

2007: WHAT A YEAR IT WASN'T IN BC POLITICS

Voter Preferences Unchanged From December 2006 – BC Liberals (45%, Unchanged) Ahead Of NDP (35%, Down 1 Point) And Greens (16%, Unchanged)

Approval Ratings For Premier Campbell (49%, Down 1 Point) And Opposition Leader James (55%, Down 4 Points) Also Very Similar To December 2006



Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, BC – 2007 was a year that witnessed treaty settlements, an MLA pay increase, convention centre cost overruns, a Supreme Court ruling on health care contracts, allegations of political dirty tricks and a visit from Arnold Schwarzenegger. And, the net impact of these events on voter preferences? Zilch, finds a new Ipsos Reid poll. The standings of the three major provincial political parties are almost identical to this time last year. The BC Liberals (45%, unchanged from Dec 2006) hold a 10 point over the NDP (35%, down 1 point) among the province's decided voters – a result that is basically unchanged from the Liberal's 9 point lead in December 2006. The Green Party is in third place at 16% support – the identical support the party held this time last year.

Leader approval ratings are also consistent with results seen one year ago. Premier Gordon Campbell's approval rating of 49% is down just 1 point from December 2006 (50%). Opposition and NDP leader Carole James has an approval rating of 55%, down a slight 4 points from December 2006 (59%).

Despite the lack of change in voter preferences, most British Columbians (70%) say they are paying about the same amount of attention as usual to provincial politics and political issues. Two-in-ten (20%) say they are paying less attention than usual and one-in-ten (10%) say they are paying more attention.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid telephone poll conducted between December 5 and December 11, 2007. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of BC been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and 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 Census data.

Voter Preferences Unchanged from December 2006 – BC Liberals (45%, unchanged) Ahead of NDP (35%, down 1 point) and Greens (16%, unchanged)

The standings of the three main provincial political parties are basically unchanged from this time last year. The BC Liberals currently have the support of 45% (unchanged) of the province's decided voters, a 10 point lead over the NDP at 35% (down 1 point). The Green Party currently has 16% support, unchanged from this time last year. These results exclude the 18% of British Columbians who are undecided or express no preference.

There is also no real change in voter preferences since the most recent Ipsos Reid survey in September 2007. The BC Liberals and NDP are both down 1 point, while the Green Party and other parties have both gained 1 point.

- The BC Liberals lead by 16 points in the Lower Mainland (49% Lib vs. 33% NDP), while the two parties are basically tied in the rest of BC (39% Lib vs. 38% NDP).
- The BC Liberals lead by 16 points among men (49% Lib vs. 33% NDP) and by only 4 points among women (41% Lib vs. 37% NDP).
- The BC Liberals lead by 16 points among higher income households (46% Lib vs. 30% NDP) and by 10 points among middle income households (47% Lib vs. 37% NDP). The NDP leads by 10 points among lower income households (44% NDP vs. 34% Lib).

Decided Vote Tracking

	Dec 07	Sep 07	Jun 07	Apr 07	Dec 06	Sep 06	Jun 06	Mar 06	Dec 05	Sep 05	Vote 05
BC Liberals	45%	46%	45%	49%	45%	47%	51%	43%	43%	42%	46%
NDP	35%	36%	36%	32%	36%	37%	35%	40%	41%	39%	42%
Green	16%	15%	15%	15%	16%	13%	10%	12%	13%	13%	9%
Other	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%	5%	3%

Approval Ratings for Premier Campbell (49%, down 1 point) and Opposition Leader James (55%, down 4 points) also similar to December 2006

British Columbians continue to be split in their assessment of Gordon Campbell's performance as Premier. About half (49%) of voters say they approve of Campbell's performance, including 13% "strongly" and 36% "moderately". A similar proportion (46%) disapprove of his performance, including 26% "strongly" and 20% "moderately".

The current results for Gordon Campbell are basically unchanged from both one year ago (50% approve, 46% disapprove in Dec 2006) and three months ago (47% approve, 48% disapprove in Sep 2007).

- Campbell's approval rating is higher in the Lower Mainland (54% vs. 43% rest of BC), with men (55% vs. 43% women) and higher/middle income households (52% higher, 49% middle vs. 42% lower).

A slight majority of British Columbians (55%) say they approve of Carole James' performance as NDP and Opposition Leader, including 13% "strongly" and 42% "moderately". Three-in-ten (30%) residents say they disapprove of her performance (12% "strongly", 18% "moderately").

While James' approval rating has fallen a slight four points on a year-over-year basis (59% in Dec 2006), she has improved by 7 points from three months ago (48% in Sep 2007).

- James' approval rating is higher among those in the 35 to 54 year segment (61%) than among younger residents (47% among 18-34 years).

Leader Approval Tracking

	Dec 07	Sep 07	Jun 07	Apr 07	Dec 06	Sep 06	Jun 06	Mar 06	Dec 05	Sep 05
Gordon Campbell										
Approve	49%	47%	49%	53%	50%	47%	52%	44%	44%	44%
Disapprove	46%	48%	48%	41%	46%	48%	44%	52%	54%	54%
Carole James										
Approve	55%	48%	54%	51%	59%	54%	53%	57%	61%	60%
Disapprove	30%	36%	34%	31%	26%	23%	29%	26%	30%	23%

No Change in Interest in BC Provincial Politics

While voter opinion didn't shift in 2007, that doesn't mean that no one was paying attention. Seven-in-ten (70%) British Columbians say they have been paying "about the same amount of attention as usual" to provincial politics and provincial political issues over the last few months. Two-in-ten (20%) say they have paid "less attention than usual", while one-in-ten (10%) say they have paid "more attention than usual".

And most (76%) British Columbians think the excitement of the provincial political scene has been "about the same as usual" over the last few months. Only a small number think it has been "more exiting than usual" (9%) or "more boring than usual" (13%).

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