

# BC GREEN POLICY

# OUR CORE VALUES

Sustainability • Respect for diversity • Participatory democracy  
Ecological wisdom • Social justice • Non-violence

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# A VISION FOR OUR FUTURE

## WHAT MAKES US GREEN AND DISTINCT FROM THE REST?

Most British Columbians want to enjoy healthy, safe lives and a good standard of living, surrounded by the rich, natural beauty of our province. We want to give our children and grandchildren the same opportunity. We want a future we can believe in. We want to sustain our environment, our economy, and our communities.

*BC Green Policy* is a compilation of the policies that BC Green Party (BCGP) members believe will achieve those goals. The approach of the BC Greens is distinct.

BC Greens are:

1. Committed to economic, social, environmental and fiscal sustainability as our central pillar;
2. Positive and progressive, believing that individuals and corporations will do the right things, and will adhere to a set of socially, economically and environmentally just rules; and,
3. Focused on the long-term view of what is best for British Columbians and the province.

## POLICY DOCUMENT CONTEXT AND PROCESS

This document is derived from some 400 resolutions passed at general meetings and policy conventions over the history of the party going back to 1985. The essential principles and values were distilled from those resolutions while putting aside detailed proposals. It is an expression of values held collectively by BC Greens as applied to specific topic areas. It is meant to guide BC Green Party candidates and MLAs and to guide the development of party platforms and public positions.

As noted in *BC Green Policy* approved by members at the June 2016 Annual General Meeting, there was need to continue developing new policy to fill gaps. This 2017 version of *BC Green Policy* has been augmented by ideas developed in the platform development process for the May 2017 provincial election. During the months following the June 2016 AGM and leading to the election

on May 9, 2017, the platform development process involved hundreds of people. The process included a public on-line forum for platform suggestions; formation of a Policy Platform Advisory Committee made up of party members with expertise in various portfolios; and intensive work by the Research and Policy Committee.

*BC Green Policy* remains a living document that will continue to evolve over time into an ever stronger statement of who we are as BC Greens. We will be creating many more opportunities for members to discuss and debate policy. We anticipate input from workshops at the riding association and regional levels. We plan to have webinars with experts in priority topics, plus, policy sessions at all our AGMs. We will be reaching out beyond our membership to our supporters and to a broader public in these discussions.

## INTRODUCTION

The BCGP is grounded in its environmental beginnings and has evolved to hold a holistic view of life on earth. BC Greens see the environment, the economy, society, and government as interconnected. Failure in one can lead to failure in all. This is consistent with the view of Indigenous Peoples who see humans as an integral part of the natural world and that we face challenges when natural systems are interrupted or broken. The future prosperity of British Columbians requires BC to use its resources wisely, protect its ecosystems, and provide people with the ability to survive and thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Establishing mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous people in the Province is critical. Unresolved land and resource issues with First Nations have resulted in inability to fully realize economic opportunity. Further, many Indigenous people live in poverty, are marginalized from society and face daily threats to their well-being. British Columbia must manage resources in full collaboration with First Nations. The Province must also develop and fund an assertive strategy to ensure that all British Columbians survive and thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

A number of documents developed internationally and within Canada can be used as a roadmap going forward to achieve reconciliation between Indigenous people and other Canadians and to address some of the issues affecting Indigenous communities. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, endorsed by Canada,

is based on the principle of free, prior and informed consent by Indigenous people on resource development. Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission report includes 94 Calls to Action, many requiring action by provincial governments. In British Columbia, Indigenous children are disproportionately represented among children in government care. The recommendations from Grand Chief Ed John's report, *Indigenous Resilience, Connectedness and Reunification: From Root Causes to Root Solutions* is an important guide for collaboration between the provincial government and Indigenous communities.

The implications of our changing climate are profound for all aspects of our well-being. Solutions from the past are not good indicators of what is needed for the future. The 21<sup>st</sup> century is a journey with constant, rapid and sometimes unpredictable changes as we grapple with shifts in global political and economic power, a rapidly changing climate, shrinking resources, the need to de-carbonize global energy, and technological innovation. Societies that are the most adaptable and resilient will fare the best in this new economy.

Prevalent policies in British Columbia are focused on the here and now, and dogmatically pursue deregulation, low taxes, small government, and balanced budgets. Too frequently this is at the expense of social equity and the interests of future generations. In contrast, BCGP policy considers short-term and long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability. BCGP policy is based on meeting the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs of British Columbians for healthy, safe, and prosperous lives, by ensuring our ability to adapt and flourish.

To build and sustain a good standard of living for

all British Columbians, our economy must be more diversified, more self-sufficient, and better equipped to provide meaningful employment for more people. We must add value to resources, reduce the use of fossil fuels, and ensure a livable income for all. We must embrace the creative economy and place greater emphasis on technology development, use and production. We must support progressive 21<sup>st</sup> century businesses that adopt the triple bottom line of profits, people and the planet.

## ORGANIZATION

BC Green Party policies are based on 15 integrated outcomes and organized into five themes:

1. Health
2. Safety
3. Standard of living
4. Ecological balance
5. Responsible government

HEALTH

SAFETY

STANDARD OF LIVING

ECOLOGICAL BALANCE

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

**WELLNESS**

Housing Exercise  
Healthy environment Education  
Income  
Food security

**RESILIENCE**

Education Jobs  
Family Wellness  
Community  
Housing

**FINANCIAL SECURITY**

Infrastructure  
Income security Education & training  
Wellness

**HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS**

Land-use planning Parks & protected areas  
Wildlife  
Sustainable farming

**FISCAL MANAGEMENT**

Fair taxation Tax shift  
Asset management Budget  
Debt control

**INTEGRATED CARE**

Choices Mental healthcare  
Prevention Addictions management

**SECURITY**

Policing Adaptation  
Welfare Worker rights  
Legislation

**SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISES**

Business climate R&D  
Triple-bottom line  
Value-added

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Waste management Habitat  
Life-cycle costing

**GOVERNANCE**

Electoral reform Codes of conduct  
Targets & measures  
Protocols

**ACUTE & END-OF-LIFE CARE**

Specialists Access to medicine  
R&D  
Infrastructure

**JUSTICE**

Courts Restorative justice  
Reconciliation  
Corrections  
Equality

**STABLE COMMUNITIES**

Development  
Food Resource management  
Empowerment

**REMEDIATION**

Contamination  
Species-at-risk Habitat restoration  
Regulatory enforcement

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

Access to information Oversight  
Watchdogs  
Records management

# HEALTH

Our health is perhaps the most important aspect of life for human beings. Without good health, our quality of life is seriously affected, our productivity reduced, and our enjoyment of life limited. The BC healthcare system is geared towards curing us once we are sick rather than keeping us well. BC Green focus is on keeping us healthy, but when we do fall ill, we are cared for and restored to good health as quickly as possible. The health of Indigenous people is a particular concern requiring attention throughout the health spectrum.

## WELLNESS

Wellness is the condition of good health and freedom from disease. Some drivers of wellness are genetic and beyond our control. We can, however, influence socio-economic and environmental factors, and help people make healthy choices. Choices and self-management are important for wellness. BC Green policies promote good health by improving access to healthy food, education, income, housing, exercise, and recreation. Plus the benefits of a healthy natural environment for human physical and mental wellness should not be underestimated.

### OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

BC Greens support outreach, education and programs that proactively address the root causes of health problems including poverty, unhealthy lifestyles and environmental degradation.

### ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

BC Greens support a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy that includes low-cost housing and increased employment opportunities to equalize the opportunities for wellness for all British Columbians.

## INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE

Even with the best of efforts, we become sick or get injured, and as we age, our bodies require increasing care. Proactive measures to prevent pain and injury include access to exercise programs and early interventions to address minor injuries or health issues before they become serious. Access to a diversity of healthcare providers such as nurse practitioners, a range of healthcare approaches, proactive treatments such as physiotherapy and massage, mental healthcare, and addictions management can speed recovery, reduce the need for more costly acute care, and provide a better quality of life.

### PREVENTION

BC Greens support a healthcare system focused on the prevention of illness and reduction of the need for chronic and acute care.

BC Greens support affordable prescription drugs.

### MULTI-DISCIPLINARY CARE

BC Greens support an integrated, multi-disciplinary healthcare system in which the workload of doctors is reduced by enabling other healthcare professionals such as nurse practitioners and midwives to provide appropriate services.

## ACCESSIBILITY

BC Greens believe in providing adequate economic support and accessibility measures for people with disabilities to live with dignity and independence.

BC Greens support comprehensive and accessible healthcare for all BC residents in all regions, publicly funded through progressive taxation.

## MENTAL HEALTHCARE

BC Greens support treating mental health issues with respect and compassion, with adequate treatment facilities and support and without stigma.

## ADDICTIONS

BC Greens support treating addiction and providing adequate treatment options, without stigma.

## SENIOR CARE

BC Greens support measures to promote healthy aging to allow seniors to live with dignity and independence.

# ACUTE AND END-OF-LIFE CARE

Despite efforts at prevention, we require acute care from time to time. It is the most expensive aspect of the healthcare continuum, requiring highly qualified professionals, costly buildings and drugs, and sophisticated machinery. Major issues include cost management, availability of qualified professionals, governance, and the right to die with dignity.

## GOVERNANCE

BC Greens support a patient-centric healthcare system that is committed to fairness, local control and accountability.

## COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTHCARE

BC Greens support a community-based, public healthcare system.

## END OF LIFE

BC Greens believe everybody should be empowered to pass their last days in comfort and dignity.

# SAFETY

Many British Columbians take it for granted that we live in a stable, safe part of the world. Yet even here some of us become victims of crime or live in fear of violence. Some face persecution and bullying and others are threatened with unemployment and income insecurity. The homeless among us face threats daily. Many of us face the threat of natural disasters.

Our goal is to nurture confident, resilient people, and to ensure that the right protections are in place to maintain public safety, and support those whose lives are going astray. When things go wrong, we want to ensure that justice is served and the public is protected. Promoting safe lives is particularly important for Indigenous Peoples, who are disproportionately represented among those on welfare and within the justice system.

## RESILIENCE

Confident people are more likely to be happy, fulfilled, and productive than people who are stressed by environmental, economic and social challenges. People, who suffer from unemployment or underemployment, income insecurity, homelessness or substandard housing, struggle throughout life. Early childhood, primary and secondary education is a foundational investment in our economic future and key to a confident and productive society.

### INCLUSION AND EQUITY

BC Greens support initiatives that enable BC residents of all backgrounds to feel valued and to value each other in an inclusive society.

BC Greens support full reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, based on respect, inclusion and mutual support.

BC Greens support education so all British Columbians can appreciate the significance of Indigenous cultures in our cultural landscape.

### PUBLIC EDUCATION

BC Greens support a school system that is integrated with community centres, recreation facilities, libraries, and schools.

BC Greens support a publicly funded education system that is inclusive and accessible to British Columbians in all income groups.

BC Greens support an education curriculum that prepares students to thrive in a changing world.

BC Greens support a public education system with local decision-making power.

### CHILDCARE AND EARLY-LEARNING SUPPORT

BC Greens support affordable childcare and early learning programs.

## SECURITY

The confidence we enjoy is supported by the protections and safety nets provided by government. Peace officers keep our streets safe. Welfare, mental health and substance abuse programs seek to support the most marginalized members of our communities. Legislation and regulations support inclusion and diversity. But one of the biggest threats to our security is climate change and the associated effects of rising sea levels, ocean acidification, extreme unpredictable weather, loss of snowpack, drought, and many other outcomes. The implications on forestry, fisheries, and agriculture are particularly serious for British Columbians.

### CHILDREN IN CARE

BC Greens believe that all children are entitled to a warm and loving environment and the opportunity to become successful adults.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

BC Greens support a proactive strategy to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

### SEX TRADE WORKER PROTECTION

BC Greens support regulation of sex workers to provide the same work protections as any other worker.

### ORGANIZED CRIME

BC Greens support strategies for harm reduction and treatment for drug possession and use while maintaining severe penalties for predatory drug traffickers.

BC Greens support initiatives to target white collar crime.

## JUSTICE

The courts are the ultimate arbiters for resolving disputes and dealing with law-breakers. There are many effective means of resolving disputes but when they fail, recourse to the courts is unavoidable. Imbalance in income between disputants can hamper access to justice for the less powerful. Powerful interests sometimes abuse the court system, for example by using the threat of lawsuits to squelch criticism. Rising court fees and continuing cutbacks in public defender budgets limit the access to justice for low income British Columbians.

There are many reasons why individuals break the law. Poverty, addiction, and mental illness are common root causes. Fundamentally people who are marginalized by society are most vulnerable. This explains the large proportion of Indigenous people before the courts. The goal is to help those who fall into the justice system to become confident citizens through restorative justice and rehabilitation programs.

### ACCESS

BC Greens support affordable access to the justice system for all British Columbians.

### REINTEGRATING OFFENDERS

BC Greens support restorative and rehabilitative measures for offenders rather than punitive measures that do not address the root causes of criminal acts.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

BC Greens support good-faith negotiation through fair collective bargaining.

### TITLE

BC Greens support requirements for project proponents and the province to comply fully with court decisions regarding title of Indigenous Peoples.

# STANDARD OF LIVING

Our financial security plays a major role in determining our quality of life. Our standard of living depends upon profitable businesses to provide good jobs and sustain a sound tax base. Our standard of living depends upon stable communities with diverse and versatile economies that can weather business cycles, and easily adapt to evolving opportunities, technological changes, and a changing climate. Enabling Indigenous Peoples to have a good standard of living and to be properly consulted in economic development decisions is essential to the future prosperity of British Columbia.

## FINANCIAL SECURITY

Individual potential is affected by our access to education and training; our entrepreneurial spirit; the availability of stable, well-paying jobs; as well as our state of wellness and confidence. Income security is essential for people to live comfortable lives. Our standard of living is enhanced by public infrastructure such as transit, roads, water and sewer systems; and parks and recreation facilities.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

BC Greens support relevant, accessible and affordable post-secondary education, including comprehensive trades' education, as an investment in developing adaptive skills necessary for a rapidly evolving world.

BC Greens support a publicly funded education system that is accessible to British Columbians in all income groups.

BC Greens support an education curriculum that prepares students to thrive in a changing world.

BC Greens support a public education system with local decision-making power.

BC Greens support lifelong learning, including access to adaptive skills development.

### INCOME SECURITY

BC Greens support a livable income for all British Columbians.

BC Greens support arm's length, non-political resolution to the discrepancy between the minimum wage and a liveable wage.

### HOUSING

BC Greens support the development of a comprehensive housing strategy to provide affordable housing for all British Columbians.

BC Greens support measures to curb speculation in BC real estate markets.

BC Greens support investment in affordable rental housing.

BC Greens support partnerships with First Nations, non-profit organizations, co-operatives and private developers to support the planning and construction of low income rental units.

BC Greens support protection of existing social housing and incentives for construction or conversion of existing buildings to rental housing.

BC Greens support strong protections for rental and lease tenants.

# SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISES

The world economy is rapidly changing. Fluctuating global and local market demand and supply; and new technologies, materials, products, and production methods affect business success. Our businesses and industry must be adaptable to new markets, technologies and social changes. British Columbia must diversify beyond the traditional dependence on resource extraction to participate in the decarbonized economy. We must reduce our use of fossil fuels, employ more people, add value to resources, support the knowledge based high tech sector and pay living wages. We must embrace the opportunities in high tech and in the creative economy; and place greater emphasis on developing and adopting new technologies.

Sustainable enterprises are the backbone of the economy in British Columbia. Progressive, 21<sup>st</sup> century businesses measure success using the triple bottom line – success includes profits, and positive results for people and the planet. British Columbia needs to support this with a positive business climate. We need a predictable policy environment, including sound fiscal policy, fair taxation, and well-defined and enforced environmental policies such as carbon taxes. Businesses also require access to capital, a labour force with the needed skills, and adequate public infrastructure.

## TOURISM

BC Greens support the development of a strong tourism sector while protecting our world-renowned natural assets and developing more diverse tourism experiences

## CARBON TAX

BC Greens support the implementation of regularly scheduled, substantive increases in the BC Carbon Tax.

BC Greens support expansion of the BC Carbon Tax to include non-combustion sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

BC Greens support meaningful, clear and transparent greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets.

## INNOVATION

BC Greens support growth in the clean technology sector.

BC Greens support the use of economic instruments that support the greening of the economy.

## TRANSITIONAL ECONOMY

BC Greens support fairness for workers in the non-renewable resource industry and their communities in the transition to a modern renewable energy economy.

## CREATIVE ECONOMY

BC Greens support arts and culture as the underpinning of a vibrant creative economy in BC.

## SUSTAINABLE FARMING

BC Greens support agricultural stewardship that is diverse, responsible and sustainable

BC Greens support small-scale, sustainable agriculture to produce food for local markets.

BC Greens support enhancing access to farmland and developing new models of farm tenure.

BC Greens support increasing the production of food within BC to enhance food security.

BC Greens support improving the attractiveness of farming as a career in BC.

BC Greens support providing expertise to the farming industry to adapt to a changing climate.

BC Greens support the humane and ethical treatment of all animals.

## VALUE-ADDING ECONOMY

BC Greens support the management, harvesting and processing of BC resources in a way that achieves the maximum, long-term benefit to British Columbians.

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

BC Greens support the practice of corporate social responsibility and adoption of triple bottom line reporting by corporations.

BC Greens support seeking consent from First Nations for development proposals within their traditional territories.

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

BC Greens support incentives and investment in infrastructure to promote sustainable transportation and discourage fossil fuel-based transportation.

BC Greens support a legal environment that encourages walking and cycling, and protects vulnerable road users.

## PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

BC Greens support rational investment in public

infrastructure to benefit current and future generations.

BC Greens support seismically safe public buildings including schools, hospitals and other health care facilities.

## STABLE COMMUNITIES

All communities throughout British Columbia face growing challenges because they are responsible for more services as senior governments download service delivery without funding or enabling legislation for local revenue generation. Communities face significant costs to maintain and upgrade aging municipal infrastructure and address climate change. Businesses depend on stable communities for their workforce and communities depend on the tax base generated by businesses.

Many rural communities contend with cycles of boom and bust associated with resource markets. Many remote Indigenous communities have limited economic opportunities. Other communities are challenged to take advantage of available economic opportunities.

Empowered communities can improve economic stability through integrated resource management and infrastructure investments. Community planning for economic, environmental and social sustainability will create the compact, energy efficient foundation for stable and livable communities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### AFFORDABLE LIVING

BC Greens support community planning and public transportation systems to ensure affordable living for all British Columbians.

### COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

BC Greens support delegation of decision-making power to the lowest practical level.

BC Greens support effective, accountable and regionally controlled planning for infrastructure including water supply, sewage, local highways and public transit.

BC Greens support stable ongoing funding to communities and effective collaboration to plan and support major infrastructure development and maintenance.

BC Greens support delegation of appropriate funding mechanisms to generate revenues at the regional level to finance regional infrastructure.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

BC Greens support the responsible development and use of resources for the needs of communities and the province, now and in the future.

BC Greens support joint decision-making with Indigenous Peoples and local government on resource development.

BC Greens recognize First Nations as equals in land management with provincial resource agencies.

BC Greens support a co-management stewardship model with First Nations for the development of provincial resources.

### FOOD SECURITY

BC Greens support rigorous programs to ensure the safety of the food supply for British Columbians.

BC Greens support adequate protection of farmland to secure local food supply.

### ENERGY

BC Greens support the responsible development of small-scale, renewable energy projects in local communities.

BC Greens support initiatives to enhance energy efficiency and maximize the use of renewable energy resources.

BC Greens support energy efficient new buildings and measures to reduce the upfront costs of making existing homes and commercial buildings energy efficient.

BC Greens support initiatives to help communities reduce the use of fossil fuels.

BC Greens support innovation that maximizes benefits from waste streams.

### RESOURCE EXTRACTION

BC Greens support improved regulation and compliance in resource extraction industries.

# ECOLOGICAL BALANCE

Human activity is disrupting the delicate balance of complex, interconnected ecosystems that support life. Many of the problems facing our environment are global in nature and require global action. In Canada, British Columbia must take a leadership role in discussions within Canada for the creation of a national plan to address climate change. In British Columbia, we need to adapt to the impacts of climate change underway and proactively address future changes.

Many activities affect ecosystems. Action is required to remediate past damage. Sound resource management and sensible planning is needed to minimize future negative impacts. Aiming for some sustainability is no longer a sufficient goal; protection, restoration and remediation are the focus for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

Healthy ecosystems are vital to human existence. Locally, they provide economically valuable and essential needs such as clean water, stable slopes, flood retention and control, safe food supply, and genetic biodiversity to prevent catastrophic disease losses. Ecosystems provide sustainable resources for fiber, building products, and recreation. If ecosystems fail, all of these services and resources cost more.

Maintaining healthy ecosystems in a changing climate is very challenging, and requires adaptive management approaches to parks, protected areas and wildlife. Effective land use and resource use planning and management are required for healthy ecosystems. Urban containment and sustainable farming practices avoid the destruction of sensitive habitat such as wetlands.

## PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

BC Greens support provincial parks and protected areas that preserve ecological diversity and natural habitats in addition to recreational benefits

## WILDLIFE

BC Greens support hunting for food, but not trophy hunting.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmental protection mitigates the negative impacts of human activity on the natural world. Effective pollution controls, rigorous environmental assessment and enforced regulations are key tools for British Columbia to ensure that existing and future facilities do not impose unacceptable risks to the environment. However, short term expediency or corporate profitability often override environmental needs. Industry and consumers often do not pay the true cost of environmental damage. Waste management is a massive challenge for British Columbia. Although reduction and materials recovery from waste streams is improving, much more needs to be done. Many species in British Columbia already face extirpation directly or indirectly from human activities.

### FULL LIFE-CYCLE COSTING

BC Greens support full life cycle costing for all developments, including all direct and indirect costs, over the lifetime of a project.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

BC Greens support the goal of zero waste through producer responsibility programs and in making use of all available techniques for reducing, re-using and re-cycling waste.

### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

BC Greens support responsible resource development that will not cause permanent harm to ecological systems.

BC Greens support best practices silviculture and zero net deforestation to enhance and protect the complex ecosystems of our forests.

BC Greens support a new forest management and allocation system that recognizes the standing value of forests as well as timber values.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION

Remediation is required when mitigating actions fail to provide adequate protection, or when environmental consequences are deliberately disregarded. Many contaminated sites are a legacy from a time when activities, especially mining, were unregulated. However, new damage and contamination is ongoing and regulatory enforcement has not kept pace.

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

BC Greens support environmental assessment processes that consider sustainability goals, take full account of greenhouse gas emissions, and cumulative impacts.

### HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

BC Greens support requirements for businesses and individuals transporting, storing or producing hazardous materials to demonstrate their ongoing ability to cover the total costs of cleanup and restoration when an accident such as a spill occurs.

# RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

Responsible government refers to the ideal way in which government handles its business. It requires that government demonstrate to the public that it is accountable and transparent about its activities through regular communications on its actions and open access to information. It applies to the ways in which government raises and spends money, and creates and adheres to the rules of governance.

The government has a fiduciary responsibility to act in the best interests of British Columbians; however, many British Columbians feel that the provincial government has lost its way as privileged interest groups receive favourable treatment, and the intentions and actions of government are hidden.

## FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Fiscal policy guides the management of government revenues and borrowing, and the expenditures made by government. Revenues are raised through taxation, fees, levies, and dividends from crown corporations. Each of these has an appropriate use, some are directly related to cover the costs of services, and others are applied more generally. The use of the taxation system to encourage desired behavior can be effective, for example through duties on tobacco and alcohol, and the carbon tax.

In British Columbia, the taxation system has become increasingly complex and regressive as government tried to reduce taxes and address revenue gaps through fees, levies and sale of assets. Spending decisions are made within the context of projected revenues, not identified needs. Rather than adjusting taxes to pay for needed expenditures, projects are often postponed, and vital services cut to avoid a budget deficit or a tax increase. Borrowing to fund capital projects is managed by maintaining a debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio.

## FAIR TAXATION

BC Greens support a simpler, transparent and truly progressive tax system by eliminating loopholes and frivolous tax credits.

## PRUDENT FISCAL MANAGEMENT

BC Greens support multi-year planning for revenues and expenditures in order to ensure ongoing stability in the delivery of public services.

BC Greens support strategic investment and management of public assets including crown land and public infrastructure.

BC Greens support the proper recognition of the depreciation of public assets, and adequate budget provision for operations and maintenance.

# GOVERNANCE

Governance is the art of steering and making decisions about the direction an organization will take. It refers to the rules defining how decisions are made, who gets a say in decisions, accounting rules, codes of conduct, organizational structure, and hierarchy. It guides the development of legislation and regulations, and assigns roles and responsibilities. Electoral reform is another area of governance, encompassing the decision on how, and therefore, who is elected to the Legislative Assembly. The implications of governance and its underlying assumptions are significant to British Columbians. Good governance requires clear rules and processes as well as reliable, accurate information to support evidence-based decisions.

## FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING

BC Greens support open and transparent financial accounting by the government.

## ELECTORAL FINANCING

BC Greens support limits on the influence of money in politics.

## ELECTORAL REFORM

BC Greens support measures to increase the engagement of youth in the political process.

BC Greens support expanded civics education in the K-12 curriculum.

BC Greens support proportional representation for the election of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs).

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

BC Greens support building and maintaining good relationships with stakeholders.

# ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability entails holding those in power responsible for the decisions they have made. Decisions that are made in a transparent manner within a robust governance structure are easy to defend. However, decisions made in an arbitrary or secretive manner cause frustration with the public. Accountability involves setting targets and expectations, and reporting on progress towards those ends.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

BC Greens support effective communication and responsive engagement by the government with British Columbians.

## OVERSIGHT

BC Greens support comprehensive investigative powers for the Auditor General of British Columbia and other government watchdogs.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA

BC Greens support the expansion of open data and open information available to the public in usable form, in a timely manner.

BC Greens support initiatives to ensure that government records are maintained and securely stored.

## EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE

BC Greens support empowerment of public servants to effectively carry out their role as dedicated, non-partisan professionals.

# CONCLUSION

This document is a statement of who we are as BC Greens, expressed in a compilation of historic resolutions going back to 1983. We know there is much more work to be done but this document provides an important benchmark as we refine our vision of the future. We look forward to many discussions and debates on the issues that are important to British Columbians. BC Greens have energy and motivation to develop practical solutions for the problems of today and a firm focus on a better future for all British Columbians.