

# Statement of Objectives

by

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## I. Introduction

The Green Party of Canada is on the way to electing MPs and winning Parliament.

There are many tasks that the party needs to complete in order to achieve these goals. As Party Chair I will work to ensure that the party clearly identifies, prioritizes and completes these tasks. We are collectively building and professionalizing the party and I believe I have the Green Party and professional experience to help take us to this next level (please see my blog for more details).

This document outlines the specific objectives I will work to accomplish if I'm elected for the 2006-2007 term. For the most part the objectives are specifically aimed at improving council operations, since that is where I believe the Party Chair should work to provide direction.

Comments on these objectives are welcome. I will commit to working in a collaborative manner with council and others to implement these goals. As a result of this collaboration some objectives may be refined, removed or added if I hear persuasive arguments that there is a better way to accomplish a goal.

## II. Leadership

The party's growth over the last three years has put an increasing strain on our infrastructure, processes and procedures. In some cases this strain has compromised

the ability of different groups within the party to work together effectively. Although this is a common situation for a rapidly growing organization the party leadership has a responsibility to establish a framework to overcome the problems. This section outlines a number of objectives to accomplish this goal.

### Vision

My vision for the party is that we should work together to achieve the goals for the party as defined as the Purpose of the party in Article 4 of the GPC Constitution. A foundation for implementing this vision is defined in our Basis of Unity (Article 3) and by our six key Principles (Article 5). I believe I share this vision with most other GPC members but it is important that this belief is publicly reinforced. As such, I will:

1. Work with council to clearly define and publish their vision for the party.

### Strategy

I've outlined a number of strategies to help move the party forward in my Simple-5 roadmap essay (see blog). It is important to recognize that strategy is not the same as vision, in that there can and should be competing strategies to realize a vision. One or more strategies must be chosen to address specific situations and each strategy must change and evolve over time as circumstances change. As such, I will:

2. Work with council, members and staff to define an annual strategic plan for 2007.
3. Start the process to define a long-term strategic plan.

### Training

Our rapid growth has put many of our volunteers in leadership positions where

they may have had little or no experience. In some cases this can cause problems due to lack of focus, direction and execution. But if managed correctly most of these individuals will rise to the challenge. Such opportunities are often welcomed since the skills they learn are often applicable to their professional career and involvement with other organizations. As such, I will:

4. Ensure that councillors receive leadership training during their term.

### **III. Party Operations**

The new constitution proposed by the Constitution Review Committee contains a provision for the creation of a small Management Committee authorized to make decisions between council meetings. This is a welcome development but there are a number of related issues that need to be addressed to ensure that party operations proceed smoothly. This section outlines initiatives to achieve that goal.

#### **Leadership Team**

I believe there are six key groups in the party that now have an ongoing mandate, objectives and responsibilities:

- Council
- Staff
- Campaign Team
- Leader and Deputy Leaders
- EDAs
- Shadow Cabinet and policy development teams

The party needs to coordinate work between these groups and ensure that each group has a say in party decision-making.

Some mandates for these groups are defined in the constitution. Others have evolved organically from council resolutions aimed at addressing day-to-day issues caused by our growth and higher

expectations. Key individuals in each group often work informally with other groups to accomplish shared objectives but there is no formal mechanism for coordinating party work as a whole.

For a variety of reasons some of the above groups are more well-organized than others. This can cause problems and frustration when a more organized group feels that it is waiting too long for information from a less organized group, or when a less organized group feels that it is being starved of resources or that its mandate is not being respected by more organized groups. To help address this problem, I will:

5. Work to create a leadership team with representatives from each of the key functional groups in the party. The team will meet on a regular basis to coordinate overall party operations and foster a sense of teamwork, collaboration and mutual respect.

#### **Task Tracking**

A well-run organization tracks progress on the tasks and objectives it sets for itself. Although each unit of the party should do this for their own tasks, there are some "big picture" tasks that council has a constitutional responsibility to track. As such, I will:

6. Ensure that directives from the General Meeting are tracked to completion.
7. Ensure that Ombuds and Appeals Committee recommendations are tracked to completion.
8. Ensure that council motions are tracked to completion.
9. Ensure that other tasks necessary to build the party are identified, prioritized and tracked, and that

sufficient council time is dedicated to resolving high priority tasks for which council must take ownership.

### **Infrastructure**

As the party has grown some problems and issues have arisen that have not been addressed in a timely manner. In some cases this is because processes and procedures are not well defined. In other cases it is because committees do not have a clearly defined mandate. To help correct these problems I will:

10. Dedicate time at council meetings for committee reports and follow up.
11. Work to create a standing internal elections committee to ensure that council vacancies are filled in a timely manner and soon-to-be yearly internal elections are conducted fairly.
12. Transition the recently created disciplinary committee to be a standing committee of council to ensure that perceived and actual conflicts are addressed fairly and in a timely manner.
13. Work to create clear and consistent policies and procedures that strike a balance between enabling local and national units of the party.

## **IV. Council Operations**

The current council has transitioned from a "working" council where councillors did the day-to-day work of running the party to a "governance" council where council provides direction to our paid staff who are now doing this work. This section outlines how I will work with the new council to follow through on this transition.

### **Governance**

A strong council will contribute to the smooth running of the party. Over time, effective council decision making will lead to increasing respect, will help to attract more individuals that can help us grow and can serve as a model for other units of the party. To help us continue on this path, I will work to:

14. Provide training to the new council on the governance model and ask that they reaffirm their commitment to that model.
15. Build respect for council by ensuring that our responsibilities and tasks are completed in a timely manner.
16. Clearly communicate council objectives and priorities.
17. Solicit input from members so council has the up-to-date background information necessary for effective decision making.
18. Track our progress at a high level by asking council and members to participate in regular "State of the Party" polling.

### **Meetings**

Holding effective meetings is an important prerequisite for achieving many of the objectives outlined in this document. A good meeting will leave attendees with the sense that they are an important part of an effective team. I have facilitated dozens of successful Green Party and professional meetings and can apply these skills to council meetings. As such, I will work to:

19. Provide an orientation for all new councillors.
20. Set aside the first hour of each monthly teleconference for a review

of high priority council tasks and reporting from councillors, committees and other units of the party.

21. Shorten the business portion of each teleconference to between 1 and 1 1/2 hours, for a total meeting time of 2 to 2 1/2 hours.
22. Adopt well-defined procedures that will allow and encourage councillors to conduct more work between meetings.
23. Ensure that council's mandate is clearly understood and that non-council business is redirected to the appropriate unit of the party.
24. Clearly identify how and when units of the party accountable to council must submit written reports to council, and ensure that these reports are distributed to the membership in a timely manner.
25. Work with councillors to prioritize council business agenda items by importance.

### **Council Support Team**

The transition from a working to a governing council has alleviated some of the time-intensive responsibilities of councillors. However, councillors still have work to do in the governance model - it is just that the nature of the work has changed. I believe that governance-related activities such as strategic planning and monitoring need to be made a priority so the fixed amount of time most volunteer councillors have available for the GPC is used as effectively as possible. As such, I will work to:

26. Create a council support team comprised of non-council volunteers.

27. Transition administrative activities still being done by councillors to the council support team. Examples of such activities could include: creating draft agendas; taking meeting minutes; scheduling and sending out meeting reminders; tracking attendance and voting records; acting as impartial gpc-council list moderators and Code of Conduct facilitators; maintaining a council website, handbook and contact information; conducting online votes; doing timekeeping and keeping track of the speakers' list during meetings; and so on.
28. Identify and introduce technologies that allow councillors to be more effective. An example would be to share documents online during teleconferences.
29. Make translations available to those councillors who wish to engage in council deliberations in French.

### **V. Conclusion**

I consider it an honour and a privilege that I've been twice elected to council. With that privilege comes a responsibility to ensure that party activities are running smoothly and in a way that allows us to achieve the goals outlined in our Constitution. I hope that this document shows that I take this responsibility seriously.

I also understand that the Party Chair position carries the additional responsibility of acting impartially. I hope that the endorsements and other information on my blog show that I try to conduct myself in a fair-minded way and will continue to do so should I be elected.

Working together, I believe the GPC can win Parliament.