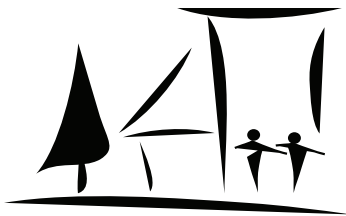


# PIBC CLIMATE ACTION POLICY 2022



**PIBC** PLANNING  
INSTITUTE  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

*FORWARD THINKING  
SHAPING COMMUNITIES*

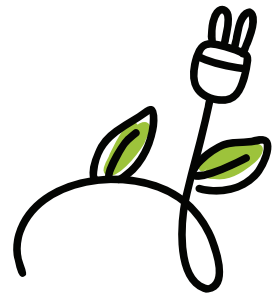


The Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC) recognizes, acknowledges, and appreciates that we are able to live, work, and learn on the traditional territories of the First Nations and Indigenous peoples of BC and Yukon. Acknowledging the principles of truth and reconciliation, we recognize and respect the history, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and all Indigenous peoples of Canada whose presence continues to enrich our lives and our country.



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# Introduction

Climate change is impacting communities across British Columbia and the Yukon — from more severe heat waves and wildfires to changing precipitation patterns, melting permafrost, rising sea levels, and more frequent and intense flooding. These climate impacts threaten community health and wellbeing, damage local property and infrastructure, cause significant capital costs, and negatively affect the natural environment and our local economies.

Climate change is occurring due to greenhouse gas emissions from the use of fossil fuels to generate electricity, heat buildings, fuel transportation, as a by-product of waste and agricultural land uses. The Province of BC and Government of Yukon have each established climate change targets and goals. Planners play a key role in both reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change which are already underway.

While climate change has been a well-documented and recognized issue for decades, many planners struggle to incorporate climate action in their work for a variety of reasons, including scientific uncertainty and changing political landscapes.

## In July 2016, PIBC Council resolved to:

**“...champion action on climate policy, help members understand how to take climate change into account in their planning activities and collaborate with and advocate for progressive policy solutions by senior levels of government”.**

This Climate Policy affirms this resolution and defines PIBC’s role in supporting climate resilience. The Climate Policy was developed by PIBC’s Climate Action Sub-committee in 2021 as an update to the initial *Climate: A Call to Action* document released by PIBC in 2017. It endorses and builds on the Canadian Institute of Planners’ *Policy on Climate Change Planning*, released in 2018. Elements of this Policy, particularly the Goal, Call to Action, Objectives and the Role of Planners, intentionally use consistent language with the CIP *Policy on Climate Change Planning*.



# PIBC's Climate Change Policy Goal and Call to Action

PIBC is committed to building climate awareness, and to resilient planning practice and action across BC and the Yukon. PIBC endorses the Canadian Institute of Planners' Policy on Climate Change Planning (2018) as the basis for identifying the context, goals, objectives, and role of PIBC members with respect to climate change planning.

The CIP Policy defines "Climate Change Planning" as the domain of all planners and includes greenhouse gas mitigation, climate adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. It sets the following overarching policy goal:

***"CIP envisions a future in which Canadian communities are planned, designed, developed, and managed to contribute to climate stability and to be more resilient in the face of unavoidable changes in the climate, and in the process, to become more liveable, prosperous, and equitable".***

PIBC shares this same policy goal.

The CIP Policy also includes a Call to Action.

PIBC wishes to confirm and reinforce the importance of this Call to Action with minor clarifications:

## Call to Action

*The global climate is changing, leading to increased hazards, extreme weather conditions, and changes to the physical environment in Canadian communities. PIBC recognizes the need to contribute to efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with climate change targets set by the Government of BC and Government of Yukon, as well as the recommendations from the International Panel on Climate Change.*

*PIBC recognizes that all planners have an ethical obligation to consider climate change in their practices and strives to ensure that members have access to the resources, data, training, and other support they need to do so. PIBC is also committed to collaborating with other professions, planning associations, governments, Indigenous communities, stakeholders, and the general public to help address the climate changes that Canadians are facing.*



# PIBC's Climate Change Objectives and Strategies

To achieve the climate change policy goal, PIBC supports the objectives for the built, natural, and social environments defined by CIP:

## Built Environment

- Communities integrate mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction considerations into all regional and local planning and intentional design.
- Urban areas are compact and walkable, and neighbourhoods in all communities have a mix of land uses, to reduce transportation-associated emissions and infrastructure.
- Communities have robust multi-modal transport systems in place, including infrastructure for active transportation, public transit, and evolving zero-emissions vehicular technologies.
- New and existing residential, commercial, and industrial developments have near — or net-zero energy and/or emissions profiles, and avoid introducing climate vulnerabilities (e.g., no buildings on coastlines or in flood plains).
- Regional and metropolitan bodies have robust strategies in place to incorporate climate change considerations for new developments, as cities grow and boundaries change.
- Waste management systems are configured to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transport of waste materials and their disposal.
- Communities are designed to support the circular economy, which minimizes the use of virgin materials, the energy used in manufacturing, and the production of waste over the full life cycles of material goods.
- Communities work collaboratively with utilities to facilitate energy conservation, efficiency, and the integration of distributed energy resources, especially in remote areas. This may include renewable energy and thermal technologies and systems



## Natural and Rural Environments

- Communities assess, prioritize, and mitigate the risks posed by extreme events (e.g., flooding, wildfires).
- In areas facing changing physical surroundings (e.g., sea level rise, thawing permafrost), land use and infrastructure are adapted to new and evolving circumstances.
- In response to changing precipitation patterns and temperatures, water resources are protected and usage is planned.
- Natural areas and their ecological characteristics, including biodiversity, are recognized as playing a vital role in adapting to the impacts of climate change and are protected accordingly.
- Planners support sustainable food systems and strive to mitigate agriculturally-related emissions.

## Social Environment

- Public and professional perspectives on climate change fully recognize scientific evidence, contributing to a broad societal commitment to reduce impacts from climate change.
- Solutions to climate change support the social development and well-being of all citizens.
- Communities are more liveable and successful, as they adopt climate change solutions that reinforce other principles of good planning.
- The impacts that climate change and associated hazards have on mental health (post-traumatic stress, anxiety, etc.) and social health (social fragmentation, declining sense of place, etc.) are minimized.
- Local Indigenous knowledge and planning traditions are integrated into planning processes, respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples.



# The Role of PIBC

In alignment with CIP, PIBC strongly believes that addressing climate change is an essential part of planning in the public interest. To support implementation of the policy, PIBC will undertake the following actions to ensure the organization contributes to the advancement of climate change-informed planning:

## 1

### Capacity Building and Education:

Promote climate change planning in PIBC communications, educational standards and development activities. Ensure that all practicing planners have access to the resources, data, training, and other support they need to fully integrate climate change considerations into their work. Regardless of the area of planning speciality, all planners need to be able to see the value of, and consistently make, climate-informed decisions.

## 2

### Partnerships:

Develop and deepen formal partnerships with other professional organizations to support climate mitigation and adaptation planning efforts.

## 3

### Engage and Provide Expertise:

Inform the development of future policies and regulations by identifying PIBC representatives to participate in external advisory bodies and committees.

## 4

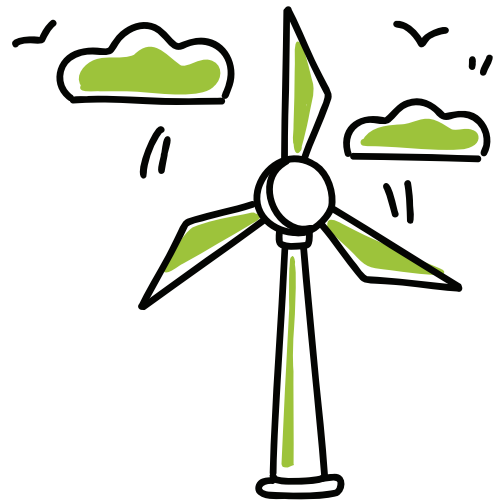
### Advocate:

In accordance with PIBC’s *Advocacy Policy*, proactively advocate to the Province of BC, Government of Yukon and Government of Canada for policies and actions that contribute to more robust climate change planning and plan implementation.

## 5

### Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Operations:

Strive to achieve carbon neutrality in its corporate operations through a combination of emissions reductions and the purchase of carbon offsets. Encourage low carbon resilience in built spaces and services, such as conference planning and chapter activities.





# The Role of Professional Planners

The role for professional planners is defined in the *CIP Policy on Climate Change Planning (2018)* and included below for reference:

## 1

### Ensure Effective Decisions

- Act in the public interest, incorporating measures to mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts in all relevant planning decisions.
- Champion climate change solutions that counteract, rather than exacerbate, impacts on vulnerable groups and under-resourced areas.
- Be familiar with federal emissions reduction targets and frameworks, as well as provincial/territorial, regional, and/or local targets where they exist, and advance policies and regulations that work towards achieving those objectives.
- Know the climate and hazard projections for their regions and make decisions accordingly.
- Account for increased disruption and unpredictability by incorporating flexibility and redundancy into their plans.
- Plan for worst-case scenarios and incorporate risk-reduction measures into their plans, in line with the precautionary principle or “no-regrets” approach to decision-making.
- Base planning advice on authoritative climate and energy data and projections.

- Use established metrics and approaches to data collection, wherever possible, to facilitate sharing data with other communities.
- Model environmentally responsible decision-making in their professional practices.
- Ensure maximum transparency of the decision-making process to improve community engagement and accountability.

## 2

### Collaborate Across Sectors

- Collaborate across sectors, departments, and jurisdictions to ensure an integrated and comprehensive approach to climate change planning, as well as effective implementation of climate change, energy, sustainability, or other similar policies.
- Collaborate with each other and other professionals – including landscape architects, architects, engineers, environmental scientists, public health practitioners, and first responders – on climate change adaptation and mitigation solutions.
- Seek to develop a shared language with others working on climate change and avoid siloed or compartmentalized approaches.
- Collaborate with other professionals to monitor the impact of planning decisions on GHG mitigation and progress on climate change adaptation, and revise plans and policies accordingly.



### 3

## Engage Indigenous people, stakeholders, youth, and the general public

- Consult and engage elected officials and leaders, the private sector, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, youth, and the general public in all aspects of planning for climate change;
- Be inclusive and respectful of Indigenous peoples, striving to promote understanding, validation, and respect of Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices to ensure decisions and interventions are culturally relevant and appropriate.
- Ensure that the perspectives of vulnerable communities and populations are actively considered in planning processes and reflected in the climate change solutions adopted.
- Work with relevant partners to develop effective communication strategies that inform the public of any mitigation, adaptation, or disaster response measures that require the public to be informed and prepared.
- Be ready to experiment with innovative methods and technologies for engaging and collaborating with the public and special interest groups.
- Communicate information to elected officials – and the public – on how climate change planning will strengthen communities and bring economic, environmental, and social benefits.
- Build on CIP’s national-level work to improve public awareness of, and support for, climate change planning by promoting the multiple benefits of climate change planning solutions.
- Encourage local, provincial/territorial, and federal governments to update development standards, planning regulations, and incentives to address adaptation and emissions.
- Encourage the development sector and utilities to update business models and planning processes to incentivize climate change mitigation and adaptation.





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