

Sustainability
Social Justice
Grassroots Democracy
Nonviolence
Decentralization
Community-Based Economics
Gender Equality
Diversity
Personal and Global Responsibility
Ecological Wisdom

A Better Way To Live

GREEN PARTY OF ONTARIO PLATFORM 2003



A Better Way To Live



GPO

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Contents

5 Message from Frank de Jong,
Leader of the Green Party of Ontario

7 Welcome to the Green Party:
A Better Way to Do Politics

9 **Renewing Democracy**

10 Addressing Strategic Voting

11 Proportional Representation

13 Campaign Finance Reform and Fixed Election Dates

14 **Strengthening Communities**

15 A Vision for Better Health, Not Just Health Care

17 Education: public and diverse

21 Social Services: we can afford to care

23 Green Cities

24 Family Time, Leisure and Culture

25 **Sustainable Economics**

26 The Principles of a Green Budget

27 Introducing the Green Tax Shift

28 Introducing Full Cost Accounting

29 New Economic Indicators

30 **A Green Environment**

31 Sustainable Energy Use

33 Climate Change: an urgent call to action

34 Clean Air, Land and Water

35 Agriculture: working with nature

36 Sustainable Forestry and Responsible Mining

37 **What Winning Looks Like**



Message from Frank de Jong, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario

Dear Friends:



I believe the people of Ontario face a choice between the kind of province we live in — and the kind of province we all want. In this election we must choose between old ideas that are weakening our institutions, ruining our environment and putting us into debt — and a more prosperous, healthy, sustainable way of life.

Over the years, I've travelled all over this province and met hundreds of great people. I've talked to folks in coffee shops, in community halls and at backyard barbeques — and they all tell me the same thing. They enjoy their jobs, but feel time-constrained and stressed-out. They look at where we're headed and they're worried about the future. They believe something has to change.

I couldn't agree more.

We'd like to present you with the Green Party's vision for *A Better Way to Live*. We've put over two years of research and consultation into this plan and we're very proud of it.

Our vision for Ontario is unlike anything you'll hear from the three traditional parties. It's a plan designed not only to protect today's quality of life, but our children's and grandchildren's as well.

A Better Way to Live is about government that would:

- Revitalize democracy through electoral reform.
- Create culturally vibrant, healthier communities.
- Exercise fiscal responsibility, and develop an economy that rewards excellence, fosters innovation, creates opportunity and ensures a better quality of life for all.
- Embrace 21st century ideas that work with nature, not against it.

People have told me our plan is profound. Even beautiful. When they say this, I'm thrilled. Like you, I believe politics should be about big ideas — about vision. It should be about building a better world for our children. It should be about justice. It should be about citizens working together to build stronger towns and cities. It must be about having the courage to dream — the strength to do what is right — and the determination to work for *A Better Way to Live*.



Frank de Jong,
Leader of the Green Party of Ontario

Our vision for Ontario is a plan designed not only to protect today's quality of life, but our children's and grandchildren's as well.



Welcome to the Green Party: A Better Way to Do Politics



“I want prosperity for my family without damaging the environment.”



“My kids need a public school close to home that suits their learning style.”



“What if doctors were paid a salary to keep me healthy instead of paid a fee for each treatment when I'm sick?”



“I want Ontario to be smog free. I want clean air and water and land.”

The Green Party of Ontario is part of a global movement spanning over 100 nations. Greens have been elected in 30 countries, and Green leaders have been part of governing coalitions in seven of those countries — including New Zealand, Germany, Mexico, Italy, France and Finland.

Green leaders have been part of governing coalitions in New Zealand, Germany, Mexico, Italy, France and Finland.

In Ontario, our members include management consultants, entrepreneurs, eco-lodge operators, farmers, university students, educators, community leaders, world-class musicians, authors, health care professionals, real estate developers, architects, mothers and engineers. Green Party members are leaders in their communities — and each of our members also helps shape Green Party policy. We believe good ideas get even better when they are discussed by a diverse group of people — that's the true spirit of democracy. So when we say we'll deliver the politics of participation, we mean it. That's what we've always done.

At a time when people have become resigned to government without imagination, management without compassion and planning without foresight, the Green Party is here to challenge those who can't envision anything beyond politics as usual. We need a better way to do politics. Our vision:

- Politics based on values
- Politics built on participation
- Politics bound to openness
- Politics that evolves

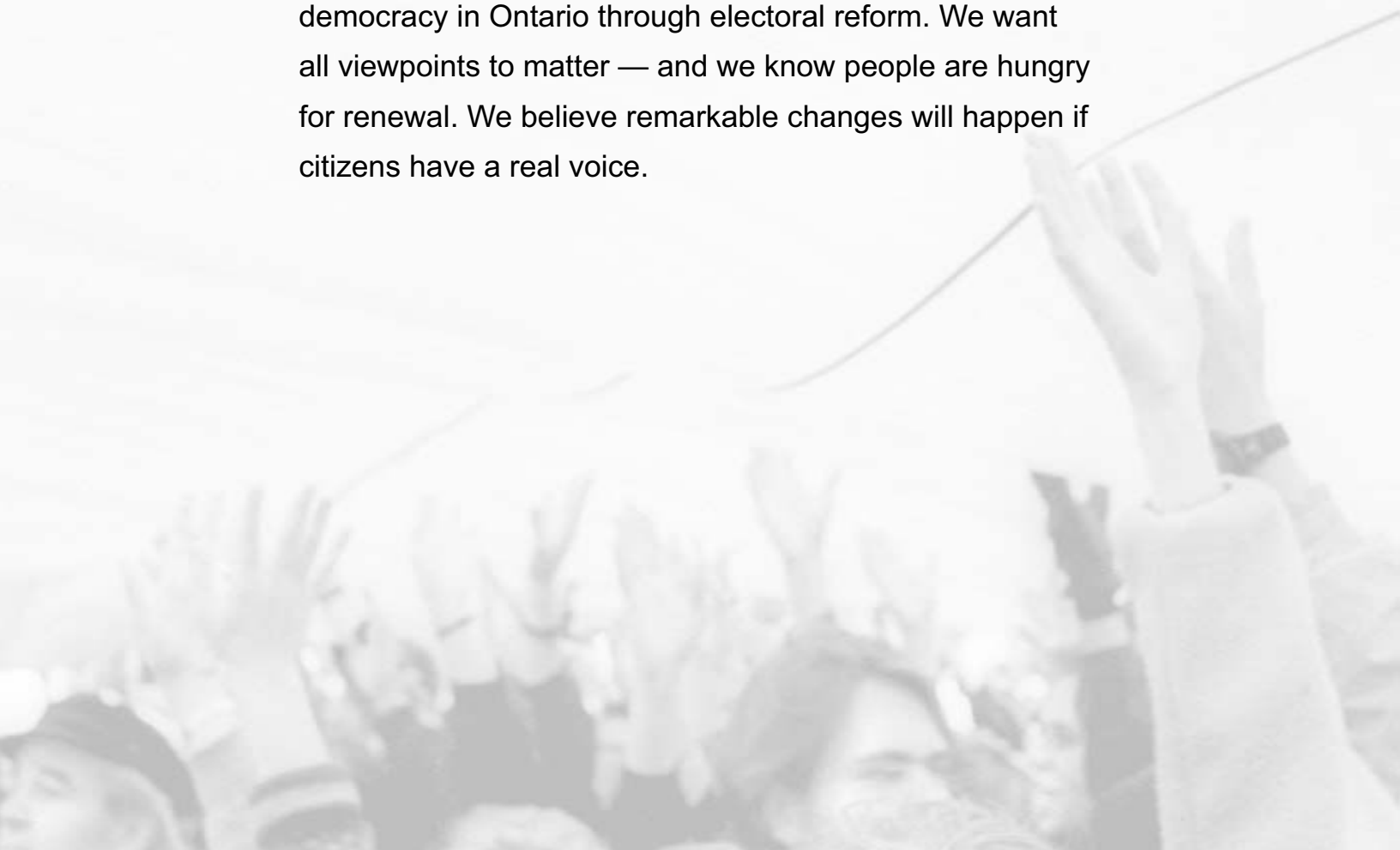
And, above all, politics that build *A Better Way to Live*.



Renewing Democracy

Canadians are increasingly disenchanted, not only with specific parties and their policies, but with the political system itself. We feel it no longer represents our interests. Voter turnout continues to decline.

The Green Party sees this election as an exciting opportunity to give Ontarians a fair voice in our political system. We're committed to revitalizing citizen-based democracy in Ontario through electoral reform. We want all viewpoints to matter — and we know people are hungry for renewal. We believe remarkable changes will happen if citizens have a real voice.



Addressing Strategic Voting

Vote **for** instead of **against**.

Our province's electoral system was designed over 130 years ago as a two-party system. Since then, Ontario has developed into a diverse, multiparty province. Today, that system no longer applies — and we face what some critics call a 'democratic deficit.'

Our First Past the Post (FPP) system encourages you to vote *against* what you don't want instead of *for* what you do want. This politics of cynicism is called 'strategic voting.' But by voting for the 'lesser of two evils,' we end up maintaining the status quo.

Voting for the Green Party makes a difference, even under our current system. Voting for the Green Party shows your commitment to fundamental change. Your vote means:

- *Momentum.* As Green Party support grows, we become more attractive to strategic voters and high-profile candidates. This means more media coverage. Success is contagious.
- *The Leadership You Want.* Your vote sends a strong message that you — the citizen — decides who leads. Your vote shows you have a real choice.
- *A Vote for Meaningful Change.* Instead of voting for the 'lesser of two evils,' you're voting for positive change and *A Better Way to Live*.

“We have a multiparty system. Don't limit your choices to two.

Chris Bradshaw,
Former Leader,
Green Party of Canada



Proportional Representation

“The fact that one can have three-quarters of the electorate vote against you and still you go to Parliament should cause us all to think.

Ed Broadbent and
Hugh Segal,
The Globe and Mail,
1 October 2002.

Ontario needs proportional representation to restore democracy.

Proportional representation is simple — if a party wins 20 percent of the vote, it gets 20 percent of the seats in the Ontario legislature. A party or coalition of parties would need the support of more than 50 percent of the popular vote to get a majority government.

However, our current FPP election system doesn't work that way. Because it was designed at a time when there were only two political parties, the winning party always had more than 50 percent of the vote. But with three parties in the legislature — as there are today — the dynamic changes. The winner requires a margin as little as 33 percent plus one. With four parties, a government can be elected with as little as 25 percent plus one.

Furthermore, FPP is winner-take-all. All votes cast in each riding for any but the first place party are discarded. So under FPP, a party could be elected *even if nearly three-quarters of the voters opposed their policies!* Today, governments regularly rule the province with less than 50 percent of the vote.

We think that's undemocratic.

It's easy to see why people have become so disillusioned with our political system. And when people are disillusioned, they stop voting. And when they stop voting, they've stopped participating in making the decisions that affect all of us.

That's why our plan for *A Better Way to Live* includes proportional representation. Almost all of the countries whose system — like ours — is based on the British “Westminster” system have made the switch. It's time Ontario did too.

That's why the Green Party will:

- Strike a Royal Commission to investigate FPP inequities and present possibilities for electoral reform. Ontarians would vote on an alternative system to restore democracy and public confidence in our political system.
- Recommend replacing our present FPP electoral system with an additional member system of proportional representation such as *Mixed Member Proportional* or *Single Transferable Vote*.

In 1995, Mike Harris's Tories received 65 percent of the seats in the Legislature with only 45 percent of the vote. In B.C. in 2001, the B.C. Green Party received zero seats with 12.4 percent of the vote.

Centre for Research and Information on Canada Report, November 2001. Allison Lawlor, *The Globe and Mail*, 2002.



Campaign Finance Reform and Fixed Election Dates

“The Tories raised and spent more money in 1999 than any party in any election year in the province’s history. The party spent at least \$23.5 million primarily on re-election activities. More than two-thirds of the money the Conservative central campaign raised came from corporations.

Prof. Robert MacDermid,
Changing Electoral Politics
in Ontario: The 1999
Provincial Election.

Only citizens should decide who gets elected.

The Green Party believes that elections are for voters. For too long, politicians have been influenced by unions and corporations – and that has affected election outcomes. But corporations and unions are *organizations* — not *voters* — and only *voters* should determine who leads Ontario.

We recognize the important role labour unions and corporations play in our province and its economy. However, to make sure voters determine the outcome of elections, the Green Party will:

- Eliminate corporate and other non-individual donations to political parties. Instead, political parties would receive individual donations and provincially allocated funds.

The public and their political parties deserve fair elections at predictable intervals. But too often the governing party in Ontario will call an election at the time that suits them best. That’s why the Green Party will:

- Fix election dates with standard four-year terms. Governments won’t be able to alter election dates unless there’s an emergency.



Strengthening Communities

The Green Party's policies for stronger communities are part of our comprehensive focus on the future. Other parties focus on crisis management and short-term solutions. The Green Party believes in long term plans that build *A Better Way to Live*.

We know that prevention costs less than treatment, so we will apply a preventative approach to health care and social services. Our package of education reforms will combine the fairness of the public system with the diversity of alternative schooling.

A Vision for Better Health, Not Just Health Care

Health care must stay public! The Canadian single-payer system is affordable, effective, and provides health care to everyone.

The Green Party has a plan for better health — not just more health care — with a focus on prevention and wellness.

Our comprehensive plan calls for an emphasis on better lifestyle choices to help people live longer, healthier lives. When people need care, a variety of allopathic and holistic approaches should be available. A Green health care system will also address the root causes of illness such as pollution, addiction, unemployment, poverty and stress.

Our preventative health care program will:

- Increase education about healthy lifestyles, diet and disease-prevention.
- Provide more support for prenatal and postnatal care and early childhood programs.
- As a first step, require pesticide-treated and genetically modified food to be labelled.

We believe in creating healthy alternatives through:

- Funding complementary health care like homeopathy, chiropractic and nutritional counselling.
- Increasing the number of nurses, public health nurses and nurse practitioners.
- Shifting more doctors away from fee-for-service to salary.
- Treating substance abuse as an illness.
- Improving home care and home treatment options for better care at lower costs.

- Using the health system to promote the most effective drugs — not just the most profitable drugs.

We will provide better service in more places by:

- Expanding the planned Northern Ontario medical school.
- Promoting a multiphysician recruitment model for under-serviced areas to help keep physician workloads reasonable and sustainable.

Drug prices in New Zealand and Australia are now one third less than in Canada under their Pharmacare program.

The Pharmacare Solution

The Green Party will expand the public health care system by creating a provincial pharmacare program. Covering the cost of prescription drugs will reduce overall health care costs and help prevent overmedication and drug misuse.

Pharmacare Saves

Ontario now spends more money on drugs than on physicians — and the costs are still rising. Drug costs now borne by families and companies could be reduced by a pharmacare program.

Our provincial pharmacare program will be run on a cost-recovery basis, with premiums waived for children and people with low incomes. Our pharmacare program will also follow the health outcomes of drug prescriptions to ensure that drugs are more effective and less expensive.



Education: Public and Diverse

Over the last five years there has been a 14% increase in the number of schools reporting fundraising for textbooks, there has been a 68% increase in the number of schools reporting fundraising for classroom supplies, and there has been a 11% increase in the number of schools reporting fundraising for library books.

People For Education,
2002 Elementary Tracking
Report.

The Green Party believes in a public and diverse education system.

The Green Party's public education system will give students the tools and perspectives they need to solve 21st-century problems. Our plan will provide the opportunity for every person in Ontario to reach his or her full potential. Our priorities for education reform are:

Critical Thinking and Responsible Citizenship. Preparing students for a career path is important, but the curriculum should encourage critical thinking, citizenship and interpersonal skills, which help students adapt to change and live fuller, more productive lives.

A Supportive Learning Environment. Schools need the resources to respond to all the challenges that students face — not just the ones in the classroom. Our plan for education includes funding for counsellors, nurses, nutrition programs and services for students with special needs. A supportive school environment promotes equality and personal development.

No Corporate Advertising in Our Schools. Too many schools are forced to allow corporations to promote and sell their products on school property in exchange for funding. Schools shouldn't accept donations unless they have "no strings attached." We will ensure all schools have the funding they need.

The Green Party's plan for public and diverse education will:

- Expand the choices available to parents and students by funding educational alternatives, including home schooling, religious schools and alternative-learning schools, under the administration of the local board of education.
- End the \$300 million tax credit for private schools.
- Ensure adequate funding for public schools.

Post-secondary Education

The Green Party calls for an accessible, affordable higher-education system.

Our universities must be at the leading edge of social and technological change, while rooting students in our shared history and achievements. Higher education is a gateway to *A Better Way to Live*. A post-secondary education should seek to develop well-rounded, ethical individuals.

The Green Party will:

- Freeze tuition at current levels and re-introduce minimal tuition fees.
- Allow student loans to be repaid through community service.
- Replace Boards of Governors with University Senates, which are elected from within the faculty, students and staff.
- Establish guidelines for corporate funding on campus.

Statistics Canada reports that students from the highest quarter income bracket are 50 percent more likely than students from middle income brackets to attend university. Less than half of young people from low-income backgrounds have access to higher education and the wealthiest quarter are 2.5 times more likely to pursue a university education.

Canadian Federation of Students, 2001.



Policies Based on Values

At a time when our politicians say they can't be bound by three-year plans and businesses manage affairs quarter by quarter, the Green Party's decisions are firmly grounded in *Ten Key Values*. They give us consistency, permanence, vision and stability in a turbulent world. The Green Party of Ontario shares these values with Green parties around the world.

Key Value No. 1: Sustainability A Better Way for Our Children

The Green Party will consider the effects of major decisions on seven generations.



The Green Party respects the needs of voters today, tomorrow and generations into the future. But today's politicians aren't even planning for the next generation, let alone the next seven. Despite promises from all levels of government, child poverty is still a serious problem. In Ontario, Ernie Eves cut welfare payments to families, withheld nutrition supplements to pregnant

women on assistance, increased elementary class sizes, raised post-secondary tuition and weakened environmental protection.

Environmental illness is on the rise. Children are vulnerable, particularly to toxins and pollution. That's why we need policies that protect our children and grandchildren. Our policies are designed to build *A Better Way to Live* for seven generations and beyond. The Green Party will:

- Introduce a *Seven Generations' Bill Of Rights*.
- Help low-income families through our housing, income, education, energy and transportation policies.
- Ban the cosmetic use of chemical lawn spraying of herbicides and pesticides throughout Ontario.
- Support parenting through changes to tax and labour laws.
- Help children from low-income families participate in community arts and sports programs.



Social Services: we can afford to care

The majority of poor kids are, in fact, living with poor mothers and dads...

It raises questions about the working poor, about good jobs and bad jobs, and about minimum wages, which have decreased dramatically in their real purchasing power in the last fifteen years.

Dr. Robert Glossop,
January 2003.

The Green Party will help working families and take an intensive, long-term approach to fighting poverty, homelessness and crime.

High poverty rates today reflect misplaced political priorities over the last 20 years. Some of the money now spent to police, hospitalize, incarcerate and remediate those who have suffered in poverty would have been better spent preventing poverty in the first place. Ontario is a wealthy province — and we can afford to care. The Green Party will:

- Build a network of community programs to help struggling families and catch kids before they fall.
- Give schools the resources to identify children at risk and link them with local agencies.
- Insist the federal government establish a timeframe to eradicate child poverty in Canada, a promise that was made and broken by the Liberals.
- Raise the personal income tax exemption so more of the working poor are tax exempt.
- Raise Ontario's minimum wage — for the first time since 1994 — to a target level of \$8.80. Full-time minimum wage earnings must be above the poverty line.
- Support community economic development and other programs that prevent welfare dependency.

Child Care

How we care for our children will ultimately determine how people care for each other and the earth. The Green Party sees parenting as a valuable investment, not only in the well-being of our children, but in the future of our society as a whole. The Green Party will:

- Support universal access to low-cost child care.
- Provide better pay for child care workers to reflect the importance of the work they do.

Social Housing

Over the past decade, federal and provincial governments have withdrawn support for social housing. Not coincidentally, homelessness has increased dramatically, primarily in Toronto, where 5,000 people sleep on the street or in hostels every night. The Green Party will:

- Provide grants and loan guarantees for co-operative housing.
- Require municipalities to tax site values more and buildings less. Taxing land rather than buildings encourages the efficient use of urban land. Taxing buildings less will create an incentive for developers and landlords to create more housing and add rental units without sprawl.

Restorative Justice: community healing

The Green Party believes that when a crime occurs, the victim, the community and the offender have all been injured. The principle of restorative justice says that offenders should be responsible for righting their wrongs, or giving back to the community they have harmed. The Green Party doesn't support the American model of private prisons. The Green Party will:

- Return the private Penetang prison to public ownership.

Access to child care will ensure that children who live in poverty are better prepared for school, will benefit from nutritious food and will experience an atmosphere free of the stresses associated with an impoverished home environment. For low-income parents, access to child care offers an opportunity to seek employment or pursue education or training.

Registered Nurses
Association of Ontario,
1998.



Green Cities

“In order to save the cities, we need to save the surrounding farms and wild spaces. Without fresh food, clean air and water, the city becomes an unbearable, lifeless thing, unfit for habitation.”

Greg Bonser,
Development Consultant

We all want our cities to be clean, green and safe. However, cities don't have the financial resources to improve themselves because other levels of government control the purse strings.

The Green Party knows our cities are the engine of Ontario's economic and cultural development and that they need financial independence to prosper. Ontario's cities need walkable neighbourhoods linked by transit so people can work, play, shop, garden, learn and worship within walking distance of their homes. The Green Party will work with cities to:

- Reform the Ontario Municipal Board to make it democratically accountable.
- Develop more urban parks and preserve green corridors.
- Redirect gas tax dollars to public transit and facilities for walking and cycling
- Restrict sprawl by promoting redevelopment within existing urban areas.
- Encourage urban gardens inside and on top of buildings. Urban gardens make for beautiful, liveable cities. They also provide food, recreation, reduce heating and cooling costs and clean the air and water.
- Ban municipal election donations from unions, developers and businesses, as Manitoba and Quebec have done. Municipal elections should allow voters to rank the candidates, to reduce the negative impact of vote splitting.

Family Time, Leisure and Culture

Take time to live.

Working is not the same as living. Most politicians don't understand this. By more actively promoting tourism, sports, recreation and the arts, the Green Party will increase our quality time. The Green Party will make sustained commitments to the arts, amateur sport and to making our communities more beautiful places to live. Because we know your time is valuable, the Green Party will:

- Make overtime pay mandatory above 40 hours per week for both wage and salary earners.
- Create tax incentives for job-sharing, flex-time and work-at-home programs.

Art holds up a mirror to our society, it gives us perspective and can transform our lives. In an era in which globalization, mass marketing and mass production threaten our cultural diversity, imagination and creativity are powerful forces for *A Better Way to Live*. That's why the Green Party will:

- Increase free access to theatres, galleries, museums, music and sporting events.
- Put media literacy programs back into the school curriculum.
- Enhance funding for T.V. Ontario and expand its mandate to support the development of new Ontario programming.
- Support community programs, cultural centres and teen drop-in facilities.
- Protect the natural heritage needed to sustain Ontario's eco-tourism industry.

In 1991, one in ten people worked more than 50 hours a week — now it is one in four. Since 1991, the time mothers have spent caring for their children has declined 33 percent.

Statistics Canada, 2001.



Sustainable Economics

Green economics is about balance. For continued prosperity we need to balance today's needs with tomorrow's — and balance the needs of commerce with the needs of communities.

In the last two decades, middle and low-income families have been hit hard by provincial, federal and international policies that put economic gains ahead of social and environmental goals. We firmly believe that increasing inequality does not lead to a dynamic economy, but rather to social collapse. That's why we'll invest strategically in our social and economic infrastructure, apply full cost accounting, establish new economic indicators and create projects that build *A Better Way to Live* for all.

The Principles of a Green Budget

Balance the Operating Budget. The Green Party will not make future generations pay for today's consumption. To achieve lasting solutions to current challenges, we're committed to fiscal responsibility — spending smarter, not always spending more.

Stop Taxing Innovation, Start Taxing Pollution: the Green Tax Shift. We will reduce taxes on income and shift taxes towards resources and waste. This tax shift would be revenue neutral across industries and taxpayer groups.

Lean, Green Government. Our responsibility to the citizens of Ontario is to provide the most services for the least money. Government must do a better job of managing for results, rewarding efficiency and innovation and making customer service a priority. It must also allow front-line employees to make more decisions.

Accountability. The Ontario government must be accountable to the people of Ontario, and should only undertake major expenditures and policy initiatives that citizens support. We would implement “open government” by making detailed financial statements of government operations available for public scrutiny.

Non-Profit Sector Partnership. The Green Party will reduce the cost of government operations by establishing closer links with the non-profit sector. These links will also improve the delivery of social services by leveraging the power of frugal, experienced and effective organizations to help us achieve our government's goals.

A non-profit sector partnership will reduce the cost of government operations and improve the delivery of social services by leveraging the power of frugal, experienced and effective organizations.



Introducing the Green Tax Shift

All OECD countries have introduced environmentally related taxes to some extent, and an increasing number are implementing comprehensive green tax reforms. Green tax reforms have been identified as a key framework condition for sustainable development.

Organisation of Economic
Co-operation and
Development, 2001.

The Green Tax Shift encourages the market to create jobs while preserving the environment.

The Green Party will partially shift taxes from incomes onto resource and land use. This will encourage employers to respond to these tax incentives by hiring more people to use resources more efficiently. The Green Tax Shift is a long-term project that is already underway in many countries. The Green Tax Shift will:

- Create new green jobs. The eco-efficiency revolution will create thousands of jobs as we update old buildings, renew crumbling infrastructure and replace outdated technologies.
- Ensure we meet — even exceed — our Kyoto targets.
- Stimulate eco-industry. New eco-industries will develop in repair, recycling and recovery, since new production will become more expensive than reusing materials.
- Encourage higher quality products. Quality production creates jobs in high-skill occupations.
- Create profit from waste. With proper planning, things we used to consider garbage can be resold at a profit. For example, central composting plants produce methane and rich fertilizer.

Introducing Full Cost Accounting

The full cost is the fair cost.

What we pay for products is often not what they really cost. Some of the costs of producing or using products are dumped on people without their permission. For example, gasoline producers and consumers don't compensate people who breathe polluted air. Plastic packaging is cheap because it dumps the cost of disposal on municipalities. Junk food is cheap to consume, but it takes a huge toll on our health care system.

Artificially cheap products lead to damaged ecosystems, broken communities and misplaced investment priorities. Full cost accounting and the Green Tax Shift are critical to achieving a sustainable economy. Governments can prevent or reduce cost dumping by making small and gradual changes using a wide variety of tools.

The Green Party will:

- Educate the public about hidden costs.
- Make minor changes to tax policies, regulations and subsidies.
- Institute Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) so that corporations must assume the environmental and safety consequences of their products and packaging. EPR is already the norm in many European countries.

Full cost accounting is the United States Environmental Protection Agency standard.

Environmental Protection Agency, 2000.



New Economic Indicators

The Alberta GPI project will establish a new sustainability standard that is unique in the world. In addition to tracking trends, the GPI provides a full monetary cost and benefit analysis of our management of human, social, natural and manufactured capital.

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, 2002.

A Genuine Progress Index (GPI) is a practical, relevant measure of progress that shows improvements in quality of life more accurately than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

What we measure shows what we value as a society. If our social and natural wealth is not measured, it is not valued. If it's not valued, we risk losing it.

The GDP is a measure of the dollar value of the goods and services produced in a year. The problem with the GDP is that it only adds — never subtracts. The GDP actually rises when bad things happen — such as when crime rates rise, disasters occur or cancer rates increase. It never falls when people lose natural wealth or when our quality of life diminishes.

That's why Ontario needs to use economic indicators that recognize that not all economic activity increases our quality of life. We need a measure that reflects so-called "triple-bottom-line accounting" — or accounting that reflects environmental and social costs as well as economic growth. The Green Party will:

- Establish an Ontario Genuine Progress Indicator to track our quality of life with a wide range of economic, environmental and social indicators.

A Green Environment

The natural environment is the most precious resource we have, sustaining and constantly regenerating all life on the planet. That's obvious to most people — but not to our leaders. Past and present provincial governments have undervalued the environment's role in creating a healthy Ontario. That's why environmental problems have been getting steadily worse.

We think it's time leaders began taking the environment seriously. Does that make us a one-issue party? The document you're reading proves we're not.

However, we do believe environmental mismanagement is behind many of the social and economic problems facing Ontarians. That's why we're committed to protecting our natural environment and building *A Better Way to Live*.

Sustainable Energy Use

The coal-fired Nanticoke generating station is the biggest and dirtiest generating plant in North America.

Ontario Clean Air Alliance, 2003.

Our sustainable approach to energy issues is crucial for A Better Way to Live.

Energy is essential to the success of our dynamic, fast-paced and innovative province. But over the long term, Ontario must find a way to reduce consumption to maintain its quality of life. Capping the price of electricity may seem like the answer to skyrocketing energy bills, but it's only a temporary solution. That's why the Green Party's energy strategy calls for a well-regulated market approach tempered by environmental and social concerns. The Green Party will:

- Reduce the environmental impacts of energy production and consumption by imposing a renewable energy portfolio standard.
- Account for all the costs of generation, transmission and consumption.
- Ensure a reliable supply by creating a stronger, more diverse energy infrastructure.
- Provide access to electricity for Ontarians living in less fortunate circumstances.

Strategies for a Sustainable Energy Future

Reduce Demand. The best way to balance energy supply with demand is to conserve energy. The Green Party will:

- Create the Ontario Power Conservation Agency, a publicly funded organization that will help educate people about the best ways to conserve energy.

- Remove PST from all conservation technologies and energy efficient appliances. We will lead by example — creating efficiency standards for lighting and appliances in all government offices.

Shift from Conventional to Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources. Conventional power generation techniques — such as coal, oil, gas and nuclear — create environmental, health, social and economic problems. The real costs of these problems are never measured. The Green Party considers these external costs to be undesirable subsidies — a kind of welfare for the fossil fuel and nuclear industries. That's why the Green Party will:

- As a first step, quickly convert coal-burning plants to gas. Burning coal is one of the most environmentally destructive practices in Ontario.
- Encourage the development of renewable energy co-operatives to create community-owned wind farms, micro-hydro and other generating facilities across the province.
- Use fiscal incentives — including taxes and other charges on fossil fuels — to fully account for the real cost of fossil fuel use.
- Phase out nuclear power, which is dangerous and expensive. Ontario nuclear plants have experienced cost overruns in the billions of dollars and frequent technical problems.
- Implement net metering. The Green Party will help homeowners and businesses generating green electricity sell their excess power back to the grid.

Ontario's coal-burning plants are responsible for nearly one fifth of Ontario's total emissions of Mercury, CO₂, NO_x and SO₂.

Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, 2002.



Climate Change – an urgent call to action

Many companies and some industry-wide campaigns are dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions, often exceeding the Kyoto target. So far, this is generally achieved at minimal cost or with considerable savings. Their success raises questions about the vocal opposition to Kyoto from a few industry groups.

David Suzuki
Foundation, 2003.

The Green Party will ensure that Ontario meets — and exceeds — its Kyoto targets.

Scientists agree: rapid climate change is real. Global warming is accelerating. The impact on our society and our planet will be catastrophic, with potentially devastating implications for global food and water supplies, peace and security, ecosystems, biodiversity – and our whole way of life.

The 1992 Climate Accord signed in Kyoto, Japan, is a small first step towards climate stabilization. In the long run, greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by more than 50 percent. However, with the right choices and investments, Ontario can meet and exceed its climate change commitments.

In the future, we'll be able to tell our children and grandchildren that we took a stand when it mattered most — and worked together to create a better place for them to live. Tackling climate change here in Ontario will:

- Reduce the costs associated with illness caused by air pollution.
- Trigger investments in research and development of green technologies.
- Create thousands of new high-tech jobs.
- Result in billions of dollars in energy savings.
- Lower monthly hydro bills.
- Make Ontario's industries more globally competitive.

Clean Air, Land and Water

The Green Party believes our children — and all other living things — have the right to clean air, land and water.

Our natural environment provides for our most basic needs, but cannot be expected to indefinitely satisfy all our selfish wants. The Green Party will:

- Legislate and strictly enforce higher water quality standards.
- Develop a *Watershed Protection Act* to protect watersheds from harmful development and environmentally damaging farming operations.
- Create industry incentives for developing closed-loop water systems.
- Eliminate cosmetic pesticide and herbicide use.
- Support municipal composting programs, and develop education and training for home, business, apartment, school, church and neighbourhood composting programs.
- Increase emission standards on all vehicles and remove the PST on purchases of zero-emission vehicles.
- Develop a *Clean Air Act* which would significantly reduce industrial, commercial and municipal emissions of air pollutants by introducing a carbon tax.
- Support public transit and infrastructure investment. The Green Party will offer tax incentives to individuals taking public transit or participating in recognized carpooling programs.

The Ontario Medical Association warns that “air pollution is a public health crisis in Ontario.” Air pollution kills 1,900 people each year in this province, and thousands more suffer from respiratory ailments associated with pollutants in the air such as asthma and bronchitis.

Ontario Clean Air Alliance, 2003.



Agriculture: working with nature

Today's factory farms treat animals cruelly, contribute to the loss of biodiversity and use damaging chemicals.

The Green Party will re-establish the financial viability of the family farm, assure a supply of locally produced food, preserve ecological diversity and make small-town Ontario strong again.

Ontarians are blessed with some of the world's most agriculturally productive soil — land that will be able to sustain us for generations if used wisely. Compared with factory farms, organic and local farms create better jobs, put less strain on resources and the environment, strengthen local economies and produce better-tasting, healthier foods. That's why, as part of our plan for *A Better Way to Live*, the Green Party will:

- Support organic farming through public education, research, farm transition subsidies and an “Organic-First” purchasing policy for government and publicly-funded institutions — including schools and hospitals.
- Expand animal cruelty laws to phase out factory farming and the use of growth hormones in livestock.
- Support co-operatives and businesses engaging in the value-added production of local and organic foods.
- As a first step, require labelling for genetically modified animals, plants, seeds and foods as a first step to protect and inform citizens.
- Shift taxes away from incomes and onto chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, fossil fuels and land, making farm labour less expensive.

Sustainable Forestry and Responsible Mining

The Green Party will ensure ecologically responsible forestry and mining practices.

The Green Party advocates sustainable forestry while keeping sensitive ecosystems free from logging. Mining provides many of the raw materials we need for the goods we use. It also generates large quantities of waste, which have contaminated our air, water and soil. The Green Party will:

- Encourage community-controlled, ecologically sustainable logging operations and techniques.
- Emphasize value-added forest products and local manufacturing.
- End the use of toxic pesticides in forestry.
- Ban genetically modified trees.
- Develop comprehensive biodiversity legislation that protects endangered species and creates wildlife preserves.
- Support the fair settlement of First Nations land claims and involve tribal councils in all aspects of forest stewardship.
- Prohibit new mines in wilderness areas, parks, disputed First Nations territory and important areas of natural and scientific interest.
- Work to recover mine tailings and encourage the efficient recovery of metals from commonly produced goods.
- Tax waste and toxic emissions to cover the cost of soil, air, and water remediation and treatment.
- Require contributions to provincial reclamation trusts to ensure the proper decommissioning of mines.

Research into innovative methods for reducing industrial wastes is critical to making Canada's natural resource sector more competitive.



What Winning Looks Like

Some people say the Green Party is a protest party. Some people tell us we'll never win.

We believe our electoral system has made those people cynical and afraid to support what they believe in. That's because our electoral system is undemocratic. It ignores every vote that doesn't go to the "winning" party in each riding and regularly elects majority governments with a minority of votes. That's why we want to introduce proportional representation.



We say that we *will* elect members to legislature and we *will* form a government, no matter what the system. We intend to win. But then again, there are many ways to win.

When we engage the public in new ideas and new debates, we win. After all, as history has shown time and time again, when the people lead, the leaders follow. When we nurture a new generation who will take up our challenges with passion, energy, talent, creativity and vision, we win.

That's what winning looks like.

Forming a government is part of winning. Ultimately, though, winning is about inspiring people to "be the change they wish to see in the world." Winning is about having the courage and vision to work for *A Better Way to Live*. That's why, when you vote for the Green Party, we win — and so do you.

Sustainability: Activities are sustainable if they can be continued without diminishing the opportunities and resources available to future generations. We have only one planet to live on, and we must treat it as if we mean to stay here.

Social Justice: Without justice, there can be no liberty, no stability and no lasting progress. We must act locally and globally to secure basic human rights and build a just society.

Grassroots Democracy: True democracy exists when citizens meet as equals to resolve problems and make decisions that are important to their community and nation. Citizens must be encouraged to participate in the environmental, economic and political decisions that affect them.

Nonviolence: Every act of violence delays our progress toward a just society. Anger

closes the open mind. Fear precludes constructive change.

Decentralization: The people most affected by a problem must have the authority to solve it. Distant administrations cannot be responsive. Individuals, cities and municipalities need more freedom to shape their destinies.

Community-Based

Economics: Businesses must contribute to the communities and nations in which they operate. Our economy must build communities, rather than extract profits from them.

Gender Equality:

Co-operation and understanding must replace domination and control. Our feminism is not only about the full and equal participation of women and men in all spheres of activity, but about making room for sensitivity, beauty, empathy and spirituality in all aspects of life.

Diversity: We honour the diversity of life on our planet. Every plant and animal has intrinsic value and the right to exist, independent of human needs. All cultural, sexual and spiritual diversity of the Earth's people has intrinsic value.

Personal and Global

Responsibility: We must learn to take responsibility for ourselves, our families, our communities and ultimately for our planet. As we learn to be responsible, we can give others the means do the same.

Ecological Wisdom: Human beings are part of nature, not separate from it. We cannot recklessly endanger whole ecosystems and remain unaffected. Whatever we do to the web of life, we do to ourselves.

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- 1 Sustainability
- 2 Social Justice
- 3 Grassroots Democracy
- 4 Nonviolence
- 5 Decentralization
- 6 Community-Based Economics
- 7 Gender Equality
- 8 Diversity
- 9 Personal and Global Responsibility
- 10 Ecological Wisdom