

BC ELECTION DAY NEARS - PART II

ASSESSING THE CAMPAIGNS

Voters Give Top Marks to NDP and Green Campaigns



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Voters Give Top Marks to NDP and Green Campaigns

Vancouver, BC — The campaigns of the NDP and the Green Party outshine that of the BC Liberals according to a new Ipsos-Reid survey conducted on behalf of BCTV News, The Vancouver Sun and The Victoria Times Colonist. Both the NDP and the Green Party have positive momentum numbers as the campaign moves into its final week. Nearly four-in-ten (38%) residents say their impression of Carole James and the NDP has improved since the start of the campaign, compared to 12% who say their impression has worsened. For Adriane Carr and the Green Party, it's 33% improved impressions versus just 5% worsened impressions. The results are flipped for Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals with nearly three times as many worsened impressions (28%) as improved impressions (10%) over the course of this election campaign.

Voters also think the NDP and the Greens have done a better job at addressing the most important election issues. A majority of British Columbians think that the NDP (58%) and Green Party (55%) have done a good job in this campaign at addressing the issues that matter most to them personally. In comparison, fewer than half (44%) of voters think Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals have done a good job at addressing the most important issues.

Looking back at the televised leaders' debate, Carole James (34%) far outscores both Gordon Campbell (12%) and Adriane Carr (9%) in public perceptions about who won the debate. This result is mitigated, however, by the finding that only 55% of British Columbians watched or followed the debate, and only 11% of these voters (6% overall) say the debate is "very important" in helping them make their vote decision.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid telephone poll conducted May 8th to 10th, 2005 with a randomly selected sample of 1,050 adult British Columbia residents, including 400 residents of Vancouver Island. The overall results are considered accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire BC adult population been polled. The Vancouver Island results are considered accurate to within ± 4.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to the 2001 Census.

Campaign Momentum

Nearly four-in-ten (38%, up 9 points) voters say their impression of Carole James and the NDP has improved since the start of the campaign, compared to 12% (down 1 point) who say their impression has worsened. This gives Carole James and the NDP a net momentum score of +26 points (improved % minus worsened %) for the campaign so far (vs. +16 points in our early campaign survey). Slightly less than half (46%, down 7 points) of voters say their impression of Carole James and the NDP has stayed the same.

- The net momentum for Carole James and the NDP is +66 points among NDP voters (67% improved vs. 1% worsened), +25 points among Green voters (36% improved vs. 11% worsened) and -3 points among Liberal voters (19% improved vs. 22% worsened).

The campaign reviews are also good for Adriane Carr and the Green Party. One-third (33%, up 20 points) of voters say their impressions have improved compared to just 5% (down 3 points) worsened. This gives Adriane Carr and the Greens a net momentum score of +28 points (improved % minus worsened %), much better than their +5 score early in the campaign. Slightly more than half (55%, down 14 points) of residents say their impression of Adriane Carr and the Green Party has stayed the same.

- The net momentum for Adriane Carr and the Green Party is +44 points among Green voters (49% improved vs. 5% worsened), +32 points among NDP voters (35% improved vs. 3% worsened) and +27 points among Liberal voters (32% improved vs. 5% worsened).

The results are much more negative for Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals with 10% (unchanged) improved impressions compared to 28% (down 1 point) worsened impressions for a net momentum score of -18 points (improved % minus worsened %). This net momentum score is essentially unchanged from our early campaign survey (-19 points). Six-in-ten (61%, up 1 point) residents say their impression of Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals has stayed the same.

- The net momentum for Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals is +16 points among Liberal voters (20% improved vs. 4% worsened), -46 points among NDP

voters (1% improved vs. 47% worsened) and -32 points among Green voters (5% improved vs. 37% worsened).

Addressing the Issues

Voters think the NDP and the Greens have done a better job than the BC Liberals at addressing the most important election issues.

Nearly six-in-ten (58%) residents say that Carole James and the NDP have done a “very good job” (17%) or “somewhat good job” (42%) in this campaign at addressing the issues that matter most. In contrast, about one-third (35%) think the NDP has done a “very poor job” (13%) or “somewhat poor job” (22%) at addressing the most important issues.

The ratings for Adriane Carr and the Green Party are very similar to the NDP. A majority (55%) of residents say that Adriane Carr and the Greens have done a “very good job” (9%) or “somewhat good job” (46%) in this campaign at addressing the issues that matter most. In contrast, about one-third (32%) think the Green Party has done a “very poor job” (9%) or “somewhat poor job” (22%) at addressing the most important issues.

The ratings are less positive for Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals. Fewer than half (44%) of residents say that Gordon Campbell and the Liberals have done a “very good job” (11%) or “somewhat good job” (32%) in this campaign at addressing the issues that matter most. In contrast, about one-half (52%) think the Liberals have done a “very poor job” (28%) or “somewhat poor job” (24%) at addressing the most important issues.

The campaign reviews depend to a great extent on what issues are important to voters. The top three issues for voters at this point in the campaign are health care (60%, down 1 point from our early campaign survey), education (33%, up 2 points) and the economy (16%, up 2 points).

- Among voters who say that “health care” is their most important issue, the NDP (63% good job) and the Greens (57% good job) perform much better than the BC Liberals (42% good job).

- Among voters who say that “education” is their most important issue, the NDP (68% good job) and the Greens (60% good job) perform much better than the BC Liberals (37% good job).
- Among voters who say that “the economy” is their most important issue, the BC Liberals (75% good job) do far better than either the Greens (52% good job) or the NDP (37% good job).

The Leaders’ Debate

Leaders’ debates aren’t for everyone. Only a slim majority (55%) of British Columbians say they either watched the televised debate or saw some coverage or analysis of the debate.

- Groups more likely to watch/follow the debate include Vancouver Island residents (62%), older voters (65% 55+ years vs. 42% 18-34 years, 57% 35-54 years), union households (66% vs. 51% non-union) and higher income residents (62% \$75K+ vs. 48% <\$40K, 56% \$40-\$75K).

Among British Columbians who watched/followed the debate, Carole James (34%) was much more likely to be selected as the winner than either Gordon Campbell (12%) or Adriane Carr (9%). Of course, it could be argued the real winner was “no winner”, as selected by 43% of voters who watched/followed the televised debate.

The importance of the debates should not be overstated. Only 11% of those who watched/followed the leaders’ debate (6% overall) say the debate is “very important” in helping make their vote decision. A further 34% (19% overall) say the debate is “somewhat important”.

The Vancouver Island Perspective

As part of this Ipsos-Reid poll, The Victoria Times Colonist commissioned an additional “oversample” of Island residents to bring the total Vancouver Island sample size to 400, including 200 residents in the Capital Region District (CRD) and 200 residents in the rest of the Island.

Campaign Momentum: Adriane Carr and the Green Party have the strongest momentum on Vancouver Island. Nearly four-in-ten (36%) of Island voters say their impression of Adriane Carr and the Green Party has improved over the campaign, compared to 5% who say their impression has worsened. This gives Adriane Carr and the Green Party a net momentum of +31 points (up from +6 points in our early campaign survey).

- The net momentum for Adriane Carr and the Green Party is similar for CRD residents (+31 points, 36% improved vs. 5% worsened) and Rest of Island residents (+32 points, 37% improved vs. 5% worsened).

Carole James and the NDP also have solid momentum on Vancouver Island. Four-in-ten (39%) Island voters say their impression of Carole James and the NDP has improved over the campaign, compared to 15% who say their impression has worsened. This gives Carole James and the NDP a net momentum of +24 points (up from +19 points in our early campaign survey).

- The net momentum for Carole James and the NDP is slightly better with CRD residents (+26 points, 42% improved vs. 16% worsened) than with Rest of Island residents (+22 points, 36% improved vs. 14% worsened).

Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals continue to have negative momentum on Vancouver Island. Fewer than one-in-ten (7%) voters say their impression of Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals has improved over the campaign, compared to 29% who say their impression has worsened. This gives Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals a net momentum of -22 points (slightly better than -24 points in our early campaign survey).

- The net momentum for Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals is slightly better with CRD residents (-20 points, 7% improved vs. 27% worsened) than with Rest of Island residents (-26 points, 6% improved vs. 32% worsened).

Addressing the Issues: Vancouver Island residents think that the NDP and the Greens have done a better job than the BC Liberals at addressing their most important election issues. Roughly six-in-ten residents think the NDP (63%) and the Green Party (58%) have done a good job in this campaign at addressing the issues that matter most to them personally. In comparison, four-in-ten (39%) voters think Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals have done a good job at addressing their most important issues.

- The “good job” ratings in the CRD are NDP (62%), Greens (58%) and Liberals (35%).
- The “good job” ratings in the Rest of the Island are NDP (64%), Greens (58%) and Liberals (43%).

Leaders’ Debate: Six-in-ten (62%) Island voters say they either watched the televised debate or saw some coverage or analysis of the debate. This rate was slightly higher in the CRD (65%) than in the Rest of the Island (59%).

Among Island residents who watched/ followed the debate, Carole James (33%) was much more likely to be selected as the winner than either Gordon Campbell (11%) or Adriane Carr (6%). The biggest support, however, goes to “no winner”, as selected by 45% of Island voters who watched/ followed the televised debate. Carole James was most likely to be selected as winner in both the CRD (30% James vs. 12% Campbell, 8% Carr) and the Rest of the Island (36% James vs. 10% Campbell, 4% Carr).

Only 10% of those who watched/ followed the leaders’ debate (6% overall) say the debate is “very important” in helping make their vote decision. A further 29% (18% overall) say the debate is “somewhat important”.

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

Kyle Braid
Vice-President
Ipsos-Reid Corporation
604-257-3200
kyle.braid@ipsos-reid.com

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