

Leadership Guiding Principles

Empower Individual Greens

The GPNS is a grassroots organization, so individuals within the party should feel that they have agency to act in the interest of the movement without needless restrictions, bureaucratic barriers or other impediments. Some party functions by their nature cannot be a completely decentralized free-for-all, such as those that rely on our limited collective or mutual resources: funding, capacity, bandwidth. In these instances, we must trust in our internally elected officers and representatives to ensure that resources are allocated with transparency and accountability, aligning with our core values and mission. In all cases, it is incumbent on those in positions of prominence within the party, especially the leadership, to lead by example. We must rely on inspiration, not coercion, to unify us toward our goals, recognizing the crucial importance of ensuring that each of us continues to want to be part of the movement.

Values: Participatory Democracy, Sustainability, Social Justice

Welcome New Greens

Faced with the existential threats of climate change, rampant inequality, and growing democratic deficit, we cannot afford to be a protest party. We must make room within the party for people who have not traditionally considered themselves Green. This must include people from many different backgrounds, as well as people with many different philosophies and worldviews, who share our core goals and values. This will mean some growing pains, as we must each learn how to respect views and ideas that may occasionally differ from our own. We must learn how to agree to disagree. So long as we are steadfast in focusing on our core goals and values, rather than becoming distracted with inconsequential nuances of opinion, we can overcome our differences and make history together.

Values: Social Justice, Non-Violence, Respect for Diversity

Renew The Green Brand

We are in the midst of a climate emergency that inextricably intersects with social justice, energy, taxation, healthcare, transportation, trade, Indigenous affairs, housing, human rights, fishing, infrastructure, agriculture, education and more. Faced with this reality, it is profoundly unwise to characterize a climate-first political movement as a single-issue party. We must proactively challenge outdated precepts and assumptions that far too many associate with the Green movement. We must combat the harmful stereotypes that old-line partisans rely on to gatekeep our legitimacy as a mainstream political movement. We must stop passively reacting in defence of our philosophy and instead seek out and preempt misinformation in the hearts and minds of those who misunderstand our movement.

Values: Ecological Wisdom, Sustainability, Participatory Democracy

Our Pathway to Success

The Blueprint

The time has come. Nova Scotia needs Green voices. We cannot afford any further delay. The Green Party of Nova Scotia must be represented in the legislature. Our democratic institutions, our future generations, and our planet cannot afford the price of inaction. We know this. That's why we're Green. We know what we will need to do to make the future livable. We know all too well where we need to be in four years' time. What we need is a plan to get there.

Fortunately, we have a blueprint for success. We know what worked for our counterparts in the rest of the Maritimes. It is imperative that we elect our first MLA. This is the most important milestone to the growth of the party. Our future success hinges upon achieving this goal. Milestones along the way will include fielding a full slate of candidates and receiving an invitation to the leaders debates.

With a majority government, there should be ample time to get an early start on candidate recruitment, allowing our next slate of candidates ample time to ramp up local campaigns. To enable the best possible preparation for local campaigns, our leadership team will work to establish campaign centres of excellence in key strategic districts in each region of the province. In these districts, we will build local campaign capacity well before the writ period by forming anticipatory campaign teams. Organization and training may begin even in advance of candidate nominations. These centres will act as regional hubs to coordinate local campaigns in nearby districts leading up to and during the election, thereby freeing up centralized organizational capacity.

The leadership team will also spearhead a coordinated effort to demand the inclusion of Greens in the leaders debates. Even if we cannot demonstrate enough support to warrant our inclusion, we must at least raise enough awareness to force organizers to provide an explicit rationale for our exclusion.

As long as we are constrained by our antiquated First Past The Post electoral system, we must employ strategies to overcome the antidemocratic obstacle to our success that it represents. Most crucially, this will mean focusing campaign resources on a winnable district, where we can make our breakthrough. Once we have established this toehold, the Nova Scotia political landscape will be irrevocably altered.

As a leadership team, Anthony and Jo-Ann will:

- Liaise with and learn from our counterparts in neighbouring provinces
- Recruit candidates as early as practical
- Establish campaign centres of excellence
- Lead a coordinated effort to demand inclusion in leaders debates
- Focus campaign resources on a single winnable district
- **Elect the first Green MLA in the history of Nova Scotia**

The Buildup

In preparation for our breakthrough, we must undertake an unprecedented capacity-building effort so that we can mount an energetic, high-visibility campaign. The party has struggled with building capacity

in two key areas: fundraising and volunteer mobilization. While these party functions are not strictly under the purview of the leadership, they are areas where the leadership can take active roles, at least between elections.

During the next election, the party will need to incur substantial costs to mount a successful campaign. To build up the profile of the party in the runup to the election, we will need to undertake outreach campaigns, including events and advertising, which will also represent substantial costs. Meanwhile, party growth will necessitate more administrative resources, and so too will our operating costs grow. To muster the requisite financial resources to meet these needs, the party must be prepared to undertake large-scale, centralized fundraising efforts on an unprecedented scale. To this end, our leadership team will make fundraising a priority over the next three years. Leveraging the visibility of the leadership to support fundraising efforts via a whistlestop tour or other high-profile events should help to identify and mobilize potential donors. We will set concrete fundraising goals, and then work to establish a team of experienced fundraisers who can meet those goals, ensuring that the party will have sustainable fundraising mechanisms into the future.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of any grassroots political movement, but this is especially true for our party. We depend on volunteers for our capacity to write policies, advocate on issues, find candidates, recruit supporters, and mount election campaigns. However, we have historically struggled to effectively mobilize and retain volunteers. Too often, eager new volunteers are tossed from one point of contact to the next while organizers struggle to find ways for them to become involved. Many of the party's most dedicated volunteers can relate some version of this narrative. While many keen volunteers will overcome these initial stumbles to eventually become indispensable members of our extended family, there are many more who do not persevere through this ordeal. This is understandable, as few would donate their precious hours and efforts to an organization that doesn't appear to want them. We can do better. Our leadership team will establish a comprehensive volunteer coordination strategy. We will establish processes to track where volunteers are needed and match volunteers up with dispatchable tasks. We will work to ensure that authority for volunteer mobilization is delegated throughout the party's organizational structure, so that interested volunteers can easily be matched up with roles that suit their talents and interests. We will work to ensure that no motivated volunteer is left idle.

As a leadership team, Anthony and Jo-Ann will:

- **Make fundraising a leadership priority**
- Set concrete, achievable fundraising goals
- Establish sustainable fundraising mechanisms
- Establish a volunteer coordination strategy
- Define processes for tracking volunteer roles
- Delegate authority for volunteer mobilization
- Ensure that no motivated volunteer is left idle

The Cabinet

As a relatively small political party, we face additional challenges when spreading our message, such as struggling to receive coverage in traditional media. Overcoming the obstacles that we face will require us

to drastically scale up our external communications, increasing the volume of press releases, official statements, prepared remarks, blogs, social media posts, and more. In order to accomplish this, we will need a large team of articulate, empowered, strong Green voices to speak out on important issues in between election cycles. We need a talented, professional, and diverse shadow cabinet.

Leading the shadow cabinet is not only a key responsibility of the party leadership, but an important tool for the leadership to leverage toward achieving core leadership goals. There is a fantastic pool of talent within the party that can be tapped, as well as Green-leaning subject matter experts who may join us to bring greater prominence to their ongoing advocacy if we leverage resources to promote them. By recruiting and retaining talented and knowledgeable individuals to represent the party between elections, we can project an image of competence and expertise.

Shadow cabinet members will work with volunteers to monitor the proceedings of the legislature, as well as any other relevant public forum for political discussion, such as radio talk shows and larger social media channels. This will provide shadow cabinet members with frequent opportunities and prompts to contribute official statements, unofficial reactions, and general commentary on behalf of the party, establishing Green voices as part of the ongoing political discourse.

As leaders, we will empower shadow cabinet members to react nimbly and speak out often by minimizing any unnecessary oversight on party communications, particularly outside of election campaigns. We will also take steps to enable and encourage shadow cabinet members to network with non-partisan policy experts and advocacy organizations. This will help to build relationships that can be leveraged while creating policy and platform, as well as during day-to-day communication activities. Following a successful leadership bid, we will immediately initiate the process to appoint a shadow cabinet, with the goal of having an initial round of appointments complete before the end of the calendar year.

As a leadership team, Anthony and Jo-Ann will:

- **Establish a dynamic, vibrant and professional shadow cabinet**
- Leverage the deep body of expertise within the party, as well as outside expertise
- Provide critics with a high degree of autonomy and speaking authority
- Use party resources to promote shadow cabinet messaging
- Enable networking with non-partisan policy experts and organizations

The Message

Our message is one of climate, social justice, and democracy. In Nova Scotia, this means phasing out Coal, establishing GLI, and implementing Proportional Representation. These are core issues that will drive our messaging. At its core, our message is a strong one. Nova Scotians are aware of the dangers of climate change, inequality, and injustice. We must continue to be our province's strongest voice on these core issues. However, while we uniquely prioritize these issues, the other political parties also make attempts to address them in their own ways. We therefore must also gain support from the other parties by differentiating ourselves in key ways; by identifying their blindspots and becoming the voice for issues that have been neglected.

Among other ways, we can differentiate ourselves by being a strong voice for environmentalists in rural

Nova Scotia. The NSNDP 2021 platform included virtually no mention of wildlife resource management and conservation. Outdoor enthusiasts like hunters and anglers are typically passionate about conserving wildlife, ecosystems and beautiful natural landscapes. They ought to form a natural component of our traditional environmentalist base, but like the NDP, we have not done an adequate job of reaching out to them and listening to their concerns.

As an example, Nova Scotia has an embarrassing history of preventable deaths from accidents involving off-highway motorized vehicles. This has gone largely unaddressed by the provincial government, despite a clear imperative to address it with safety training or other proactive measures. The human cost of this neglect is all too real for rural Nova Scotians, many of whom rely on off-highway vehicles, not just for recreation, but also for their utility or as part of a rural livelihood. We could work with organizations like ATVNS to find ways to prevent these tragic accidents.

Our leadership and shadow cabinet should also be in regular contact with groups like The Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters or Ducks Unlimited to ensure that we keep abreast of the conservation concerns of all Nova Scotians who enjoy being close to nature. These are our natural allies, but we have neglected to listen to them. We must welcome them and provide reassurances that their concerns are valid and being heard. The resultant issues will not likely take precedence over our top priorities, but even acknowledging the concerns of rural Nova Scotians and demonstrating a commitment to address them can make a very meaningful positive impression in the parts of Nova Scotia where people have long felt invisible to Halifax.

These examples are meant only to be illustrative; concerns follow from consultation, not the reverse. The key consideration is that, above all, we must build bridges with groups and individuals who have not traditionally considered themselves Green. This does not mean compromising our collective identity, but it does mean respecting and welcoming diversity.

As a leadership team, Anthony and Jo-Ann will:

- **Reach out to Nova Scotians who feel underrepresented**
- Consult with diverse non-profit and advocacy groups
- Expand the party by appealing to non-traditional Greens

The Brand

In order to make an electoral breakthrough, we must also work to build recognition and positive sentiment around our brand, growing our pool of potential supporters. Established parties can win majorities in the legislature by mobilizing a dedicated minority through divisive messages and wedge issues, despite often alienating a majority of voters. We cannot afford to embrace divisiveness. We will not make a breakthrough without first earning the implicit approval of an overwhelming majority of voters. Our support is not deep, so it must be broad. It is not enough for us to convince one third of Nova Scotians that we're the lesser evil. We must convince the vast majority of Nova Scotians that we are fit to govern; that we are competent, rational, professional, pro-science, and above all, that we are not irresponsible radicals. We must not only win over those who empathize with our cause, but also soften the resistance of those who oppose us. We must not only respect diversity but also seek out and enthusiastically welcome diverse supporters, including non-traditional Greens. Only then will we have an

adequately broad and deep pool of support to draw upon that we might win over enough voters in one district and finally elect Nova Scotia's first Green MLA.

Before we will be prepared to welcome new Greens, we must accept the unfortunate reality that the Green brand currently carries substantial baggage. Many consider Greens to be naive idealists with no practical plans. Some consider Greens to be a scientifically illiterate fringe who are afraid of 5G and promote homeopathy. Some even believe that we are anti-everything NIMBYs who want to ban all food except organic soybeans, shut down all industry, and revert to the dark ages. We know that these things are egregiously false, but these perceptions are very much real for some. These ideas may be rooted in outdated information, misunderstandings, or the actions of other Green parties abroad. In some cases, these ideas may be perpetuated maliciously by partisan actors in attempts to discredit us. Whatever the reason, we must address them head on. We must take a stand against these harmful stereotypes by proactively identifying and disavowing them.

If we fail to directly and explicitly address these concerns, we may risk leaving the impression of “dog whistling”. This is a tactic of covertly signalling tacit openness to controversial positions, in order to appease a fringe base who may ultimately drive decisions. To a cynical or uninformed outside observer, this is analogous to others’ failures to formally recognize the reality of climate change or a woman’s right to choose. If we wish to make progress on important issues, we cannot afford the appearance of moral ambiguity that follows from allowing doubts to linger around otherwise unambiguous issues. Our leadership will make it a priority to directly address misplaced criticisms in our messaging whenever applicable. We will create a process to approve uses of the GPNS brand to avoid misunderstanding of party positions by the public. We will also make resources available to empower candidates and supporters to easily debunk misinformation, including a published list of common controversial issues on which our candidates have been vetted. These should help us to stymie partisan smear campaigns, as well as to educate the public about our actual values and goals.

As a leadership team, Anthony and Jo-Ann will:

- Rehabilitate the image of the Green movement in Nova Scotia
- Work to counteract harmful stereotypes and misinformation
- Welcome and make space for non-traditional Green supporters
- **Build a brand identity based on our Green values**
- Create a process for approved use of the GPNS brand

The Future

If we are successful in welcoming many new Greens to join us in our mission to build a better Nova Scotia, we will experience some growing pains as the party increases in size and diversity. We may even experience the types of internal conflicts that have dogged our federal counterparts. We must therefore be ever vigilant against losing sight of our core values and goals. We must also be prepared to address disagreements that arise within the party between members, candidates, officers, critics, or leadership. To help us navigate internal policy disagreements, our leadership team will work to establish informal guidelines for constructive disagreement. To establish clear expectations, we may choose to internally classify some issues according to a red/yellow/green colour scheme, reflecting the Green rules of order.

Green issues represent those where a consensus is both clear and core to the party's objectives. Examples could include: carbon pricing, GLI, sustainable forestry management, or Proportional Representation. In theory, green issues will be covered by policy as it is developed, but they needn't always be codified in policy. These issues should be the least controversial within the party.

Red issues or positions are those where there is a clear consensus among members, and further public discussion is both unnecessary and may bring the party into disrepute. An example would be climate denial or other unscientific theories or any overtly discriminatory ideas. Controversial issues are already effectively codified into our existing candidate vetting processes, and this should be carried out as openly and transparently as possible by publishing a list of such issues. Candidates may also be asked to pledge not to renege on these controversial issues, in order to safeguard the party against partisan smear campaigns like the one that targeted the Green Party of Canada on reproductive rights in 2019.

Yellow issues are those where a clear consensus cannot be reached. Examples could include: GMO technology, animal agriculture, complementary medicine, or nuclear power. Yellow issues will require the most prudence and tact to address. In principle, policy proposals that fail to meet the 60% voting threshold are in this category, but these may also arise informally from time to time. The leadership will take a proactive role in identifying and addressing these. Once one is identified, we will proactively address disagreement around it. Leadership will collaborate with members to apply Green values and identify a range of acceptable positions for official statements from leadership, shadow cabinet, and candidates. We may also informally identify a range of views that should be tolerated internally, with leadership laying out the expectation that this diversity is to be respected within the party. Once it becomes clear that consensus is unachievable, continued debate has little value, so further conflict should be strongly discouraged. We must learn how to agree to disagree.

In this way, we aim to orient our healthy and robust internal debate toward useful ends, and away from pointless infighting over irreconcilable disagreements, with the aim of promoting party unity and fostering a culture of mutual respect and harmony. Note that these procedures will not include any enforcement mechanisms. This would be a purely leadership-driven initiative, not necessarily embodied in any party by-laws, and dependent on leadership by example, rather than institutional structure. However, the leadership will also participate in any processes undertaken by the party's executive branch to develop and implement membership codes of conduct.

As a leadership team, Anthony and Jo-Ann will:

- Ensure transparency around the handling of controversial issues
- Guide internal debate toward constructive ends
- Help the party to learn how to agree to disagree
- **Foster a culture of mutual respect and harmony**
- Provide guidance and coaching on how to speak publicly about internal disagreements
- Keep the focus on our areas of consensus: Green values and green issues
- Participate in efforts to develop and implement codes of conduct