

# Introduction

At the 2019 BC Greens Convention, we held a Courtyard cafe where attendees were able to give their thoughts on topics that ranged from organization to policy issues.

The information we gained through the tables will be used as input to the strategic planning process that is currently in progress. One of the key elements in the development of a strategic plan is an environmental scan.

This is the Executive Summary which consists of a high level summary of key findings from each of the tables.

An more extensive transciption of notes taken can be found here: https://www.bcgreens.ca/courtyard\_cafe\_summary

"Environmental scanning is the process of gathering information about events and their relationships within an organization's internal and external environments. The basic purpose of environmental scanning is to help management determine the future direction of the organization."

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Environmental Scanning." Thomas Edison State University. Accessed July 18, 2019. http://www.tesu.edu/about/ir/environmental-scanning.



# **Executive Summary**

## **ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES**

## YOUTH

### Youth perceptions of government and politics

- No point in voting.
- Government is made up of established elites.
- Sense of apathy, helplessness, disconnect and disenfranchisement, including the idea that my vote makes no difference.
- Politicians are too focused on election cycles, instead of long-term issues facing youth.
- Youth don't understand politics.

### Strategies to attract and engage youth and youth leaders

- Include civics in the K-12 curriculum.
- Directly support youth involvement.
- Change the voting environment, including lowering the voting age to 16 years.
- Engage through existing youth-friendly media and events.
- Make politics more mainstream for youth.
- Develop youth focused policy.

# **EQUITY AND DIVERSITY**

## **Current Situation**

- Current profile of members and supporters does not reflect the diversity in the province.
- The Greens may be perceived to be not as diverse as other major parties.
- New Canadians not aware of social and economic elements in the BC Greens platform and, as a result, may drift to parties that purport to have a focus on the economy.
- Some BC Greens' issues such as environmental issues, drug policies, LGBTQ2+ or socialism do not resonate well with some ethnic groups.
- Few young candidates, most are middle-aged.



## Strategies to enhance diversity

- Support candidates through affirmative action.
- Promote our policies and values with various ethnic groups.
- Remove barriers, for example, cost barriers for youth and others, and provide resources and support to run as a candidate.
- Reach out to non-profits and community groups.
- Create a welcoming and safe space for people from different communities.
- Review our policies and branding to determine what may appear exclusive.

## **BUILDING THE BC GREENS FAMILY**

#### **Party**

- Principled party foundations.
- Enhanced fundraising capacity.
- Greater staff resources dedicated to providing services from the provincial office.
- Ensuring Convention is economically and physically accessible.
- Maintain stability in the provincial office, develop a succession plan

#### **Volunteers**

- Growing interest in the party, but not always jobs immediately available for volunteers.
- Some volunteers highly engaged, but are in danger of burnout.
- Provide a structured approach to on-boarding volunteers.
- Ensure there is an activity for the volunteer to do.
- Provide appropriate supports.

#### **Riding Associations**

- Growing number of organized riding associations (RAs).
- Three staff now dedicated to field and RA development.
- Goal of RAs is to build a community with common interests.
- Connect RAs with other Greens in the riding by providing list of member.
- Identify clear roles and responsibilities..
- Enhance data access to give insight into our local voters/ demographic base.



#### Caucus

- Caucus has shown that politics can be done differently.
- Caucus has played an effective role in shaping better policy through CASA.
- Caucus has conducted themselves with integrity.
- Need to get more MLAs to strengthen caucus.

# **POLICY**

## **Policy development**

- Policy needs to be forward thinking and address future issues such as technology of the future and associated opportunities.
- Avoid focusing on economic growth.
- Simplify policy descriptions so it's easier to understand.
- More public involvement in policy discussion.
- Specific areas for consideration in policy and platform
- Review of the tax structure.
- Measurable objectives to drive natural resource decisions.
- Emergency management.
- Climate emergency.

## **HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

## **Overarching issues:**

- Health is an outcome.
- Need to address impediments to health and well-being.
- Is this the first time children will not outlive their parents?
- Most efforts into disease treatment, not health promotion. Need to do more prevention.

#### **Basic needs**

- In order to thrive, people's basic needs must be addressed.
- Remove impediments to social advancement, eg. through free education, universal basic income.

## **Healthy lifestyles**

- Healthy nutrition as a baseline.
- Active transportation.
- Exercise.



#### **Prevention**

- Lack of proactive policy and focus on prevention.
- Provide basic dental care.
- Universal pharmacare.

#### Mental health

- Mental health and wellness is the foremost social issue.
- Counselling services eg. grief, dealing with life.
- Destigmatization.
- Promote healthy, homes and families.

#### **Addictions**

- Personal cost of treatment. It's a huge financial burden.
- Shame and stigma many are not open about it.
- Isolation in communities.
- Over prescribing of opioids.
- Should be treated as a health issue, not a criminal issue.
- Provide clean source.
- Additional resources for addictions treatment.
- Support for parents who need to put their children into addiction treatment facilities.

#### **Environmental health**

- Improve urban design, community spaces, and cultural engagement.
- Enhance the connection with nature and the natural environment.
- Infrastructure for active transportation.
- Community gardens.
- Legislation eg.. right to clean air and water.

## **Systemic issues**

- Siloed decision making authority. Allocation of resource siloed.
- Inadequate measurement of outcomes.
- Cross-ministry approach.
- Develop overarching plan for delivering health services.
- Should look at best practices around the world.



## **NEW ECONOMY**

## **Overarching issues**

- Need to promote green and sustainable jobs.
- Need sustainable policy to be implemented by citizens.
- Need framework to make decisions.
- Need to shift to framing the importance for the people not just saving the environment for its own sake.
- Need government to invest and take the risk.

#### **Systemic issues**

• Government ministries operate in silos.

### **Transition to new economy**

- Need to transition to new economy.
- Certain business models will disrupted.
- Plan to mitigate impacts and people relying on conventional industry livelihood.

#### **Measuring Success**

• Use genuine progress indicator.

#### Jobs in the new economy

- Re-invest in skill training and industrial innovation in clean and renewable tech.
- Need to list the actual jobs people will be able to get.

## Infrastructure needs

- New infrastructure needed for the 21st Century economy
  - ♦ Accessible mass transit
  - ♦ Adaptive climate change infrastructure
  - ♦ Changing building code
  - ♦ Clean energy
- Important to say this is a structural investment, not just a cost to pay for social programs

#### Income in the new economy

- Universal basic income
- Guaranteed livable income as a replacement for lost jobs



## New economy local government Issues

- Local governments needs financial support. New economy will impact revenues.
- New structure needed for municipalities to recover costs beyond property tax.
- Need a policy that incorporates costs for all levels of government and avoids siloed decision making at all three levels of government.

### **Energy**

- Sustainable energy is the future.
- We have to reduce energy consumption.
- Solar and wind will not be enough.
- Green energy infrastructure.
- Lower guidelines on the putting solar in building code.
- Ability to sell power back to grid.

#### **BC Hydro**

- Need to repurpose/redirect BC Hydro.
- Revisit BC Hydro mandate.
- Concern about independent power producers and feed-in tariffs.

#### **Emissions, energy efficiency and buildings**

- Raise the bar on energy efficiency.
- All new homes must be net zero.
- Energy efficiency incentives.
- Net zero emission homes.
- The living building challenge.
- Needs to train people to reprofit to install renewables.
- Introduce passive house standards.

## Agriculture and food security

- Make better use of food waste.
- Food security with global climate change is so important.
- Need to grow local food -how to increase opportunity for people?
- Lease out at market rates affordable land.
- Subside farmers instead of oil and gas industry.



## Forestry and resource industries

- Logging industry is losing logging jobs every day.
- We need retrofit mills.
- Resources are controlled by a minority of corporations.
- Assist people in the oil and gas industry to transition jobs.

#### **Green New Deal**

- The same as "Leap Manifesto" and any other trendy branding.
- Green New Deal needs to prioritize social and economic wellbeing rather than just "wealth."
- NGOs building the Green New Deal are often NDP backers.
- Organisers are holding town halls across Canada and collecting data.
- Feedback: It is at 20,000 feet need to bring it down to earth.
- We are the Green New Deal.
- Needs to be framed around work to transition our economy.
- Green New Deal is great marketing term.
- Holistic sustainability measures needed to drive a Green New Deal.
- New Green Deal is a concept, a visionary beacon.

## **RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT**

#### Role of government in a functional society

- To redistribute wealth to ensure social health.
- To regulate society and industry.
- Manage natural resources to achieve maximum public benefit.
- Government can increase economic efficiency by reducing imperfections.

#### Improving the image of government

- Issue:
  - ♦ Negative perceptions
  - ♦ Influence of vested interests
  - ♦ Lack of Trust
  - ♦ Flitism
  - ♦ Politicians are dishonest
  - ♦ Too many broken promises
  - ♦ Abuse of power
  - ♦ Polarisation and partisan bickering



#### Solutions:

- Radical transparency, really open government with real accountability.
- ♦ Change partisan vote system.
- Walking the talk, relationship building, enhance human connection.
- ♦ Change the language. Government is simple an extension of us.
- ♦ Promote collaboration.
- ♦ Emphasis that politicians are people.
- Have more access to politics and normalize politics with society.
- ♦ Political courage vision beyond election cycle.
- ♦ Changing "leader" dominance model

#### **Enhancing participation in the political process**

- Perception
  - ♦ Government is made up of established elites.
  - ♦ Politics is too competitive.
  - ♦ Lack of Inclusivity or welcoming/outreach to young.
  - ♦ A different generation youth don't feel included or like their voices are heard and therefore don't feel connected.
- Solutions:
  - We need more politicians that are not career politicians from diverse backgrounds.
  - ♦ Better K-12 education.
  - ♦ Parties need to make candidacy more accessible.
  - ♦ Create youth levels of government to matc.h
  - ♦ Change the voting age to 16.
  - Mandatory voting.
  - Improve high school education on politics.

## **Local government**

- Revisit the Community Charter and Local Government Act to strike a new deal with local governments.
- Provide more stable funding (and much greater funding) to local governments, given the huge increase in costs related and climate change.
- Address barriers to becoming a councillor eg. childcare leave.



#### **Enhancing the way government functions**

- Make policy evidence based, ally with science medical and other experts.
- Develop legislation in the public interest in collaboration with other parties.
- Governance changes, eg. 60 per cent threshold for budget, supply, confidence bills, and motions.
- Awards for civil servants achieving incredible things eg. Michael Lewis — In it for mission not the money.

### **Considerations in developing BC Greens policy**

- Balancing local government, provincial and national issues.
- Precautionary and preventative issues.
- Forward looking innovation eg. The Green Economy
- Move away from BCGP as an "Island Party."
- Highlight successes.
- Safeguard the privacy of citizens.
- Focus education on values that cross party lines.
- Encourage the use of open source software in government and private sector where practical.

# Leadership of BC Greens in changing attitudes towards government?

- Convention accessibility.
- CASA works and shows parties can work together to govern and yet still have opposition role.
- Platform of honesty.
- Ability to work across party lines for the benefit of all British Columbians.
- Vision beyond election cycle.

