

Rob Ford's approval rating plummets in new poll



Natalie Alcoba Sep 14, 2011 – 11:18 AM ET | Last Updated: Sep 14, 2011 1:44 PM ET

Mayor Rob Ford is steadfast in his approach to balancing the city's books, despite a new poll showing his approval rating has taken a nosedive amid seemingly unpopular budget cuts.

"I talk to people every day and people say stay the course," he told reporters, surrounded by a girls' winning basketball team called the Toronto Triple Threat. "We inherited a \$774-million mess and the

easy way is to sit back and increase taxes 35%, or \$1500 on the average tax bill. That's not going to happen.

"I'm going to clean up the mess we inherited from the previous administration and get our fiscal house in order. I just started three more football teams at Winston Churchill [Collegiate Institute] yesterday and even teenagers understand, and they come up to you and say stay the course. The teachers, the parents, it was all positive. So, I'm excited for the next three years."

Mr. Ford is refusing to raise property taxes more than 2.5%, and when asked about the uproar over some cost cutting measures, he stressed "we haven't made any cuts at all ... we're finding efficiencies."

He defended eliminating the vehicle registration tax, and said he is "on course" to eliminate the land transfer tax, which brings in more than \$200-million, by the end of his term — but would not commit to rolling it back next year.

According to a poll of 1,046 people, 42% of Torontonians approve of the job Mayor Ford is doing, compared to 57% in June and 60% at the end of February.

The Mayor's tact is more popular among older residents (47% of those over 55) and in Etobicoke-York, where half of the people endorse his work. Toronto East York residents were the least impressed (30% approval), followed by North York (43% approval) and Scarborough (49%).

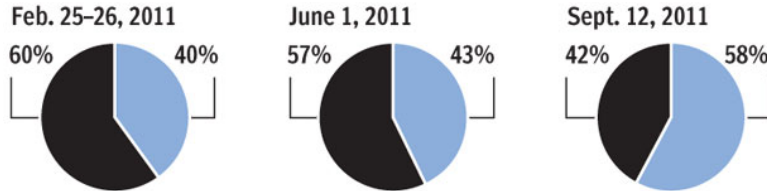
Forum Research surveyed randomly selected residents on Monday, the day city manager Joe Pennachetti released his list of preferred cuts to help balance the books. It is considered to be accurate plus or minus 3%, 19 times out of 20. Age specific results are less accurate. Forum Research paid for the poll "as a public service."

"Rob Ford campaigned on a promise to cut the gravy, none was found and the reality of cutting services residents rely on — often on a daily basis — is setting in," Forum Research president Lorne Bozinoff said in a statement. "This has obviously shaken public confidence in his ability to handle the job of mayor."

ROB FORD'S APPROVAL RATING TUMBLES: NEW POLL

Q: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job Rob Ford is doing as Mayor of Toronto?

■ APPROVE ■ DISAPPROVE



Q: In order to have a smaller increase in property taxes next year, do you approve or disapprove of each of the following?

■ APPROVE ■ DISAPPROVE

