

# DAILY COMMERCIAL NEWS

## AND CONSTRUCTION RECORD

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2010 municipal election

Toronto mayoral hopefuls Smitherman, Ford talk infrastructure

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The answers from Toronto's mayoral frontrunners to a Toronto Board of Trade infrastructure blog provide a glimpse at how construction will be kept busy if either is elected.

Andy Manahan, executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, is a guest blogger on the board's Toronto municipal election website [www.votetoronto2010.com](http://www.votetoronto2010.com)

Manahan recently wrote a blog post in which he posed five pressing **RCCAO** questions for candidates to answer as it concerns a vision for the city's infrastructure and transit. The election will be held Oct. 25.

George Smitherman and Rob Ford are widely considered the frontrunners in the mayoral race and they provided answers to some of the five blog questions.

Here are highlights from their answers to infrastructure planning and procurement improvement questions (you can read their [full responses here.](#))

**What is your plan with respect to road, transit, sewer and water infrastructure??**

**George Smitherman:**



"Transit expansion must be the focus on new infrastructure, given the worsening congestion and the growing population in the GTA," wrote Smitherman.

"Clearly, state of good repair on key infrastructure cannot be deferred as it makes for a 'snowball' effect and bigger problem in the future."

Smitherman also pointed to his plan to have business owners be compensated for road repairs and road cuts that are delayed. He will work closely with the Toronto Association of BIAs and key stakeholders, to establish "clear penalty" for road contractors who fail to complete projects on time. These penalties will be passed on to affected businesses.

Smitherman said he would also establish a "new system of 24/7 construction on major arteries" to help minimize disruption.

**Rob Ford:**



Ford has noted that his transportation plan includes a \$700 million investment in road improvements, to be funded with private sector cash generated through subway-related development along the Sheppard Line.

This money will then be used to eliminate a \$250 million backlog of road repairs, complete the \$50 million synchronization of all signalized intersections and provide up to \$400 million for arterial road improvements to increase traffic flow.

“Sewer and water infrastructure maintenance/improvement must continue to be a priority for the city,” added Ford’s campaign team.

**Are there changes you would make to procurement/tendering processes to ensure that Torontonians get better value for money and that more infrastructures can be built with limited dollars?**

**Smitherman:**

Smitherman said he would establish closer ties with Metrolinx for the build-out of transit infrastructure, and focus the TTC instead on day-to-day operations and maintenance.

“This will put construction of major transit infrastructure on a footing similar to other cities in the Greater Toronto Area, concentrating expertise and management focus in the provincial agency while the city and TTC take the role of client and customer,” Smitherman said.

Smitherman also said that when procurement contracts are signed, he will insist on the inclusion of youth apprenticeships, supplier diversity, and “no strike” clauses. He believes this approach to project agreements will “encourage closer co-operation and alignment” of building trades unions, corporate bidders, and city bureaucracy to achieve infrastructure goals.

**Ford:**

Ford’s campaign team pointed to his taxpayer protection plan which will address “this concern in detail.” This plan includes posting online all results of city council voting, reducing “secret meetings” so taxpayers are more informed and setting measurable service standards for front-line city staff.

Ford has said he will publish the city’s entire spending online so vendors can see opportunities that may otherwise be missed. Also, all city purchasing will be open, transparent, and competitive and all major purchases will be tendered.