

As reported by the *Cottage Country Now* media group, online, September 14, 2011:

## **Responses to a Question Posed to Parry Sound-Muskoka political candidates**

**QUESTION:** *Under your government would the burden on municipalities, and consequently our property taxes, increase or decrease and why?*

### **Progressive Conservative MPP Norm Miller (Opposition Finance Critic):**

“A PC government will make provincial gas tax revenue available to all municipalities in Ontario, not just those that have public transportation, as is currently the case under the McGuinty government. This will mean that all municipalities in Parry Sound-Muskoka will get a share of the gas tax to use for their priorities: roads, bridges or other needs.

They could also use this revenue to lower property taxes. This would be a dedicated sustainable source of revenue that municipalities could make long-term plans based on.”

### **Green Party candidate Matt Richter:**

“The Green Party of Ontario has a number of strategies in place to ensure that costs are not downloaded on or added to municipalities’ limited property tax base.

To name a few, we would immediately create a separate, new, predictable and permanent fund for municipal roads and bridges and provide funding for municipalities to invest in safe roads and trails for active transportation.

Secondly, the GPO would meet the promised upload of \$1.5 billion in social service and court security costs. Additionally, we would commit to shifting the tax burden for waste disposal from municipal property taxpayers to industry through extended producer responsibility laws.”

### **Liberal candidate Cindy Waters:**

“The current Liberal government has committed to uploading more than \$15 million from municipal costs at a minimum. The cost of roads and their upkeep and the cost of social services were downloaded by the Harris government, but the Liberal government is committed to uploading services to ease the burden on municipalities.

The additional losses of local provincial jobs have put an added burden on our area with the loss of payroll. The MTO, MOE, MNR, cuts to hospitals and school boards and the loss of payroll was lost by rural Ontario. We’ve come ahead in the last eight years under a Liberal government.”

### **NDP candidate Alex Zygniuk:**

“Our leader Andrea Horwath has served as municipal councillor. In Andrea’s words: “It makes no sense that municipalities should be on the hook financially for programs they don’t control.”

An Ontario NDP government will initiate a three-year dedicated fund to provide \$70 million annually to help municipalities with road and bridge repairs; this sustainable funding comes as good news for rural and regional municipalities where crumbling infrastructure is a major concern.

We’ll evenly split the operating costs of municipal transit systems. We’ll continue to upload the costs for social assistance and court security. And we’ll make a commitment not to download the cost of hazardous household waste disposal on municipalities or on consumers in the form of eco-fees.

Based on our plan, to upload and relieve municipalities of the cost burdens we have outlined, we should see property taxes positively impacted.”