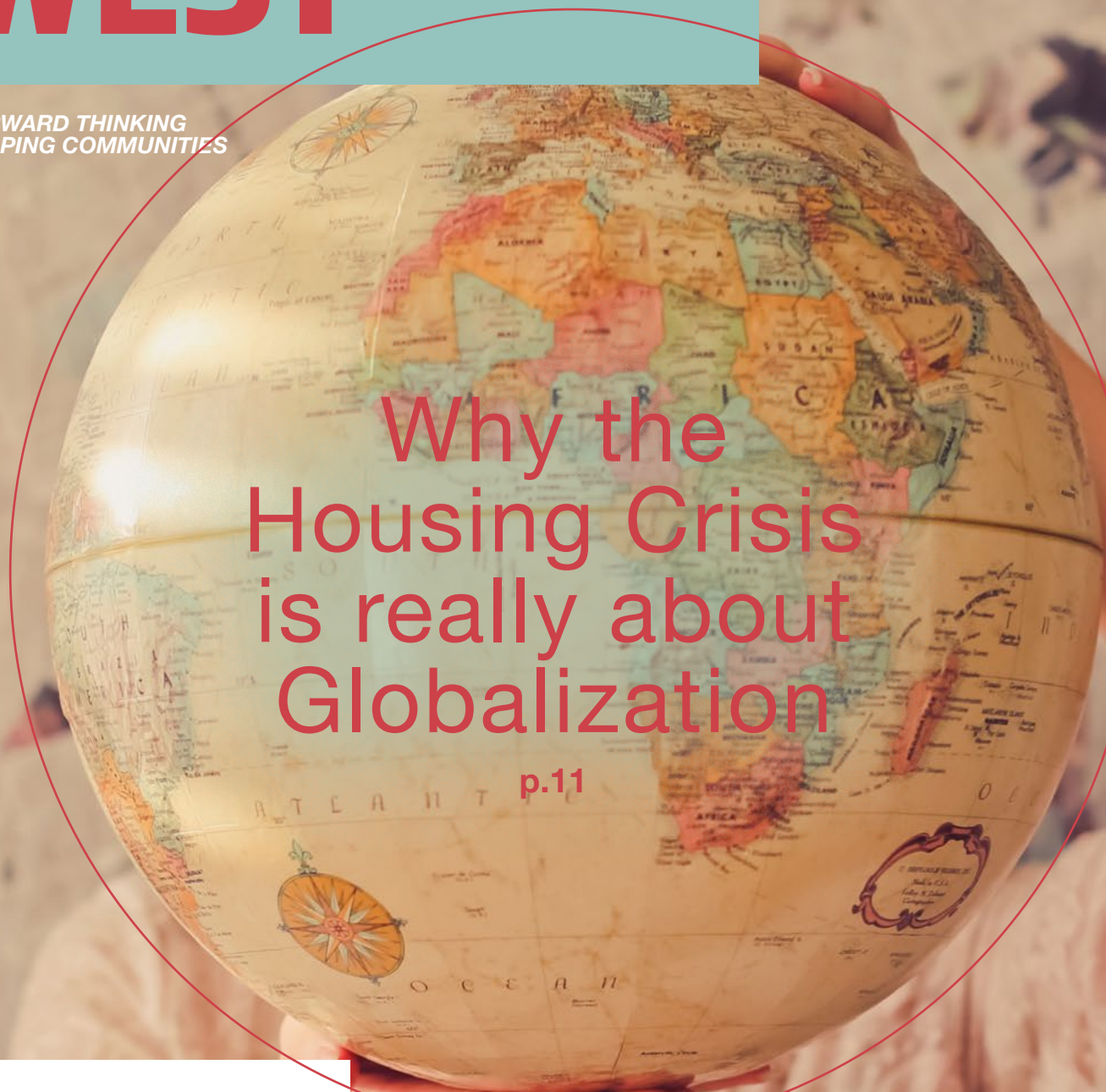


# PLANNING WEST

FALL 2018

FORWARD THINKING  
SHAPING COMMUNITIES



## Why the Housing Crisis is really about Globalization

p.11



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# PLANNING WEST

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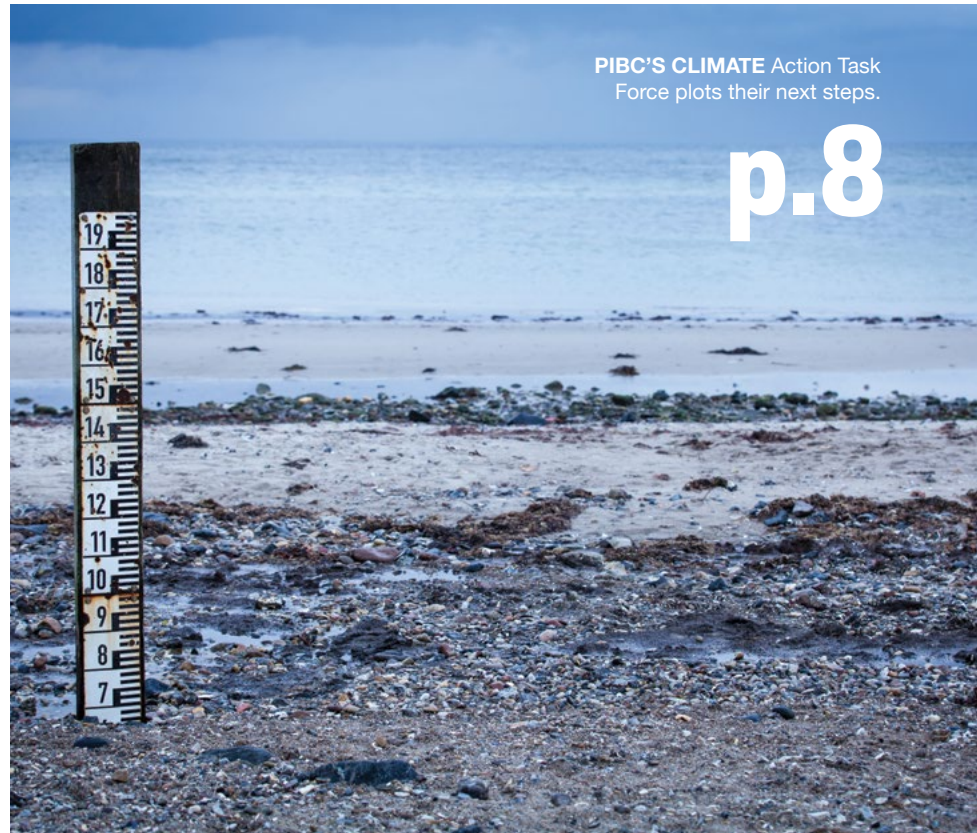
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**PIBC PLANNING INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

FORWARD THINKING  
SHAPING COMMUNITIES



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Housing is a hot topic in British Columbia. This issue, we asked the experts to weigh in on what planners can be doing to help.  
Photo: Slava Bowman



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

fun after party. Huge thanks are extended to everyone who attended and shared in these celebrations with us.

Continuing with the theme of our 60th anniversary celebrations, we were also pleased to see the publication of our special 60th anniversary issue of *Planning West* magazine. It gives a flavour of where PIBC and planning have come from, and provides us with a tangible and lasting piece to mark this important milestone for the Institute. Special thanks to our guest co-editors Kristin Agnello MCIP, RPP and Dr. Pam Shaw MCIP, RPP for their work steering this anniversary project to completion. And further thanks to the many organizations and individuals who took the opportunity to share their congratulatory messages with us in this special issue of our flagship publication.

As part of the process of preparing the budget for 2019, we have been looking ahead to key initiatives for the coming year. Some highlights include: a new member survey on compensation and benefits for planners; our annual conference for 2019 – the unique 2019 BC Land Summit, which will bring together planners and practitioners from other related land and land-use professions – definitely an event not to be missed; plans for our next round of PIBC Board of Directors elections – watch your inboxes for notices about how to nominate someone for the 2019-2021 Board – an excellent opportunity to get involved in all things planning related in BC and Yukon; and building upon key member services such as our professional learning webinars and local chapter events. In looking further ahead, our joint national conference with CIP will be held in Whistler in 2020, and our next regular PIBC annual conference in Whitehorse, Yukon in 2021.

As we look towards closing out 2018 I want to take this opportunity to personally thank all of you – our members – for your continued support and participation in our ongoing work and activities. It truly has been a milestone year for our professional organization. We have come a long way since our founding by just eight members in June 1958! And for the hundreds of member volunteers who have contributed to our efforts over the past year; please watch for a small personal note of thanks and token of our sincere appreciation to come your way. Many thanks to all. ■

**Andrew Ramlö** MCIP, RPP

**F**or many, fall represents a time of change and transition: shorter cooler days, leaves changing colours and falling from the trees, and most of us back to work or school. And so it is for PIBC as well as we begin the transition from planning to the delivery of a wide range of events, from this fall's World Town Planning Day event to the host of webinars and chapter events that will be held throughout the province. This fall also represents a transition for the PIBC Board of Directors as we move into the final two quarters of our two-year term.

The Board met in late September to, among other things, review and approve the Institute's budget for 2019. I am pleased to share that Institute continues to operate in a healthy financial position, with suitable financial reserves to meet all our current and ongoing needs, while also being able to continue to invest in enhanced operations and services for our members. Part of the budget workshop was dedicated to setting membership fees for the coming year and, while there will be a modest increase to membership fees in 2019, the increase has been kept in line with current cost of living increases. This is also the first increase since 2017.

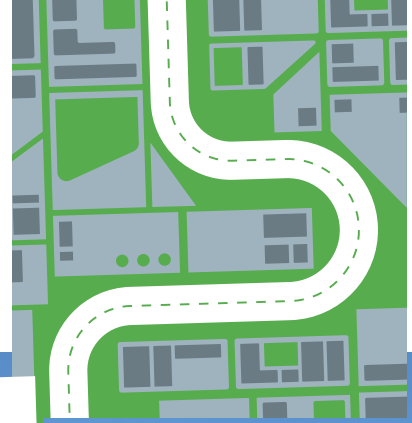
Also for 2019, we will continue with our practice of not charging planning student members membership fees – a practice that CIP recently announced it will be piloting at the national level. We are hopeful that other Boards across Canada follow PIBCs lead on this. You can check out the latest on the 2019 budget and membership fees in the upcoming issue of the new PIBC Board Update e-News newsletter.

The Board, committees and staff are also continuing to move ahead with projects and activities in support of our Strategic Plan – focusing on public policy and government relations, expanding the range of member services, continued support for student members, and the launch of a new and updated website (slated for launch by the end of the year).

As part of our public policy work and outreach to government, we were pleased that BC Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Selina Robinson, joined us for our annual World Town Planning Day gala event in Vancouver on November 3rd. PIBC continues to build these bridges, and undertake other outreach, to help ensure planners and planning are connected with the important public policy work going on in the province.

With 2018 winding down, we not only marked the passing of another World Town Planning Day, but our annual evening event was complemented with the culmination of our year-long celebrations marking PIBC's 60th anniversary. In addition to our traditional recognition of new Registered Professional Planners, long serving 25+ year members, and our newest Honourary and Life members, we also heard insightful words about our profession and practice from Larry Beasley FCIP, RPP. We also kicked up our heels a little to truly celebrate our 60th birthday with a

# OUTLINES



What's Trending... Member in Focus...



**BC HOUSING, The Vancouver Native Housing Society, and others have resources to help British Columbians secure housing.**

Notice some planning gold in the social media universe? Share it @\_PIBC

## What's Trending

by **Cindy Cheung**, PIBC Communications & Marketing Specialist

**T**he future of housing is a focus in this issue. Certainly a hot bed for discussion and debate and a topic with various online resources, below are just a few local organizations and resources online worth your visit.

### **BC Housing @BC\_Housing**

“How can we help?” are the first words you’ll read on the BC Housing website ([www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org)).

Offering resources and current information for housing issues in BC, visitors can easily navigate the website to learn more about housing assistance, partner services, licensing and consumer services, and other resources, including a page dedicated to housing programs for First Nations. Visit [www.bchousing.org/indigenous](http://www.bchousing.org/indigenous) for useful links to Aboriginal housing programs.

### **The Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS) @VanNative**

“Safe, secure and affordable housing” is Vancouver Native Housing Society’s top mandate. VNHS was founded in 1984 and currently houses approximately 8% of the urban Indigenous population through 18 buildings it manages or owns, including the Skwachàys Lodge most recently recognized by TIME magazine (turn to the back of this issue to learn why). Currently, VNHS has expanded its operations to include housing solutions for non-Indigenous people including seniors, youth, women at risk, people living with mental illness and the homeless and homeless at-risk populations. Learn more at [www.vnhs.ca](http://www.vnhs.ca).



**Selina Robinson – BC Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing**  
**@selinarobinson**

Following BC's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may seem obvious but, aside from tweeting out current provincial updates and responses to housing affairs in BC, you'll also get a glimpse into what's important to the Minister – just check out her subtle retweets on celebrating a breast cancer survivor, a Globe and Mail article about cultural expectations around women, work and humility, and the food-for-thought response to a recent Nike ad. ■

**Planning West Call for Submissions**

**World Town Planning**, Winter issue.  
Deadline December 15, 2018  
**Planning in Northern BC**, Spring issue.  
Deadline March 15, 2019

Articles should be 1000-1200 words in length and in an unformatted, Word document. Not all articles can be accommodated in each issue given the number of submissions received.

**MEMBER IN FOCUS**

**Gary Pooni MCIP, RPP**  
**President, Brook Pooni Associates**

by **Cindy Cheung**,  
PIBC Communications & Marketing Specialist

VANCOUVER IS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL and vibrant cities in the world and, according to Gary Pooni MCIP, RPP, President of Brook Pooni Associates, the city's successful urban built environments came to be with mindful planning and hard work. We caught up with Gary to talk about the importance of purposeful planning, how to continue this positive legacy, and what it takes to transform rural villages halfway across the world.

**Where did you grow up?**

My parents are immigrants from India. I was born and raised in New Westminster and spent most of my life here. This is my hometown and I love it. I received my undergraduate degree at Simon Fraser University before going to Calgary for graduate school. After graduation, I worked for the City of Calgary and as a consultant before coming back to the Lower Mainland in 2003. I joined Brook Development Planning (before it became Brook Pooni Associates) as a planner in 2004 and took on the role of President in 2008.

**When did you know you wanted to become a planner? What or who inspired you into this profession?**

It was a combination of three things that really shaped me into a planner and inspired me to take on the planning profession:

The first one has to do with my father's profession. My late father was a dump truck driver for 35 years. As a kid, I saw many construction sites, and because of my father and his career, I took an interest in the construction industry.

Later on, when I enrolled at Simon Fraser University, I had a great interest in geography – the historical shaping of cities and countries, the changing of urban areas and the combination of history and place changing over centuries.

Finally, while I was growing up on our farm in Queensboro, I had my first exposure to the community planning process in the 1990's. Our own land was going through these changes and, through that process, I was exposed to urban planning and what it was like to be part of a changing community.

Combined, these three factors drew me into the planning profession.

**What is one thing that surprised you or inspired you most about planning in BC?**

I've lived here most of my life. I've travelled a bit overseas and lived in Calgary, but coming back after nine years away, I fell more in love with my home town. To me, Vancouver is spectacular. I've come to appreciate the local living environments. It's quite easy when you're always in Vancouver to take it for granted. The city's urban environments, they did not happen by accident. You cannot point to any one thing; the success is a collaborative effort that's transforming Vancouver.

I'm not saying Vancouver is perfect. Now our city is hitting adulthood and with that comes growing pains but there are strengths in the city that need to be continued; opportunities for corrections, improved inclusivity & accessibility, ensuring housing opportunities, and making sure the legacy created continues in the built & social environments.

It's been a remarkable twenty years and we need to keep working purposefully for the next decades. I am inspired by the legacy of work already in place and planners in both the private and public sectors need to ensure that this legacy continues. What's been built since the 1980s was not by accident; it was an intentional urban exercise. The opportunity to continue this legacy is one of the most inspiring aspects of my job. Building and continuing this positive legacy for the city, this is my way to show incredible love for my home town.

“

**Communities grow and change, just like people do.”**



**GARY POONI'S** high school photo (inset) and Gary Pooni now.

**How did you become involved with community development projects in India via the Indo-Canadian Friendship Society? What are the rewarding and challenging aspects of these projects? Any one contribution you are particularly proud of?**

I became involved with the Indo-Canadian Friendship Society through our family doctor, Dr. Gurdev Singh Gill. He is the first Indo-Canadian to graduate in medicine from UBC and the first to practice medicine in Canada. After a visit to his village in Punjab, he started fundraising efforts to transform the living conditions there. He showed us there was so much we can do for these villages in our home country. He is a pioneer and an inspiration in our community.

When I go back to India and to my family's village, I think about the pristine environment we enjoy in Canada and then see people in these rural villages without proper drinking water or sanitation. With a little effort on our part, there is such a great opportunity to provide that to them. Through the Society, over 15 years, we have transformed the living envi-

ronments of over 20 villages, improving their health and social equity. To me, it's incredibly rewarding to be part of such a positive impact in villages where my family came from.

The challenges? It takes hard work. We have been quite successful with the 20 villages but in a country as large as India, that is just a small dent. It's an enormous task to bring to an entire nation, but someone had to start it. Just thinking about it, it's quite daunting since we can help just a few villages a year. The work can take full time with a crew of volunteers.

I'm most proud of how these projects bring all the villagers together. The entire village participates during contract; everyone helps out. We are all like-minded, working towards a common goal.

Transforming villages in a completely different regulatory environment, it is very eye opening. It comes back to how fortunate we are here in the developed world, that what we take for granted are luxuries in developing countries. It is very humbling.

**Unexpectedly, you have a complete free day. What would you do with it?**

That's a great question and I have a simple answer, and I'll tell you why.

I'd spend the day just kicking a soccer ball with my kid.

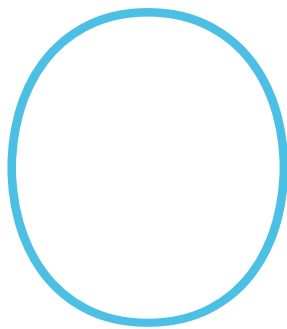
As a planner, private or public, it can be a thankless job. We work hard work, deal with stress constantly, late nights, community meetings and political forces. It can take away time from our families. We invest time at work and it can get very intense. For me, taking my son, going to the park, kicking a soccer ball, having just simple fun is a good contrast to that heaviness.

Most planners get into this profession for good intentions and the public interest. It's easy to throw yourself into work and get lost because there are no set hours to this profession, it can stay with you 24/7.

To young planners, I say remember not to get lost in the job, despite the rewards. Ensure other parts of your life are not neglected. As rewarding as a job can be, do find other rewards outside the job and don't neglect those rewarding people around you. ■

# You had Me at 'Adaptation'

An update from PIBC's Climate Action Task Force



In May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, PIBC's Climate Action Task Force (CATF) had the pleasure of facilitating a full house at their session of the annual PIBC Conference in Victoria. The dialogue proved extremely interesting and action focused, with participants offering tangible direction for how CATF can support PIBC to advance climate action initiatives. As members of CATF, we are keen to share what we heard, and relate this to our mandate and efforts we might take up in the future on behalf of planners working on climate action.

The existing CATF mandate is to:

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

by **Christine Callihoo** MCIP, RPP  
**George Benson** MCIP, RPP  
**Bruce Simard** MCIP, RPP  
and **Darwin Horning** MCIP, RPP

## CATF EFFORTS TO DATE

Significant work has already been completed, including the following:

- PIBC Member Climate Survey (winter 2017)<sup>1</sup>
- PIBC Climate Resource webpage<sup>2</sup>
- Planning West – Climate Issue (spring 2017)
- CPL Climate Series focused on the following (spring 2017):
  1. Recognize and strengthen linkages between land use and climate action
  2. Amend legislation to broaden municipal powers on climate
  3. Take a leadership role in setting targets and reporting
  4. Supply targeted funding for climate action
  5. Supply timely and consistent data to local governments that enables climate action



## CATF'S ONGOING EFFORTS

- Identify and initiate strategic linkages with other organizations championing climate action.
- Recommend climate content be included in PIBC webinars on an ongoing basis and required as part of the CPL credits.
- Encourage climate specific sessions be included in all PIBC Conference programs.
- Support the implementation of the BC Energy Step Code — a performance-based energy-efficiency framework that will enable future housing to cost less to operate and maintain.

The CATF also anticipates participating in the upcoming review of the Yukon Government Climate Change Action Plan in late 2018 with an eye on using GreenHome standards for all new housing to enhance the energy efficiency of Yukon's housing stock.

Feedback from PIBC members at the CATF session at the 2018 Conference highlighted ongoing challenges and potential strategic partners for PIBC to further champion climate action. The following is a summary of the session feedback.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Question 1 — Where are the greatest areas of challenge in your work on climate change?

- Assessing the effectiveness of mitigation measures. Local governments have reduction targets, but the Province no longer provides data to measure progress (Community Energy and Emissions Inventory- CEEL).
- Capacity and resource needs. Collaboration has worked well to help us achieve progress on climate change thus far, but we need to scale up — more multi-level partnerships between local and regional governments and partnerships with the federal and provincial governments. What might the private sector have to contribute?
- Housing affordability versus climate solutions. EV charging stations and rain gardens are perceived as adding additional costs to housing in spite of the long-term benefits. Need to clearly inform how to make climate action focused trade-offs.
- Issues/actions being downloaded to local government (e.g. dikes / flood

control) by senior governments without the necessary resources (e.g. finances, personnel) to adequately address.

- Reframing the message in our communities to include the health and economic benefits of climate action, such as community wellbeing, affordability, generational legacy, etc. There is also a lack of resources and support for incorporating ecosystem services as part of community overall and economic wellbeing.
- Sea level rise. Coastal communities now need to plan for sea level rise which requires data and engineering services, as well as community buy-in about what's needed to respond. This can be challenging to discuss and manage. For example, high water marks are rising yet there is a lack of new floodplain mapping for creeks and lakes which recognizes changing conditions.
- Urban / rural divide. How does climate action work in rural communities and regions? Most actions are relevant mainly to urban environments, yet impacts are also significant in rural communities.
- Pessimistic public. The public has grown cynical specifically regarding policy and actions on GHG reductions, as mitigation is not considered relevant to the individual — especially in comparison to the impact of industry.

### Question 2 — What partnerships should CATF be developing on behalf of PIBC?

Session participants supported PIBC's goal for encouraging a collaborative approach with other entities to better achieve climate action at the community level. Participants suggested potential partners for CATF to consider discussing opportunities to collaboratively address climate action and optimize available resources, including:

- Asset Management BC
- British Columbia Real Estate Association
- British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects
- Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia
- Engineers and Geoscientists BC
- Fraser Basin Council
- Insurance Bureau of Canada
- Professional teachers associations
- Registered Professional Foresters Association
- Union of BC Municipalities



## CATF NEXT STEPS

Informed by membership guidance from the 2018 PIBC Conference session, CATF's next steps will include:

- Reporting to the PIBC Board and recommending priority strategic partnerships for climate action.
- Drawing from the 2018 Conference session and the 2017 membership climate survey to address identified priorities.
- With support from PIBC's Board, submit a motion to the next Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention to reinstate the Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI).
- Initiate connections with identified organizations to explore common goals related to climate action at the community level.

The authors are all Registered Professional Planners who volunteer their time as part of the PIBC's Climate Action Task Force. ■

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Sara Muir-Owen, CATF member, for her stellar note taking during the session on which this article is based, and the contributions of the May 31 session participants for the insightful guidance towards the future work of the CATF.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>2017 PIBC Member Climate Survey Results: [https://www.pibc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/PIBC\\_Climate\\_Action\\_Member\\_Survey%20\\_March\\_2017.PDF](https://www.pibc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/PIBC_Climate_Action_Member_Survey%20_March_2017.PDF)

<sup>2</sup>PIBC Climate Action Task Force Resource Page: <https://www.pibc.bc.ca/content/climate-action-task-force>

# New Online Hub for Planning Tools

by **Kellie Garcia** P.Ag., B.Sc.

**M**any valuable guides and toolkits have been written for the planning community, providing innovative policies, case studies, bylaw language, and legal approaches to environmental protection. While much effort and public funding has gone into developing these resources, uptake has been very slow. In 2016, the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) received a grant from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to investigate uptake and barriers, gather ideas for solutions, and develop a strategy to optimize and support use of planning guides and toolkits.

The OBWB started with a survey to identify what planning resources are used in BC, obstacles to their widespread use, and possible solutions. Forty-five people completed the survey, mostly local government planners or planning consultants. The survey confirmed that most toolkits are not well-known or well-used. The most significant obstacles to using the guides were identified as a lack of time and capacity to find the materials and a lack of outreach and support after the guides are released. An online information hub that provides access to toolkits and guides was identified as the best solution and webinars as the second best solution.

Given the survey information, and after conversations with the project steering committee - Fraser Basin Council, Columbia Basin Trust, Stewardship Centre for BC, The Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC, and Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program - the OBWB decided to focus on creating an online hub. We partnered with CivicInfo BC, a not-for-profit society with a membership that includes close to all local governments in the province. CivicInfo BC has operated a website since 2000 that provides a wide variety of tools and information resources for those who work or have an interest in the local government sector.

The new online hub currently contains records for 80 resources. Each record includes a brief description, why it is useful, and a link to the PDF file and HTML location. The hub can be searched by way of drop down menus under four criteria:

1. Subject Area (e.g. water conservation, environmental protection, land use planning);
2. Tool (e.g. case studies, sample bylaw language, best practices);
3. Application (e.g. official community plan, zoning bylaw, drought management plan); and
4. Author (e.g. Okanagan Basin Water Board, Government of BC, Fraser Basin Council).

The Fraser Basin Council and OBWB co-hosted a webinar in March 2018 to introduce the online hub and discuss a long-term strategy to help people access and use the resources. The webinar was attended by more than 75 planners, engineers, biologists, environmental scientists, sustainability specialists, and water managers from local and provincial governments, non-profit organizations, and consulting companies.

This project clearly demonstrated that while there are many resources available for communities to become more resilient to weather extremes and make sustainable land and water use decisions, there are gaps in accessibility, training and capacity. While it is a good first step to bring all of the resources together into an online hub, much more needs to be done to build capacity, encourage synergies, and share best practices.

The OBWB is committed to building on the learnings and deliverables of this project. We will continue to dialogue with the steering committee to ensure we move forward in a unified fashion and build on our cumulative knowledge and experiences. The OBWB and CivicInfo BC have an MOU that commits to long-term maintenance of the online hub. We will also continue to partner with Fraser Basin Council on webinars that dive deeper into the most important resources on the hub.

The OBWB would also like to be part of a capacity-building initiative that provides direct support and training in the planning resources available and how to apply them. We are seeking a group to partner with or support in this initiative - let us know if you are interested, or have further ideas for action! ■

**KELLIE GARCIA** is a Planning and Policy specialist at the Okanagan Basin Water Board. She can be reached at [kellie.garcia@obwb.ca](mailto:kellie.garcia@obwb.ca) or (250) 469-6321.

The online hub can be found at:  
<https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/planning-guides>

The webinar can be accessed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=JZlQr-VLcwA>

The Okanagan Basin Water Board was initiated in 1968 and legislated in 1970 as a valley-wide partnership to identify and resolve critical water issues in the Okanagan watershed. The Board of Directors includes representatives from the three Okanagan regional districts, the Okanagan Nation Alliance, the Water Supply Association of BC, and the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council – a multi-stakeholder group established by the Board to provide independent science-based advice on water issues.

An online information hub that provides access to toolkits and guides for 80 resources.



# GLOBAL DEMAND

**Why the Housing Crisis is Really about Globalization**

by **William E. Rees**

COMPLEX PROBLEMS ARE CALLED COMPLEX FOR A REASON. They may be several layers deep; people may mistake mere symptoms for the real problem; we confuse causes and effects; there are lags and thresholds and positive and negative “feedbacks” are in play that we cannot even detect.

Unfortunately, all the significant issues confronting the contemporary world — climate change, spreading marine dead zones, land degradation, biodiversity loss, human population growth, economic uncertainty, egregious inequality, etc. — are complex problems. Even trained experts don’t often truly understand them so we can hardly be surprised if sometimes policy solutions are ill-conceived, misdirected and ineffective.



Consider something as basic as housing. It is commonly assumed that parts of Canada, including Metro Vancouver and the Toronto region, are suffering a housing crisis. But this merely confuses a painful symptom for a deeper disease. Increasing numbers of inadequately housed people do not necessarily imply a deficiency of suitable housing. What if what we are experiencing is not a really a “housing” problem at all?

It is true that everyone needs a roof over his and her head. But does that mean everyone has a housing problem? Not really. It is worth noting here that there is no physical housing shortage — for example, there are 25,000 empty houses and condominiums in Vancouver; 11,195 more in Surrey, 5,829 in Burnaby and; 4,021 in Richmond. Clump just these units together, and the resultant ghost town would be one of the largest in the province. At the Canadian average of 2.5 occupants each, these units could house virtually the entire population of Kelowna.

And even as demand for decent housing increases, the number of physically empty nests is ballooning. There were 98 per cent more unoccupied units in Vancouver in 2017 than in 2001 when “only” 12,895 houses stared vacantly onto the street.

It’s not that these houses have been abandoned but rather that their owners, domestic or foreign, can afford a second dwelling or investment property whatever the going rate and leave it unoccupied most of the time. Indeed, it is increasingly being accepted that speculation and foreign investment have bid up the cost of housing above the price points that average citizens who actually need a house can afford.

From this perspective, we see the housing crisis as a symptom of the growing mismatch between the wages and salaries generated in the local economy and prices demanded in the local housing market.

Of course, the reason for the wage-price gap is that the Vancouver housing market is no longer strictly local — already an unprecedented 20 per cent of high-end condominiums in Vancouver are foreign owned. The world sees Canada as a safe, economically secure and politically stable country, and Vancouver as a particularly attractive city.

This makes the Vancouver property market highly attractive to foreign investors, legitimate and otherwise, so local housing prices now reflect global realities. Vancouver is not a high-income city, but local wage-earners must now compete with the world’s

growing millions of super-rich for a piece of their own city.

By now it should be clear the so-called housing crisis has little to do with housing per se. We could as easily assert that we have an income crisis — if Vancouver residents had significantly higher average incomes, the “housing crisis” would disappear. But neither is this the complete picture. The income-price crunch is a by-product of globalization and footloose capital in a competitive market, so it is worth trying to understand the structural effects of competition.

In ecosystems, structural change is driven in part by competition among various species for essential resources. For example, when species “A” is better at acquiring food or shelter in a particular ecosystem than competing species “B,” then “A” may competitively displace “B” from the latter’s preferred habitat.

Humans are part of every ecosystem on Earth and, as it turns out, high intelligence and technology have given us a competitive leg up in the global competition for just about everything. Humans have “competitively displaced” hundreds of other species from their ecological niches, colonized all suitable habitat on the planet, appropriated the largest share of global primary production (the



**Earth has become ecologically “full,” and resource competition is intensifying. More than ever, privileged people are displacing not just other species, but also other humans from their habitats and future food sources.”**

products of photosynthesis), are rapidly using up many other essential resources and, in the process, we have polluted or degraded every major ecosystem on Earth.

But this inexorable process is now entering a particularly ominous phase — with the persistent growth of population and per capita consumption, Earth has become ecologically “full,” and resource competition is intensifying. More than ever, privileged people are displacing not just other species, but also other humans from their habitats and future food sources, and doing it in novel ways.

This points to a significant land-based conflict between the increasingly global wealthy consumer class who sit atop humanity’s literal food chain, and the interests of the majority of the world’s people. It also suggests a parallel with the foreign acquisition of land and housing in Vancouver, Toronto and other cities, right down to the potential hollowing out of neighbourhoods and rising number of business failures resulting from simultaneously skyrocketing rents and taxes and the critical loss of customers.

In fact, to the extent that the “housing” crisis in Vancouver is driven by foreign investment, it raises concerns about sovereignty, social justice and weak local governance.

So where does all this take us?

First, it should be clear that the “housing” crisis cannot be solved if we approach it as a question of housing per se. Nor can we count on economic growth and the hope of higher

incomes to fix the problem. While Canadians with good jobs have enjoyed increasing purchasing power since the 2007 downturn, this masks a longer-term trend of stagnation and declining real wages across Canada; in fact, inflation adjusted wages in 2013 were almost identical to wages in 1975 — just over \$10/hr in 2013 dollars.

Not so with housing — since 1975, housing costs in problem communities have ballooned, and by 2017 they had increased four- or five-fold in real terms. Meanwhile, the scandalous income gap is increasing, and 14 per cent of Canadians (18.5 per cent of children) still live in poverty even as GDP swells and the country enjoys lowest levels of unemployment in decades.

In the circumstances, it is unlikely that most local residents will even be able to enter the race with cash-flush offshore buyers any time soon.

What might work are strong policy initiatives to re-localize land and housing markets. Massive taxes on foreign buyers or empty house taxes might help fix market inequities, but an outright ban on foreign ownership would be more honest and effective.

In the absence of serious civil unrest, however, such “extreme” measures are unlikely to be implemented. Somewhat ironically, major resistance comes from thousands of local resident property-owners whose houses have made them millionaires and who are loath to give up their unearned bounty.

In effect, globalization has widened the local wealth gap, exacerbating tensions between two segments of BC’s population with vastly different interests – those who have and those who haven’t made money in the real estate market

It is entirely possible, then, that Vancouver’s housing/income/globalization problem is — like many “wicked” problems — essentially unsolvable. Whether we are discussing housing, climate change, biodiversity loss or inequality (all of which are actually symptoms of deeper dysfunction), politically feasible policies are ineffective, and policies that might be effective are politically infeasible.

As for the wealthy minority, they need not worry — at least in the short term. We have created a global system governed by an allegedly free market with built-in dynamics that favour the already rich. So as long as market values and accumulated wealth remain the measure of personal worth, this will remain a world in which she or he who dies with the most money wins. ■

*William E. Rees is professor emeritus of human ecology and ecological economics at the University of British Columbia, and co-founder of the ‘ecological footprint,’ one of the first tools to measure our impacts on the environment.*

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# LOCAL SUPPLY

## Corridor Urbanism: How Planners Created and Can Fix the Housing Crisis

by **Mark Holland** MCIP, RPP

DR. WILLIAM REES' ARTICLE ON GLOBALISM and the housing crisis raises a critical issue— that of the disruptive influence of global capital on local housing markets. Rees looks at some practical forces and suggests that widespread inequity is a core consideration when looking at housing.

While the crisis of housing prices may in part be blamed on the very rich, solutions are vague and history might suggest that many may be worse. This article focuses on how planners can respond to these forces at a local level to mitigate some impacts on housing prices, including:

1. Land costs
2. Planning processes
3. The geometry of growth management

It is generally accepted that a balanced housing market has a ratio of 15-20% sales to inventory – which is to say that for home sold in a unit of time (demand), there are five to six homes on the market of the same or similar type (supply). If that percentage rises, buyers have many more homes to choose from (a buyer's market) and prices drop. Below that percentage (a seller's market) and prices rise as buyers compete for the limited inventory.

The first consideration of ensuring a balanced housing market is the role of land in the cost of housing. Since construction costs are roughly the same in all Canadian metro areas, the primary difference is the

demand for, and thus cost of the land. With enough capital and enough builders to build the housing we need, supply can exceed demand and begin to stabilize or decrease housing costs. What is making supply a problem is the availability and cost of land.

For the purposes of this discussion, there are three tiers of supply and demand for land that set its price:

- The local market – This tier includes local home buyers, builders and financiers interacting in a slowly growing local market. In these situations, where there is plenty of land available for builders to buy without unduly competing for it, supply easily responds to minor changes in demand and housing prices remain relatively attainable and stable over time.
- A growth market – This tier emerges when demand for housing exceeds the pace at which local builders can effectively respond and causes land and housing prices to begin to rise consistently over several years. This condition attracts builders and capital from other regions who now compete with local builders for the local supply of land. Again, with sufficient supply of affordable land and density, the land value does not face extreme increases. However, if the supply of land or density is insufficient to meet demand, then land prices rise fast, and housing prices concurrently rise.
- The speculative market – This condition emerges when land supply is far below what the market needs for sustained periods



and the price rise is rapid, extreme and sustained. This condition attracts the attention of a whole new type of capital. Land then ceases to be a utilitarian good for housing and instead becomes an investment product like any other (equities, bonds, others). Only in this situation do we get the massive influx of global capital speculating on land. These new players significantly increase the scale of demand which drives up housing prices far in excess of local housing market forces. The high prices then also drive out many smaller local developers, attracting new national and international players with much deeper pockets.

Many communities around the world were largely unaffected by global capital and economic inequity because the local land market delivered low returns and therefore was uninteresting to this level of capital.

The housing issue that Rees speaks to exists in our major metro areas because planners, local

governments, developers and residents created attractive urban environments, but then did not understand the effect this would have in attracting global capital and, subsequently, demand for land.

A second consideration is planning processes that happen at the local government level offer opportunities to improve housing supply and affordability.

Official Community Plans (OCP) in BC are only required to provide for five years of housing. However, most communities update their OCP and/or local area plans once every ten years or more.

The OCP policy also presumes that the majority of land that has an OCP designation or zoning for greater density will actually be redeveloped to maximum density within that OCP's timeline.

Finally, no due diligence is done during planning processes on whether there are other areas where additional density could be developed in a cost-effective manner. Instead, our current planning processes significantly overestimate the actual capacity for development in our communities – leading to a long range housing shortage.

To achieve a balanced housing market long term, community plans need to have 5-6 times the total anticipated density so that there will be adequate housing to ensure stable prices until the next community plan/OCP is developed. Setting aside global housing demand, there is no risk to the local government of embracing this potential because the market will only build where and to the extent it can sell in any given year for the local or even growth markets.

This scenario then immediately raises a concern. How do we bring into the market the supply of housing needed without creating “sprawl”? The answer lies in two streams of action:

1. Significantly densifying existing areas in a city (far beyond gentle infill thresholds); and
2. Changing our geometry of growth to a network of corridors to achieve sustainable development while allowing construction in new greenfield sites.

Strategies for densifying existing areas are well known and do not need to be discussed here, other than to point to the scale required. Attainable housing needs to have the land value per unit at under \$75,000 unit, preferably a lot less. As such, a single-family home and lot that costs \$500,000 would need 7-12 units on it to have an attainable redevelopment price. With

lot value over \$1 million, as in Vancouver's market, the “affordable density threshold” would be double that. This means that to build attainable housing, planners and city councils need to increase densities within existing neighbourhoods manifold – something that is rarely politically feasible.

Without some other mechanism to increase supply and control global demand, the discussion of greenfield development is necessary.

The conventional model of city growth is a collection of mixed-use medium to higher density town centres, or urban nodes, surrounded by lower density suburban areas, and green or agricultural areas surrounding those, protected from growth by a growth boundary.

However, these constrained ovoid-esque “town centres” never contain enough developable land to support a growing regional population without driving land prices up rapidly. All builders then compete to buy the remaining sites, thereby driving up prices.

The solution is to conceive of the region not as a set of town centres, separated by green space, but rather to conceive of it as a spider web network of corridors structured around continuous urban village corridors centred on a regional network of interconnected great mixed-use streets, with green space separating the corridors. Corridor urbanism still has a strong growth boundary, but it keeps the corridor contained in a linear fashion, protecting green space on either side of it.

The housing affordability crisis was created by planning that overly constrained the availability of land and density in the face of significant demand. Without adding significantly more development capacity, it will worsen. Fortunately, the problem can be largely solved by planning, but only if we understand the real relationships in play between land, communities and capital and adjust our spatial growth models accordingly. Through a densification and corridor urbanism model, the negative impacts of global capital can be mitigated by planners using local municipal tools and powers.

We live in a new era of significant scales and mobility of capital. As planners dedicated to creating sustainable communities, we need to adapt our urban development models to respond to this new reality. ■

*Mark Holland MCIP, RPP is a planner and development consultant. He is also a professor in community planning at Vancouver Island University*

# TIME TO RETHINK BC'S PLANNING TOOLS

## The Impacts of Planning Processes on Housing Affordability and Economic Development

by Erica Tiffany MCIP, RPP



WHETHER WE REALIZE IT OR NOT, planning professionals are having an impact on housing affordability, and not in a good way. Reviewing development applications, including those that are consistent with an existing Official Community Plan (OCP), are taking an ever-increasing amount of time to complete.

With limited data on current and historical processing times, one could explain this delay several ways:

- Local governments around the province, especially in rapidly growing regions, are busier than ever
- There is not enough staff to accommodate the number of applications that require review
- Applications are becoming “more complex” and, as a result, require more time to think through
- There is an increased level of public expectation and scrutiny which results in greater refinement of development projects.

Yet delays and uncertainty regarding timing come at a cost which is ultimately born by the home buyer and renter, and ultimately affect affordability.

**A one-month delay on a development project can add significant costs in interest alone for an applicant:**

Townhouse site: 2 hectares

Land cost: \$24,000,000

Amount borrowed: \$19,000,000

Loan term: 5 years

Interest rate: 3.5%

Monthly interest payment: \$50,000



## STAKEHOLDER ROLES AND CONCERNS

Stakeholder	Roles	Concerns
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintains public interest</li> <li>Ensures community plans are implemented as envisioned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of discretionary review after rezoning</li> <li>Increased level of public scrutiny</li> </ul>
Developer/Builder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implements and makes community plans a reality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financing and carry costs of land prior to development</li> <li>Needs predictable process to schedule resources (i.e., consultants, contractors, trades)</li> </ul>
Home Buyer/ Renter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates community by living and working in development provided by the builder</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developers carrying costs (e.g. interest) may be included in housing price and rent</li> <li>Delay in housing supply increases demand and, in turn, price</li> </ul>
Current Local Residents (Public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Former home buyer/renter now resident becomes vital member and participant of community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants understandable, open, transparent process</li> <li>Wants to understand the impacts of development</li> </ul>

### HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Historically, land use plans and zoning date back to the 1920s when Official Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Bylaws were first introduced under the Town Planning Act. In 1968 development permits were introduced as a new, non-discretionary review mechanism under the Municipal Act. Since then, no significant tools have been added to the development review toolkit although, land use contracts have come and will be gone by 2024.

The primary tools available today to assess development plans essentially come down to rezoning, subdivision and development permits (DPs). Yes, there are other review mechanisms such as development variance permits, temporary use permits, phased development agreements, etc., but one can argue these mechanisms have only a supporting role to the big three.

Of the big three, only two are discretionary: rezoning and subdivision. Local governments can “ask” for items on rezoning and subdivision applications depending on the alignment of

the application with their community plans. However, for a DP application, the review is based on whether it meets the development permit guidelines.

Yet while the tools have stayed the same since the 1960s, much has changed in the world of planning and development including economic, environmental and social contexts. This begs the question as to whether these tools are sufficient to effectively and efficiently review applications that support the implementation of community plans.

In conversations with professionals who are involved in all aspects of the process, including the reviewers, the applicants and consultants, as well as with the public, the consensus appears to be the process is not working well at any level. Planners responsible for reviewing applications are burned out from overwork due to a high number of applications and increased detail of review. Applicants are frustrated by a lack of predictability and accountability in the process, and the public is frustrated because

they simply don’t understand the process.

Just as important, the process itself is arguably creating challenges within the province to compete globally. The tools that we have don’t allow for an effective development application review that ensures for the timely construction of both employment generating uses (commercial, industrial, institutional) and housing units. We are essentially operating a ship that requires significant time and space to maneuver, while competing in a world that is far more agile and responsive to constantly changing externalities.

### HOW DO WE FIX THIS?

The reality is that there is a relationship between local government, developer/builder, home buyer/renter, and current local resident. Each has their own set of concerns and roles that directly and indirectly affect the other. As a result, it is imperative that solutions address issues holistically. A development review system must be one that supports the objectives of all parties concerned.

## THREE POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

### 1. Discretionary permit process

The process of rezoning lands is one of the few discretionary tools available to local governments to assess land use and development applications, and is one of the few times the local government can “ask”. This results in detailed review occurring at an early development review stage.

In an ideal review environment, there should be an opportunity to refine an application later in the process when more detail can be given to the specifics of building and site layout. A solution would be to create a discretionary permit process that replaces non-discretionary development permits. The benefits would be:

- The development community would have the ability to refrain from preparing detailed plans and studies prior to zoning and obtain financing once lands are zoned without spending significant dollars in soft costs.

- The local government retains some degree of discretionary review that can still be applied later when the developer can more efficiently and effectively provide the level of detail (i.e., plans and assessments) the local government is seeking.

Within zoning bylaws, a more refined hierarchy of “as of right” uses vs. “discretionary” uses could be defined. This level of distinction could potentially simplify the process, reduce staff burden, and allow staff time to be spent more strategically on projects.

### 2. Training

How many new planners have been thrust into the world of development application review for the first time and have neither been trained or prepared for it? And, if we have moved from one municipality to another within the province we are most likely re-learning the process of a particular local government. The level of training planners receive greatly depends on the availability and/or willingness of the manager, supervisor,

or a colleague to provide mentoring. In busy planning departments the opportunity is limited, and planners must often learn as they go along, adding more time to the review process, which in many cases results in the applicant needing to redo requirements. This situation is frustrating for the both the planner, the applicant, the public and the future new buyer.

As a profession, we need to provide better training and education on both the legislative requirements for development review as well as the art of application file management. The latter takes time for new planners to master, but training and understanding earlier rather than later in a planner’s career will help facilitate this.

### 3. Legislate Timelines

This idea may result in a collective gasp, and a response that says there already is too much pressure to meet timelines given workloads, but... there needs to be greater accountability on the local government to provide timely responses to applicants. Without this, the applicant has no knowledge or understanding of the status of their application and cannot proceed with planning or scheduling any future stages of the development project without assuming greater levels of risk and cost. Establishing minimum time frames within the provincial legislation regarding the “completeness” of a development application to viably initiate review by the local government may be a feasible starting point for mandating timelines. Ontario has taken this further by mandating timelines for decision-making on development applications with specific timelines for different application types.

### MOVING FORWARD

The provincial legislation needs to provide better balance and accountability for all stakeholders involved in development review process. There is no better time for the planning profession to pause and reflect on the tools we are working with and consider legislative changes that would make the development approvals process more effective to the betterment of housing affordability and economic development. ■

*Erica Tiffany MCIP, RPP, is a former local government planner now working with McElhanney Consulting Services, Ltd. She has over twenty-five years of experience working in community, transportation and development planning.*

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# INNOVATIVE PARKING SOLUTIONS

## **PART 3: Balancing Parking Supply & Housing Affordability**

by **Dan Casey** MCIP, RPP  
**Mairi Bosomworth** and  
**Tim Shah**, MA

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND OFF-STREET PARKING**

In November 2017, the federal government released the National Housing Strategy, an historic and momentous strategy that contains a suite of policies and programs that puts the needs of Canada's vulnerable populations at its core. The Strategy includes a \$15.9 billion National Housing Co-Investment Fund that will repair and renew existing social housing and build new affordable housing. Funding for affordable housing is indispensable for addressing our growing housing affordability crises; however, carefully examining—and updating—our municipal planning policy and off-street parking regulations is equally important for supporting the creation of new, affordable housing.

*This article is the third of a three-part series that explores opportunities for communities to enact innovative parking regulations.*

Housing affordability has become a critical issue in the City of Victoria, which now finds itself among the least affordable cities in Canada. Affordability is recognized as an important planning policy issue in the City's 2012 Official Community Plan (OCP), where affordable housing is defined as, "Total costs for rent or mortgage plus taxes (including a 10% down payment), insurance and utilities should equal 30% or less of a household's annual income." A number of policies are identified with the common objective to encourage a range of different types of housing across the city and within every neighbourhood to meet the needs of residents at different life stages and circumstances.

In 2015, Victoria City Council approved the creation of the Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability. A series of recommendations were presented to Council outlining how the City could address housing affordability over the 2015-2018 period. One of the recommendations was to reduce the parking requirements within the City's off-street parking regulations.

More recently, the City released its Housing Strategy 2016-2025, with a series of actions to encourage affordable housing projects. One of the actions includes, "reduce parking requirements and consider parking innovations that support affordable housing projects."

The City has planning and policy rationale to reduce parking supply requirements for affordable housing projects. But do the economics of reduced parking requirements make sense?

The costs of parking in new construction are significant. Costs are dependent on the type of facility (above ground structured, below ground structured or surface parking) and localized land value. In Canada, on average, construction costs are \$15,000 per surface parking space, \$35,000 per above-ground structured space, and \$50,000 per underground structured space<sup>1</sup>. These costs are generally reflected in higher purchase or rental costs.

A 2013 study found that when minimum parking supply requirements were removed in downtown Los Angeles, developers provided more housing units with less parking. This resulted in a greater variety of housing types including housing in older buildings and lower-priced housing with unbundled parking marketed to non-drivers.

While we know that the costs of parking are significant, but will supplying less parking result in parking shortages?

## VICTORIA'S UPDATED OFF-STREET PARKING REGULATIONS

Over the course of 2016-2018, the planning team at Watt Consulting Group worked with the City of Victoria to update its off-street parking regulations ("Schedule C") of the Zoning Regulation Bylaw.

Historically, Schedule C did not differentiate Affordable Housing (or similar) as a distinct use and, consequently, provided no clear direction to developers about how much parking was required when constructing purpose-built affordable housing units. In the summer of 2018, an updated Schedule C was officially adopted by the City and contains a series of regulations that support active transportation, encourage economic development, enable affordable housing and maintain healthy communities.

The consulting team explored off-street parking regulations from communities across Canada to identify minimum parking supply schedule specific to affordable housing. A handful of BC municipalities contain an affordable housing parking supply schedule in their regulations including Kamloops, Vancouver, Richmond, Maple Ridge, and the City of North Vancouver. In these municipalities, the minimum parking supply rate for affordable housing dwellings is, on average, 30% lower than the rate for multi-family residential condominium dwellings.

Vehicle ownership data from the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC) was obtained for 23 affordable housing sites in Victoria comprising 419 units. Vehicle ownership data was also collected for 103 multi-family residential sites—a combination of strata condominium and rental apartment.

The average vehicle ownership rate among the 23 affordable housing sites was 0.49 vehicles per unit (residents only). This is approximately 32% lower than the average rate among condominium sites and approximately equal to the average rate among rental apartment units. These results indicate that parking demand is in fact lower among affordable housing units in the City of Victoria when compared to private market-valued units.

To supplement parking demand research, a focus group was hosted with five affordable housing organizations working in the Capital Region to better understand what they thought was the right amount of parking for affordable housing units. It was reported that a "blanket rate" for affordable housing sites may not be appropriate given the full spectrum (and diversity) of affordable housing needs. Focus group participants also explained how



**For residents who need affordable housing, car ownership is often not attainable and in a compact vibrant community like Victoria, there is much less need to own a personal vehicle....By reducing the amount of parking we have to provide, we can build buildings that cost less and therefore offer lower rents. This modern approach to off-street parking has many benefits for our tenants."**

*—Kaye Melliship, Executive Director, Greater Victoria Housing Society*

the minimum supply rates for a new affordable housing use should differentiate by unit size recognizing that the parking demand needs of those living in smaller units may be completely different from those living in larger units.

Parking demand differs by geographic location, bedroom quantity or unit size, and housing tenure—all of which informed the parking supply rates in the City's off-street parking regulations. Table 1 illustrates the supply rate requirements for multiple dwellings by type for each geographic area. More information about the parking supply rates — and geographic areas — are available online in the City of Victoria's Zoning Bylaw, Schedule C.

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

To borrow from Donald Shoup, "simple parking reforms may be a city planner's cheapest, fastest, and easiest way to achieve a more just society."<sup>2</sup> The inclusion of a minimum parking supply rate specific to affordable housing is an innovation in and of itself. What makes the City of Victoria's updated off-street parking regulations even



TABLE 1. PARKING SUPPLY RATES FOR MULTIPLE DWELLINGS, SCHEDULE C

Multiple Dwelling	Dwelling unit gross floor area	Core Area	Village / Centre	Other Area
Condominium	< 45m2	0.65	0.70	0.85
	45m2 to 70m2	0.80	0.85	1.00
	> 70m2	1.20	1.30	1.45
Rental Apartment	< 45m2	0.50	0.60	0.75
	45m2 to 70m2	0.60	0.70	0.90
	> 70m2	1.00	1.10	1.30
Affordable	< 45m2		0.20	
	45m2 to 70m2		0.50	
	> 70m2		0.75	

more innovative is how the supply rates are: informed by local vehicle ownership data supported by research in other bylaws, and, based on unit size, recognizing that floor area is a determinant of parking demand.

Victoria's updated Schedule C offers valuable lessons for other communities across BC. Setting a lower off-street parking requirement for affordable housing is not only sensible from a planning and land use perspective, but is good economics, helping developers save significant costs and incentivizing the construction of more units — providing more housing options to Victorians. ■

<sup>1</sup> Note: these 2014 estimates are for hospital parking construction in the Greater Toronto Area, but are generally representative of a variety of land uses in Canada's larger urban centres.

<sup>2</sup> Shoup, D. (2016). Cutting the Cost of Parking Requirements. Access Magazine (48), Spring 2016. Available online at: <https://www.accessmagazine.org/spring-2016/cutting-the-cost-of-parking-requirements/>

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# Enhanced Housing Powers for Local Governments

THIS YEAR'S SPRING SESSION of the B.C. Legislature brought some rare changes to the enabling legislation for land use management in the province, some of it keenly anticipated and some not. Planners working in the province will need to be familiar with both.

## RENTAL ZONING

In its January 2018 manifesto *A Home for Everyone: A Housing Strategy for British Columbians*, the Union of B.C. Municipalities made a host of recommendations to the provincial government on solutions to our housing affordability problem. One of them directly addressed UBCM's uncontroversial assertion that too little rental housing is being built, and asks the Province to provide local governments with the legislative authority to "create zoning for affordable rental housing." Bill 23 of 2018, which is already in force, almost does that; it provides legislative authority to create zoning for rental housing, but not 'affordable' rental housing.

Housing tenure is not a matter entirely beyond the jurisdiction of B.C. local governments. For many years, the Strata Property Act has required the approval of the "approving authority" (e.g. the municipal council or regional board) for the conversion of existing rental buildings

to strata ownership. This has enabled local governments to attenuate the erosion of existing rental housing stock through strata titling, a process that had been producing the forced eviction of many long-term residents who could not afford to purchase their units.

A similar local government veto is not available in relation to newly built multi-unit buildings. A strata plan for such a building is prepared by a surveyor and submitted directly to the land title office for registration. Local government jurisdiction is limited to the prior issuance of a building permit and perhaps a development permit, neither of which can prevent the subdivision of the building. For many years, particularly in the Lower Mainland, the real estate market has preferred the production of new strata-titled housing units over the production of new rental units, including on sites where rental buildings are being demolished.

Prior to Bill 23, the zoning power conferred by the Local Government Act (and the Vancouver Charter) would probably not enable a local government to specify a tenure aspect (rental vs. strata title) for a permitted use of land. The case law would suggest that the local government zoning power in British Columbia did not include the authority to distinguish between the occupancy of a dwelling unit by a tenant and the occupancy

of the same dwelling unit by its owner. (As a land use lawyer practicing in this jurisdiction for over 25 years, I have never encountered a situation where a local government has attempted such regulation, though there are a few zoning bylaws that creep into tenure issues in relation to secondary suites and carriage houses.)

The core of Bill 23 is the new s. 481.1 of the Local Government Act (s. 565.01 of the Vancouver Charter): a zoning bylaw may limit the form of tenure of housing units in multi-family residential developments to residential rental tenure, as defined in the bylaw, within any of the following:

- a zone
- a part of a zone
- a specified number, portion or percentage of housing units in a building

Some simple examples that come to mind as candidates for this type of zoning are sites within multi-family residential zones that are currently occupied by rental buildings, and vacant or brownfield sites on which the local government wishes to see rental tenure in at least a portion of new residential development. However, there is no reason that a local government could not amend the zoning regulations for an entire multi-family



**A Regional Growth Strategy must “work towards” adequate, affordable and appropriate housing and adequate inventories of suitable land and resources for future settlement, and must include actions proposed to provide for the housing needs of the region’s projected population over at least 20 years.**



residential zone, or entire portions of such a zone, to limit the tenure of all new housing units to rental tenure.

Apart from that basic enabling language, Bill 23 includes some consequential amendments dealing with lawful non-conforming tenures. They may continue in similar manner to lawful non-conforming uses, but rental tenure applies to any replacement building including a strata-titled building. As well, there are restrictions on varying rental tenure limits via permits or board of variance orders.

A reference in the Bill to rental bylaws of strata corporations suggests not only that the enforceability of existing strata bylaws prohibiting or limiting rentals would not be affected by a rental tenure requirement in a local government bylaw, but that a strata corporation (or owner-developer of a multi-unit residential building) might be able to overcome any such requirement by registering a strata corporation bylaw that limits or prohibits rentals.

Bill 23 does not provide new zoning bylaw enforcement powers. Planners who are

thinking about recommending rental zoning should be spending some time on that aspect of regulation, given that identifying and proving unlawful residential tenures will likely be less straightforward than identifying and proving unlawful uses. A typical situation might involve a strata-titled housing unit whose purchaser decides to take a chance and occupy it themselves, or rents it to a relative for a nominal amount in return for an invitation to occupy it themselves. The usual caution applies: putting regulations in place without a well-considered enforcement strategy can bring discredit on the regulator, undermining the enforcement of other regulations as well.

### **HOUSING NEEDS REPORTS**

Regional growth strategies (RGS) and official community plans (OCP) are both statutorily required to address housing needs in some fashion. An RGS must “work towards” adequate, affordable and appropriate housing and adequate inventories of suitable land and resources for future settlement, and must include actions proposed to provide for the housing needs of the region’s projected population over at least 20 years. An OCP must include policy statements and map designations respecting the location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet at least 5 years’ anticipated housing needs, and must include policies respecting affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing.

The Province has now moved, via Bill 18 of 2018, to require local governments to document, in a standardized format, the housing needs that they are addressing in these plans. They must prepare housing needs reports. The first such reports are due in 3 years, and they must be updated at maximum 5-year intervals thereafter. Transitional provisions enable local governments that already have some sort of housing needs assessment in place or in preparation to get it accepted (by the Minister of Municipal Affairs) as their first housing needs report. There are also provisions that enable the Cabinet to exempt particular local governments or classes of local governments (perhaps villages?) from these new requirements.

Bill 18 adds (as Division 22 of Part 14 of the Local Government Act and Division (6) of Part XXVII of the Vancouver Charter) details on the type of information that must be collected in order to determine housing needs, and the manner in which housing

needs are to be quantified and described in the report. While in each case the Cabinet has authority to prescribe additional or different requirements, Divisions 22 and (6) require local governments to collect statistical information about current and projected population and household income; information about significant economic sectors; and information about the current and anticipated supply of housing units. The legislation requires housing needs reports to be based on the collected information, and to identify the number of housing units to meet current needs and needs anticipated over at least 5 years. Housing needs reports must be received by the municipal council or regional board at a meeting that is open to the public, and posted on a local government website.

The legislation also links housing needs reports to the overall planning function. In the case of RGS, the regional board must “consider” the most recent regional housing needs report when preparing a new RGS or amending an existing RGS in respect to housing matters. In the case of OCPs, the municipal council or regional board must similarly “consider” the most recent regional housing needs report when developing a new OCP or amending policy statements or map designations respecting residential development or other housing policies respecting affordable, rental or special needs housing.

The Legislature has stopped short of requiring local governments to actually accommodate the housing needs identified in their reports in their RGS and OCP. For the time being, at least, it seems that the transparency associated with publishing these reports is expected to provide sufficient motivation to get local governments to actually address housing demand in their basic land use planning documents, either by accommodating it or by identifying any constraints (such as a limited potable water supply or a community preference for maintaining a lower rate of growth) that precludes such a policy. ■

**BILL BUHOLZER FCIP, RPP** is a Registered Professional Planner and Lawyer. He is a partner with Young Anderson Barristers and Solicitors

## PIBC Board Notes

### JUNE 2018

On June 1st, 2018 the PIBC Board of Directors met following the 2018 Annual Conference in Victoria.

### PRESIDENT

Andrew Ramlö MCIP, RPP thanked everyone involved in making the 2018 Annual Conference happen, and noted that initial feedback from attendees was very positive.

### BOARD & GOVERNANCE

The Board reviewed the work to-date on the various goals and tasks from the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan and discussed opportunities to complete ongoing and remaining tasks.

The Board approved the appointment of the following university planning program representatives as members of the Institute's Member Engagement Committee & Academic Liaison Sub-Committee for the current term: Lawrence Frank MCIP, RPP (University of British Columbia); Thomas Gunton MCIP, RPP (Simon Fraser University); Mark Holland MCIP, RPP (Vancouver Island University); and Darwin Horning MCIP, RPP (University of Northern British Columbia).

The Board approved the appointment of Gina MacKay MCIP, RPP, from the Okanagan-Interior chapter to the Institute's ad hoc 60th Anniversary Committee for the current term.

It was also reported that the Executive Director had confirmed the appointment of the following members to the Institute's Awards & Recognition Committee for the current term: Katherine Fabris MCIP, RPP; Lee-Ann Garnett MCIP, RPP; Amanda Grochowich MCIP, RPP; Jessica Hayes (Candidate); Victor Ngo (Candidate); Lainy Nowak (Student); and Barclay Pitkethly MCIP, RPP.

### ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Executive Director, Dave Crossley, reported on ongoing and key activities at the PIBC Office.

Secretary-Treasurer, Carole Jolly MCIP, RPP, presented the Institute's internal, unaudited 2018 year-to-date financial statements for information.

### MEMBER PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Annual Conferences: The Board reviewed an update report from the BC Land Summit Society that included information on preparations for the 2019 conference – the joint, interdisciplinary BC Land Summit. It was noted Brent Elliott MCIP, RPP is the Institute's representative on the 2019 Land Summit Program Advisory Working Group.

60th Anniversary Celebrations: The Board approved a recommendation for allocating additional funding from the Institute's Strategic Initiatives reserve fund for various elements of the Institute's 60th anniversary activities, including expanding the program for the World Town Planning Day gala, issuing an extra commemorative edition of Planning West magazine, creating a digital online timeline of key milestones, and hiring a temporary, part-time project assistant to help work on the various related tasks.

### NATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Board reviewed and approved the feedback and recommendations from the Institute's Professional Standards & Certification Committee regarding the Five-Year Comprehensive Review of Membership Certification Standards and Academic Accreditation Standards for the Planning Profession in Canada as produced by the national Professional Standards Committee.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS & BUSINESS

Professional Standards & Certification: The Board approved the admission of a number of new members, and a number of membership transfers and changes. The Board also resolved, in accordance with the Institute's bylaws, to strike from membership all members with outstanding fees owing as of June 1, 2018.

Awards & Recognition: The Board unanimously approved the admission of Gary Paget to Honorary membership in the Institute as recommended. The Board also reviewed and discussed suggested nominees for Life Member recognition.

### LOCAL CHAPTERS

**Fraser Valley:** The Chapter's 2017 annual report was reviewed. The Board approved receipt of the report and the release of the Chapter's 2018 annual seed funding.

### OTHER BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE

The Board reviewed and discussed a sponsorship request for the Place 18 Canadian Planning Students Conference. The Board deferred the request for sponsorship for the conference until the next Board meeting.

### NEXT MEETING(S)

It was noted that the next Board meeting was to be confirmed, and would be a short meeting later in the summer via telephone teleconference, as required.

It was also noted that the next subsequent regular Board meeting would be held Friday, September 28, 2018 in Vancouver (in conjunction with a morning 2019 Budget Workshop).





## Membership Report

JUNE 2018

### NEW MEMBERS

Congratulations and welcome to all the new PIBC Members!

At its meeting of June 1, 2018, it was recommended and approved that the Board of Directors admit the following individuals to membership in the Institute in the appropriate categories as noted:

#### CERTIFIED

Wayne Beggs  
 Crystal (Crissy) Bennett (Reinstate)  
 Eric Blueschke  
 Morgan (Mo) Bot (Transfer from APPI)  
 Coralie Breen  
 Chi Chi Cai  
 Ivy Campbell (Transfer from APPI)  
 Sarah Crawford  
 Alex Dyer  
 Cara Fisher  
 Julian Gonzalez  
 Dilys Huang  
 Teresa Kazszonyi  
 Graham March  
 Hannah McDonald  
 John O'Reilly  
 Christopher Oliver  
 Jeffrey Pratte (Joint with MPPI)  
 Elizabeth Sarioglu

Bronwyn Sawyer  
 Meredith Seeton  
 Amanda Taylor  
 Templar Tsang-Trinaistich  
 (Transfer from OPPI)  
 Caroline von Schilling  
 Urszula Walus  
 Nigel Whitehead  
 Lauren Wright  
 Wing Yan (Winnie) Yip  
 Kevin Zhang

#### CANDIDATE

Julia Bahen (Transfer from OPPI)  
 Christa Brown  
 Daniel Burke  
 Nicole Capewell  
 Jenna Cook  
 Brad Dollevoet  
 Michael Fujii

Rushi Gadoya  
 Charndeeep (Charn) Gill  
 Samira Khayambashi  
 Darren Lucas  
 Hsuan-Ju (Rosa) Shih  
 Geoffrey Sugar

#### PRE-CANDIDATE

Emma Greendale  
 Andrea Spakowski

#### RETIRED

Patrick Deoux

#### STUDENT

Zoe Acton (Queen's – Transfer from OPPI)  
 Sasha (Brandon) Djordjevich (York)  
 Alexandra Kitson (Dalhousie)

## MEMBER CHANGES

It was further recommended and approved that Council approve and/or acknowledge the following membership transfers and changes in membership status for the following individuals as noted:

<b>Renée de St. Croix</b>	From Certified	To Member on Leave
<b>Jane Koh</b>	From Certified	To Member on Leave
<b>Heather Shedden</b>	From Certified	To Member on Leave
<b>Thea Wilson</b>	From Candidate	To Member on Leave
<b>Rick Brundrige</b>	From Member on Leave	To Certified
<b>Ashley Elliott (Servatius)</b>	From Member on Leave	To Certified
<b>Chloe Fox</b>	From Member on Leave	To Certified
<b>James (Jim) Rule</b>	From Member on Leave	To Certified
<b>Erin Ferguson</b>	From Member on Leave	To Candidate
<b>Lauren Wright</b>	From Member on Leave	To Candidate
<b>Julie Cooke</b>	Resigned	
<b>Natasha Horsman</b>	Resigned	
<b>Debbie Hunter</b>	Resigned	
<b>Pierre Iachetti</b>	Resigned	
<b>Barbara Jackson</b>	Resigned	
<b>Sam Mohamad-Khany</b>	Resigned	
<b>Austin Norrie</b>	Resigned	

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS & REMOVALS

At the Board of Directors meeting of June 1, 2018, it was reported and confirmed that the following individuals had not renewed their membership in the Institute for the current year (2018) and in accordance with the Institute's bylaws ceased to be members effective as of June 1, 2018:

**CERTIFIED**  
**Paul Faibish**  
**Jason Gordon**  
**Connie Halbert**  
**James Hurst**  
**Stephanie Johnson**

**CANDIDATE**  
**Erica Austin**  
**Leif Chapin**  
**Grant Liebscher**

**PRE-CANDIDATE**  
**Matthew Milovanovic**  
**Michelle Pollard**



## Skwachàys Lodge, Vancouver, BC, Canada

In this issue, we bring our world view focus right back to a local 18 room boutique hotel listed by *Time Magazine* as one of the “Greatest Places” in the world to stay in 2018. Owned and operated by the Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS), Skwachàys (pronounced skwatch-eyes) Lodge is Canada’s first Aboriginal Art Hotel. What’s most unique about this lodge is not just the guest rooms, each featuring one-of-a-kind art by six indigenous artists, but the innovative Artists in Residence social enterprise program that provides affordable housing to practicing First Nations artists.

Eligible Indigenous artists can work, volunteer and live on-site in one of 24 bachelor suites funded by the proceeds of the hotel and art gallery that are part of the facility. Aside from the subsidized housing, artists also have 24/7 access to a shared artist workshop and access to programs to further their personal and professional development. Partners of the program include local businesses, non-profit organizations and schools including Emily Carr University of Art & Design, Capilano University and BCIT.

Can this social enterprise become an integral part of future housing in BC? Watch a short YouTube video to find out more about how the Lodge came to be and hear the Indigenous stories behind the art from the First Nations artists at: <http://skwachays.com/about>.

# Learn Dialogue and Civic Engagement at SFU

Whether you're working on a contentious land-use project or communicating policy changes, SFU's Dialogue and Civic Engagement program can help you convene diverse groups and achieve positive change.

Register now for our one- to three-day courses in downtown Vancouver.

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-Rebecca Chaster, City of Coquitlam Community Planner”

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