. It would also install a consumer protection watchdog. The party says it will introduce a monthly caregiver benefit and make it less expensive for seniors to renovate their homes to allow them to keep living there. It would eliminate hospital parking fees for staff, patients and visitors and bring back the COVID-era staycation tax credit to encourage tourism within Ontario. It says it will protect the auto industry. Leader Marit Stiles said Jan. 30 she would "be looking very carefully at the details of the deals" struck for electric vehicle battery plants in Windsor and St. Thomas, then on Jan. 31 denied having previously expressed skepticism about the deals and said she'd continue them. It would double ODSP and Ontario Works (OW) rates, create 53,000 new child care spaces, make it easier to form a union, and ban replacement workers during labour disputes. The cap on farm risk management support would be removed. The party hasn't released a costed platform.

## Liberals

The Liberals say they will cut income tax by two percentage points for middle-class families, offer a tax credit of up to \$1,000 for child sports and recreation, not tax home heating and hydro and permanently double ODSP benefits. They promise to cut the small business tax rate from 3.2 per cent to 1.6 per cent and raise the threshold for businesses to qualify. The provincial Liberals are against a consumer carbon tax. The party hasn't released a costed platform.

## Greens

The Greens want to cut income taxes for people making less than \$65,000 a year and households making less than \$100,000 a year, passing on nearly \$19 billion in revenue over four years. They would raise the minimum wage to \$20 an hour. They would raise income taxes on the top bracket to make back \$10 billion and stop those kinds of earners from getting hydro rebates. They say they will invest in local food hubs to support small farmers and businesses, better support agricultural innovation and increase funding to risk management programs which backstop farmers in case prices drop or production costs rise. The party said it would double ODSP and OW rates and tie future raises to inflation, part of a plan to phase in basic income. It would also give child care workers a raise to attract more of them and end for-profit child care. They would end "aggressive and unfair" social assistance clawbacks and payday loans and strengthen grocery price-fixing laws. They would make it easier to form a union. The party has released a costed platform.

# Tariffs

## Progressive Conservatives

The PCs laid out more than \$14 billion worth of support in the first few days of February, the vast majority in tax relief for businesses. They'd also spend \$600 million to keep drawing investment to the province, \$138 million to help workers who want to change jobs and \$120 million to increase the LCBO wholesale discount for bars and restaurants. The PCs supported banning American companies from getting provincial contracts, buying Ontarian and Canadian whenever possible, the Energy East oil pipeline and easier goods trading between provinces. When the tariffs were hours away, the PCs said they were "ripping up" a \$100 million Starlink contract to get high-speed internet to thousands of remote customers because of owner Elon Musk's ties to Donald Trump. As part of an effort to convince Trump not to impose tariffs, the PCs would buy two more helicopters to support border patrols in the Niagara and Windsor areas and ban Chinese state-owned enterprises from future energy contracts.

## NDP

The NDP said it would support directly affected businesses and workers by protecting incomes with the federal government and pausing taxes, creating new supply chains, launching retraining programs and finding new export markets. It would promote buying Ontario products, including from small businesses, and direct provincial agencies to procure in the province while improving interprovincial trade. Infrastructure and housing projects would be sped up. The Starlink contract would be cancelled no matter what happens with tariffs.

## Liberals

The Liberals propose letting Ontario businesses borrow at lower government rates, spending on hospital, school and transportation infrastructure and seeing where they could move money around to support this. They want to increase security along the U.S. border, work to get rid of interprovincial trade barriers, ban American companies from government contracts and offer Canadian doctors working in the United States a \$150,000 bonus to come back and be a family doctor.

## Greens

The Greens pledged to create a tariff task force for trade negotiations, develop a Buy Ontario strategy and create a fund for businesses disproportionately affected by tariffs, diversify trade partners, work with other provinces to remove interprovincial trade barriers and create an investment tax credit "to unlock business investments in Ontario."

# Transportation

## Progressive Conservatives

The PCs say they'll ban congestion charges, which can make drivers pay to enter part of a community. They promise to remove Highway 407 tolls east of Brock Road in Pickering, widen the Queen Elizabeth Way between Burlington and St. Catharines and Highway 69 between Parry Sound and Sudbury, tunnel under Highway 401 in the Toronto area and significantly expand GO Transit. They would have the province take over Ottawa's Confederation rail line at a cost of \$4 billion over 30 years and also take over Highway 174. The PCs say the Northlander train between Toronto and Cochrane is on track to reopen next year.

## NDP

The NDP pledges to take tolls off Highway 407 within 100 days of forming government, starting with removing tolls for trucks on the first day. The province would buy the private part of the 407. It would cover half of municipal transit costs. The NDP would move ahead on GO expansion to Cambridge, Grimsby, Guelph and London and build new GO stations at Mimico and Park Lawn, fund rail to Scarborough and Phase 2 of Kitchener-Waterloo's ION rail line and fast-track the return of the Northlander train. Highway 40 would be expanded to Sarnia and highways 11, 17 and 69 would be widened under an NDP government.

## Liberals

The Liberals say the province would take over and extend Ottawa's light rail line west and take over the capital's Highway 174. ION would be extended to Cambridge and GO Transit would run all day between Kitchener and Toronto and between Niagara and Toronto, including at Grimsby. They would fund safer transit, such as building platform edge doors at TTC subway stations, hiring more special constables and crisis intervention workers in major cities and funding transit safety equipment.

## Greens

The Greens are looking to set up long-range, stable funding for infrastructure in rural and northern areas. They say they will take on more municipal transit costs. They would cancel both Highway 413 connecting Halton, Peel and York regions and the Bradford Bypass connecting York and Simcoe, saying it would save \$2.5 billion a year. They want to see more trucks use Highway 407 for free on dedicated lanes to counter the effects of cancelling Highway 413. They support a Grimsby GO station and want to expand all-day, two-way service. They'd set up an affordable electric bus service connecting cities to rural areas.