

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WESTERN ARCTIC MP DENNIS BEVINGTON

LAUNCHES “GREENER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY”

OTTAWA — NDP Energy Critic and Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington announced the party’s ‘Greener Communities Strategy’ in Ottawa this week. This set of realistic proposals to help conserve energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, attract green investment and create jobs is the second plank in the NDP’s 5-point Green Agenda for Canada.

“This plan will help lower the high cost of living for Northerners as a direct result of reducing high energy costs,” said Bevington.

“While Northerners continue to wait for the Conservative government to scratch together the ‘made in Canada’ solution promised months ago, the NDP is taking action,” Bevington added. “This government has no plan to invest in a green economy and their inaction is allowing other nations to bypass Canada on the road to providing productive, environmentally sustainable Northern communities.”

The ‘Greener Communities Strategy’ consists of the following proposals:

Retrofit community, commercial and institutional infrastructure through a loan and tax incentive program. This program would help existing businesses, hospitals, churches and schools to reduce their energy consumption. Low-interest loans would be provided to public institutions such as hospitals, and tax incentives and write-offs to corporations. Energy savings would cover the cost of loan repayments.

Install 100,000 **solar thermal building systems** (rooftops or walls), as is done in Sweden, with a federal grant for 50 per cent of the material costs and loans for the remainder. This is a crucial step in reducing energy costs for both commercial and residential building owners, and assisting in the introduction of new solar technology.

Provide funding for **community capacity building**. Funding would be used to support the development of community groups and non-profit organizations to promote activities which promote greener use of energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

Provide support for **local co-operative and renewable power** production using wind, biomass, and other renewable sources, and small scale cogeneration to reduce reliance upon centralized power plants. Ensure that there are fair and equitable interconnection standards across the country that can promote small scale energy producers. Non-wind renewable energy such as biomass and small scale hydro would receive the incentives already available to wind power.

Enlarge the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' **Green Fund** to drive further infrastructure investment by communities towards green house gas reductions.

Provide incentives to communities to **reduce emissions from land fills**. The main green house gas released from land fills is methane, dramatically more harmful than CO2.

“Within seven years, the Greener Communities Strategy would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 29.5 megatonnes,” said NDP Environment Critic Nathan Cullen (Skeena – Bulkley Valley). “It will create more than 300,000 jobs and save businesses, organizations and governments money by lowering energy bills.”

This set of realistic proposals ties in with the ‘Greener Homes Strategy’ announced by the NDP last week, which includes proposals for an energy efficiency program to make the homes of Canadians more energy efficient; re-instatement of the EnerGuide programs abolished by the Conservatives; amendment of the National Building Code to require lower energy use in homes; and requirements that new homes meet these energy standards in order to qualify for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s Mortgage Insurance Program. The NDP’s Greener Homes Strategy would reduce Canada’s greenhouse gas emissions by 42 megatonnes within seven years under this plan and create more than 190,000 Canadian jobs.

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