

# Report on Interviews – November 2025 through April 2026

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## Background and Interview Subjects

In October 2025, members of the executive of the Vancouver Granville Electoral District Association (EDA) drew up a roadmap for building up support among communities in the Federal riding. A first step was to identify a list of influential people in Vancouver, some of whom have electoral experience with a Green Party at the municipal, provincial, or federal level, some of whom we identified as potentially “green-sympathetic,” to reach out to for advice.

The goal was threefold:

- Get valuable advice on how we can build an organization that responds to community needs in our riding,
- Build connections with community leaders, and
- Identify the next Green Party candidate for Vancouver Granville.

From November 19, 2025, to April 2, 2026, we interviewed thirteen people. They included the following:

**Adam Hawk.** Provincial Green candidate for Vancouver-South Granville in 2024. He achieved the second highest number of ballots cast for any BC Green Candidate on the Mainland of BC. A passionate bike safety advocate, he has spearheaded efforts to make eco-friendly, accessible transportation a reality for all, regardless of age or ability.

**Beth Clarke.** Environmental Activist. Executive Director of the Wilderness Committee, an organization that runs grassroots campaigns that "challenge systems to create equity and justice for all." She has worked for a variety of social justice non-profits in diverse sectors for more than 30 years

**Denis Agar.** Transportation Activist. He is an urban planner with 10 years experience working at TransLink, the regional transportation agency. He is now the Executive director of Movement Metro Vancouver Transit Riders, which is a non-profit focused on fighting for better transit.

**Geoff Wright.** In 2019, he was the candidate for the Green Party of Canada in the federal riding of Vancouver Quadra, running on a platform of environmental sustainability, investment into post-secondary education and transparent campaigning. He is a Director of the Vancouver Greens.

**Kaarina Talvila.** Campaign Manager in the 2019 Federal election. She was instrumental in establishing the first city-wide BC Green Party Riding Association and served briefly as its first President. At the municipal level, Kaarina hopes to help keep climate and climate change adaptation and resilience on the front burner. Kaarina supports green initiatives for sustainability, reduced consumerism and local handmade.

**Michael Weibe.** Elected to the Vancouver City Council running under the Vancouver Green Party slate in the October 2018 municipal election. He had previously served on the Vancouver Park Board as a commissioner. Having worked extensively in Vancouver, he has developed strong relationships across diverse cultural communities, grassroots organizations, and advocacy groups. His background is in sustainability, community engagement, and political organizing

**Nathan Caddell.** Journalist. Editor in Chief at the Georgia Straight, He is a journalist, writer and editor based in Vancouver. He has worked for several of the country's top magazines and newspapers. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science with a minor in professional journalism.

**Patrick Condon.** UBC Professor Emeritus in the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. Expert in sustainable urban design. Patrick is also a frequent contributor to the Tyee and in 2024 published *Broken City: Land Speculation, Inequality, and Urban Crisis*.

**Sarah Potts.** City Councillor in Victoria, Oct 2018 - Nov 2022 She served on the city's Community Wellness Task Force, which focused on delivering a mental health-first response for crises of mental illness, homelessness and substance use. She has experience across municipal government, community engagement, and crisis care reform.

**Shane Gunster.** Communications Specialist. SFU professor in the School of Communication. His areas of focus include media coverage of environmental and

energy issues (especially climate change) and environmental communication, including activist and advocacy communication.

**Wes Regan.** Social Planner. Senior Policy Lead with Vancouver Coastal Health. Green Party of Canada's 2015 Candidate for the riding of Vancouver East. He has worked in community economic development, social planning and public health.

Each of the interviews followed a set of written guidelines, designed to ensure that each subject was asked the same questions. The guidelines stipulated that individual interview results shall be kept confidential and will be shared only among the executive. The consolidated interview results will be reported anonymously and will be shared with the participants. There will be no attribution to individual interviewees.

## Summary – Analysis of Alternative Candidate Profiles

This summary describes three distinct candidate profiles or types

- The Community Servant
- The Faithful Partisan
- The Charismatic Populist

These names were given to the three types which emerged from the analysis of the interview results. The categories appear to provide an exhaustive summary of the candidate characteristics which were identified in the interviews as contributing to electoral success.

Here is more detailed description of the three themes or distinct candidate types which have emerged

- **The Community Servant.** Has a history of service in the local community, through supporting the interests of community organizations or possibly serving in municipal government. Consults with constituents. Aims to improve the system through advocacy for specific local interests using lobbying and collaboration. Forms alliances to get results.
- **The Faithful Partisan.** Spokesperson for party policy. Aims to improve the system through legislation. Supports the national leader; wears the team jersey. Willing to collaborate with other parties to advance the public good. “I am not interested in the Greens being a protest party standing on the legislature steps with a megaphone. I am focused on holding the balance of power inside the legislature so we can enact more Green policy.”
- **The Charismatic Populist.** Influencer. Generates buzz, using social media, fire, and confrontation. Adversarial. Fix the system by getting rid of the bad guys. Return power to the people from the self-serving elite, A charismatic leader who spurs action through public advocacy and demonstrations.

The table below contrasts defining characteristics of the three types.

	<b>COMMUNITY SERVANT</b>	<b>FAITHFUL PARTISAN</b>	<b>CHARISMATIC POPULIST</b>
MAIN MESSAGE	Looking after your issues	Serving the public good	Leading the bandwagon
PRIMARY COMMUNICATION MODE	Face-to-face	Advertising	Social media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memes</li> <li>• Images</li> </ul>
FIXING THE WORLD	Community organizing, advocacy	Legislation, Political alliances	Getting rid of the elites
PROFILE	Community roots	Supports party leader, wears the team jersey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular</li> <li>• Influencer</li> <li>• Celebrity</li> </ul>
CALL FOR SUPPORT	Improve your community	Glorify the party	Join the movement, Be part of the buzz
USE OF POWER	Collaborative	Collaborative	Adversarial

## Interview Notes

The interviews were conducted by Walter Wawruck and Mark Dunn. Their notes from the interviews are reported below. The notes paraphrase the statements made by the interviewees, and are not intended to be verbatim quotations. The responses are grouped by eight questions, posed in the interviews, which deal with electoral strategy, organization building, the profile of the candidate, and the role of the EDA. There were other questions dealing with the interviewee's place of residence, personal plans, and suggestions for other people to interview, which are not reported here.

A large bullet ● marks the start of a statement by an interviewee. Information in the original notes which may have identified the source of a statement has been changed to ensure anonymity.

*\*\*Interviewer's note on one of the interviews—I got a little carried away in the conversation and didn't stick as closely as I should've to the questions we set out. The answers will all be in italics to signify that this was my impression of the subject's perspective - Mark\*\**

## **WHAT IS THE MOST CRITICAL FACTOR, WHICH CAN BE INFLUENCED BY THE EDA, TO GAIN ELECTORAL SUCCESS IN THE RIDING?**

- Recognise that a Federal groundswell at the national level is the key factor. Select a candidate who can convince local voters of merits of the Federal policy.

The riding is so demographically diverse that it is difficult to identify and promote local issues for a specific community, but there may be issues, not necessarily local, which galvanize all communities in the riding.

Don Davies is perhaps the most community connected candidate there is, but he almost lost. Fear of conservatives clouded everything.

Emily Lowan's experience shows that the characteristics of a leader can stimulate support even in a demographically diverse electorate. (Emily Lowan is the newly chosen leader of the BC Greens).

- Set up reciprocal relationships, or partnerships with local community groups in the riding.

Method identify a local group and start talking to them with the aim of establishing the issues of concern to the group. Discuss the connection between the issues and climate change. Example housing is #1 concern. Elaborate connection between housing scarcity and climate change.

Important to meet people where they are at. Need to interrogate group to determine their needs. Start with issues that concern them.

Once connection has been established, find out how we can work together. Show how you can support them in achieving their objectives.

Select a candidate who can promote the Green climate perspective in the discussions with the community groups.

- Create an awareness in the riding of the presence of the riding association and the Federal party in the riding through outreach and advertising. Examples of methods for doing this include appearing at events in the area (farmers' market), door knocking, mailouts, postering (e.g; notice of monthly bike ride on cross-street bike buttons), developing a rapport with journalists.

- Greens must be seen as having good policy positions on issues within Federal jurisdiction such as cost of living, housing. Historically, Greens have been effective in setting out policies that have been adopted and implemented by other parties. So the Greens can achieve positive results even if they have not been elected.

Transit issues are the domain of provincial and municipal policy. Funding (especially operating budgets) and space for infrastructure are determined by province and municipality. In Canada Federal government limits its involvement to providing

matching funds for capital infrastructure, does not fund operating costs. Current federal government shows no interest in transportation, has reduced transit funds in current budget. In the USA, Federal government provides grants for inter-city bus systems.

The VanGran EDA would have to influence provincial and municipal policy to address transportation issues.

● The issues that are happening in the world, such as affordability or tariff threats, will determine the party that people vote for. These issues are taking attention away from the climate (and hence reducing the Green vote). People vote for the party and the prime minister; they look beyond the local MP.

● The biggest thing is the Federal Leader and policies. This factor, like several others is not in the control of the EDA. For instance, the policies and candidates of other parties. In 2024, electorate was concerned with electing a majority, or afraid of Polievre, and did not vote for smaller parties like NDP or Greens.

The EDA should consider other measures or targets for success which are within the control of the EDA, for instance

- Number of volunteers ready to participate in a campaign
- Capturing the portion of the vote needed for the EDA to retain the funds raised by the campaign, and not remitting them to Elections Canada – 10% ? WR’s campaign in 2015 raised \$36K, but did not get 10% of vote and had to give the money to elections Canada.
- Becoming an anchor riding for Vancouver, providing services, training, and use of riding office for other EDAs.

Have a plan for building capacity in a series of steps over the long term

- Recruiting volunteers
- Building up a bank account

● Most important is the candidate who has been in the riding for the long term.

● It is hard for the EDA to do anything [to influence electoral success] without a candidate. However, there are things an EDA can do to maintain a Green presence in the riding even in the absence of a candidate. Webinars and town halls, sending out newsletters and messages through GVote are some examples. Quadra EDA put on informational webinars following 2019 election. Topic for one was Roberts Bank expansion.

NDP does a good job of maintaining a presence, send out regular newsletter. The Federal party supports local NDP ridings in this connection.

● The earlier you have a candidate, the better. However, there has to be some momentum in the EDA before you can attract a desirable candidate. Accept the likelihood that a candidate will not be elected the first time one runs.

It would be smart for the EDA to put together a package for prospective candidates, outlining what support can be offered. Should be able to show a few volunteers (3 to 5), with training and/or experience in campaigning. Would be good to identify potential key members for a campaign team, such as campaign manager with experience.

- Don't follow the neoliberal line, differentiate the party from those that still believe and perpetuate the assumption that an unfettered "free market" economy is good. Even in social democrat circles, neoliberal dogma is too strong and no one can admit that there are problems the market can't solve. Need to counter the argument based on the ideological assumption that governments are fettering the market (e.g., solution is to remove red tape).

- *The interviewee is a big supporter of the ground game—a consistent door knocker in between campaigns, his electoral success can likely be attributed to his dedication to knocking on doors and talking to people. He's also very involved in community events. When I asked him about what we could be doing to bolster the federal party in the riding, his first answer was along the lines of "That's a great question—I wish I knew."*

- Door knocking. Someone close to the interviewee supported an independent city council candidate. They did two years of door knocking and the candidate was elected) though it doesn't seem as efficient unless it's specifically the candidate doing the work. Need to engage with people on what matters to them. It can't just be about winning.

Takes a lot of time. Going to community meetings, meeting with unions and other groups is also important.

Really important that the candidate understands that it's a long game. Should consider employing "deep canvassing" or having long and in-depth conversations with members of the community. It's unscripted and just starts with a question. Neighbours United has a pamphlet on it. Coffee meetings are also effective (and cheap—people can buy their own coffees).

- Differentiation from the NDP. Avi Lewis was just elected leader of the national NDP and has already hinted at a stronger environmental platform. E.g., he has committed to not expanding oil and gas in Canada. (Avi Lewis was also one of the individuals behind the "Green New Deal" years ago).

In a Canada with a strong NDP pushing a progressive climate agenda, who is the Green Party? What is their role? How are they different from the NDP?

## **WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A CANDIDATE WHO IS A COMMITTED AND RESPECTED COMMUNITY LEADER?**

- If one has a candidate who is already known in the community, creating awareness is easier. However there are things that can be done even without that candidate. Do this by seeking out organizations and associations that are already doing good work in the riding and can benefit from an association with the riding organization. There are lots of small

associations with volunteer boards. Examples include food banks, LGBTQ, transit promotion, community gardens. The object is to elevate these organizations

One can become known as a spokesperson for an issue without being a candidate; in fact, once one is declared a candidate doors may close.

- Key requirements (1) Candidate is well known in the community, seen as an ally by interest groups in the community. (2) Candidate is an effective communicator; punchy – knows how to express ideas that will play well on social media. Has a good presence (charisma?).

- While national leader and policies will generally determine who is elected, there are cases of the “breakthrough candidate” who does well even in areas which traditionally have not voted Green. Example Chris Turner in Calgary (November 2012, finished third, capturing a significant 25.6% of the vote). Mike Schreiner, Ontario provincial leader, elected as MLA three time in a row after two losses.

To be a breakthrough candidate, person must come with a profile in the community.

A well organized EDA is better able to attract a candidate who is prepared to make a long term commitment to the riding, and who is willing to run a number of times. EDA should recognize the personal sacrifice and psychological toll associated with running for election. Selling points the EDA can offer include an exposure that will benefit the candidate in pursuing other nominations, municipal and provincial even if not elected, candidate may learn of other worthwhile roles in the party

- Name recognition is not that important. Cannot have the “old white guy”. Need someone new who listens to people in a real way, appeals to younger voters. Being able to reach people more important than policy knowledge – this can be learned.

Being known to community in this riding is difficult because of the diversity of different neighbourhoods.

- Candidate needs to be a known person. Doing community building does not hurt, but it would be great if the community connections were already there.

- The ideal candidate is one who is well known and has been in the riding for the long term, and so is prepared for the campaign; a community minded person and has been involved in local issue such as housing, mental health, or environment, not necessarily an alignment with Federal party policies. Want someone with integrity who has volunteered a lot to become known, by serving on boards for instance; who is an organizer and has a record of accomplishments. Adrienne Carr would be an example. It is tricky to start with someone who is unknown.

During the campaign, the candidate should go door-to-door, contact community organizations. Talk about issues of local concern such as housing and affordability, which are key issues in BC.

- The candidate is not the most important factor; people vote for the party and the prime minister.

It is nice to have a candidate who participates in community organizations, but this is not the critical factor. There are things a candidate can do to cultivate a relationship with the community; coaching sports teams for example.

What is important is to establish a party or candidate visibility in the riding both between campaigns (the EDA and member) and during campaigns (the candidate). As examples. Elizabeth May holds regular constituency meetings where she talks about policy issues and what is happening in parliament. The Quadra EDA holds regular public gatherings at the Dunbar community centre, presenting speakers on topics related to climate and sustainability. Having a public space in which to gather reinforces identity, also a place to recruit volunteers.

During the Quadra 2019 campaign, the candidate promoted visibility through sign waving and other planned public appearances, accompanied by a crowd of volunteers. Locations included foot of Burrard bridge and Whole Foods. This worked to attract public attention and engagement by passers-by. In this case, did not do door knocking, which was considered to be less effective than planned events such as invitational house parties and sign waving. The 2019 campaign in Quadra was considered a success ( 12.5% of the vote for Green, compared to 5.06% for Green paper candidate in VanGran) because of the visibility established during the campaign rather than work done by the EDA before the campaign.

- The key factor is to have a candidate who is known in the community. Consider Tom Digby and Pete Fry as people who are already known before announcing a candidacy. You can run someone who is from outside the riding.

[Interviewers note one federal candidate in 2019 did not fit the pattern of being well known and having strong community roots, and yet had a relatively successful campaign, roughly doubling the typical proportion of Green vote for this area. Factors contributing to the success appear to have included active campaigning supported by volunteers, a strong campaign team, and the candidate's own expertise in environmental issues.]

The policy positions taken by the candidate should be supported by expertise. Geoff Wright apparently appealed to the Quadra demographic with a higher education because of a science background. The Quadra demographic includes UBC academics and students.

Joyce Murray [Liberal, Quadra] is good example of an MP who maintained contacts with community through regular constituency meetings and informational gatherings. Subsequent to the 2019 election, the Quadra Green EDA, essentially formed by the candidate, maintained member contact through webinars and GVote messages.

- Not always necessary. Take the recent by-election win of the Green Party in the UK. Hannah Spencer won with 40.7% of the vote. She was a city councillor since 2023, but notably, her day job was a plumber. She leaned heavily on her working-class bonafides

and won a riding that is a mix of white working class voters with a strong Muslim population. She was known as “Hannah the Plumber.”

Also important to note that in the UK the rise of the Reform Party (far/alt-right) is creating a strong ABC (anything but conservative) movement. In this by-election, Hannah was able to demonstrate that she was best positioned in the riding to keep Reform out—and clearly she was right.

- The EDA can do things to build out the EDA and secure community support even without a candidate, and should do these things to make the riding attractive to a potential candidate. The suggested process is to identify a number of issues important to community organizations, and to champion these issues through advocacy. Include business improvement associations in community contacts when identifying issues. Schedule meetings with the current MP to present the issues on behalf of community organizations and hold the MP to account. Argue that there is a Federal role through funding and infrastructure. Some instances of issues of concern in Vancouver Granville
  - need for east-west buses, roadways, and bike routes along the river in the south portion of the riding
  - no swimming pool in Marpole
  - False Creek/ Fairview need a seniors’ centre. Seniors are doing yoga in an unheated room.
  - Fate of co-op housing in false creek
  - Impacts of Broadway sky train extension

Use a newsletter to keep community informed of advocacy on the issues – need to show purpose, that you are able to champion what the community wants, and to get issues to the attention of the current MP. Then use this as a basis for recruiting members and volunteers.

Informational meetings and lectures on topics of concern can come later.

- Better to have one who is than isn’t. Zohran Mamdani (City of New York Mayor) was very connected to the democratic socialist side before he was elected, and party faithful (young tech types) pushed him to get the Democrat nomination.

- *Important, but doesn’t mean an individual can’t be successful if they put in the work.*

- Candidate should be values-driven, pragmatic, thoughtful, and realistic about their chances. The motivation for seeking office and how they can communicate that vision can be more important than having a reputation as a community leader already (though it certainly doesn’t hurt).

## **WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A COMMITTED TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS?**

- Start identifying supporters between campaigns. Easiest to start with simple requests, such as willingness to have a lawn sign . Record list of volunteers in GVote. They do not have to be members.

- Need people on the team with social media skills. For Instagram and Tic Tok, probably under 25 years of age.

University good place to recruit. Also alliance relationship with local organizations brings in volunteers. Incentives for volunteering chance to exercise special skills (e.g. social media), affiliation with an admired candidate.

Establishing relationships with community organizations and interest groups is one of the most difficult jobs, but political influence is greatly magnified if one can demonstrate alliances with other groups and organizations.

- When the Green campaign was initiated in Quadra in 20219, there was no EDA. Candidate had to organize his own nomination meeting. Between the nomination in June and the formation of a campaign team in August, volunteers came forward. They apparently responded to the fact that there was a candidate; people came out to work when they saw something was about to happen.

People tend to volunteer when there is an issue in front of them. For example, the disruptions caused by the Broadway Sky Train extension could be an issue to take up. Nurses and hospital workers could be a target demographic for housing and affordability concerns. The EDA may need expert advice to formulate policy on these community issues.

Youth is a demographic to target for environmental concerns. Sustainability is being taught in the schools, and students will be future voters. In 2019, Geoff Wright captured the youth vote. UBC students should not be thought of as a Quadra demographic alone, since they reside in other ridings throughout the city. Work has been done to organize student Greens at UBC, first by Steve Kisby, and subsequently by Farrukh Chishtie on behalf of the Provincial Greens.

People tend to participate and volunteer when there is a buzz and they see action. consider excitement around Emily Lowan and Pete Fry. When a candidate makes a appearance, one should be accompanied by a group of volunteer supporters.

Fiscal responsibility is a current issue and Greens should be seen to have this capability. European Greens have succeeded in being seen as fiscally responsible.

- Community events sponsored by the EDA (speakers on topics of interest, fireside chat with elected representatives etc.) are a good opportunity to recruit volunteers. Civic, non-profit organizations have members who are inclined to volunteer.

Important to have volunteers for duties during election phoning, signs, rides to polls. Training and preparedness must be done before the election.

● In our organization, it is a struggle to get volunteers to stay. A good strategy is to seek volunteers with specific skills. People with specialist skills may be attracted by the opportunity to exercise those skills.

● Appeal to volunteers whose concerns can be addressed by their work for the riding. Even if their concerns are municipal or provincial, there may be a federal policy which affects the issue.

● A corps of volunteers is an important factor. NB. Experience is that volunteers will self identify in situations where they can see an opportunity for engagement and fun. Volunteers may be recruited at

- contacts and presentations to local organizations
- events sponsored by the EDA, not necessarily political. Movie nights.
- EDA office or space where people can gather, or use for their own organizational purposes
- Shared volunteer lists with municipal and provincial Greens
- Collect names and contact information with a raffle

Volunteer co-ordinator is a key role for the campaign team.

● With reliable volunteers it's easier to build connections in the community. Demonstrate what you can do for the community by volunteering to support different groups. Make it clear that you're volunteering as the "Green party" but don't expect anything in return. Build relationships and trust by finding out what people need help with and showing them that you can do it.

Organize events that aren't specifically political. *\*\*e.g., from the interviewer beach/park clean ups.\*\**

● Volunteers were an important factor in the 2019 Quadra campaign. Volunteers were identified through Gvote. Email calls for workers were not effective; people came out readily in response to personal phone calls- made them feel important. Identify professional skills which can be used on the team. Community organizations were not seen to be a source for recruiting volunteers.

Volunteer corps must be developed before the campaign, Start when election call seems imminent at the latest. Training for volunteers should include explanation of how election works and review of campaign activities such as sign installing, sign waving, getting out the vote. Recruit hosts for house parties from among the volunteers.

A Volunteer Co-ordinator is a key role on the team.

Essential team roles based on the 2019 Quadra experience

- Campaign Manager

- Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Fund raiser (paid)
- Finance
- Policy work – prepared candidate for debates
- Sign management
- Social media - UBC students
- Graphic design and printing services

● Need to have a few volunteers at least to attract a desirable candidate. Find people who will work with civic and provincial Greens as well. They will learn how to work the streets. Cross pollination is helpful. Take advantage of available training.

To raise the EDA profile set up table or booth at community events, street festivals, parklets (blocked off streets along Main, Cambie, and Granville). Host a candidates meeting in connection with civic election.

● Important, but how do you get it? Progressive forces are confused and all “so-called” progressives are neoliberal. The BC NDP is already taking “abundance” framework to justify housing policy focused on build as much housing as fast as possible.

*\*\*I wasn't familiar with “abundance” as a political movement prior to our conversation, but the interviewee was quite critical of it. This Tyee article talks about it <https://thetyee.ca/News/2025/11/07/Abundance-Movement-Dividing-Left/> \*\**

Sean Orr (COPE City Councillor) and COPE have not demonstrated enough of an anti-capitalist view.

● *Volunteers can be a big help, especially in between campaigns with door knocking and during campaigns with events like sign waving.*

● A small but dedicated group of volunteers can make a huge difference. Around 10-15 individuals who are committed. One candidate's spouse supported a successful candidate in their town's municipal election with very few volunteers.

## **WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EARLY START TO A CANDIDATE'S CAMPAIGN?**

● Time frame should be driven by what needs to be done to be prepared. First find candidate and get that person out in community, then round up volunteers following a systematic plan. A key step is to prepare and follow a time line showing key events leading up to an election.

● Some say that elections are won between campaigns. Underline need for good communications between elections.

- Be prepared before the election. Get everyone in the same room (municipal, federal, and provincial Greens) and strategize on building capabilities that are mutually beneficial.

Mike Schreiner example of early start and commitment over multiple election cycles. (Leader of Ontario provincial Greens, MLA since 2009. Defeated in by-election 2009, came 4<sup>th</sup> in 2011, elected in 2018, 2022, and 2025. Under his leadership, Ontario Greens have grown substantially in membership, fund raising, staff, volunteers, and media exposure.)

- Elections are won between campaigns. The time is needed to build up capacity and to become known in the riding. Actions to establish awareness and to attract volunteers include

- Have a space (EDA office) where people can engage. Posters in the window and program of events. Space could be shared with other ridings and municipal and provincial Greens. Joanne Roberts had a large space which could be shared.
- Outreach to local organizations. Community contacts include business associations and non-profit organizations
- Letters to the editor
- Social media presence

During the campaign, still need actions to get out the vote – this wins the election.

- Need to sign up supporters and volunteers between elections noted above.

Volunteers can do much of the work associated with advertising when funds are not available.

The candidate who defeated Pierre Poilievre in Ottawa knocked on doors for a year before the election and became known to electors even if they normally voted for another party.

Every door should be knocked on even if it takes four years.

- Mike Schreiner, MPP for Guelph worked at building relationships in the community for decade before being elected.

- Assembling the team and launching the campaign was carried out effectively in Vancouver Quadra starting in August for an October 2019 election. Within this time, visibility for both the party and the candidate was established in the riding,

Between campaigns, the EDA must establish a list of volunteers with contact information recorded in Gvote. This is a key activity during the lead time.

- Need to slowly build a volunteer base and community support. [However the Geoff Wright campaign experience in 2019 appeared to support the opposite. From June to October, went from no volunteers to a solid corps. Wright received roughly twice the historic Green proportion of the vote, although at 12.5% fell considerably short of being

elected. Should likely take this advice to mean that with more lead time, Greens could have done even better].

Create a buzz between social media and e-mails.

- (Early start not specifically discussed, but need for continuously maintaining momentum through advocacy on issues of concern to community organizations was strongly emphasized. This needs to be done by the EDA even if there is no candidate, and is in fact a requirement for attracting a desirable candidate.)

- Great if you can. The big threat is the public's "justified cynicism" in politicians in general (and "progressive" politicians specifically). Zohran Mamdani "put lightning in a bottle" and part of that was from having a lot of time to build momentum.

Regarding housing, the entire political spectrum in Vancouver feels that if developers are allowed to do whatever they want, and that politicians get out of the way and don't tax them, our housing problems will be solved. Even the BC Greens supported bills along those lines *\*\*I haven't researched them personally, but the interviewee was referring to bills 44, 45, and 47 in the BC Legislature.\*\**

Since Autumn 2023 city planners can no longer interfere with high rises (can't say no) which represented the greatest transfer of wealth from citizens to land holders (in Vancouver).

- *I get the impression that the interviewee is a strong believer in the early start. He's been in campaign mode for some time already for a coming campaign.*

- A candidate and team's commitment to the bigger project is very important. How do you reduce barriers to canvassing (something that can be difficult for a lot of people)? Start without a goal in mind, just seek out conversations "I just wanted to chat about x..."

Can the EDA put on a sort of workshop on something either campaign-related, community-related, or something else? Focus on low stakes conversations, and avoid holding "meetings." Should be clear that events are done just for the sake of it, they are their own ends. An inspiring candidate is someone who loves doing it just for the sake of it. Respect what people bring.

An option for an early-stage event would be an open-ended listening exercise. Lean on current contacts and hear what motivates them and what inspires them to action. People are problem-solvers by nature *\*\*I really loved this point\*\** and will want to get together to talk about solutions to a problem.

Important to acknowledge that there are also risks.

Really important to start offline. Build real world connections first and bolster them with digital strategies.

- Absolutely important. If you have a candidate, they should've started yesterday.

One way to build up a reputation in the community is to find out what people need and to help them get it. You almost want to act like you're already doing the job. Can you support a group's petition, or help them get in front of actual decision makers? Support causes that are in line with your values and do it without expecting anything in return.

## **WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT?**

- Need some money. Our organization tries to do everything with no expenditure. The thing that needs special expertise, and money to obtain it, is creative communications. An example of communications that are not winning it right now, in spite of funding, is the David Eby machine. A good example of creative communication, slogans attractive to young people, was Rachel Notley in Alberta.

- Funding is important. Social media offer a way to get the message heard for a minimal cost, but it is important to have communications strategy prepared by a knowledgeable person, if not a paid professional.

- There are some essential expenditures which cannot be covered by volunteer work printed materials (posters, lawn signs, door cards, billboards, bus shelter posters).

No point in using traditional media. Paid advertising on social media is highly effective. There are rules governing paid political messages on social media EDA can be registered as a qualified advertiser for political messages. Messages can be specifically focused on a geographic area such as the riding. The material for paid advertisements including videos could be prepared at minimal cost by volunteers.

Posters provide excellent visibility. There are designated Cof V poster sites and at least two commercial services which put up posters, which need constant refreshment. This could also be done by volunteers.

Money is important if volunteers are not available.

- Many things can be done without money. Finding a candidate. Long lead time, and recruitment of volunteers come ahead of fund raising.

Essential expenditures include mailers, rack cards, advertisements. Dubious about the effectiveness of paid ads on social media.

A space to be shared with other ridings and municipal and provincial Greens would be a worthwhile expenditure.

- Do not need a lot of money. Volunteers can contribute professional skills. 2019 Quadra campaign was run on about \$20,000. Got a discount on graphic design services. Look for opportunities to save by sharing orders (t-shirts for example) with other EDAs.

Fund Raiser was a paid position on the team. Private house parties by invitation to friends were a source of funds, along with person-to-person contacts.

- Quadra 2019 campaign actual expenditure was around \$10,000, although there was \$20,000 in pledges from fund raising. Problems were in getting the money in early enough and in the internal approval process. Could have done more if able to spend more. Because vote proportion was over 10%, got 60% back from Elections Canada.

Were not able to obtain brochures early enough, so did not do door knocking, although this is important. Sign waving during the campaign seemed effective. Large signs and large numbers of signs are important for establishing a presence. Consider example of Don Davies in Kingsway. Should be seen to be sustainable. Bridget Burns used re-cycleable signs in 2025.

Fund raiser was not paid in Quadra 2019, but an assistant to the campaign manger was paid. In addition to private house parties also solicited contributions by phone through GVote.

People will donate if there is a request for a specific expenditure. This is a way for an EDA to fund raise even if there is no candidate.

The ability to fund raise is an important capability for a prospective candidate. This apparently is the reason that Federal NDP set a \$100,000 entry fee for party leadership contest.

Collaboration with other EDAs and with Provincial and Municipal Greens allows for cost sharing. Having a central common space for all Greens would be very helpful. Funds for shared space could be obtained through specific requests. Adrienne Carr did have an office and Pete Fry is considering having an office.

- It takes real money to achieve electoral success. Greens have been able to get it done with less money.

Collaboration with other EDAs and with civic and provincial Greens is a way to economise. There have been discussions about securing shared office and gathering spaces for various Green organizations among civic Greens and people like Jerry Kroll and Leonard Schein. There needs to be a way to find funds to hold on to the space between elections.

There has to be a fund raising plan, both before and during election campaigns. First identify what the money is needed for, then use this as the basis for the ask in fundraising. For example, in raising funds for one charitable foundation, money flows readily if a specific project or expenditure is identified, but not in response to a general request for money.

- Paid staff is the biggest expenditure. Dwarfs all others. Ideal staff should be generalists with campaign experience, good at organizing events, social media savvy, capable volunteer manager.

Other good expenditure is events. This where you can meet other organizations and build relationships.

- A lot can be done with \$15K to \$20K Priority expenditures
  - campaign office with phone bank(?) Office could be shared with other city ridings, this attracts more donations
  - sign war
  - pamphlets
  - polling. Use poll results to raise awareness via media
  - social media ads
  - campaign manger who could also handle communications, paid position
  - volunteer co-ordinator, paid position
  - “Nation Builder” web site recommended.

● Great if you have it!

● *Didn't discuss this in particular, but similar to other respondents, I got the impression that fundraising is great if you have a particular goal in mind (signs, t-shirts, office space, etc).*

● Helps—but not as important as other factors. The greatest impacts in a campaign are not financial, but are in building a feeling of community and a sense that we are building something bigger.

Interesting to also consider the role of generational divides on politics. Paul Kershaw's organization, Generation Squeeze, a “think and change tank” explores this topic.

Housing idea: end the capital gains exemption

*\*\*Also discussed the need for more citizen assemblies at this stage—not a campaign thing though.\*\**

● What's the money for? Important, sure, but you can't fundraise unless you have a reason to, and it's much more important to build connections with the community.

## **WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF A PRESENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA? OTHER MEDIA?**

● Mamdani's success in New York probably due to use of social media. Must have a candidate or people on the team who are knowledgeable about social media. Each platform has a different algorithm (Facebook, Blue Sky, X, Tic Tok, Instagram) and may have a different demographic audience. Postings are free. Paid ads are also effective.

Posting and pamphlets can be very effective and cost very little. Photocopy is cheap. Message must be short and catchy. Had a good experience with chalk messages.

- Social media popularity creates buzz, but does not translate to votes. Social media are important, but traditional methods can not be written off. Still have to bring people to the polls: phoning, offering rides.

“Low information voters” (those who have a limited or no understanding of electoral process or issues) are best reached by face-to-face contacts, door knocking.

Principal message should be the national party message, unless there is a key local issue. In this case a paid communications person should be engaged.

- Social media is something that has to be done, a way to maintain a presence and name recognition. However, the campaign should not be built upon social media. Stay away from toxic sites such as X. A presence on Facebook and Instagram is almost expected. Make frequent postings featuring current events in the riding (roundabout town) and the opportunity for participation and fun.

Emily Lowan’s leadership campaign is an example of effective use of social media to create excitement and image of large supportive team having fun. Attracted new, younger members. See her Instagram site.

Role of social media co-ordinator could be attractive to a media-savvy volunteer.

- UBC students were recruited to manage social media during the 2019 Quadra campaign. Social media are the means for reaching young voters.

- Not a big fan of social media, but recognize that you need to use it. There is a connection between social media presence and electoral success. If you do not do social media, you will not get the votes.

Quadra team had a social media person on the team. Find a person with that inclination.

- While social media is useful for getting information out, it is important to have as many real people out as possible.

- Important but not the most important factor – see Zohran Mamdani’s campaign in New York.

- *We did talk about social media a little bit and both agreed that while it was important, it probably wasn’t the deciding factor in electoral success and that neither of us were particularly good at it.*

- Important to support the connections built offline. Should not be a main focus. Discussed Zohran Mamdani and Emily Lowan’s use of social media. Can be a support, but builds on work done in the real world.

- Definitely important. Look at Emily Lowan's work. She's also young and a bit of an outsider to politics.

**WHAT IS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY FACTOR FOR ELECTORAL SUCCESS FROM AMONG THOSE DISCUSSED (RESPECTED LEADER, VOLUNTEERS, EARLY START, FUNDING, FACTOR SUGGESTED BY INTERVIEWEE)?**

- Choice of candidate.
- Candidate is #1. Electoral experience in Vancouver ridings demonstrates that the right candidate can dramatically improve historical vote share.
- Outreach to community organizations to establish awareness and presence for Green organization.
- Effective communication of a federal policy which addresses issues of concern to the electors. Social media is a critical method for conveying the message.
- National leader and policies that address issues of current concern to voters. In 2025 these were tariff threats and affordability, not climate.
- Key factor is having a candidate who is well known in the community.
- To be seen as able to advocate for the issues of concern to the community, either by the candidate or by the EDA before there is a candidate.
- Putting forward an alternative vision compared to the other "progressive" parties. Rejecting the assumptions of neoliberalism and being able to articulate an alternative in a clear and inspiring way to the electorate.
- Of the five factors for electoral success, the candidate is the leading factor, but a strong EDA is needed to attract a good candidate. However, remember that there is more to "success" than winning an election. A good plan is to aim for long term capability building in the EDA.
- A well known candidate who is in for the long term.
- *Ground game. Hit the pavement and start talking to people. This goes hand in hand with an early start.*
- The ground game. Knocking on doors, meeting people where they're at, and making connections with community groups.

The left is also too reluctant to push a progressive vision of Canada. A sense of Canadian identity has been ceded to the right, where a sort of petro-nationalistic view of the country has taken hold. E.g., when a group of university students was asked how much of

Canada's GDP is from oil and gas, the average answer was above 50%; in reality, this number is closer to 2-5%. Why isn't the left contesting this "petro-nationalistic" view of the country?

● For the Green Party, it means showing a clear differentiation from the NDP. Who is the Green Party and what is their role in a Canada with a progressive, working class focused NDP with a strong climate agenda?

For the candidate, it's building connections with the community. Showing that winning an election is not the goal, but doing what's best for the community is. Green candidates need to work incredibly hard to show why they're the best because they often can't fall back and rely on the national party to do the work (like the Liberals can). Important to push a "candidate"-focused campaign.

Additionally, the next election may be another one surrounded by the fear of a conservative government. The winning candidate may be the one who can best demonstrate that they are the best option for the "ABC" movement to galvanize around.

## **WHAT SUPPORT AND SERVICES SHOULD THE EDA PROVIDE TO THE CANDIDATE'S TEAM BETWEEN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS?**

● I have been a Green candidate three times, but in no case had an active riding association. Primary roles of EDA are to recruit/groom a candidate and generate a list of volunteers.

EDA should establish a list of expectations for a candidate – a road map of how the campaign will be conducted. A formal agreement or MoU between the EDA and the candidate would not be bad thing. Would set out what each party would do and contribute to the campaign, including the appointment of people to the campaign team. Candidate should specify the amount of time that would be devoted to the campaign.

● Really a **good idea** for the EDA to have a written set of expectations of the candidate and use these as a basis for discussions and reciprocal commitments with a candidate.

● Things that the EDA can do which the candidate could not, or could be done before a candidate is selected

- Establish and maintain a federal Green presence, both on-line and in the community
- Assemble a volunteer list. Prepare volunteers
- Acquire a space for the EDA and for Vancouver Greens in general

When a candidate is identified or an election is called, people typically move from the EDA organization to the campaign team, and then there are two distinct organizations. There should be an agreement between the candidate and the EDA setting out the expectations for the two organizations.

Also there should be a written agreement among the candidate and members of the campaign team. There have been some troublesome experiences where the division of

decision authority between the candidate and the campaign manger was not clear. For a successful provincial campaign, a four person management team worked with the candidate campaign manger, marketing, volunteer co-ordination, and social media.

- Familiar primarily with campaign team. Experience was that when election is called, EDA members join the campaign team and the two organizations fold together. The EDA should be thought of as a precursor campaign team.

Establishing a volunteer list and maintaining party visibility in the riding are EDA roles between elections.

- There was no EDA when the Quadra 2019 candidate was selected. Following the election, the candidate worked to keep EDA active through GVote communications and hosting webinars on sustainability topics.

- Have a “candidates handbook” which clearly sets out processes and rules for the relationship between candidate and the EDA; a clear and transparent outlining of the roles. Establish the understanding up front. The EDA must be honest with the support it can provide.

Roles on the campaign team should include campaign manger, finance, volunteer co-ordinator, fund raiser.

There have been instances of conflict between candidates and riding executives, including conflicts over policy pronouncements. Make clear who controls the platform after a candidate has been selected.

- *Whatever you can.*

- Use what you have available. Whose contact information do you have now? How can you reach them? What avenues do you have for reaching out to your community at this stage?

- Leverage what connections you have and build up your relationships with community groups. Help people and show what you can do.

WAW, MJD May 4, 2026