

THE CITY WE WANT

Toronto is a city with immense potential. Torontonians come from every part of the world. Our skills and creativity contribute to a richly diverse culture; our dreams are of a just society and decent future for our children and grandchildren. Tremendous wealth is generated here, yet at the same time poverty wages are the reality for too many of our neighbours.

Over the last four years far too much effort has been expended on damage control at City Hall. We are fortunate that the worst service cuts proposed by Mayor Ford were prevented by community mobilization and City Council, but many vital programs have suffered due to cost-cutting. The TTC moves over a million people a day yet urgently needs improvement. Preventative measures for storm water flooding or other emergencies have been put off till some future date – part of the hidden story behind the boast of saving taxes.

Saving money by delaying repairs to a roof may seem easy, until the leaking water ruins far more than you bargained for. Whether it's flooded streets and basements, or crowded roads and buses, or youth involved in violence – it is clear that short-sighted policies fail our city and the majority of its residents.

It is time to assert a new vision for **the city we want**. The labour movement has worked hard to build a foundation of strong public services that reach every neighbourhood and deliver important programs for every community. We know what is important to working families – decent jobs, affordable housing, schools that work for our kids and transit that is fast and reliable.

The city provides recreation and library programs that help develop healthy life choices, childcare for thousands of families, and programs that help seniors keep active. Our vision includes schools that can be centres of life-long learning and community hubs; a city that can once again be a leader in environmental stewardship; a city that has a strong commitment to racial equity and women's equality. The people of Toronto are willing to invest in a city that works for all of us and doesn't leave any of our neighbours behind – because poverty hurts all of us. Politicians who want to cut to the bone, sell off public assets or turn good jobs into poverty jobs, are simply not doing their job.

The people of Toronto deserve to have new leadership that is tough, respected, and willing to fight hard and smart for the interests of all working families. Those who serve on City Council and School Boards have to champion the values that matter to working people – values rooted in the principles of equity and fairness. There are no shortcuts to building a society where everyone shares in common prosperity. It will take hard work, and a resolve to do things right. After all, we want this to be a great city not just for today, but one that future generations can be proud of as well.