

# GAME CHANGERS

## Host your own townhall or watch party

Your community deserves a voice in this election.

In addition to helping people make it to the polls, we want to support your efforts to get the issues that matter to your community into the debate.

We'll share your community's concerns and ideas with the candidates, and those ideas will help shape the questions the United Way, TMU and the Star ask in the May 31<sup>st</sup> Debate.

### Hosting Townhalls

Hosting a townhall at your site can be an easy way for participants in your programs or members of your community to gather and discuss the issues.

Pick a date and time when lots of folks can come: If you are hoping to get program participants, maybe lunchtime on a day with lots of programming is best. If you want to reach a wider range of local residents, an evening is usually best. Either way, putting on a lunch or dinner is a good way to make it easy for people to come and stay.

Pick an experienced moderator: Sometimes people have strong opinions about elections, so choose someone to lead the meeting who has had some experience managing big groups, such as a teacher. Make sure you start by setting ground rules for the discussion – for example, speak respectfully, don't interrupt, and accept that people have different points of view.

Plan out an agenda that gets at the value of voting and the issue folks care about: Use the agendas and questions in our "Conversation in Your Program" and "Issues that Matter" sections to generate questions and ideas for your agenda.

Speakers on issues can help and Social Planning Toronto has a roster of advocates on their website at [www.socialplanningtoronto.org/municipal\\_election\\_resources](http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/municipal_election_resources).

There are more tips for hosting townhalls in elections in ONN's Advocacy guide at [www.ontarioforall.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ONN-Advocacy-Toolkit.2019.pdf](http://www.ontarioforall.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ONN-Advocacy-Toolkit.2019.pdf)

After the event, use the template at [bit.ly/TOVoteReportingTemplate](http://bit.ly/TOVoteReportingTemplate) or the online form at [bit.ly/TOVoteFeedback](http://bit.ly/TOVoteFeedback) to share ideas folks raised or just email a summary to [info@ontarioforall.ca](mailto:info@ontarioforall.ca).

### Hosting a Watch Party

The United Way, TMU, and Toronto Star debate is on May 31<sup>st</sup>. It's a great opportunity to bring your community together to talk about the election.

Invite your community a half hour before the debate starts. Include some snacks just like you would for the World Cup. It's helpful to have a conversation with community members about the issues and the candidates before the debate starts.

Remind folks that this is a nonpartisan event, so we won't be picking sides or deciding who should win – everyone gets to make their own choice. We're here to talk about issues.

What issues do people most want to see discussed? What questions do they hope will get asked? Which candidates have they seen speak out about the issues they care about?

Let people know there will be a brief discussion after the debate.

After the debate is over, ask people to talk about any answers that impressed them. Ask about ideas they heard from candidates that they thought were useful and that would help make a better city. Ask folks to make sure they fill out a pledge to vote in the election before they go.

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# Promote City-Wide Watch Parties and Events

If you're too stretched to host your own event, we will be hosting city-wide events online. We will send invitations for each event in the coming weeks.

**1) A discussion of the issues:** Social Planning Toronto will host an online event on policy. You can go to [www.socialplanningtoronto.org/municipal\\_election\\_resources](http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/municipal_election_resources) for details.

**2) A City-wide watch party:** On May 31, we will be hosting a “debate watch” party online. People can come early to hear from a panel on the issues that have emerged during the campaign and the policies they expect to hear about. We will be showing the debate on our site and inviting people to comment in a moderated chat box (moderators will delete any disrespectful or partisan comments). We will have the panel back after the debate to review the results and answer questions that were posed in the chat. Details soon.

## Run a "Get Out The Vote" (GOTV) drive

Getting voters to the polls is the most important part of democratic engagement. Helping people get to the polls is totally nonpartisan (as long as you don't discuss who to vote for) and many charities do it across Canada. People who can't vote (such as permanent residents and non-citizens) can participate in the voting process by getting out the vote.

### Before the Voting Starts

**Posters:** Put up posters encouraging people to vote and include information on voting. You can order posters from [www.engagedemocracy.ca/toronto-mayoral-election-2023](http://www.engagedemocracy.ca/toronto-mayoral-election-2023).

**Pledges:** Ask people to sign a pledge to vote in this election. Give all signers an “I am a voter” sticker. You can order pledges and stickers from [www.engagedemocracy.ca/toronto-mayoral-election-2023](http://www.engagedemocracy.ca/toronto-mayoral-election-2023) You can hang onto the pledge cards for your own get out the vote effort, or take a photo with your phone and send the images to [info@ontarioforall.ca](mailto:info@ontarioforall.ca).

**Information sheets:** Put out information sheets explaining how to vote and encouraging voting. They are the yellow sheet in this kit. You can download them or order printed copies from [www.engagedemocracy.ca/toronto-mayoral-election-2023](http://www.engagedemocracy.ca/toronto-mayoral-election-2023).

### For Advance Polls

**Special reminders:** Put up special posters on advance poll days saying “You can vote TODAY for Mayor – Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM at **ANY** voting location in Toronto” with a list of locations in your area. You can find local voting stations at [bit.ly/TOvote23](http://bit.ly/TOvote23).

**Make it an event:** Many communities make voting an event. Help program participants pick a location to gather and go together to the polling place. Offer rides if you can.

### On Election Day

**Special reminders:** Put up special posters saying “You can vote TODAY, June 26<sup>th</sup>, for Mayor from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Just go to [bit.ly/TOvote23](http://bit.ly/TOvote23) to find your voting location.”

**Call your pledge cards:** If you collected pledge cards, get volunteers together to call the people who signed and remind them that today is voting day. Have a computer on hand so callers can get help and volunteers can look up the address of the polling place at [bit.ly/TOvote23](http://bit.ly/TOvote23) for anyone who isn't sure.

**Knock on doors:** In many communities, people go door to door to promote voting. Get a group of volunteers together and go door to door to remind people it is voting day. They can look up the polling location for any community at [bit.ly/TOvote23](http://bit.ly/TOvote23).

