



## Ford says he's confident citizens still support him

*CP24 Staff - Oct 25, 2011*

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford says despite the latest polls showing he's not as popular as he used to be, he's confident that if an election were held today, his administration would still have the citizens' support.

Ford held a news conference Tuesday afternoon, exactly one year after the former Etobicoke councillor was voted into power.

"One year ago, I was elected to bring change to city hall and that is what our team has done," he said, speaking to reporters during a city council recess. "We knew that making the decisions wouldn't be easy - but we are making the tough choices now. We are making changes that benefit the taxpayer."

Ford pointed out several campaign promises that he made and kept since taking the oath of office on Dec. 7.

"Everything that the previous administration said couldn't be done, we've done it," he said.

Among the mayor's achievements:

- Privatizing garbage collection
- Eliminating the vehicle registration tax
- Making the TTC an essential service

Despite his successes, Torontonians polled in a recent Forum Research survey say they're not too impressed so far.

Ford's approval rating sits at 37 per cent, making him the second most unpopular mayor in Canada. The poll ranked the mayors of Canada's 15 largest cities, based on their approval rating.

Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion placed first.

Ford had a 60 per cent approval rating in a Forum poll last February, but his popularity has plummeted since then and he's even been threatened with death.

Controversy and decisions that ruffled feathers appear to have outweighed Ford's accomplishments in the 12 months since he was elected.

Ford was elected on a wave of popularity as he promised to stop the "gravy train" at city hall and end the "war on the car" in Toronto.

However, he has drawn fire from residents for a reported \$774-million budget shortfall, a core service review that led to a heated debate over public services cuts and employees being let go in an attempt to make up for the shortfall.

He has also been criticized for scrapping bike lanes on Jarvis Street and his decision not to partake in Pride Week events.

He has also come under fire for his transportation agenda. After scrapping former mayor David Miller's Transit City plan, Ford has promised his own \$12.4-billion plan to extend the Sheppard subway line and built a new light rail line that would go underground along Eglinton Avenue.

The plan requires billions in funding from the provincial and federal governments.

The mayor did allow one personal moment at the podium. After he was asked by a reporter if there is anything he would have done differently, Ford said he regrets not spending more time with his family.

"The only thing I would have done differently is that I would have spent more time with my family," he said. "My wife and kids come first. They are going to start coming with me everywhere. If I can spend more time with them, that's what I'll be doing."