

Canadian Municipal Green Party Association
Draft

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Canadian Municipal Green Party Association (CMPGA) would have five objectives:

1. To encourage Canadians to become involved in the Canadian political system,
2. To educate members of the CMGPA in the workings of their local municipal government,
3. To train members on how to campaign for office,
4. To train members on how to hold office, and
5. To provide a grassroots communications forum for those involved in municipal politics.

This association would be based on the need for grassroots involvement in government at the local level as laid out in the Charter of the Global Greens.

This Association would not be a political party. The CMGPA would exist to encourage and support the involvement at the municipal level of individuals who believe the fundamentals of the Global Greens, The Green Party of Canada and their provincial Green Party.

General Discussion

The poor voter turnout for the 2008 Federal Election clearly demonstrates the need for a way to get more Canadians involved in our political system.

The ongoing message from the CMPGA would be: "It's your government, get involved!"

There are two reasons why the Green Party at both the provincial and federal levels should support the CMPGA:

1. Participatory Democracy is one of our fundamental principles, and
2. Municipal politics serves as a training and recruiting ground for both provincial and federal politics.

Canadians deal with four levels of government:

1. Municipal,
2. Provincial,
3. Federal, and

4. Global

The Green Party has provincial, federal and global components. What is missing in Canada is the municipal one. The CMPGA would fill this gap.

In Canada, political parties are not a visible part of municipal politics. This is why the CMPGA should not be viewed as a political party. It would be a resource that individuals can turn to for training and sharing.

Two reasons individuals may have for not getting involved are, not knowing where to start and a fear of the unknown. (“What I’m I getting into?”) The CMPGA can address both of these factors.

The level of government that we have the most face-to-face contact with is the municipal level. Many people do not realize that a great deal of business is dealt with by committees. These committees are formed by members of the general public. Most communities have a hard time recruiting for their various committees.

The primary purpose in joining a municipal committee should be to serve your community. By joining a committee you gain three things:

1. You start to learn how government and politics work,
2. You meet the individuals who are the key players in your community, and
3. Others see you being an active member of your community.

Once an individual decides to run as a candidate, the CMPGA can provide information on how to run a campaign. Here we can use the three R’s – Reduce, Re-use and Recycle. The training can be broken into two parts. The first part would contain the elements of campaign management that are common to municipal, provincial and federal campaigns. The second part would be specific to the level and location of the campaign.

This is an example of the kind of information the CMPGA could provide.

So how would all of this work?

There would be three functions the CMPGA would carry out;

1. Encouragement to the general public to learn about and be active in Canadian politics.
 - a. “While we would naturally prefer you to be a member of the Green Party, we consider it a victory if you decide to become active in any way.”
2. To be an information and training resource to our members.
 - a. This would primarily be through the Internet.

3. To encourage our members to share information and help each other.
 - a. This would be through forums on the Internet and through meetings.
 - i. The CMPGA would encourage hold informal meetings on a regular basis in their municipality.

A key policy of the CMPGA should be that it is in no way to be looked upon or used as a fund raiser for the Green Party or its members at any level.

1. The CMPGA will not transfer funds or spend funds to support any election campaign.
2. During an election the CMPGA can spend funds to encourage the general public to vote or volunteer for any political party or candidate.
3. Instructions on how to raise funds would be part of the information available to members of the CMPGA.

Membership fees should be low. (\$10 per year?)

Membership should only be open to individuals.

Funds raised through membership fees would go to the operation of the CMPGA, primarily for the operation of the website.

Funds raised through donations would be used for the public education/encouragement program.

The information section of the web site would have three key areas:

1. Approved/adopted information and training materials,
2. Past submissions
3. Current submissions

(A mechanism for approving/adopting information and training materials would have to be developed.)