

Editorial ? Has the Provincial election campaign begun?

We still have more than a year to go, but it looks very much like Ontarians are starting to prepare for the next provincial election, expected in 2018.

It's clear to us the governing Liberals are lining themselves up for the coming campaign. They are issuing regular statements on the way things have been performing in various sectors, and they seem to be pretty heavy when it comes to self-congratulations.

What else could be expected?

On the other hand, we heard over the weekend about the results of a new Forum Research poll that gave the Progressive Conservatives the support of 44 per cent of decided voters. The Grits are in third place with 24 per cent, one point back of the New Democrats. The Green party checked in with six per cent.

And we would submit even better news for the Tories is their support is spread pretty much across the province. The poll results reported they are in a statistical tie with the Liberals, which should raise a few eyebrows.

No, this is not the time to start speculating on what a government under the leadership of Patrick Brown is going to look like or accomplish. These are simply poll numbers that have been released approximately 15 months before the next election day (Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones' office told us the election is set for June 7, 2018). If the poll numbers 15 months before the last election had meant anything, we would now be speculating on the chances of Tim Hudak's Conservative government being returned for another term.

There's plenty of time for things to change.

Of course, we have to remember that the government is posting poor polling numbers for a reason, or possibly a number of reasons. Our Province is deep in debt. True, the Liberals are maintaining their pledge to have the budget balanced by 2017-18. It will be interesting to see if they can keep that pledge, especially since we should know if it's been accomplished, one way or another, by election day.

There are many people who don't like the fact that their government is mired in heavy debt. These individuals generally want the government working on how to get out of debt, just as soon as the government makes sure it's provided the services that these people want.

There are lots of other issues that are going to crop up in the coming months.

Seen your hydro bill lately? We're hearing horror stories about people who have to decide between putting food on the table or being able to turn on the lights. The government says it's trying to act.

Locally, people want to know what's going to happen with the GTA West corridor. That project has been more or less in limbo for more than a year now.

Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca was in Caledon in mid-December, and one of the things he told the Citizen at that time there should be some news on the matter in the relatively near future.

We don't know how long a period is represented by 'the relatively near future,' but it's safe to guess it's more than 11 weeks.

Who knows? 'the relatively near future' could mean 15 months.