

# **Heading down the Home Stretch, It's Too close to Call for Toronto Mayor but the Edge Goes to Ford... For Now...**

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Preference with Pantalone (13%) Out of Contention...  
Among those Committed to Go Out and Vote, Ford (39%) Steals  
Back Edge from Smitherman (33%) as Pantalone (15%) Stagnates*

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**Ipsos Reid**

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*Preference with Pantalone (13%) Out of Contention...*

*Among those Committed to Go Out and Vote, Ford (39%) Steals Back*

*Edge from Smitherman (33%) as Pantalone (15%) Stagnates*

**Toronto, ON** – A new Ipsos Reid poll conducted for Global Television suggests that the race to become Toronto's next mayor will be right down to the wire.

With the exit of Rocco Rossi from the race last week, there are just three major candidates left. Realistically, only two have a chance to be elected as the mayor of Canada's largest city.

This poll, which was taken October 15-17, 2010, finds that if the election were to happen tomorrow Rob Ford would garner 33% of Torontonians vote against main rival George Smitherman who would receive 31%.

Joe Pantalone (13%) is effectively out of the race in all but name.

These results are from "Topline preference voters" – a total that includes many voters who won't likely go out to the ballot box on voting day. That's why another set of potential voters become crucial because municipal campaigns in Toronto are notorious for minimal participation by voters: those who say that they are absolutely certain they will go out on Election Day. In the 2003 election when David Miller first was elected mayor, voter turnout was estimated at 38%; in the last municipal election held in 2006, voter turnout was estimated

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at 41%. When trying to predict the outcome of a municipal election, it's most important to focus on voters who will actually show up to cast their ballot on Election Day.

And even though the percentage of those who say they are 'absolutely' certain to go out and vote on Election Day is likely inflated (54%, but no change from last weeks poll) right now, it's an important measure of both commitment and motivation of those most likely to actually show up and mark their ballot.

When the votes are counted among this pool of 'likely turnout voters', it reveals that last weeks advantage for George Smitherman over Rob Ford has flipped: Rob Ford (39% +7) now has the edge over rival George Smitherman (33% -5) and well outpaces Joe Pantalone (15%, unchanged) with only 11% of voters in this pool who remain undecided. It's also important to note that if Pantalone's supporters take the bait from the Smitherman camp that their "vote for Joe is a vote for Rob" and decide to vote strategically with their second choice to stop Ford, Smitherman will likely be the largest beneficiary of any defections.

*The key take away from this survey is that there are approximately 10% of those who are absolutely certain to go out and vote who will determine the outcome--which means that out of the entire pool of eligible Toronto voters around 5% will be kingmakers. Some might suggest that this is a group that can't make up its mind and are simply seesawing between the front runners. Others might proffer that this is more about a rallying voter surge and ebb depending upon which rival candidate appears to be in the lead. Perhaps it's a bit of both.*

As such, a last minute surge – either way – in the next few days could tip the scales for one of the two frontrunners.

As for where the current vote is coming from among those most likely to go out and cast a ballot it's instructive to look at the surges – especially in Rob Ford's back yard:

- Ford (39%) - Etobicoke 62% (+26), Scarborough 49% (+11), North York 37% (+5), Toronto 24% (+3) and York/East York 19% (-27).
- Smitherman (33%) - Toronto 49% (+3), North York 34% (-7), York/East York 34% (+11), Scarborough 23% (-14) and Etobicoke 19% (-13)
- Pantalone (13%) - Toronto 15% (-7), York/East York 27% (+14), Etobicoke 11% (-2), Scarborough 13% (+2) and North York 15% (+6).

### *Other Perspectives...*

#### *Voters and their vote...*

- 54% of Torontonians indicate they are absolutely certain to go out and vote on Election Day. A regional breakdown indicates that those most likely to do so are in Etobicoke (67%), followed by Toronto (60%), Scarborough (52%), York/East York (46%) and North York (46%). Of the candidates, Rob Ford's voter base are notionally more committed to actually go out and vote (63%) followed by those supporting Joe Pantalone (60%) and George Smitherman (59%).
- Topline vote: Ford 33% - Etobicoke 58%, Scarborough 40%, North York 30%, York/East York 25% and Toronto 20%. Smitherman 31% - Toronto 40%, York/East York 36%, North York 28%, Scarborough 25%, Etobicoke 22%. Pantalone 13% - Toronto 19%, York/East York 15%, North York 13%, Scarborough 10%, Etobicoke 7%.

## *Second Choice...*

- Among Torontonians who declare their voting intention, Joe Pantalone emerges as the most popular ‘second choice’ candidate. When asked who their ‘second choice’ candidate is, 35% of declared voters overall state Pantalone, followed by 23% for George Smitherman and just 11% for Rob Ford. 31% of those who declared their primary vote intention do not offer a named “second choice” candidate. Joe Pantalone is a more popular ‘second choice’ candidate among supporters of George Smitherman (60%) than among those supporting Rob Ford (27%). Conversely, George Smitherman is a more popular ‘second choice’ candidate among supporters of Joe Pantalone (59%) than among those supporting Rob Ford (31%).

## *The Issue and motivation...*

- When asked which local issue is the most important motivator for driving their voting behaviour, spending and fiscal concerns emerge as the top issue category, with 19% of Torontonians citing this as the primary driver of their vote-selection. Spending and fiscal concerns are of particular importance in Scarborough where 29% of residents cite this as their top motivator for voting. Other significant drivers are Transit/Transportation (9%) and the Economy/Jobs (4%); 4% of Toronto citizens say that their primary reason for going out to vote is to stop Rob Ford from winning.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Global Television from October 8-10, 2010. For the survey, a representative randomly-selected sample of 500 adults living in Toronto was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within*



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*±4.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of Toronto proper been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/gender and regional composition reflects that of the actual Toronto population according to Census data. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.*

**For more information on this news release, please contact:**

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