

BC Green policy

A vision for the future

Approved by members at our 2020 AGM on April 27, 2021

Our core values

Sustainability • Respect for diversity • Participatory democracy

Ecological wisdom • Social justice • Non-violence

Table of contents

What makes us Green and distinct from the rest?	7
Policy document context and process	7
Introduction	8
Organization	10
Figure 1. The BC Green Party policy themes, outcomes, and some contributing factors	10
1. Health	10
Wellness	11
Outreach and Education	11
Anti-Poverty Strategy	11
Integrated Healthcare	12
Prevention	12
Multidisciplinary Care	12
Accessibility	12
Mental Healthcare	12
Substance Use	12
BC Greens support decriminalization for simple possession of illegal drugs.	13
Senior Care	13
Acute and End of Life Care	13
Governance	13
Community-based Healthcare	13
End of Life	13

2. Safety	13
Resilience	14
Inclusion and Equity	14
Public Education	14
Childcare and Early Learning Support	14
Security	14
Children in Care	15
Climate Change	15
Sex Trade Worker Protection	15
Organized Crime	15
Justice	15
Access	16
Reintegrating Offenders	16
Collective Bargaining	16
Title	16
3. Standard of Living	16
Financial Security	16
Education and Training	17
Income Security	17
Housing	17
Sustainable Enterprises	17
Tourism	18

Carbon Tax	18
Innovation	18
Transitional Economy	18
Creative Economy	18
Sustainable Farming	18
Value-Adding Economy	19
Corporate Social Responsibility	19
Sustainable Transportation	19
Public Infrastructure	19
Stable Communities	19
Affordable Living	20
Community Empowerment	20
Resource Management	20
Food Security	20
Energy	21
Resource Extraction	21
4. Ecological Balance	21
Healthy Ecosystems	22
Climate Action	22
Biodiversity Loss	22
BC Greens support strategies to address biodiversity loss and protect and recover species at risk.	22
Parks and Protected Areas	22

Wildlife	22
Environmental Protection	22
Full Life Cycle Costing	23
Waste Management	23
Resource Management	23
Environmental Remediation	23
Environmental Assessment	23
Hazardous Materials	23
5. Responsible Government	24
Fiscal Management	24
Fair Taxation	24
Prudent Fiscal Management	24
Governance	25
Financial Accounting	25
Electoral Financing	25
Electoral Reform	25
Government Relations	25
Citizen Participation	25
Accountability	26
Effective Communication	26
Oversight	26
Access to Information and Data	26

Effective Public Service	26
Conclusion	26

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.

The BC Green Party is:

1. Committed to economic, social, environmental and fiscal sustainability as our central pillar;
2. Committed to openness and transparency, rebuilding trust in government institutions, and evidence-based decision-making; 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 the mid-1980s. 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.

BC Green Policy, in its current form, was first approved by members at the June 2016 Annual General Meeting. It was noted at the time that there are many gaps and that a new policy was required to fill the gaps. Minor revisions were approved at the 2017 AGM, but there have been no amendments to the document since then and much has changed in that time. A complete overhaul of the policy document is scheduled to begin in late spring 2021.

The [BC Greens' policy development process](#) is intended to function throughout the year; receiving policy proposals, researching the ideas and working with proponents to ensure the integrity of the proposal and its consistency with the *BC Green Policy* document.

However, due to the extraordinary circumstances in 2020, the policy committee has not been active and receiving and reviewing proposals.

On January 7, 2021 notice of the 2020 AGM was sent out and included an invitation to submit policy proposals. Submissions were due by February 14, 2021, and notice of motions was due to be posted by March 16, 2021. Established January 18, 2021, the Interim Policy Committee (IPC) was given eight weeks to review submissions. Given the compressed timeframe, the IPC had to establish strict operating and assessment criteria for the proposals received. Seventeen proposals were reviewed by the IPC.

It was determined that only minimal and “necessary” changes would be made to the document for the 2020 AGM. The committee defined “necessary” as:

- “Ready-to-go” policies, in that the policy meets the criteria for inclusion into the Policy Document without significant changes.
- Previously committed changes. Drug policy was discussed at the 2019 AGM and a commitment was made to come back with a revised policy at the next AGM.
- The removal or editing of out-of-date references, or terminology that may not be considered appropriate for 2021. Also, some legislative references have been included to reflect significant changes eg. *the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)*.

Proposals not included in this version of the policy document have been deferred for consideration by the new policy committee, which will begin its work after the 2020 AGM.

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 21st century.

Establishing mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous people in the Province is critical. Unresolved land and resource issues with First Nations have resulted in an inability to fully realize the economic opportunity. Further, many Indigenous people live in poverty, are marginalized from society and face daily threats to their well-being, including health care services. 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 21st century.

The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) enacted in 2019 provides a framework for aligning provincial laws with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, endorsed by Canada. Among other things, DRIPA requires an action plan and regular reporting to the Legislative Assembly on this work. It represents a step forward in achieving reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and other Canadians. DRIPA follows Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission report with its 94 Calls to Action, many requiring action by provincial governments. The recommendations from Grand Chief Ed John's report, [Indigenous resilience, Connectedness and Reunification: From Root Causes to Root Solutions](#) remain an important guide for collaboration between the provincial government and Indigenous communities with respect to the disproportionate number of Indigenous children in government care.

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 21st 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 decarbonize 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. 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 21st 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 21st-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

Figure 1. The BC Green Party policy themes, outcomes, and some contributing factors



1. 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. The BC Greens' 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.

British Columbia is in the grip of two very serious health crises. Since early spring in 2020, the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has preoccupied British Columbians. With solid political leadership and trust in our scientists, British Columbians have worked together to control the virus. With vaccines now approved and available, we can see our way out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the same time, British Columbia has been Canada's epicenter for the overdose crisis. Since 2011, more than 8700 British Columbians have died from toxic drug overdoses. There seems no end to this crisis caused by a poisoned illegal drug supply and inadequate treatment options. The COVID crisis has in fact exacerbated the overdose crisis by disrupting supply chains and making street drugs even more toxic. 1,716 people in BC lost their lives to toxic drug poisoning in 2020, while the death toll from COVID to date in the province is 1,372. Each day, five British Columbians lose their lives to overdose.

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.

Multidisciplinary Care

BC Greens support an integrated, multidisciplinary 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.

Substance Use

BC Greens support a balanced, evidence-based substance use strategy of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and enforcement.

BC Greens support treating problematic substance use as a health issue, providing adequate and voluntary treatment on-demand, without stigma.

BC Greens support decriminalization for simple possession of illegal drugs.

BC Greens support low barrier access to safe supply to reduce the risks to people of the poisoned illegal drug supply.

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 end-of-life care.

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.

2. Safety

Every British Columbian deserves to live in a safe environment that is free from fear and persecution.

Our goal is to nurture resilient people and to ensure that the right protections are in place to maintain public safety while supporting human rights. Our shared responsibility for promoting fairness and safety is particularly important for Indigenous Peoples, who continue to be marginalized, subject to systemic discrimination and are disproportionately represented among those within the criminal justice system.

Resilience

Resilience allows people to overcome the stress and hardship of environmental, economic, social challenges and to better lead happy, fulfilled and productive lives. Unemployment, under-employment, income insecurity, homelessness, and substandard housing can all contribute to the challenges people face. Early childhood, primary and secondary education is a foundational investment in our economic future and key to a resilient 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

Government has the power and ability to create supports for the environmental, economic and social challenges we face, thereby increasing our security. Legislation and regulations can support inclusion and diversity. 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 the regulation of sex workers to provide the same work protections as any other worker.

Organized Crime

BC Greens support strategies targeting all forms of organized crime and the resulting proceeds of crime.

BC Greens support initiatives to target white-collar crime.

Justice

The courts are the ultimate arbiters for resolving disputes and dealing with those charged with criminal offences. 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 in civil disputes and criminal cases. 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 Legal Aid budgets limit the access to justice for many British Columbians.

Fundamentally people who are marginalized by society are the most vulnerable to being targeted as criminal offenders, regardless of overall culpability in society. This explains the large proportion of Indigenous people before the courts. Alternatives to criminalization and incarceration can help to equal the playing field for marginalized communities. The goal is to help those who fall into the justice system to avoid the ongoing harms of criminalization and punishment 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.

3. 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. The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) must be used to enable 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 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 organisations, 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, 21st-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 ageing 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 21st 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 the 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 the 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.

4. 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. At one time, British Columbia was considered a leader in Canada on climate action. The new Clean BC Program helps to restore our commitment but more work is needed. British Columbia must take bold action to address climate change and prevent further biodiversity loss that will lead to severe economic and social consequences for future generations. The most effective way to spur national and global action is to lead by example here in BC.

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 21st 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 habitats such as wetlands.

Climate Action

BC Greens support bold action to mitigate against climate change.

Biodiversity Loss

BC Greens support strategies to address biodiversity loss and protect and recover species at risk.

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 the best available methods for reducing, recycling and reusing 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.

5. 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 the 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 behaviour 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 the 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 and citizen participation 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.

Citizen Participation

BC Greens support the use of citizen assemblies to inform government decision-making.

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 the 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 the mid-1980s. 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 the energy and motivation to develop practical solutions for the problems of today and a firm focus on a better future for all British Columbians.