

Transport Futures holds Ontario gas tax forum July 25

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TORONTO — Transportation advocacy group Transport Futures will be holding a public forum to discuss the new Ontario government’s pledge to reduce provincial gas taxes by 10 cents per litre.

The promise made by the Progressive Conservatives during the recent provincial election was that 5.7 cents would be cut from the current 14.7-cent excise tax and 4.3 cents would be saved through the cancellation of the Liberals’ cap and trade program. A media release noted the cuts will lead to a \$1.2-billion loss to provincial revenues, “much of which funds critical road and transit infrastructure.”

The forum will examine such issues as the long-term impacts on transit ridership and green business practices, whether the cuts will lead to consumers continuing to purchase large vehicles and shun cleaner electric vehicles or active transportation, and whether road tolls could replace gas tax revenue and at the same time reduce congestion.

The release said the forum will “discuss the pros and cons of cutting the gas tax in terms of economics, fiscal policy, transportation demand management, environmental/legal implications and politics.”

Confirmed speakers include Richard Walton, mayor, North Vancouver District; Dan McTeague, senior petroleum analyst, GasBuddy; Michael Roschlau, strategic adviser on public transit and urban mobility; **Andy Manahan, executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario**; Julia Langer, chief executive officer, The Atmospheric Fund; Harry Kitchen, professor emeritus, Trent University; Jason Parent, vice-president, Kent Group Ltd.; and Michael Berends, managing director of ClearBlue Markets.

The event will be held July 25 from 12:45 to 5 p.m. at Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave., Toronto with registration from noon to 12:45 p.m.

For more information visit www.transportfutures.ca/gastax.