PLANNING INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

PLANNING WEST

Spring 2026

FORWARD THINKING
SHAPING COMMUNITIES

NORTHERN HORIZONS: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE NORTH



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PIBC PLANNING INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

FORWARD THINKING SHAPING COMMUNITIES

The Planning Institute of British Columbia recognizes, acknowledges, and appreciates that our head office operates on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We acknowledge the principles of truth and reconciliation and through our ongoing journey and work as an organization and profession, we continue to actively assist and advance the decolonization of the planning profession in BC and Yukon.



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ON THE COVER
Yellowknife,Northwest Territories,Canada. View of magnificent Northern Lights with reflection on a lake

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President's Message



As some of you may know, I work as a regional planner in central British Columbia. While I typically describe my work as taking place in the central part of the province, many people across British Columbia would likely consider the region where I work to be part of "the north." This difference in perspective highlights the geographic scale of the province and the diversity of planning work that exists. What may be considered central to those of us who live and work here can feel remote or northern to those in larger urban centres such as the Lower Mainland or southern Vancouver Island. On the other hand, residents of smaller and more remote areas may view this part of the province as a service hub, travelling here to access a greater range of goods, services, and amenities. Additionally, people in the Yukon would, understandably from their perspective, see this part of British Columbia as part of the south.

Much of my work focuses on unincorporated areas that exist outside municipal boundaries but are closely connected to them. This is relevant when considering how communities across the north build capacity and work towards the often-discussed goal of sustainability. These unincorporated areas often support and complement municipal communities through shared infrastructure, employment opportunities, housing options, and access to services. Residents frequently move between unincorporated and incorporated areas for work, recreation, and day-to-day needs, which means that planning decisions made in one jurisdiction can have meaningful impacts on the other.

As a result, regional planning requires a thoughtful and coordinated approach that considers both the broader regional context and the needs of individual communities. My work involves contributing to both long-range and current planning initiatives. Long-range planning initiatives often involve extensive research, collaboration with municipal and provincial ministries, Indigenous governments, agencies, organizations and engagement with residents to ensure that policies reflect both local priorities and broader regional objectives. At the same time, current planning work involves reviewing development applications and proposals that shape the day-to-day of our communities.

The variety of planning files is one of the aspects that makes regional planning interesting. In many cases, planning in regional and northern contexts involves acknowledging the realities of a large geographic area, differing service levels and different local perspectives. Service levels in northern communities can vary from place to place, and there can be limited availability to things such as transportation, connectivity, health care, government services, and housing. Economic opportunities need to be balanced with the protection of the natural environment and the acknowledgement that economic prosperity is vital to the well-being of a community. Communities are proud of their identity and strive to protect their values and goals while change occurs around them.

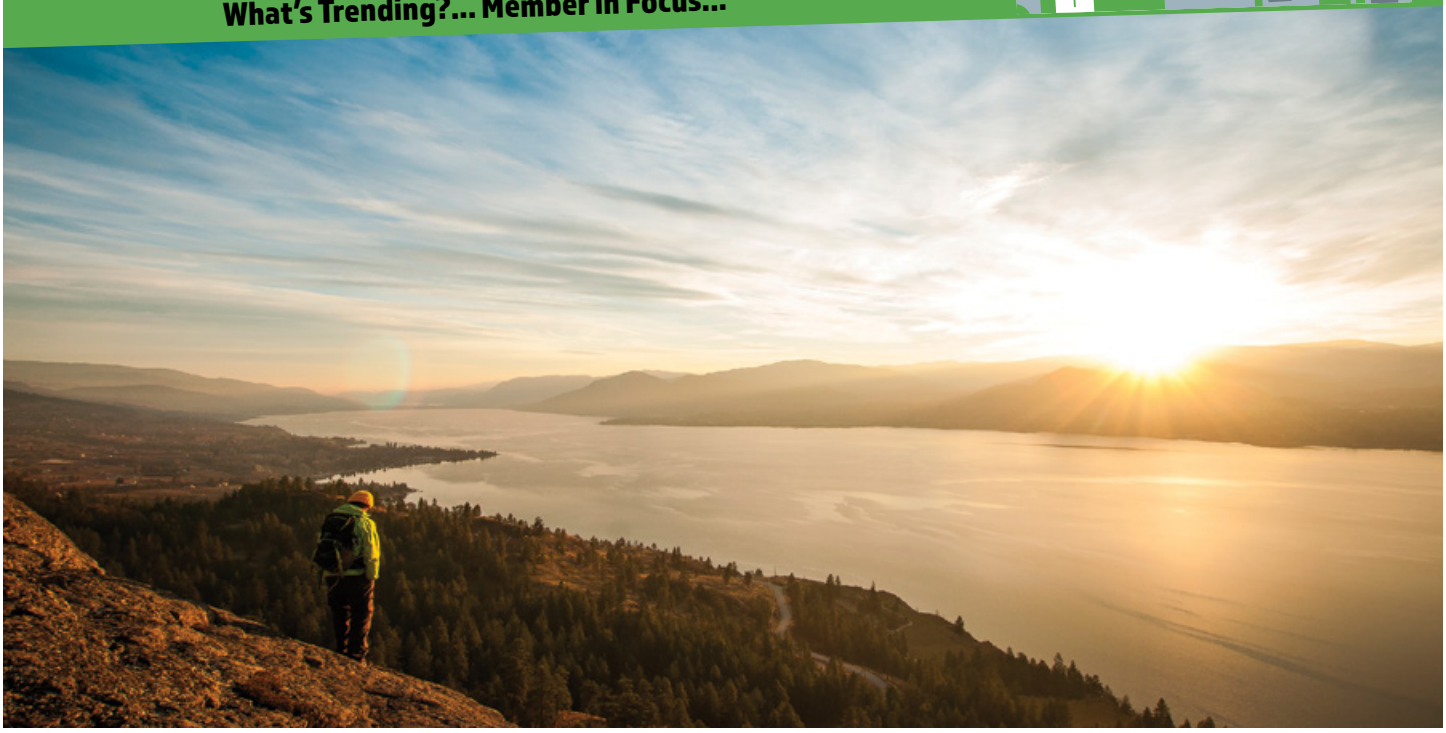
Working in this environment has provided me with a valuable perspective on the role of regional planning in supporting communities. I look forward to this issue of *Planning West* and reading about the different projects and initiatives that are taking place across the north that support communities and regions of all sizes.



Kenna Jonkman RPP, MCIP

OUTLINES

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



What's Trending?

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

With the PIBC 2026 Annual Conference just around the corner (from June 2nd to 5th in Penticton, BC), we are sharing a teaser on what our opening keynote speaker will bring to the #PIBC2026 stage. We also revisit a notable past BC Land Summit speaker and author from the North who is bringing her climate change and human rights advocacy and leadership to the next generation.

New Economy Canada

neweconomycanada.ca

More than ever, there is an urgent drive to build momentum for a "new economy" focused on securing long-term economic stability, prosperity and job creation with clean energy investment and manufacturing in Canada.

New Economy Canada is acting now to build non-partisan partnerships with business, labour, and Indigenous organizations to form the backbones and infrastructures needed for this new "clean" economy of tomorrow. The aim is to ensure Canada becomes a leader in the global energy transition and thrive on being high-tech, innovative, and resilient. Current New Economy Canada members employ and represent over 410,000 workers and generates annual revenues of over $200 billion CAD. Here's an opportunity to learn more - Merran Smith, President of New Economy Canada, will share her vision with attendees on Wednesday, June 3rd as #PIBC2026's opening keynote speaker.

Stay Updated with PIBC e-News!

Keep up-to-date regularly with current Institute & local planning news, events and job opportunities with PIBC e-News! The Institute's electronic newsletter is emailed to members every other Wednesday. Haven't seen your PIBC e-News? Check your spam/junk email folder and be sure to add enews@pibc.bc.ca to your contacts.

Quick Links:
Getting Things Built:
neweconomycanada.ca/getting-things-built

New Economy Canada News: neweconomycanada.ca/news

New Economy Canada on LinkedIn:
www.linkedin.com/company/neweconomycanada

Siila (Sheila) Watt-Cloutier

A Radical Act of Hope (in a podcast)

Back in 2019, Siila (Sheila) Watt-Cloutier's powerful keynote address at the 2019 BC Land Summit moved and inspired the packed room of planners and land-use professionals who came to hear her speak about how her lived experience as an Inuk woman led the way to changing how the world should view climate change as a human rights issue for all humankind, not just for those living in the North.

Now the Nobel Peace Prize Nominee and award-winning author has partnered with the Pacific Institute of Climate Solutions (PICS) at the University of Victoria to produce the limited-series podcast "A Radical Act of Hope".

In this four-episode podcast, Siila and her PICS co-hosts share their visions for climate change solutions, dive deep into insightful and experienced approaches to growing hope and leadership, and talk with the next generation of emerging leaders about the evolution of climate change and human rights advocacy. They share the importance of using and sharing a new worldview - Climate Conscious Leadership – to bring forward radical hope in the face of escalating climate challenges.

Important fact: this podcast collaboration supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Learn more about SDGs at the University of Victoria:
www.uvic.ca/about-uvic/un-sdg-uvic/index.php

Take a listen to the next generation of Climate Conscious Leaders:
climatesolutions.ca/insights/podcast-a-radical-act-of-hope

Planning West Call for Submissions

Summer 2026 Issue:
PIBC 2026 Annual Conference & Awards
Submission deadline: June 15, 2026

Fall 2026 Issue:
Shaping Growth: Land Use as an Economic Engine
Submission deadline: Sep 15, 2026

Articles should be 1000-1200 words in length in an unformatted MS Word document. Please note: not all articles may be accommodated based on editorial decisions and the number of submissions received.

SAVE THE DATES !

JOIN US FOR THESE PIBC CPL WEBINARS IN 2026!

CPL webinars will begin again this fall starting in September! Visit the PIBC Webinars webpage www.pibc.bc.ca/pibc-webinars for the current webinar dates, registrations and available webinar recordings.

June 2 - 5, 2026
PIBC 2026 Annual Conference
Bold Plans. Local Action.
Select conference plenary keynotes and sessions will be available online through **virtual conference registration**.
Visit **pibc.bc.ca/annual-conference** for the conference's online program.

Introduction to PIBC Intelligent Inventory. (free webinar recording)

Get introduced to the PIBC Intelligent Inventory – the first AI tool built for planners to instantly search, compare, and verify OCPs and zoning bylaws in BC.

Visit the Peer Learning Network (PLN) website **www.pibc.bc.ca/pln** for current PLN webinars, recordings and the latest peer learning network resources.



Member in Focus

Blake Laven RPP, MCIP
General Manager of Development Services, City of Penticton and PIBC 2026 Annual Conference Committee Member



This year's annual conference will bring attendees to the beautiful lakeside City of Penticton in the Okanagan Valley, where Blake Laven RPP, MCIP, works as General Manager of Development Services for the city. As one of this year's Annual Conference Committee members, he is excited for the opportunity to show off the vibrant town he calls home – where he is proud to be on the team guiding the development of the City and where he loves raising his young family. Learn more about how the place, the people and the potential of Penticton came to be Blake's "forever place".

What inspired you to become a planner? Was there a person or event that led you to pursue planning as a profession?

Actually, I came to planning later than many people do. In my third year of university, I was studying political science and history and struggling to see how those interests would translate into a meaningful career and then a friend changed my trajectory. At that time, Robyn Holme RPP, MCIP (current PIBC member working in the Comox Valley), was completing her Master's degree in Planning. She would often ask me to proofread her papers, and through those conversations, I was introduced to the planning ideas and theories she was studying.

As we talked more, I realized that planning brought together everything that fascinated me about history, politics, and the way cities shape human civilization. I loved the idea that urban form, how we design and organize our communities, has a direct influence on quality of life, prosperity, and overall well being. I started reading everything I could get my hands on, from Jane Jacobs to the New Urbanists like Andrés Duany and Peter Calthorpe, Donald Shoup, and Richard Florida's *Rise of the Creative Class*. Before long, I found myself applying to graduate programs in planning, and my aspiring career as a historian was, well… history.

In graduate school at Dalhousie University, I was fortunate to learn from Dr. Jill Grant, who became an early mentor. She taught me how to think critically, to understand competing community interests, and to approach planning with both rigor and empathy. In my professional career, I've benefited from the guidance of several role models: Dale Rintoul, Dean Strachan RPP, MCIP, and Robert Miles RPP, MCIP, during my time with the City of Vernon; Darryl Haddrel and Audrey Tanguay in development planning; and Anthony Haddad RPP, MCIP, as a career mentor.

You have been a part of Penticton's planning team for over 15 years. How did you first come to land in Penticton and what continues to inspire you to stay?

The Okanagan is a truly special place, and to me, Penticton is the best part of it. The name "Penticton" comes from a Syilx word meaning *"forever place,"* and anyone who spends time here understands why people have been drawn here over the centuries. I feel very fortunate to play a role in helping guide the growth of this special place in a positive way, and I don't take that responsibility lightly.

One of the biggest reasons I've stayed is the organization itself. The City has always supported continuous learning, internal growth, and advancement, and that culture of support has been instrumental in my career. But at the end of the day, it's Penticton, the place, the people, and the potential, that continues to inspire me and keep me here.

Currently, as Penticton's General Manager of Development Services, what do you see as a key opportunity or challenge for the future development of the City?

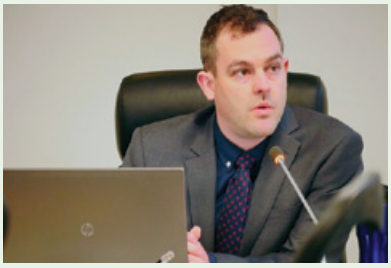
We're entering a fascinating stage in Penticton's evolution as a community. With our urban boundaries now largely defined, growth increasingly depends on infill and densification.

This shift towards higher density also provides a chance to create more vibrant, complete urban areas. Our downtown, located right on the Okanagan Lake waterfront, continues to transform into a more dynamic, year round hub for commerce, social connection, recreation and housing but we still have challenges with housing everyone that wants to live here – providing jobs, childcare and healthcare – to a growing population along with protecting our tree canopy and natural environments in a changing climate.

I recently took on the economic development portfolio at the City, and it has been enlightening to see how closely economic development and planning intersect. Issues like employment lands, business vitality and job creation are directly tied to how we plan and shape our built environments. Striking the right balance between fostering economic opportunity and maintaining an exceptional quality of life is essential. I believe we are achieving that balance in Penticton, and it's something I keep top of mind in the recommendations I bring forward to Council or decisions I make on strategic policy or long term directions.



Running along Skaha Lake
Top left: Blake and his daughter, Sarah



Presenting to Penticton City Council

Penticton is the host location for this year's PIBC annual conference. Thank you for your work as a volunteer member of the Conference Committee!

What are you most excited about for this conference and for attendees visiting Penticton?

Penticton is exceptionally well suited to host an event like this, and with PIBC coming here for the first time, we are eager to put our very best foot forward! We have a number of tours planned to showcase our communities and how our approaches to important planning challenges share common ground with planners from other communities.

I'm also proud that we're highlighting our collaboration with the Snpink'tn (Penticton) Indian Band. It's an important relationship for our city, and one I deeply value as we continue to live and work on the traditional territory of the Syilx people.

Beyond the sessions and tours, I'm genuinely excited to share our downtown with visiting attendees. It has such a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere – with fantastic coffee shops, breweries, art galleries, and local retailers – that really reflects the unique character of Penticton. A few City staff and I will also be leading optional morning walks and jogs, giving delegates a chance to enjoy some of our most beautiful places before the day begins.

Overall, I hope people leave the conference not only with new ideas and inspiration, but also with a real appreciation for what makes Penticton such a unique and vibrant community. I can't wait to show off my town!

What is something new or exciting you recently tried that brings you pride or joy?

Outside of work, I have two kids Miles (9) and Sarah (7) who keep me happily busy with their energy, antics and extracurriculars. Watching Miles bang out "Master of Puppets" on his electric guitar has inspired me to pick up a guitar for the first time since my teenage punk days. It has been fun (callouses aside) to get back into playing the guitar. I can't say it's a source of pride (since I have never been especially proficient) but there's definitely a lot of joy in it!

Planning Podcasts

Join the PIBC Communications Committee in sharing interesting planning-related podcasts!

Planning Xchange: How AI is Transforming City Planning with Scott Matheson (Episode 132)

Podcast summary by Kali Holahan RPP, MCIP, PIBC Communications Committee Chair

Run time: 54 minutes
Host: Jess Noonan and Peter Jewell
Guest: Scott Matheson, Head of Planning at MyLot
Podcast link
https://planningxchange.libsyn.com/planningxchange-132-how-ai-is-transforming-city-planning-with-scott-matheson

Podcast Summary
PlanningXchange is a podcast devoted to urban planning and the people who make it happen. In this episode, the hosts speak with Scott Matheson, Head of Planning at MyLot, an Australian AI technology company focused on simplifying the planning process for councils and communities.

Exploring his journey from traditional regulatory planning into the dynamic world of AI, Scott shares examples of how MyLot is transforming development assessments with automated tools and data-driven insights and how AI can enhance transparency, reduce processing times, and better engage citizens. Together, they also discuss the broader implications of AI on the planning profession, potential ethical concerns, impacts on employment and how planners can position themselves to work *with* emerging technologies rather than against them. Scott also shares a light-hearted story about using AI to open up relationship discussions.

Why Planners Should Listen
This podcast offers a timely contribution to the ongoing conversation around artificial intelligence (AI) in the planning profession, specifically in Victoria, Australia. Scott Matheson, Head of Planning at MyLot, speaks candidly about his work applying AI tools to real-world planning challenges. Rather than replace planners, Matheson is clear that AI can support planners at a time when the system is under real strain.

Got a planning related podcast you want to share? Contact us with your podcast summary at editor@pibc.bc.ca



One of the most resonant themes in the episode is around workforce shortages within the planning profession. With planning programs closing at universities and a reported 20% of rural communities unable to attract qualified planners, the profession is facing a genuine capacity crisis. This decline is not just a staffing issue; it represents a loss of local knowledge and contextual understanding that is fundamental to good planning decisions. Matheson identifies the potential for AI to "backfill" this gap by strengthening regulatory decision-making processes where human capacity is limited, without suggesting that technology can replace local insight or professional judgement.

The discussion repeatedly reinforces that planning is, at its core, an inherently human task. However, Matheson highlights how AI may be able to support planners in spending more time on the aspects of our work that we enjoy and are passionate about compared to administrative and procedural tasks. In particular, for public sector planners where process often dominates day-to-day work, this reframing may feel hopeful.

The episode also explores the role AI could play in increasing accessibility to planning systems. By translating complex planning frameworks into plain language, AI has the potential to make planning more approachable and navigable for both communities and applicants. It also highlights that if applicants are increasingly submitting AI-prepared applications, local governments may need to more strongly consider codification and getting planning documents into machine-readable formats.

Although AI may come with efficiencies, it also introduces new challenges, particularly for ensuring that speed and automation do not come at the expense of understanding. While AI may make planners more powerful, it does not inherently produce coherent or holistic insight, which remains central to sound planning decisions. This is especially relevant for early-career planners, who are often the most enthusiastic adopters of generative AI but may not yet have the broader conceptual and professional experience required to recognize what these tools might overlook.

Finally, the discussion closes with a reference to the 'Jevons Paradox', reminding listeners that efficiency doesn't automatically result in less work or fewer impacts.

This podcast makes a strong case that AI can be a powerful tool for planning by improving access, alleviating capacity constraints, and refocusing our professional efforts on what matters most so long as humans remain firmly in the loop. It's a must-listen for anyone thinking seriously about the future of AI in the planning profession.

Victoria Real Estate Podcast: What Happens if We Ignore Rural Communities? with Jada Basi

Podcast summary by Steffi Sunny, PIBC Communications Committee Member

Run time: 25 minutes
Host: Adrian Maclaren
Guests: Jada Basi RPP, MCIP, co-owner and Principal of CitySpaces Consulting
Podcast link
https://www.buzzsprout.com/2249878/episodes/18499234

Podcast summary
Victoria Real Estate Podcast focuses on the latest market trends, buying and selling tips, and investment opportunities in Greater Victoria, BC. This special episode was recorded live from *BC 2030: The Future of BC Real Estate conference in Vancouver*, hosted by the Real Estate Institute of British Columbia and offers a rare look beyond the major cities and into the communities that quietly support the province.

Adrian is joined by Jada Basi RPP, MCIP, co-owner and Principal of CitySpaces Consulting, a community planning and infrastructure expert with two decades of experience working in rural, regional, and resource-based communities across Western Canada.

Their conversation explores many topics including:
- The impact of the Instant Towns Act of 1965 on development
- What company towns were and how they shaped British Columbia
- Why these towns still matter to BC's economy today
- How Indigenous-led utilities and regional partnerships are changing the future
- Why the future of BC's economy may depend more on what we repair than what we build next

Jada also shares practical insights for younger planners and entrepreneurs, plus a few personal picks in a fun rapid-fire closing segment.

Why Planners Should Listen
Jada Basi starts by sharing a personal summary of her background and describes the small forestry-based town where she grew up. She explains the origins of Instant Towns Act, describing how resource-based communities became municipalities. The conversation also explores what that means today for these small towns with aging infrastructure, limited tax bases, and single industry dependence. She further elaborates on real examples of mill closures, underfunded water and sewer systems, and industries operating outside municipal boundaries.

The discussion shifts to Canadian examples where small towns have amalgamated and annexed nearby industrial lands to expand their tax base and strengthen local revenues. Jada highlighted an emerging model from Northwest BC involving a consortium of 21 local governments known as the Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA). These communities have joined together to advocate for a share of the revenues generated from major projects such as pipeline and port expansions, wind farms, etc., an approach that truly demonstrated leadership.

Adrian and Jada also discuss how policy and decision makers need to explore new ways of reinvesting in local industries for these communities to thrive. Strengthening small towns isn't only about improving residents' quality of life, but also about ensuring that these communities are places where people genuinely want to live, with access to strong amenities, reliable healthcare, dependable fire protection services, etc. Throughout the podcast, Jada mentions the noticeable disconnect between urban and rural regions, and how we forget to fully appreciate the interdependence of urban and rural communities. Their conversation wraps up with a light personal Q&A where Jada shares a few fun recommendations and preferences.

This engaging 25-minute episode is one I would recommend to all my planning colleagues as well as planning students and anyone interested in extending their knowledge on planning in rural communities. Adrian and Jada keep listeners hooked - their conversation breaks down the realities of rural-urban interdependence, how major projects and community readiness must align, and what policy tools are needed to make small remote towns truly livable and sustainable.

*

Did you know these podcast links are available on the Planning Podcasts page on the PIBC website?

Visit www.pibc.bc.ca/planning-podcasts to click and listen!

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Planning at the Edge: How Prince Rupert Reimagined Its Role in Housing Delivery

Myfannwy Pope RPP, MCIP

Planners across British Columbia and the Yukon know that housing delivery is challenging everywhere, but in northern, rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, the barriers are often greater and more persistent. Prince Rupert's recent experience illustrates how a small municipality can shift from being a regulator of development to an active enabler of housing. The city's story is one of practical policy reform, relationship building, and a willingness to be flexible in the face of long standing assumptions about the role of local government.

The Northern Reality

Across northern BC, familiar provincial challenges appear in more acute form: aging infrastructure, limited staff capacity, and a rising unhoused population driven by increasing costs of living. Northern communities also face additional constraints. Rental availability is particularly limited. Housing stock is older and often inadequate. Transit systems are less developed. Construction industries are smaller and more fragile. The "northern factor" adds cost to every stage of development, from securing materials to attracting labour. Finally, short construction windows compress timelines even further.

Prince Rupert's Example

Because of all these factors and more, it is expensive to build in Prince Rupert. Located at the end of Highway 16, the city's original townsite was designed in Southern California in 1907 and applied to Kaien Island with little regard for topography, soil, or climate. As a result, Prince Rupert retains a pre 1910 City Beautiful layout: walkable, dense, and built on small 25 by 100 foot parcels with plenty of opportunity for infill. However, what seems like a modern planner's dream on paper, is a little more complicated in reality.

The land base is constrained by muskeg and steep slopes. A long lasting economic downturn and aging infrastructure have made financing new projects difficult. After 25 years of economic downturn, no one could build, housing was being squeezed, infrastructure was failing, and traditional growth management tools, such as Development Cost Charges, posed additional deterrents to investment.

Recognizing these realities, the City of Prince Rupert shifted its planning approach in 2022 from exclusive "Regulator" to "Enabler" to initiate growth. At the beginning of this strategy, the city was losing more housing than was being built, with 2021 seeing a net loss of 6 housing units. By the end of 2025, 185 new units were under construction, with an additional 209 in various stages of development permitting.

Using the Tools Available:

The first step was introducing a suite of incentives designed to reduce costs and encourage reinvestment. These included:

- Planning and Development fee waivers for new housing
- Downtown tax revitalization exemptions.
- Removal of all off street parking requirements for mixed use or commercial developments in the downtown.

The City also leveraged its land base. In 2022, Council pre approved the sale of several City owned properties and changed its approach to offers on additional parcels based on community benefit, alignment with the OCP and Housing Strategy, and commitment to near term development. This approach has already resulted in two housing projects.

Prince Rupert Legacy Inc., the City's venture corporation, offers additional flexibility to be more directly involved in development. While not currently its focus, this model allows land to be sold without the reserve restriction in Section 188 of the Community



Prince Rupert Harbour
All photo credits: Myfannwy Pope



Residences in Prince Rupert

Charter, which could open the opportunity for several development and partnership approaches in the future.

Permissive, Predictable, and Practical Regulation

Prince Rupert's regulatory overhaul focused on reducing friction for both developers and municipal staff. The emphasis was on simplicity, efficiency, certainty, and the practical realities of the development environment.

A major push came in 2023 with the introduction of Bill 44 for Small Scale Multi Unit Housing (SSMUH). The City embraced SSMUH with a guiding principle: let geography, not regulation, determine density. Key changes included:

- Allowing up to four units per site in any configuration
- Removing the Development Permit requirement for projects up to four units
- Relaxing height and setback requirements to reflect existing non conformance and small lot sizes
- Reducing parking requirements to accommodate more density while retaining minimums due to limited transit. The City introduced a graded parking requirement: single family homes require 1 stall per unit, duplexes 0.75, houseplexes 0.5, and accessory dwelling units only 0.25 new stalls.

These changes significantly reduced the number of variance permits and shortened processing times. They also placed more responsibility on developers to design feasible projects rather than relying on prescriptive regulation that often complicated building on the small lots.

The City also delegated Development Permits and minor Development Variance Permits. Combined with regulatory changes, the average rate of variance approvals has since halved. Delegation has provided more certainty to developers and shorter timelines, as staff approvals follow clear, transparent guidelines.

The Zoning Bylaw was designed to be simple, avoiding unnecessary distinctions between housing types and not imposing minimum unit sizes. It focuses on land use rather than construction methods, consistent with the interpretation that municipalities regulate what is built, not how it is built. This approach has already paid off: the city's newest multi family project achieved occupancy using modular units and off site construction

Relationships as a Housing Strategy

In small communities, relationships are often the most powerful tool available. Prince Rupert's experience demonstrates how collaboration can unlock projects that would otherwise stall. *See Figure 1.*

First Nations partnerships are essential, as housing is often a shared priority for First Nation members and families. The City has worked with various Ts'msyen communities and other First Nations to support housing through land contributions, supportive policy environments for funding applications, and coordinated timelines.

Close staff to staff relationships with BC Housing have also been key. Letters of support, early coordination, and clear communication have helped secure funding for 170 affordable units to date.

Finally, relationships with local and non local developers determine whether builders are willing to take on projects in a high cost, high risk northern environment. Prince Rupert is formalizing a development concierge model that provides:

- Regular and consistent communication.
- Project tracking.
- Clear guidance across departments.

This approach is staff intensive upfront but reduces rework, uncertainty, and delays. It has so far improved relationships with developers and strengthened the City's reputation.

What This Looks Like in Practice

North Star Development – Aurora Housing – 40 Rental Units. *See Figure 3.*

Initially planned as a land sale, the City allowed the developer to pivot to a ground lease when BC Builds financing became available. Modular construction enabled a 2.5 year timeline (2023–2026) from initial conversations to occupancy, including a sale Agreement, Rezoning, Development Permit, Lease Option, Building Permit, and Utilities Work. The Developer benefited from flexible regulation, fee waivers, land sale, and the development concierge model to achieve efficient approvals and build.



Figure 1
38-Unit BC Housing Project led by Lax Kw'alaams WAAP Housing Society. Groundbreaking took place in November 2025.

Figure 2 (below)
70-unit BC Housing Project led by Lax Kw'alaams WAAP Housing Society, Nearing completion in March 2026.



WAAP Housing Society's BC Housing Projects – 70-Units and 38-Units

Lax Kw'alaams WAAP Housing Society was successful in two consecutive rounds through BC Housing's Indigenous Housing Fund. The 70-unit building benefitted from the City's land donation, concierge model through several iterations of design, and permit fee waivers. The 38-unit building was supported through letters of support, the design concierge model that enabled rapid approvals, fee waivers, and parking exemptions in the downtown core. *See Figure 2.*

The Work Ahead

Despite progress, challenges remain: infrastructure gaps, limited tools to require servicing upgrades without significant population growth, capacity constraints in adopting new provincial tools, continued housing loss due to old stock, and difficulty securing financing for market housing. *See Figure 4.*

While this approach may not suit every community, Prince Rupert's experience shows that even in the face of significant constraints, northern municipalities can meaningfully influence housing outcomes

Myfannwy Pope is the Director of Planning and Development Services for the City of Prince Rupert, with a Master's in Resource Management (Planning) from Simon Fraser University. She has worked in housing policy across local government, First Nation, federal, and academic contexts.



Figure 3
New 40-unit building completed by Aurora Housing/ North Star Development. It was completed using modular housing and achieved occupancy in March 2026.



2021-2026 Housing Needs Assessment Housing need	Housing Lost (2021-2025)	Housing Units awarded Building Permits (2021-2025)	Housing Units as per active Development Permit	Housing needed to stay on track
532	137	185	209	484

Figure 4 (table above)
Housing Need, housing builds, and housing lost from 2021-2026.
Taken from publicly available report prepared by Prince Rupert Planning Department with permission.

Thoughtful Population Projections Strengthen First Nations Planning

Spencer Lamirand MCRP, PIBC Candidate Member

This article argues that the standard approach to projecting population growth of First Nations used by consultants today is not only flawed but detrimental to the planning process. Ultimately, encouraging greater discretion in this practice and advocating for First Nations to steward their own demographic data.

As Planners, we fundamentally prepare for an uncertain future using current and historical information about communities. Having access to accurate and reliable data is critical for ensuring sufficient resources are distributed to support tomorrow's plans. Population demographics are key in this process, enabling Planners to project likely future scenarios. However, for those of us who work closely with First Nations, this crucial inference is marred by data gaps and a limited view of what constitutes being part of a First Nation.

How Do You Measure Belonging?

Holding status under Section 6 of the Indian Act is the most regulated and formally measured way of understanding First Nations demographics today. While the shortcomings of this approach could fill an article of their own, suffice it to say that the rigid colonial criteria within Section 6 leads to an underestimation of First Nations populations. Furthermore, for the at least 350 Section 11 First Nations whose Membership lists are tied directly to the Indian Register (Statistics Canada, 2021), this underestimation poses an existential threat. The second-generation cut-off written into Section 6 creates a clear avenue for the loss of status between generations unless both parents hold Indian Status. I am not the first author to suggest that this system was intentionally designed to reduce the size of the status First Nations population in Canada over time (Day, 2018). Despite the fact that Indigenous populations have reliably grown faster than non-Indigenous populations over multiple decades, many Section 11 First Nations see the writing on the wall that their Membership could reach zero before you, reader, pass away.

At the end of 2025, the Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Peoples voted to amend Bill S-2 so a single parent with Indigenous status under the Indian Act is sufficient to pass status to a child. At the time of writing, the bill is currently on second reading in the house with some uncertainty as to whether or not it will be enacted (Pugliese, 2025). Either way, this is an important plot point in the long novel of how Indigenous identities in Canada have been policed and, importantly for us today, measured.

Another way of understanding First Nations' population is through Membership. For the approximately 230 First Nations that have written Membership codes in accordance with Section 10 of the Indian Act (a.k.a. Section 10 First Nations), Membership does not necessarily correlate with only those who have Indian Status. While Membership codes are unique, they cannot make ineligible those who could otherwise be Members under the Indian Act (1985, s.10). Therefore, changes in Membership rules by Section 10 First Nations can only increase the scope of who is eligible to be a Member. Well maintained Membership lists for Section 10 First Nations are a good source of population data that more closely reflects the true number of community members in a First Nation than the Indian Register.

Why Population Matters

First Nations communities are diverse. I have been fortunate enough to be welcomed into numerous communities through my planning work, and whether it's non-status children, non-Indigenous spouses, or Members who choose not to join the Indian Register, there are many community members who are not captured in most demographic profiles. The effect? Since federal funding is crucial to the operating budgets of many First Nations today, and a wide array of funds are distributed on the basis of Member population (FRE, 2018, Table 1), communities can be left without adequate resources to provide for the actual people they serve.

Take for example, a vaccine funding program based on total Membership. A parent visits their First Nation's health centre to vaccinate their two children, only one of whom holds status under the Indian Act. For Section 11 First Nations, the second child hasn't been accounted for in the funding arrangement yet anecdotally I can tell you they will get vaccinated anyways. For Section 10 First Nations with Membership codes that have eliminated the second-generation cut-off, no such trade off is necessary. However, the next child that visits may be technically registered to a neighbouring First Nation despite growing up in the community. That child is now in a similar situation where they need, and will likely receive, medication but without contributing to the funding formula. Extrapolated over dozens of health programs, social services, and government initiatives, you can begin to see why both status and Membership are inadequate measures of a real community. *See Figure 1.*

During population projection, these discrepancies are magnified mathematically and can result in both predictions that are too high and too low. The most common and basic method – a linear projection based on compound annual growth rates – does not account for loss of status and is only as good as the data used to inform it. Because of this, Section 11 First Nations often receive reports and plans based on projections that ignore status loss, therefore overestimating future Member population, whereas Section 10 First Nations without accurate Membership data receive documents based on the Indian Register that underestimate the size of their Membership. Either way, this is an issue for planning – making land use decisions for a future population that won't live on reserve, is just an inefficient as mistakenly building a new school half the size as it will need to be.

Proposed Changes

Considering the potential damage that plans based on linear projections using publicly available population data can cause, I propose that it would be more responsible to not perform them in this way at all. In situations where there is sufficient time, money, expertise, data, and understanding of the local

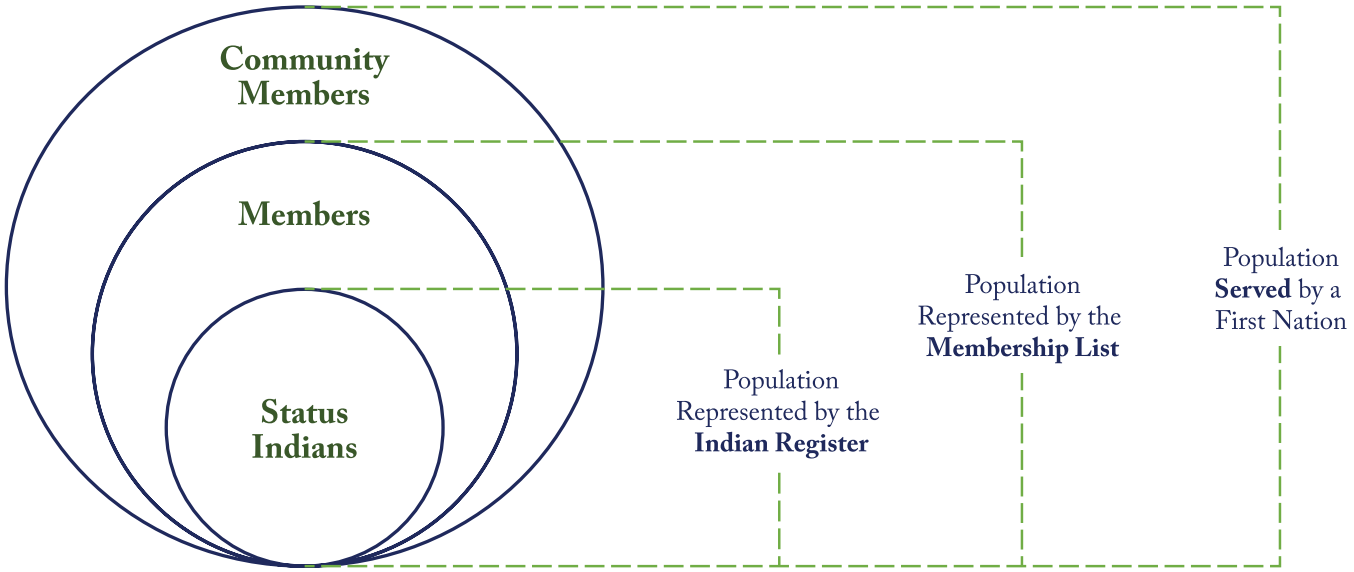


Figure 1:
Three Different Understandings of Section 10 First Nations Population

community, more sophisticated population projections are a valuable tool for all types of planning. Too often, however, they are performed as a perfunctory part of report writing by people who do not necessarily have the tools and information to do them accurately. When this occurs and then informs decision-making, it can be a detriment to the First Nation as a whole.

Finally, I would like to take a moment to speak directly to any staff, leaders, or administrators for First Nations who may be reading. There is power in having independent records of your population. Stewarding your own data allows you to determine who is part of your community whether you have an independent membership code or not. It recognizes the child who will always be welcome at the health centre, it gives you the ability to control who accesses the most accurate records for your First Nation, and it supports the ongoing national conversation we find ourselves in about who is Indigenous and why we're counting.

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Beyond the Floodway: Planning for Safer Communities

Amanda Haeusler RPP, MCIP

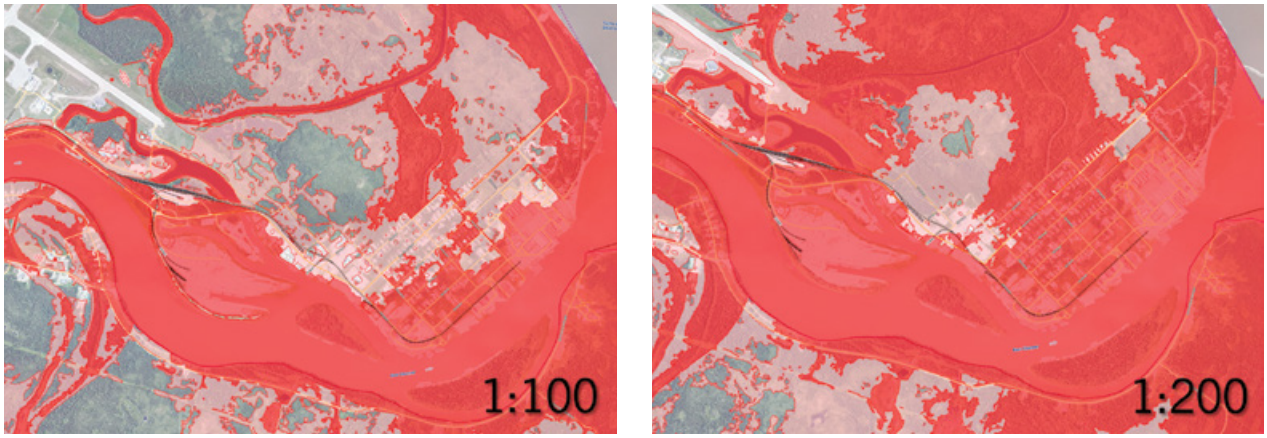
Communities across Canada are facing rising sea levels and more frequent, more severe flood events. Although flooding is natural, the impacts we experience are shaped by how and where we have chosen to build.

We can't undo the fact that many communities were built in floodplains, but we can help communities navigate changing expectations to understand the risks and make clearer, safer choices going forward.

As planners, we are tasked to translate local values into community planning; balancing growth and affordability demands with emergency management, asset management, and economic development. Often our jobs feel complex, especially when we're also trying to connect technical information with the lived realities of the people we serve. When faced with planning for flood resiliency, what communities value, what they can withstand, and what they can compromise on all varies dramatically.



Forever changed – 10 years after the flood.
Post Media. Calgary Herald. 14 June 2023.



Kátł'odeh (Hay River) Flood Hazard Mapping Study (2025)

Although we do our best, it's normal to feel overwhelmed when working in this space. Flood planning in Canada is complex—there's no single "right way," standards vary widely, and many best practices are difficult to apply in established communities. Still, there are practical considerations that can help us navigate these challenges with greater confidence and clarity.

Drawing on my experience working in western and northern Canada, this article focuses on the practical side of flood planning: how planners can take meaningful, grounded steps to support the development of safer and more resilient communities.

Why flood planning matters

When flooding affects people, infrastructure, or essential services, the impacts extend well beyond physical damage. Recovery can take years, placing emotional and economic strain on residents, local governments, and small businesses. Flood planning matters because it's hard but necessary. It helps protect lives, supports community well-being, and strengthen long-term resilience. It is also a complex and evolving topic with a severity that demands we adhere closely to our professional responsibilities.

As outlined through our Code of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct: we must practice within our competencies and work with integrity; respect the diversity, needs, values and aspirations of the public; provide full clear and accurate information; and acknowledge the inter-related nature of planning decisions and the consequences for natural and human environments.

Adapting to changing information

I first experienced the challenge communities face adapting to new information after the 2013 floods in Alberta which killed 5 people, forced evacuation of 100,000 residents, and caused approximately $6 billion in damages . To help communities move from immediate response to long-term mitigation planning, the provincial government created a Flood Recovery Task Force. Working on some projects resulting from that entity, what I witnessed was that people were exhausted. Recognizing that their bylaws required protections for a 1:100 design flood, not the most recent 1:200 flood level, they were unsure of what their best next steps were and felt overwhelmed as they were faced decisions that would reshape their communities for decades.

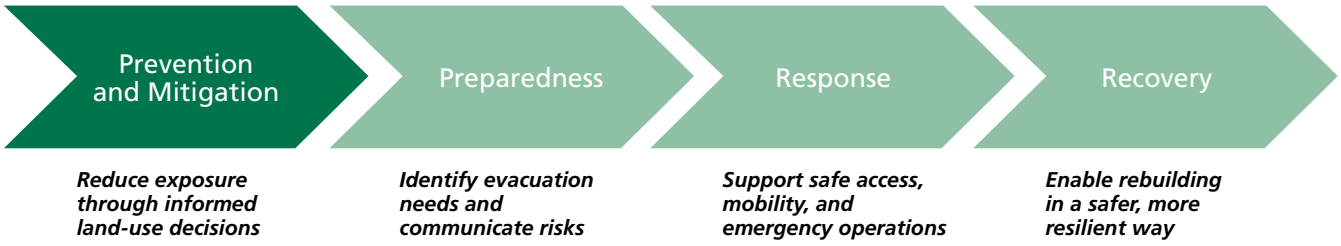
Since then, I've learned this experience is not unique. Working across the Prairies, the North, and coastal regions, I've seen how common it is for communities to struggle with what to do following significant flood events, how to interpret and apply new mapping, or how to update their bylaws to align with changes in provincial or territorial guidelines.

If you do not work across multiple jurisdictions, you may not recognize how dramatically flood planning practice varies across Canada, or how often information changes, potentially leading you to assume that "the rules" are the same everywhere. If you're in this situation, the real shock may be that there are no consistent rules.

What we can do

1. Connect flood planning to emergency management

Floodplain management is not just a land use exercise; it is an integral part of emergency management. To demonstrate the purpose of this work, align flood planning decisions with the emergency management cycle:



2. Know your context

Understand your rules and tools

Because flood planning looks different across Canada, it's important to understand the legislation, guidance, and other tools that shape decisions in each place you work. Most jurisdictions do not actually have "rules"; they have guidance which local governments *must* or *should* consider. Carefully understanding what legislation, flood level standards, flooding modelling guidelines, or other mechanisms your community operates under is important.

Knowing the local rules or guidelines will help you choose the right planning approach (e.g., how to limit development, what flood level to plan for, what terminology to use), adjust as conditions change, and clearly communicate the limitations you're working within to your community or elected officials.

Use the correct terminology

Clear, shared language helps us understand what's at stake and why certain decisions matter.

1:200

FLOOD EVENT

One of the most misunderstood concepts is also one of the most important: AEP — Annual Exceedance Probability. Often said as "a 1 in 200-year flood", is really a "1:200" AEP event – a flow rate that does mean it will happen once every 200 years. It means there's a 0.5% chance of that flow rate occurring in any given year.

Using the correct terminology for this and other terms is important to help communities understand flooding and its risks.

3. Understand your maps

Choose the correct map for the job

Flood maps come in many forms (e.g., inundation, risk, awareness), but only flood hazard maps, those which model selected flow rates, form the basis for bylaws or planning policy.

Before relying on a map for your policy development, always confirm:

- What flood event is modelled in the map
- What standards and definitions were used to create the model/ map
- What assumptions or limitations apply to its interpretation

While maps are critical to our work, they are usually intended to guide our decision-making. Until they are embedded into legislation or bylaws, they don't automatically impose policy.

Define the hazard areas

Flood hazard maps illustrate areas subject to flood risks. In some jurisdictions there are multiple hazard areas shown, in other jurisdictions there may be only one.

Where multiple hazard areas are used, they will be defined in the mapping or modelling report. One type of commonly used hazards areas for a two-zone approach is floodway and flood fringe: each identified by its water level, velocity, or ice presence. The other type commonly used for multi-zone approaches are having each area represent a different AEP (1:100, 1:200).

Understanding the hazard areas shown in your map is key to interpreting and considering them because what is shown will influence the level of risk associated with each area.



4. Adapt best practices to your unique context

Best-practice guidance gives us a strong foundation to work with, but the real challenge comes from adapting it to the unique people, places, and values of each community. Prohibiting all development in high hazard areas, for some communities, is simply not possible. Consider the Emergency Management Framework to guide your thinking, and use the tools at your disposal to create policy that reflect those priorities:

- **Protect lives** Evacuation routes for persons and animals, safety of responders, emotional and financial impacts on residents, temporary and long-term housing availability.
- **Property** Loss and damage to buildings and structures; structures, vehicles, or other materials being washed away; land lost through erosion
- **Environment** Safeguarding drinking water sources, preventing contamination of the water and lands
- **Economy** Effects on local or regional employers, impacts on critical services, access to key transportation routes

Identify critical infrastructure

Access to essential services play a central role in shaping local priorities. While critical infrastructure typically includes public utilities, key transportation routes, airports, health facilities, schools, major employers, and local governance structures, it can also include other things.

In many rural or northern communities, losing even one essential service—like the only grocery store—has significant consequences. Similarly, losing the only seniors care facility can also have long-lasting impacts. These are different risks than those faced by communities with multiple service options; understanding your community's unique dynamics is important to ensuring they are reflected in your planning.

5. Use your full toolkit to create a multi-barriered approach

Adapt Zoning Bylaws and Official Community Plans

Tailor land-use regulations to reflect anticipated risks.

- Limit high-risk uses in higher hazard areas (e.g., critical infrastructure, chemical and outdoor storage facilities, uses that require evacuation assistance)
- Require floodproofing that reflects the anticipated risk (e.g., dry floodproofing to protect lives)
- Restrict overnight accommodation or large assembly uses where evacuation is difficult
- Require land dedication or easements for flood-affected areas

Enhance community-wide protection

Where feasible and supported by modelling:

- Raise evacuation and key transportation routes to the Flood Construction Level
- Expand culverts and widen channels to accommodate increased flows associated with climate changes
- Build berms, dikes, or other protective infrastructure to provide broader community protections

Increase awareness and improve communication

Help residents see the connection between flooding hazards and planning decisions.

- Visualize high-water marks or inundation extents on public infrastructure (e.g., bridges, street signs)
- Explain flood risks plainly, consistently, and often
- Help residents understand how and why certain decisions are made
- Connect flood planning policies to community values and lived experience

Key takeaways

Flood planning is evolving. New data, changing standards, and shifting community priorities mean planners are often working with uncertainty while balancing safety, growth, and affordability.

There is no single approach that works everywhere. What is appropriate for one community, or at one point in time, may not be suitable in another. Effective flood planning requires an understanding of local context, clear communication about risk tolerance, and careful consideration of what communities value most.

Planners play a critical role in helping communities navigate this complexity. By grounding decisions in current data, using clear and consistent language, and applying an emergency management lens, we can support more informed conversations and help communities make choices that reflect local values and realities, creating safer, more resilient communities.

Amanda Haeusler is a Senior Planner and Engagement Specialist at Stantec with 16 years of experience working with small and mid-sized communities across Western and Northern Canada. Based in Kelowna, BC, her work focuses on land use and policy planning, as well as engaging impacted and interested parties on complex topics such as flood risk and emergency management, translating technical guidance into practical, locally informed outcomes.

UrbanPlan at UNBC: Teaching the Dynamics of Community Planning

Rylan Graham RPP, MCIP and
Barnaby Mullen, PIBC Student Member

Since 2021, planning students at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) have participated in a unique and innovative program called UrbanPlan. This program, delivered in partnership with the Urban Land Institute (ULI), is intended to "harnesses the power of experiential learning to drive students to more deeply engage in the complex nature of land-use decisions and inspire them to take an active role as engaged citizens to create better communities" (Urban Land Institute, n.d.). To achieve this important goal, students are presented with a fictional development scenario set in the imagined community of Yorktown. In this context, Yorktown's City Council has articulated a vision to revitalize Elmwood—a neighbourhood that has experienced years of decline and disinvestment.

Working in groups, students form development firms in which each team member assumes one of five roles: site planner, financial analyst, marketing director, neighbourhood liaison, and environment and equity director. Each firm responds to the City's request for proposals (RFP) by developing a vision and redevelopment proposal for Elmwood. While team members advocate from the perspective of their assigned role, collaboration is essential, as groups work through complex economic, social, political, and design challenges. Teams develop a vision for their proposal and bring this to fruition in developing a site plan and putting together a viable financial proforma.

While the case unfolds in a fictional setting, it offers students a realistic look into planning practice. Students learn about the roles and influence of different actors, the economic realities of

City Council's Goals for the Elmwood Redevelopment

1. Create housing that is attainable to a mix of income groups (very low-income, low-income, and moderate income) in addition to market rate housing;
2. Create employment opportunities for neighbourhood and city residents and increase the number of jobs offering a living wage;
3. Attract retail businesses that serve the needs—both products and price points—of neighbourhood residents;
4. Develop the city's first EcoDistrict by promoting equity, resilience, and climate protection;
5. Contribute to the city's plan for decarbonization by investing not only in green buildings, but also in net zero buildings;
6. Generate tax revenues for the city;
7. Create or preserve public and private amenities that enhance retired/longtime residents' ability to age in place;
8. Address existing residents' concerns about gentrification;
9. Create public spaces for active and passive recreation;
10. Attract investment in neighbourhoods experiencing physical andeconomic decline; and
11. Preserve legally designated heritage properties.

Financial goals that must be achieved…

I. $9.5M return to the City of Elmwood over a period of 10 years

II. 13.5% return to the developer to ensure that investors (and their capital) are attracted to the development

Teams respond to the RFP which outlines City Council's goals for Elmwood



Students come together to develop a plan for Elmwood

Elmwood District Plan

Key Features:

- Focal point along the historic Elm street. This street will foster a space for the community to connect with services and each other.
- Historic buildings will be renovated inside and out to restore them to a safe and enjoyable environment
- Housing for each demographic
- Improved walkability
- Parks create space for people to enjoy the beauty around them
- The skate park and courts encourage young families to move into the neighbourhood

Site Plan and its key features developed by one of UNBC's teams

development, and the challenges of reconciling competing community priorities.

For example, The Old Urbanists, a group of 200 long-time residents, advocate for a greater diversity of housing types to support their goal to age in place. They also hope that a Q-Mart, a fictional chain supermarket, will be included in the plan to ensure that groceries and medication remain accessible. Conversely, the Elmwood Neighbourhood Alliance, comprised of 400 higher-income residents, strongly oppose the Q-Mart, concerned that it will increase traffic congestion and alter the neighbourhood's character. Faced with these competing perspectives, teams must determine how best to proceed and incorporate these conflicting priorities into their final plan.

To help students navigate the project's complexities, industry professionals visit the class twice during the semester to serve as facilitators. In this role, they provide feedback on each team's vision statement, site plans and proforma. The six-week project concludes with teams pitching their final proposals to a mock City Council. Much like a real Council meeting, students face challenging and pointed questions from City Councillors who bring their own values and perspectives to the conversation.

Every year, teams at UNBC present thoughtful and compelling visions for a revitalized Elmwood. The proposals often share many common elements including an emphasis on mixed-use development, pedestrian-oriented design, preservation of historic structures, plenty of public spaces, and with land uses aimed to foster inclusion and equity. At the same time, each team adds its own creativity and values to the process, resulting in distinct redevelopment concepts.

Elmwood is illustrative of many central neighbourhoods throughout Canada, where decades of disinvestment and decline have led to a new era of grand plans for redevelopment and revitalization. By engaging with a scenario that closely mirrors real-world practice, students gain insight into how market and non-market forces shape what ultimately gets approved, financed, and built. Incorporating this type of experiential learning into our curriculum at UNBC helps students better understand the complexities of planning. More importantly, it helps to prepare them, with greater confidence, to navigate those challenges as future practitioners.

A student's experience with Urban Plan

By Barnaby Mullen, PIBC Student Member

When I began planning school three years ago, I had a general idea of what the profession involved and what a career in planning could look like. It wasn't until last year, however, that I began to connect more deeply with some of the key concepts in my program and see how they might apply in practice. Through the UrbanPlan project, I gained a better understanding of the day-to-day realities of planners including the many complex trade-offs involved in shaping communities.

One of the most challenging aspects of the project was balancing neighbourhood concerns with the need to make a development financially viable. These priorities did not always align, which made arriving at consensus difficult. The experience showed me that planning rarely presents simple problems with clear answers. Instead, planners must work through competing interests and determine how best to move forward.

My group and I also learned how financial models (pro formas) work and how different land uses, including residential, commercial, and retail, can be combined in ways that respond to both community goals and municipal objectives. Just as important were the lessons that came from working as part of a team. Each group member took on a specific role, which meant we had to communicate our ideas and knowledge clearly while also making room to understand the perspectives of others.

At times this was not easy. There were moments when our ideas clashed, but those conversations helped us work toward compromises that initially seemed difficult to achieve. Learning how to listen to others and adjust our ideas accordingly was an important part of the process.

The hands-on elements of the project also made the experience particularly engaging. Using physical blocks to map out development ideas allowed us to visualize our proposals and brought a creative aspect to the assignment that is sometimes absent in university courses. Seeing our ideas gradually materialize made the project feel more realistic.

The final stage of the project involved presenting our proposal and answering questions from professionals, serving as City Council, who evaluated and deliberated on our proposals. This was one of my first experiences presenting a proposal in a more formal setting, and it gave me a sense of what these types of discussions might look like in practice. Overall, the project was both enjoyable and challenging, and it helped broaden my understanding of a future career in planning.

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Barnaby Mullen is a current student in the Bachelor of Planning program at the University of Northern British Columbia and the student representative for the PIBC Academic Liaison Committee.

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Photo by Ana Klippe on Unsplash

Advancing Child Care in BC. Responding to Change, Planning for the Future

Kristina Shubert, PIBC Student Member

As a mother of three, I am intimately familiar with the highs and lows of attempting to secure and maintain quality child care. When my kids were young, I relied on a mix of formal and informal care, working part-time in an effort to manage costs, spend time with my kids and maintain my career. My parents helped, I swapped care with friends, I juggled shifts, and my kids attended Strong Start, preschool or daycare depending on our care arrangements at the time.

Families all across British Columbia share in the struggle to secure affordable, high-quality, inclusive and flexible early learning and care. A significant share of children (64%) live in neighbourhoods with insufficient child care supply, while 14% live in outright child care deserts (Macdonald, 2026).

Why Plan Child Care?

Child care is critical social and economic infrastructure within every community. Access to affordable, high-quality early learning and care supports early childhood development and has positive long-term outcomes across the lifespan. It also increases labour force participation, especially among women resulting in broader economic benefits. Overall, child care expansion between 2019 and 2024 is estimated to have boosted BC's GDP by $5.8 billion (Stanford, 2024). Although local governments are not mandated to undertake child care planning, their involvement can greatly influence community well-being and economic vitality.

Provincial Planning Context

ChildCareBC, introduced in 2018, is a 10-year provincial strategy focused on increasing child care access, affordability, and inclusion with a long-range aim to create a universal child care system. The plan introduced a range of policy and program initiatives to address the immediate child care crisis.

In order to stimulate and align child care planning at the local government level, the Province announced one-time funding administered through the Union of British Columbia Municipalities in 2019. It funded child care planning projects that increased child care spaces and coordinated with other levels of government and community partners. Sixty grants were awarded reflecting a strong uptake from local governments.

Local governments engage in a range of activities to support and create child care spaces including: zoning and land-use planning, streamlining development permitting and business licensing, contributing capital to new facilities, leveraging development financing tools such as density bonusing and amenity cost charges to establish new centres, leasing public land or assets at no or low-cost, awarding child care grants, and encouraging high-quality building design and co-location.

PIBC Internship Project

Many local government child care plans have now been in place for more than 5 years, presenting an opportunity to assess progress and strengthen plans. My internship project included a context analysis of the child care planning landscape and an industry scan to identify best practices and innovations. The resulting report is a resource for local governments who wish to update and strengthen their plans.

Over the course of my project, I worked closely with the social planning team at the City of Burnaby. My research included a literature review, interviews, and facilitated engagements tapping into the expertise of local planners, academics, child care operators,

school district representatives, public health, advocates, and non-profit organizations supporting children and families. These actors all participate in child care planning and provision. Herein, I refer to them collectively as practitioners.

Project Findings

BC's Progress

The Province has made progress reducing child care fees, increasing employment and earnings in the sector, and meeting their federal space creation commitments, but a lot of work remains. Child care access in BC is well below established national targets of 5.9 spaces per 10 children (Macdonald, 2026). Moreover, the expansion of new child care spaces has largely been achieved by for-profit operators (72%), despite senior levels of government expressed preference for non-profit and public provision (Friendly et al, 2026). Universal child care remains a distant ambition - only 10% of child care spaces are $10-a-day (Macdonald & Friendly, 2025). Access to those spaces is inequitable – awarded by centre rather than demonstrated need. Meanwhile, families outside the $10-a-day program pay market-based fees that remain high despite the Province's fee reduction initiative – especially in urban areas (Macdonald, 2025).

BC Budget 2026, paused new enrolment into the $10-a-day program and new spaces funding. While existing supports remain, this decision is likely to slow child care expansion and gains in affordability.

Practitioner Perspectives

Practitioners working in child care planning and provision report a range of challenges working within the field. Foremost among these is a lack of provincial coordination and insufficient funding. Child care in BC remains fragmented and largely market driven, responding to opportunity rather than intention. Practitioners struggle to access adequate funding to develop and maintain accessible, high-quality programs. The families they serve are stressed and stretched. Meanwhile, early childhood vulnerability has increased in the province, especially in areas of social and emotional development (Nigelkehler, 2025).

Planning a Way Forward

While planners experience capacity and resource challenges, wonderful child care innovations have been achieved. Planners rely on local government tools, relationships, partnerships and advocacy to advance child care in their communities. Child care spaces have been achieved through memorandums of understanding with local school districts, through collaboration with public health, and through partnerships with non-profit organizations and operators. Using and maintaining data to assess and report on child care needs within local government and across the community has yielded positive results.

Planners and practitioners share these tips for others working in the field:

- Regular monitoring and evaluation of plans is a critical component to advancing child care.
- High-quality plans lead to stronger outcomes. Local governments can enhance plan effectiveness by assessing whether their plans (1) incorporate spatial, economic and social equity analysis, (2) communicate clear, specific and measurable goals, and (3) establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks with defined indicators, timelines and assigned responsibility (Binet et. al, 2025).
- Co-locating child care with other social infrastructure supports children and families, improves access, strengthens neighbourhood cohesion, and incentivizes sustainable transportation. Examples include the City of Richmond's early childhood development hubs, and the Town of Gibsons' affordable housing development for frontline workers which includes onsite child care.
- Child care preservation is equally significant to space creation. Planners can support preservation by monitoring development, identifying at-risk facilities and leveraging planning tools and relationships to mitigate loss. As an example, the City of Burnaby helped relocated a $10-day program to a long-term care facility when their lease was unexpectedly terminated.
- Establishing communities of practice among practitioners and local government planners creates a valuable forum for sharing skills, knowledge and best practices. Members can collaborate, problem solve, and advocate.

Conclusion

Child care planning is impactful work that strengthens communities. While a systems approach and more funding is needed on a provincial level, local governments are key actors in supporting, expanding and sustaining child care within the existing system. Updating and strengthening plans, grounded in the current context, will enable local governments to respond to sector needs and seize opportunities as they arise. Now is a critical time for local governments to lean into child care planning.

Kristina Shubert is a Master's student in the School of Community & Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia. Prior to her studies, Kristina worked in the municipal recreation and non-profit sectors as a program manager delivering community services. Her practice is situated at the intersections of community health, social infrastructure and infrastructures of care across diverse planning contexts.

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Bold Plan, Local Action: OCP Modernization at the Cowichan Valley Regional District

Coralie Breen RPP, MCIP

The Cowichan Valley Regional District is one of 27regional districts in British Columbia. It covers a total land area of approximately 3,474 square kilometers and is situated on southern Vancouver Island. The CVRD serves a population of over 89,000 residents within four incorporated municipalities and nine electoral areas, approximately 40,000 of whom live in the electoral areas.

The CVRD's nine electoral areas are a diverse and complex area—mountain tops to river valleys, farmlands to commercial hubs, 21 different neighbourhoods and villages, and 23 First Nations with Traditional Territory in the lands and waters. Collectively, our communities are facing several challenges, none the least of which are less affordable housing, inconsistency in water supply, a changing climate, stresses on sustainability and a transitioning economy.

There were seven official community plans for nine electoral areas guiding key decisions on these challenges. Comprising nearly 2,000 pages of planning documents for 40,000 people, this was just too much. Many pages were repetitive, but with just enough variation to create inconsistency and inefficient decision-making, slowing down our ability to adapt as a region.

Addressing this was a two-step process.

Step 1: Harmonization – first, we brought seven OCPs into one by standardizing the information and creating more clarity, consistency and flexibility, while taking advantage of opportunities to innovate.

Step 2: Modernization – next, we updated the single OCP policies to address our changing future, build in sustainability and develop a single framework to guide land use with overarching social equity policy considerations. *See From Harmonization to Modernization graphic below.*

One Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas was the CVRD Board's key strategic response to current and future challenges with an overarching goal to enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities. The result was a plan that necessitated a high degree of creativity and innovation in policy content and approach—a bold plan, executed with local action.

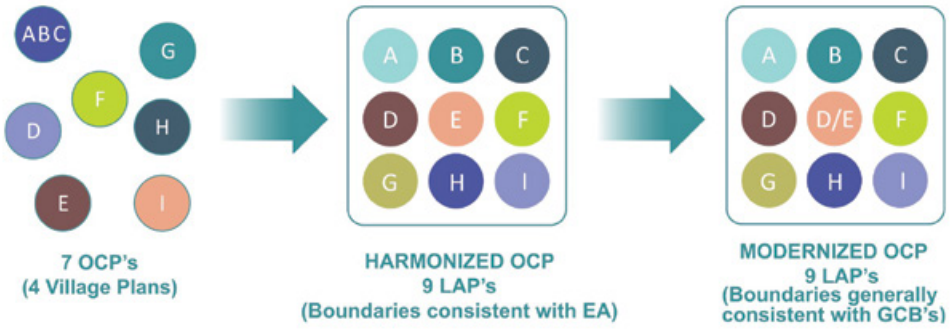
Now, we had just one plan to update, rather than nine, but there was still work to do. A complicated web of policies challenged decision-making and consistency of approach. We needed an innovative way to decode and organize policies, objectives and land uses from seven OCPs to one. We custom crafted a custom-made CVRD transect, a comprehensive framework for land use and community planning across all nine electoral areas for the next 20 years. It was a helpful tool that introduced a shared language around different settlement and landscape types that exist across this vast region.

The OCP was a project we could not take on alone. Developed through extensive public engagement, it represents a fusion of the communities' visions and values reflected in long-term planning objectives and policy directions. This includes several years' engagement with ten First Nations with Indian Reserves (as identified by the Indian Act) adjacent to electoral areas, eight of which are in advanced stages of BC treaty negotiations.

The CVRD, committed to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, engaged with First Nations on the importance of a single OCP that responds to and evolves alongside the self-governance steps being achieved by First

CVRD

From Harmonization to Modernization



Nations and opportunities to work toward reconciliation. Potential collaboration exists in many areas including infrastructure servicing, emergency preparedness, economic development, housing, cultural heritage, arts and culture.

The result of several years of consultation, collective problem-solving, creative thinking and community engagement, the OCP exceeds all expectations. It brings clarity and simplicity to a range of complex issues and priorities that the Cowichan Valley Regional District's electoral areas face, and it offers a clear and consistent approach to growth management and land use planning across all electoral areas. At the same time, it reflects and preserves the unique characteristics of each community. This allows for better decision making and provides a blueprint for several implementation projects, such as a comprehensive zoning bylaw harmonizing several electoral area zoning bylaws and the development of local plans with First Nations.

Transferability

The transferability of the OCP process is two-fold: first, Regional Districts in BC with electoral areas can adapt the CVRD process and methodology citing the need for solutions to similar problems. Second, the transect framework can be adapted to other regions with rural, semi-urban and urban environments (usually adjacent to the electoral areas), including the lessons learned—and there were many.

Transferability to BC Regional Districts

While the number of electoral areas differs by regional district, reflecting unique population and geography the OCP process is directly transferable to any regional district in BC that has more than one electoral area OCP. Any region that wishes to improve decision making by harmonizing its OCPs, save money by only updating one OCP with one planning framework, and significantly support a more sustainable future with integration of one set of policies and objectives can benefit from the CVRD's OCP approach.

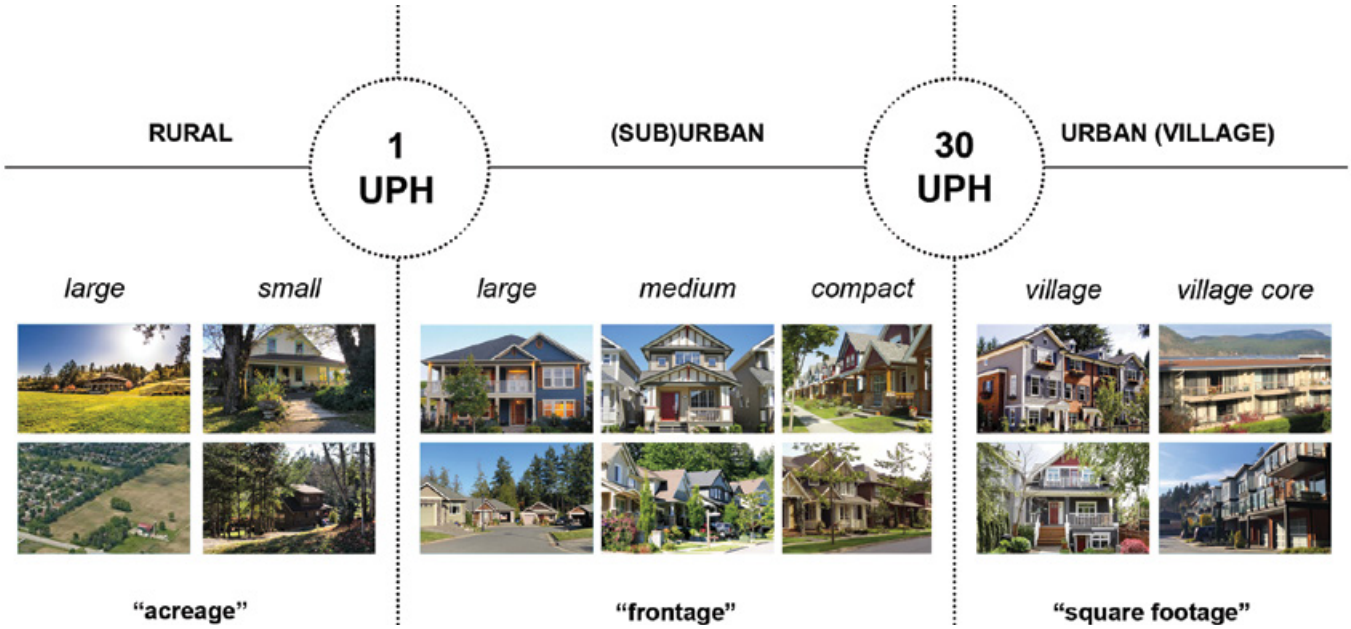
Transferability of the transect framework

The transect is an approach to organizing land use designations and communicating their characteristics. It structures the CVRD's various landscapes into transect landscape types: from natural and rural to village and urban settings. Generally, land use designations with densities below one unit per hectare (UPH) are only located outside of the growth containment boundaries, and those above one UPH are located inside the growth containment boundaries. *See Density Thresholds graphic below.*

This helps protect natural, agricultural and rural lands against sprawl while ensuring future development— whether it's housing, commercial centres, industry or key community services—is focused in areas where it can be well integrated. This framework is

CVRD

Density Thresholds



flexible and robust, and easily transferable to other regions with a similar range of landscape types and with variances in land use designation densities, depending on the unique characteristics in different local government areas. To develop the foundation for a land use planning framework, we took inspiration from the field of ecology. When studying the complexity of ecology, we see a compelling diversity of different landscapes, and we can draw a line along an ecosystem to make sense of its various pieces and how they work together.

These observations were adapted into a land planning model that helps us better understand human settlements and how they relate to one another. In a study of the Cowichan Valley, seven categories, from natural to urban and based on density threshold, were identified:

- Rural and Agriculture
- Suburban
- Village and Urban
- Downtown
- Special

The transect helps us understand the similarities and differences between these categories. To situate the land uses, we needed to untangle a complex web of policies and put them into a logical framework. Through GIS analysis we consolidated 166 land use designations (including 55 in residential alone) into 21 that fit along the transect model. To achieve this, we had to study each one, calculate the density and determine how they fit into the planning model. As planning model, the transect gives us common language to describe our diverse communities. It is accessible to anyone, which brings us together to make decisions about the future. The result was a meaningful public process because everyone—not just experts—could participate in the discussions, see the bigger picture and plan with clarity and confidence. *See The Transect Organizing Framework graphic below.*

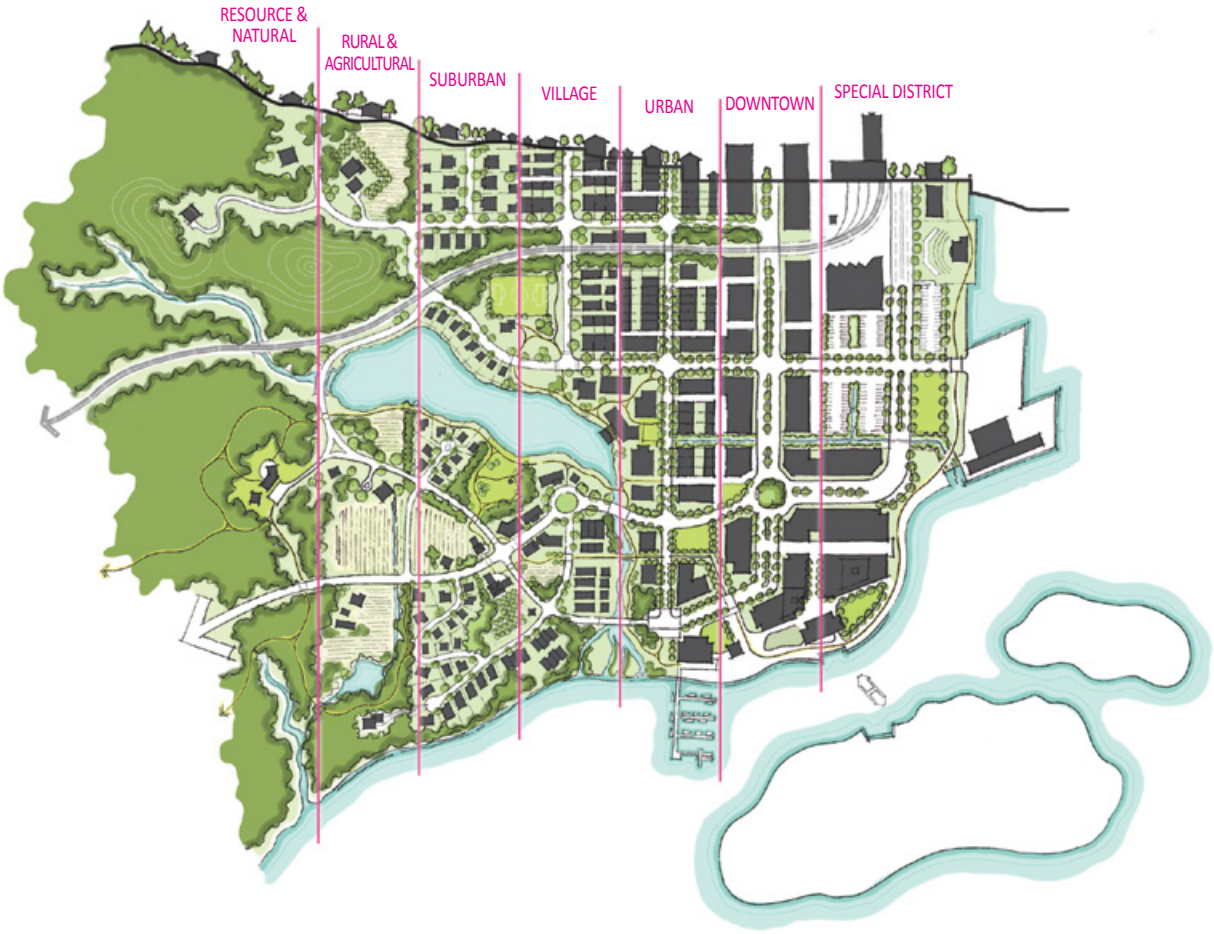
While the analysis involved a group of technical GIS experts, it was the ongoing public process with skilled facilitation in a meaningful and carefully systematic process that supported the development of a tailored framework which was embraced and accepted by communities and supported by the CVRD Board.

See Planyourcowichan.ca for more information and project videos https://www.planyourcowichan.ca/the-modernized-official-community-plan-mocp

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CVRD

The Transect – Organizing Framework



PIBC's Professional Governance Research and Engagement Project – Wrapping It All Together

Deborah Jensen RPP, MCIP, Chair, RPP Regulation Subcommittee

Author's Note: this is the sixth article in *Planning West* reporting on the status of PIBC's Professional Governance Research and Engagement Project.

If you've been reading this series of articles about the project or are familiar with the *Professional Governance Act* (PGA), you'll know that over the past 15 months, PIBC has been extensively engaging with members and non-members about the PGA. You'll also know that the primary purpose of the PGA is to set out a governance framework for self-regulating professions - that protects the public interest from, and reduces the risk of, unethical and incompetent practice. Six professions are currently regulated under the PGA, including architects and engineers – the planning profession is not.

The Decision

Phase 1 of the Professional Governance & Research Engagement Project was structured to gather and analyze information regarding the pros and cons should the planning profession be included under the PGA, whether by the Institute's request, or by provincial direction.

Work on the project culminated at the March 20, 2026 PIBC Board meeting, where the Board made a decision to not proceed with an application for a PGA assessment at this time. The Board determined that it wants to focus on other priorities of PIBC; however, PIBC will continue to monitor the activities of the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance (OSPG) and other external influences that may impact this direction.

Reflecting on the Journey

Before providing an overview of the process, we want to first and foremost acknowledge you – the PIBC members. If you have at all been involved in Phase 1 of the Professional Governance initiative, the RPP Regulation Subcommittee would like to thank you for the time and effort you took in providing your input into the discussion. PIBC has taken many steps to ensure this project has been a fulsome and transparent process, and the Subcommittee is grateful for your participation.

Phase 1 of the Professional Governance Research and Engagement Project began in December 2023, with the PIBC Board's direction to undertake outreach and education about the *Professional Governance Act* (PGA) and its opportunities and implications for PIBC and its membership. And since Fall 2024,



Figure 1: **Phase 1 Workplan Activities**



Figure 2: **Phase 1 Engagement Opportunities**

PIBC and its RPP Regulation Subcommittee have been actively engaging with our membership about professional governance; and undertaking research and analysis to identify issues and address potential opportunities and trade-offs.

A workplan was developed to steer Phase 1 of this project, designed to undertake research in learning more about regulatory operations both here in BC and elsewhere; and to engage with our PIBC members. *See Figure 1.*

Much of the research was undertaken by the consulting firm, The Regulator's Practice (TRP). Their work entailed a strategic assessment of professional governance for the planning profession in BC, including background research, facilitation of nine focus groups, and delivery of a final strategic assessment report. That report, presented to PIBC in January 2026, presents an analysis of the high level pros, cons, and trade-offs of professional governance options.[1] The report outlines three options for how PIBC could proceed regarding a PGA designation:

Option 1 – Undertake Additional Information Gathering and Engagement

Option 2 – Do Not Apply for PGA Designation

Option 3 – Apply for PGA Designation

No matter the option, each involves a series of trade-offs that impact the planning profession.

Incorporated throughout the length of Phase 1 were a host of opportunities to engage with and educate the membership. *See Figure 2.* Embodied within the umbrella of a transparent and fulsome process, PIBC made every attempt to raise awareness of the project and encourage participation. Resources were made available for review, and events were scheduled to provide opportunities for discussion. The membership seemed eager to be involved, and we saw high rates of participation throughout the project. For example:

- ✓ 323 members completed the initial survey;
- ✓ 209 members attended the May 2025 introductory webinar;
- ✓ 69 attendees participated in the nine focus groups in Fall 2025 (see the previous issue of Planning West that provided a comprehensive overview of the focus group discussions); and
- ✓ 158 members attended the March 2026 webinar to present the TRP Strategic Assessment report.

PIBC Members and a Desire to be Future Ready

Engagement with PIBC members and non-members yielded some valuable insights. Throughout the engagement process we heard members raise a number of issues that appeared to be weighing on their minds about the profession. For example, in the final engagement survey conducted in February 2026, we asked the members to select their top three issues that should still be discussed or clarified, even if PIBC decides to **NOT**

proceed with further work on professional governance. By far, the most pressing issue for survey respondents was practice based standards, followed by reserved practice and defining the public interest. *See Figure 3.*

So What's Next?

As the project's work plan neared completion, the RPP Regulation Subcommittee undertook a comprehensive review and analysis of the input received from the PIBC membership, the work undertaken by The Regulator's Practice, and external factors that may impact the planning profession, including:

- OSPG and the Province. Should PIBC apply for a designation assessment, the role of the OSPG will be to evaluate PIBC's application and make a determination on whether it is in the public interest for the planning profession to be regulated under the PGA. Even if the OSPG endorses an application, in the end the Province can still reject the application (as was the outcome for the home inspectors). The direction of the OSPG and the Province could also alter over time, and it is important to monitor any potential changes.
- Other Legislation. New legislation could impact the work of the planning profession. For example, a private member's bill, Bill M216 *Professional Reliance Act*, is under consideration with the Province[2], which would enhance the role of other PGA regulated professions in land use development reviews, typically within the scope of a planning professional.
- Public Interest. Over the past decade, governments and professions are experiencing the impact of a higher degree of accountability to the public. This is resulting in increased regulations on professions, including planners, as exhibited in other regions, including within Canada.



Professional Governance Considerations

This information was used to make a recommendation to the PIBC Board to not apply for a PGA designation at this time, but to continue monitoring the topic of professional governance such that PIBC would be in a 'future ready' state.

Throughout the initiative, the PIBC Board received regular updates from the Subcommittee regarding the current status of the project, and participated in some of the engagement activities. With knowledge in hand from these events, the consultant report, and information and recommendations from the Subcommittee, the Board had an entire body of information to determine the appropriate path forward. And at its meeting of March 20, 2026, the Board made a decision to not proceed with a PGA assessment at this time.

Ultimately, it is the Province who determines whether the planning profession should or should not be included under the umbrella of the PGA. That decision is not within the control of the Institute. What is within PIBC's power is whether or not to apply for a PGA assessment that could lead to inclusion under the PGA regulations.

And while the Board is not proceeding with a PGA assessment and no additional research or engagement activities are being undertaken at this time, PIBC does recognize the importance of those issues identified by the membership through the course of the project. PIBC will continue to monitor for these and other external factors, such as the OSPG and Bill M216, that may affect the profession in BC and the Yukon.

If you are interested in learning more about the entirety of this initiative, the project webpage (www.pibc.bc.ca/professionalgovernance) contains a host of information regarding professional governance, providing FAQ resources, PGA information, the project Work Plan, *Planning West* articles and more.

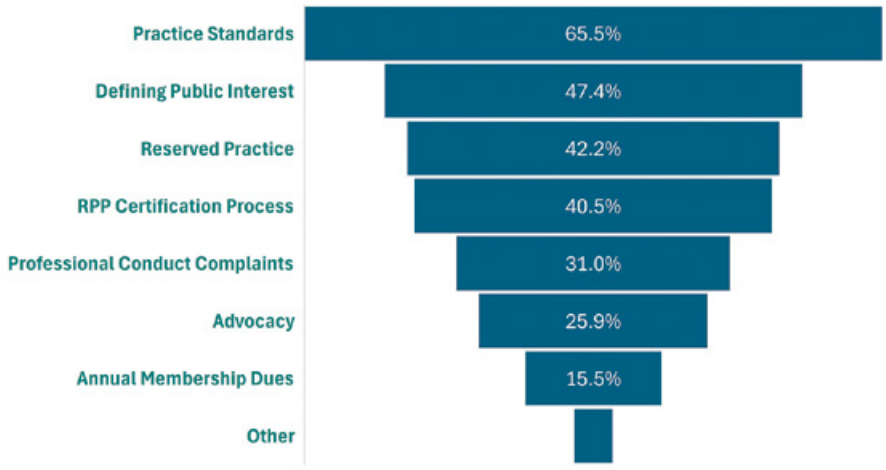


Figure 3: **Percent of Respondents Identifying Their Top Three Topic Areas**

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[1]The Strategic Assessment of Professional Governance of the Planning Profession in British Columbia report, authored by The Regulator's Practice, can be found on the PIBC website at www.pibc.bc.ca/professionalgovernance.

[2]The Planning Institute of British Columbia is aware of proposed Bill M216 Professional Reliance Act that is under consideration by the Province. At the time of writing, Bill M216 has received second reading and sits with the Select Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Bills for consideration.

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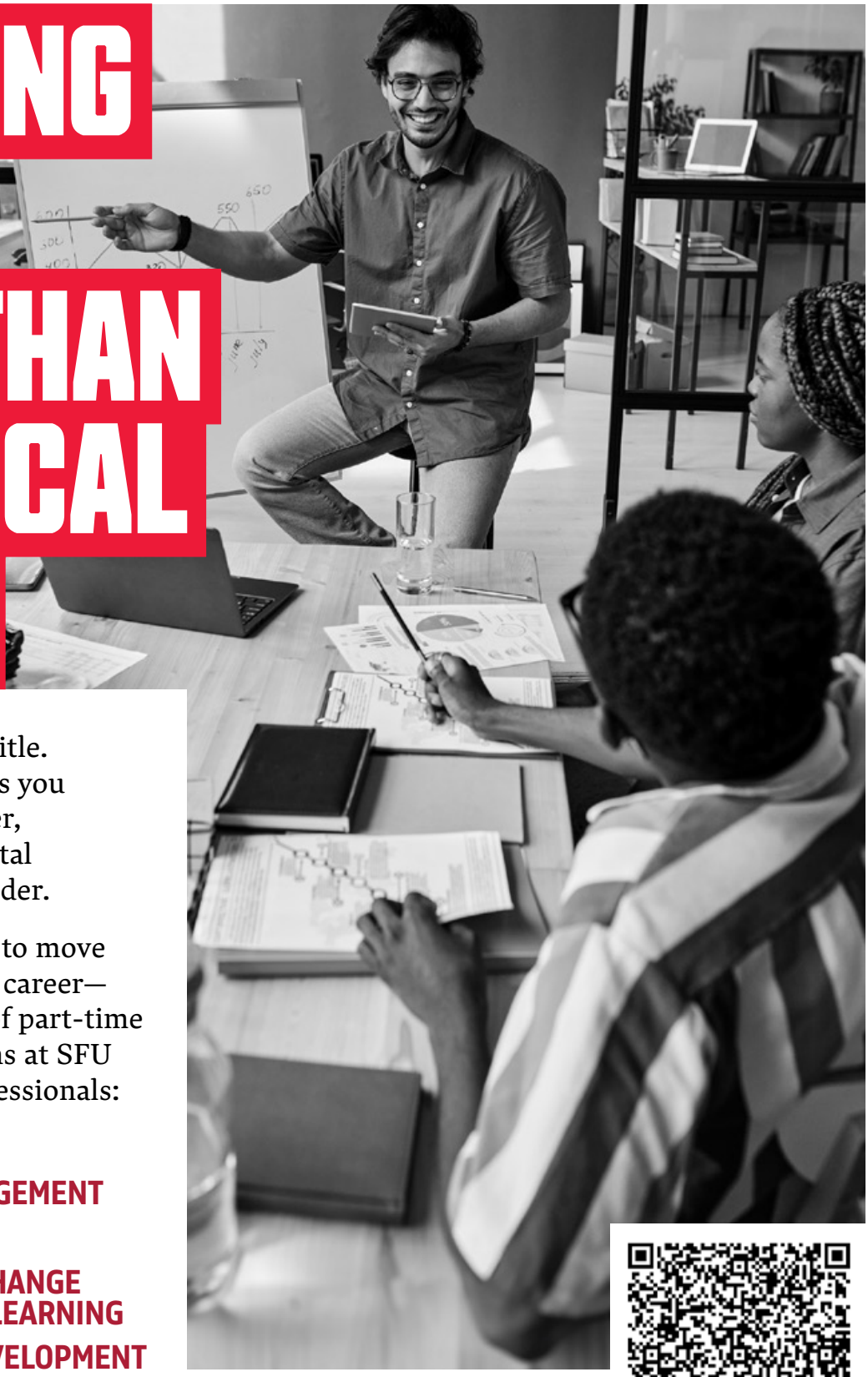
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The PIBC Intelligent Inventory: Shaping Artificial Intelligence to Serve Planners

Raymond Kan RPP, MCIP, PIBC Director of Policy & Research, Patrick Oystryk RPP, MCIP, and Krish Mehta

The future is run by machines capable of independent thought and determination. Matters of economies, war, and peace are the purview of Artificial Intelligence. The human experience is reduced to manual labour for the extraction of critical minerals and energy to power their Artificial Intelligence overlords.

Whether this dystopian image of the future will leap from the pages of science-fiction novels and into real life is up for debate. What is not in dispute is the rapid advancement, adoption, and accessibility of Artificial Intelligence that has made the technology a regular feature of daily life, from crafting e-mails and reports to creating music, photography, and even computer code. In the here and now, you can stay on the sidelines and reminisce about old times, or you can actively shape how this new technology can provide a useful service for humans.

PIBC has taken the pragmatic approach. After six months of development, PIBC is excited to launch the pilot Intelligent Inventory, the first AI tool built for planners to instantly search, compare, and analyze the Official Community Plans and zoning bylaws of 80 local governments in British Columbia[1]. At the direction of PIBC's Housing Task Force, a competitive RFP process was undertaken last year to retain consultant support to design and deliver the Intelligent Inventory. In Fall 2025, PIBC selected the multidisciplinary project team of NeuraCities and MODUS.

Serving the Needs of Planners

Before a single line of code was written, the project team talked to planners. In Fall 2025, in-depth interviews were conducted with 13 planners and planning practitioners across British Columbia and Yukon. Many were navigating the new provincial housing legislation with limited resources, and some were tracking housing reform across dozens of jurisdictions simultaneously. The goal of the interviews was not to validate a predetermined design, but to understand the actual workflow problem: where were planners losing time, what did they need to verify, and what would make a tool trustworthy enough to use professionally?

From these interviews, three priorities emerged that formed the design foundation for the Intelligent Inventory:

1. The search problem was not just about finding documents; it was about finding the right language within documents. Planning terminology is not standardized across municipalities. A "secondary suite" in one bylaw is an "accessory dwelling unit" in another. A tool that only responded to exact keyword matches would miss large amounts of relevant information.

2. Source traceability and verification were non-negotiable. Planners are professionally accountable for the information they use. Any tool that could not show its work — citing the exact document, section, and page for every result — would not be trusted, regardless of how accurate it appeared.

3. Comparison was the core use case. Most of the time, planners were not looking for information about one municipality; they were trying to understand how multiple municipalities had approached the same policy question. Side-by-side comparison across many jurisdictions at once would be a huge benefit.

What the Intelligent Inventory does

The tool is built on a structured inventory of OCPs and zoning bylaws from 80 BC local governments, prioritized to include municipalities with populations above 5,000 — the threshold consistent with *Bill 44 Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing* legislation. Within that inventory, planners can ask questions in plain language:

"What are the setback requirements for garden suites in coastal municipalities?"

"How have Metro Vancouver municipalities implemented parking reductions near transit?"

The tool is designed to evolve its understanding of planning concepts, not just keywords, and return results that cite the exact source document, section, and page for every piece of information surfaced. Every comparative response includes a table when multiple municipalities are referenced, and every source link connects directly to the original document.

As a pilot, design decisions were intentional:



AI Image created by Microsoft Co-Pilot

start with the document types most directly relevant to the recently enacted housing legislation, focus on the local governments most affected, build a tool that planners can trust immediately, and consider additional enhancements and expansions as warranted.

The pilot tool does not yet include plans or regulations from regional districts, First Nations communities, or communities in the Yukon. It does not yet include housing needs reports, development cost charge bylaws, area plans, or provincial legislation such as the *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter*. And while the tool is designed to surface the most current adopted documents as of February 2026, the current build requires active maintenance to stay current as plans and bylaws are amended.

Comparing to Other AI Tools

As a purpose-built tool for planners, the Intelligent Inventory differs from 'off-the-shelf' AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, etc.) in several ways:

- The Intelligent Inventory is designed to be a closed system that only accesses information from the curated inventory of Official Community Plans and zoning bylaws. In contrast, off-the-shelf AI tools look at the entire web, including potentially unreliable content (e.g. Linkedin posts, opinion articles, and other unrelated web content).
- Even if queries are constrained to searching for specific documents, off-the-shelf AI tools can sometimes return outdated, incomplete, or unofficial policy documents.
- Off-the-shelf AI tools are known to sometimes skip web searches but produce responses from prior knowledge bases, which increases the likelihood of hallucinations.
- The Intelligent Inventory includes helpful instructions and tips on how to query effectively, allows users to customize search parameters, and it understands planning vocabulary that may vary from one community to another.

Lessons from User Testing

In late February, 40 planners and practitioners tested the tool — drawn from PIBC's Board, Policy and Public Affairs Committee, Member Engagement Committee, PIBC staff, Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs, and planners from the Fall engagement. The responses confirmed the core design principles. Two dozen testers completed a feedback form – here are some metrics:

- Nearly all testers rated the tool as "somewhat easy" or "very easy" to navigate without prior training.
- 85% of testers said they would probably or definitely recommend it to a colleague.
- 74% of testers reported time savings, with four testers estimating that a single research session saved more than three hours of manual work.
- The features that testers found most valuable were consistent with the original design priorities: source citations with direct page links, side-by-side comparison tables, and natural language search capabilities.

Changes were made in response to user feedback, including improving the formatting of responses and adding explanatory text about key features of the tool. Further, PIBC is considering several major enhancements in the near term:

- Document upload capability – allowing users to upload amended plans or zoning bylaws, or any other relevant policy document.
- Automatic document retrieval capability – automatically monitor and retrieve updated documents from source websites.
- Geospatial integration – allowing users to connect regulatory analysis to spatial context and zoning maps within a single workflow.

Where the Tool is Today, and Where It May Go

Innovation can be a risky endeavour for any organization. The Peer Learning Network has offered PIBC the unique opportunity to try something new with the stated goal of delivering benefits for its members and non-member practitioners. The experience to date has demonstrated that there is genuine demand by planners for a trusted, purpose-built planning intelligence tool.

The Intelligent Inventory is now online at **intelligent-inventory.pibc.bc.ca**. The tool is free to use through June 2026. In respect of the benefits of membership, PIBC is offering members roughly double the number of allowable queries as compared to non-members.

PIBC is also thinking strategically for the long-term:

- How can PIBC operate and maintain the tool sustainably once the Peer Learning Network program has concluded?
- How can PIBC position the Intelligent Inventory to be the 'category' leader for planning intelligence support for planners and practitioners in BC and the Yukon?
- How can PIBC scale up the tool to expand the benefits to more planners and practitioners in more jurisdictions through partnership opportunities with other mission-aligned organizations?

Prudence should always be exercised whenever deploying new technologies. What the Intelligent Inventory project has reconfirmed is that the planning approach of engaging interest holders early and often, developing clear goals and objectives, and striving for transparency will likely lead to an outcome that meets the needs and expectations of the intended end users. In this case, the technology will do what you direct it to do, and not the other way around. Yet.

Raymond Kan RPP, MCIP has been practicing as a planner for over 20 years, with time spent in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and the Metro Vancouver region. Ray holds a master of urban planning from the University of Illinois and an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from UBC.

Krish Mehta (Founder, NeuraCities) is a civil engineer from UBC specializing in AI and data analysis, Krish started NeuraCities which builds AI and geospatial tools for planners and the communities they shape.

Patrick Oystryk RPP, MCIP (Associate Principal & Senior Planner, MODUS) is passionate about addressing big challenges: Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, the climate crisis, and housing affordability. His practice focuses on sustainable land use planning informed by meaningful community engagement.

[1]PIBC's Housing Task Force is responsible for overseeing the Peer Learning Network. The original concept of an inventory of plans and zoning bylaws emerged from task force deliberation. An early attempt was a spreadsheet of hyperlinks of the zoning bylaws of all local governments in British Columbia. Suffice it to say, a list of hyperlinks with no ability to query information has limited utility. If you wish, you can access this low-tech inventory here: https://pibc.bc.ca/pln/resource-library

The State and Future of the Planning Profession

Raymond Kan RPP, MCIP,
PIBC Director of Policy & Research and
Andy Yan RPP, FCIP, PIBC Board
Director & Chair of PIBC Member
Engagement Committee

The planning profession in British Columbia and the Yukon is currently going through a period of deep introspection. The recently completed Phase 1 of the Professional Governance Research and Engagement Project documented diverse perspectives amongst the membership about the appropriate way to regulate the planning profession. *Bill M216 Professional Reliance Act*, a private member's bill that is under consideration by the BC legislature at the time of writing, is notable for its limited awareness and understanding of the role of professional planners in the development review and approvals process, and for the unintended and adverse consequences on the profession should it be enacted in its current form[1].

But the current state of introspection began in earnest when the slate of housing legislation affecting local government zoning was enacted by the BC government in 2023. The legislation introduced new requirements to amend zoning bylaws in a matter of months and longer-term requirements to regularly review and update Official Community Plans and zoning bylaws. The legislation brought into sharp relief the tenuous planning capacity that many small and medium-size communities across the province have been experiencing. Communities were sounding the alarm that planning staff, who were already working at capacity processing development applications and supporting daily operations, would have to be redirected to complying with the new legislation. For small communities, where planners have many roles in addition to land use planning, the concern was much more acute[2].

With this backdrop[3], PIBC's Member Engagement Committee took the lead in discussing and developing a scope of work to better understand the state of the profession in British Columbia and Yukon[4]. In Fall 2025, PIBC retained the services of Roslyn Kunin and Associates (RKA) to undertake the State and Future of the Planning Profession Study.

This is the first study commissioned by PIBC to establish an evidence-based understanding of the current and potential future labour market for planners. The study also follows in the footsteps of other planning and planning adjacent professional organizations in Canada and the world[5]. The study is intended to be one building block to inform long-term and strategic planning by the Institute and other interest holders, such as local governments, the provincial government, development and consulting sectors, and academia. The study also works in concert with existing studies of the planning labour market like WorkBC which identified urban and land use planners in BC as a "high opportunity occupation".

Some of the key takeaways of the research are:

- There is a shortage of qualified planners, especially for more experienced and high-level people. Competition for planners is fierce at all levels of government. The shortage of planners will continue into the future.
- The planner shortage is exacerbated by a significant level of turnover, partly to do with competition for able, experienced and certified planners. Growing turnover rates in certain organizations has significantly increased recruitment activity in order to backfill the resulting vacancies.
- Recruitment and retention challenges are significant. Not all employers are able to provide competitive compensation, flexibility in working conditions and geographic location planners prefer.
- Geography makes a big difference. In Metro Vancouver, it is easier to find qualified people although still a challenge to keep them. In the non-Metro areas, finding and retaining even less qualified or experienced people is very difficult, a problem that is exacerbated the smaller the community.
- Most employers hire non-certified planners for entry-level or junior positions. This is especially true in smaller centres. However, certification is much more important for senior planner positions.
- Employers consistently highlight the following training that new planners should be receive in school:
  - project management skills
  - interpersonal skills and effective communication
  - development planning, finance, and zoning
  - Geographic Information Systems
  - knowledge of the legislative framework in which planning occurs, including how local governments operate
  - negotiation skills.
- The ability to work remotely is often desired by those considering taking a planning position or remaining in it. However, remote work opportunities for planners are relatively rare even though remote work could well be part of the solution to planner shortages particularly in non-metro areas.

It should be noted that the study does not necessarily establish a comprehensive causal analysis of the factors that may be affecting these patterns and trends. And, where possible, the study attempts to capture as fine a geographic scale as possible like a PIBC Chapter, but this scale of analysis is limited by data availability.

In the next phase of work, the consultant will be designing a Census-style questionnaire to collect additional data from members to shed more light on issues such as expected retirement, family constraints to career andgeographic mobility, and diversity. Details on when the Census questionnaire will be implemented are still being discussed. Stayed tuned for updates.



You can download the entire report here: https://pibc.bc.ca/member-engagement-committee

PIBC is offering two ways to stay engaged on this topic. On May 20, PIBC will host a special webinar for the consultant to present the key findings, followed by a panel dialogue of distinguished planners. On June 2, PIBC will be hosting a pre-conference panel dialogue in Penticton. If you have any feedback about the study, please contact Raymond Kan, PIBC's Director of Policy & Research at Raymond.Kan@pibc.bc.ca

Andy Yan RPP, FCIP wears many hats: Director of the City Program at SFU, Associate Professor of Professional Practice in Urban Studies at SFU, and is a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners. Andy holds a master of urban planning from UCLA and a Bachelor of Arts in geography and political science from SFU.

Raymond Kan RPP, MCIP has been practicing as a planner for over 20 years, with time spent in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and the Metro Vancouver region. Ray holds a master of urban planning from the University of Illinois and an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from UBC.

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[1] PIBC's formal input on Bill M216: https://pibc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/internal_pages_pdfs/news-and-events/PIBC-Letter-to-Select-Standing-Committee_FINAL-Signed.pdf

[2] "Lack of planners a concern as B.C. municipalities try to meet housing targets" (January 23, 2024, accessed: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/lack-of-planners-to-meet-housing-targets-1.7091185)

[3] The backdrop is evolving: the provincial economy and housing development have softened in the last two years. National decisions on interest rates and immigration have affected the supply and demand for housing; and, geopolitics has created an urgency to move on nation-building energy infrastructure in northern BC and the Yukon.

[4] Cleo Corbett RPP, MCIP was the co-chair of the Member Engagement Committee at the time of developing the scope of work.

[5] In recent years, the New Brunswick Association of Planners, Atlantic Planners Institute, Canadian Institute of Planners, Buildforce Canada, and the Planning Institute Australia have conducted their own labour studies.

[6] See 'Urban and land use planners'. (2026). WorkBC. https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/urban-and-land-use-planners#career_overview

REMEMBERING GRAHAM STALLARD 1940-2026



Photo of Graham taken in 1983 at a CIP Conference in Victoria Credit: Jim Masterton

Sadly, in February we have lost one of our exceptional founding planners who made key contributions to the early PIBC Journal.

Graham was heavily involved with PIBC, serving as the newsletter editor for ten years and as president for two terms in the late 1970s. He also became CIP president in the early 1980s. Graham was noted for his wicked sense of humour and always had a punchline. He prided himself on being *"the curmudgeon in residence"* on the various councils he attended. He also believed in the use of cartoons to prove a point; he had an ambition to produce an all-cartoon OCP! He was also great fun at the many planning conferences we attended together. He will be greatly missed by the BC planning community and by his friends.

Graham's life journey was another epic venture. He was born on the *Isle of Wight* in England. As a teenager, trusted by his father, he was at times the skipper of the company ferry taking on passengers to cross the sometimes wild and windy Solent channel. He graduated from the London School of Economics in UK before emigrating to Canada, directly to Vancouver. There, he worked for the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board (LMRPB) before "emigrating to Vancouver Island" where he worked for many years at the City of Victoria, which he considered to be his dream job. He also did brief service in West Vancouver, Whistler and Nanaimo before retiring to Sidney.

Graham, in his self-crafted obit, humbly described his life lost to cancer merely as "a bird falling off his perch". He will be sorely missed by all the old and young guards alike, who were fortunate to work or cross paths with him. May he rest in ultimate peace and beyond.

Submitted by Mickey Lam and Jim Masterton
Former PIBC President (1981-1983)

The Peer Learning Network

Raymond Kan RPP, MCIP,
PIBC Director of Policy & Research
and Narissa Chadwick RPP, MCIP,
PIBC President Elect & Chair
of PIBC Policy & Public Affairs
Committee Housing Task Force

PIBC PLANNING INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
PEER LEARNING NETWORK

One of the core missions of PIBC is to provide member services that advances the profession and the public interest. Since January 2024, PIBC has been delivering the Peer Learning Network – a three-year program funded by a contribution from the Province of BC – to support planners in understanding and complying with the provincial housing legislation. PIBC is solely responsible for designing and delivering all Peer Learning Network offerings.

There are two distinctive features to the Peer Learning Network: one, all offerings must be made available at no charge to users; and two, non-member planners and any interested practitioner are open to access the resources. These two features are consistent with the principle that the delivery of housing requires member planners, non-members, and allied practitioners to collectively understand the requirements of housing legislation and related matters, and that it would not advance the public interest to put up barriers to peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange.

To ensure accountability, PIBC established a Housing Task Force to steer the design and delivery of the Peer Learning Network:

- Narissa Chadwick RPP, MCIP (Chair)

- Heather Kauer RPP, MCIP
- Erica Tiffany RPP, MCIP
- Mary Storzer RPP, MCIP

To date, PIBC has delivered the following Peer Learning Network offerings and opportunities:

- 6 in-person regional peer learning sessions throughout the province
- Sponsored Registered Professional Planners to participate in conferences and panels (2024 UBCM Housing Summit, peer learning sessions at the 2024 BC Land Summit and 2025 PIBC annual conference)
- 11 webinars on a variety of housing topics, including legal panels. The webinars have averaged over 200 attendees per session, of which 20% of attendees are non-members. The recordings have garnered over 3,000 views (https://tinyurl.com/57ev2r78)
- Dedicated webpage to host resources, including provincial guidelines (www.pibc.bc.ca/pln)
- Online discussion forum
- Subsidy to access the Quickscribe legal resource (www.quickscribe.bc.ca)
- Subsidy to support locally organized 'Peer Learning Pods'
- Two engagement surveys to inform program design
- Enhanced information sharing relationships with the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs and with allied organizations such as Local Government Management Association, Building Officials' Association of BC, and Urban Development Institute.

What's in Store?

The Peer Learning Network will conclude on June 30, 2026. In the remaining months, PIBC is on track to deliver significant value to planners and practitioners. These new offerings respond to a strong demand for practice-based resources for those who are already working in the housing space, as well as for those who are simply interested in expanding their knowledge and understanding about housing matters.

Housing Advisory Bulletins: PIBC has commissioned the preparation of Housing Advisory Bulletins that cover three essential topics: development economics of housing development, cost of and funding for infrastructure and community amenities, and inclusionary housing policies and zoning. The Housing Advisory Bulletins are written by planners for planners and will serve as a legacy education resource. These bulletins are available in the PLN Resource Library (www.pibc.bc.ca/pln/resource-library).

Regional Support for Small-Scale Housing Delivery: PIBC has partnered with Small Housing BC to deliver this project to delve into the specific conditions, constraints, and opportunities in different parts of the province in relation to delivering small-scale multi-unit housing. The project leverages PIBC's Peer Learning Network resources and Chapter networks, and Small Housing BC's expertise on missing middle housing. Small Housing BC will design and deliver regional focus group sessions comprising planners and practitioners to identify region-specific issues and solutions. The findings will be documented in a technical memo and reported out to in a Peer Learning Network webinar in June.

Intelligent Inventory: PIBC has commissioned the design and development of the pilot Intelligent Inventory – a repository of local government Official Community Plans and zoning bylaws. In the current pilot phase, the Inventory includes documents for the 80 communities in British Columbia with a population greater than 5,000. The tool allows planners to efficiently query, compare, and analyze any content in these documents.

Thank you for engaging with PIBC throughout the course of the Peer Learning Network. For resources, please go to the Peer Learning Network website (www.pibc.bc.ca/pln). Stay tuned for announcements about the new offerings. If you have any feedback about the Peer Learning Network or ideas on how PIBC can continue to provide excellence for its members, please contact PIBC's Director of Policy & Research (Raymond.Kan@pibc.bc.ca).

Narissa Chadwick RPP, MCIP works for the Islands Trust and serves as President-Elect on the PIBC Board, Chair of the Policy & Public Affairs Committee, and Chair of the Housing Task Force. Narissa has an undergraduate degree in Comparative Development Studies and a Master's degree in Planning from UBC.

Raymond Kan RPP, MCIP has been practicing as a planner for over 20 years, with time spent in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and the Metro Vancouver region. Ray holds a master of urban planning from the University of Illinois and an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from UBC

What Membership Means to Me

Planners across British Columbia and the Yukon join PIBC and value different aspects and benefits of membership. In this issue, a member of this year's Annual Conference Committee (and regular Okanagan-Interior Chapter volunteer) shares why he values being an RPP and what membership means to him.



Steven Collyer RPP, MCIP
Housing & Policy Initiatives Manager, City of Penticton

"Building connections with fellow planning professionals is a major part of what PIBC membership means to me. There are so many different ways to connect and learn from peers through PIBC webinars, committees, publications, and events, not to mention the annual conferences. Those connections support me in my work as a Registered Professional Planner to ask questions, explore new ideas, and shake off the organizational blinders to learn more about what is happening for other planners across BC and the Yukon.

I've been working in the planning field for over 8 years and have been a Registered Professional Planner since 2020. I enjoyed volunteering for several years on the Okanagan-Interior Chapter to help organize professional development events for colleagues in the region. Membership has helped me advance in my career through building connections, professional networks, and exchanging new ideas to address the pressing planning issues of today and tomorrow.

For me, these connections underscore the collective impact of the work we do. With planners guiding informed decision-making on all sorts of land use matters, we help advance the shared goals and competencies of our profession. It reminds me that the work I do is connected to the work of a whole range of other planning professionals and that, together, *we help make our communities more vibrant, more equitable, and more resilient for future generations.*

I look forward to the many connections set to take place in Penticton as the host community for this year's annual conference in June!

INSTITUTE NEWS

Matthew Walshe
Administrative & Governance Coordinator

PIBC BOARD NOTES

On **November 28th, 2025**, the PIBC Board of Directors met online by video conference.

While the meeting was held remotely, it was acknowledged that we are able to live, work, and learn on the traditional territories of the First Nations and Indigenous peoples of BC and Yukon.

The Board confirmed two previous electronic resolutions approving issuing PIBC's official input on the draft national ethical standards to the Professional Standards Board (PSB); and the endorsement of submitting a letter to the Premier of BC and appropriate parties regarding feedback on proposed private members Bill M216.

DELEGATION

Katya Masnyk, of The Regulator's Practice, provided an overview and update on the Strategic Assessment of Professional Governance Engagement and Research Project being undertaken under the RPP Regulation Subcommittee of the Policy & Public Affairs Committee.

MEETING MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meetings held on September 26th, 2025, and November 17th, 2025.

PRESIDENT

Kenna Jonkman RPP, MCIP provided an update on various activities as President.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

The Board reviewed the 2025 unaudited financial statements to September 30th, 2025, for information.

Executive Director Dave Crossley reported on the ongoing and key projects, initiatives, and activities at the PIBC office.

The Board also received and discussed an update and work the work plan for the development of long-term financial planning, budget & reserves policy, for information.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Board received and discussed an update bulletin from the national Professional Standards Board (PSB) for information, and in particular the PSB's removal of the requirement for new applicants for professional membership to be already actively employed in planning before they apply for assessment for membership. It was noted that amendments to the Institute's bylaws would be required to align with the revised national standard for admission to Candidate membership. The Board referred the development of the appropriate bylaw amendments to the Governance and Nominating Committee, for subsequent approval by the Board.

The Board also discussed recent Board member engagement with new and prospective members regarding their experience with the PLAR process, and ongoing policy work relating to readmission of former members who are senior practitioners.

INSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS & BUSINESS

A brief update on the activities of the university planning program at SFU was provided by the student member representative from the program. There was some further discussion regarding dispersing student conference funding through an annual conference discount code and potential solutions to address accessibility barriers when providing student funding for the annual conference. It was agreed that staff will explore developing solutions to address these matters.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & BUSINESS

Justice, Equity, Diversity, Decolonization, Inclusion and Accessibility: The Board formally approved the name change of the JEDDI working group to the Justice, Equity, Diversity, Decolonization, Inclusion and Accessibility (JEDDIA) working group.

Policy & Public Affairs: The Board received and discussed an update relating to private members Bill M216 and next steps noting that the Institute will be preparing a submission to the standing committee of the Legislature expression opposition to the proposed Bill as drafted, along with feedback on the Bill, for the Board's review and approval.

The Board reviewed and discussed an update from the Housing Task Force on the Peer Learning Network (PLN) noting that the timeline of the PLN has been extended and that research initiatives are underway including ongoing work on Housing Advisory Bulletins, and a Pilot Intelligent Inventory project.

The Board also received an update from the RPP Regulation Subcommittee of the Policy & Public Affairs Committee on the implementation of the Professional Governance
Research and Engagement Project, noting that diverse feedback was received during recent focus group sessions held, and that further engagement and analysis is underway. It was also noted that that there are intersections between the PGA engagement work and the proposed Bill M216.

Professional Standards & Certification: The Board approved the admission of a number of new members including 27 Certified, 7 Candidate, 2 Pre-Candidate, and 36 Students. The Board also approved and or noted a number of membership transfers, resignations, and other changes.

The Board moved to closed session to discuss a matter *in camera*.

NEXT MEETING(S)

It was noted that the next regular meeting would take place on January 30th, 2026, in Victoria, BC, in conjunction with meetings with representatives of the Province of BC.

On **January 30, 2026**, the PIBC Board of Directors met in Victoria, BC.

It was acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen speaking peoples of the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations.

It was noted that the afternoon prior to the regular Board meeting, the Board held a working session with representatives from the Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Housing & Municipal Affairs. Updates were provided, and a number of issues of mutual interest and opportunities for potential collaboration were discussed.

The Board confirmed previous electronic resolution endorsing the PIBC submission to the Standing Committee of the BC Legislature regarding Private Members' Bill M216 (Professional Reliance Act).

DELEGATION

Deborah Jensen RPP, MCIP, RPP Regulation Sub-Committee Chair, and Bradley Chisholm and Katya Masnyk, of The Regulator's Practice presented an overview of the Strategic Assessment of Professional Governance report.

MEETING MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on November 28th, 2025.

PRESIDENT

Kenna Jonkman RPP, MCIP provided an update on various activities as President.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

The Board reviewed the 2025 unaudited financial statements to November 30th, 2025, for information. It was noted that there are variances in expenditures and reduced revenues in certain key areas with a larger than anticipated deficit expected. It was noted that further year-end adjustments and expenses yet to be made to the unaudited financial statements.

Executive Director Dave Crossley reported on the ongoing and key projects, initiatives, and activities at the PIBC office.

The Board reviewed and discussed and update on the progress and development of long-term financial planning, budget & reserves policy work, noting that the Institute is also reviewing and identifying potential opportunities for revenue increases and expenditure reduction.

BOARD & GOVERNANCE

The Board reviewed and discussed the update relating to internal tracking and monitoring of Board resolutions and actions and suggested revisions to the format future updates.

The Board reviewed, discussed, and approved an administrative policy regarding the readmission of senior practitioners to membership who were previously long-serving RPPs.

MEMBER PROGRAMS & SERVICES

The Board reviewed, discussed, and approved the establishment and funds for a new PIBC student scholarship for the undergraduate planning program at SFU.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Board received and discussed an update bulletin from the national Professional Standards Board (PSB) for information.

Institute Representative Reports & Business
A brief update on the activities of the university planning programs at UNBC, UBC and SFU were provided by the student member representatives from these programs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & BUSINESS

Policy & Public Affairs: The Board reviewed and discussed an update from the Housing Task Force on the Peer Learning Network (PLN) and endorsed proceeding with a partnership between PIBC and Small Housing BC relating to deliver regional engagement sessions regarding small-scale multi-unit housing delivery, and to subsequently report out on the findings, outcomes and lessons learned. The Board also approved the winding down the PLN online discussion forum on or before April 9, 2026.

The Board also received an update on the work of the RPP Regulation Subcommittee on professional governance, and an update on the status of private members bill M216, noting that it was still before the standing committee of the legislature.

The Board reviewed and discussed the Strategic Assessment of Professional Governance – consultant report as circulated and presented earlier. The RPP Regulation Subcommittee were directed to proceed with further outreach and engagement relating to the project including holding an online session, conducing a final engagement survey, and convening an information meeting with PIBC Committees.

Member Engagement: The Board received and discussed an update on State and Future of the Planning Profession study noting that a consultant has been engaged to support the study and that work relating to methodology and interviews is currently underway.

The Board received and discussed an update regarding a recent session with members and prospective members regarding the membership certification process – particularly the Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) process and associated challenges and potential recommendations. The Board endorsed proceeding with providing feedback to the national Professional Standards Board (PSB) on the PLAR process based on the feedback.

Academic Liaison Subcommittee: The Board received a brief update on the work of the Subcommittee noting interest in the upcoming Board meeting in Prince George at UNBC.

Governance and Nominating Committee: The Board reviewed and approved revised terms of reference for the Professional Standards and Certification Committee.

The Board discussed the approved proceeding with a bylaw amendment process relating to the removal of the requirement for applicants for professional membership to be already employed in planning at the time of application, to streamline the application process and align with the recent national changes to requirements developed and approved by the national Professional Standards Board (PSB).

Professional Standards & Certification: The Board approved the admission of a number of new members including 5 Certified, 30 Candidate, 10 Pre-Candidate, 5 Students, and 7 Retired members. The Board also approved and or noted a number of membership transfers, resignations, and other changes.

LOCAL CHAPTERS

The Board received annual reports and approved the release of annual seed funding for the following local chapters: Fraser Valley; Kootenay – Rocky Mountain; Okanagan-Interior; South Coast; Sunshine Coast; Vancouver Island North; Vancouver Island South and the Yukon.

NEXT MEETING(S)

It was noted that the next regular meeting would take place on March 20, 2026, in Prince George, BC.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
NOVEMBER 28, 2025

Welcome New Members!

Congratulations and welcome to all the new PIBC Members!

At its meeting of November 28, 2025, it was recommended and approved by the Board to admit the following 27 Certified, 7 Candidates, 2 Pre-Candidates, and 36 Students to membership in the Institute as noted:

CERTIFIED:
Marika Butzelaar
Charly Caproff
Jean-Gabriel Chiasson
Ming Wai Chung
Allison Dominelli
Harrison Ellis
(Transfer from API)
Andrew Nisha Gnanasingarajan
Cameron Graham
Paula Hay
Hayley Inglis
Claire Lee
Samuel Loran



Laura MacTaggart
Amanda Habkirk
Hossam Meawad
Talia Mimura
Karissa Noselski
Danielle Patterson
Myfannwy Pope
Rachel Rauser
Krisha Shah
Patricia Taylor
Mikayla Tinsley
Andrew Treger
(Transfer from APPI)
Mike van der Laan
Caitlyn Wiltsie
Melanie Wittes

CANDIDATE:
Christopher Bjorgan
Mia Bojic
Khanh Duong
Christian Higham
Daniel Martin
Simarjeet Nagpal
Guangxiu Ran

PRE-CANDIDATE:
Giovanna Lia Toledo
Aidan McCulloch

STUDENT:
Ranae Babcock *(SFU-B)*
Angel Bao *(UBC)*
Michael Bukit *(UBC)*
Vincent Bulloch *(SFU)*
Natasha Burgert *(UBC)*
Zoe Cohen *(SFU)*
Florencia Comesana *(SFU-B)*
Hafsah Dastgir *(UBC)*
Christian Doran *(UBC)*
Olivia Du *(UBC)*
Diana Feng Liang *(UBC)*
Kaya Heathman *(UBC)*
Elaina Heaton *(UBC)*
Devin Hentschel *(SFU)*
Madeline Hill *(UBC)*
Sydney Ikeda *(UBC)*
Ulysses Kamps *(UBC)*
Vicky (Yea Ji) Kim *(UBC)*
Caroline Kuhn *(UBC)*
Kathleen Mills *(UNBC)*
Max Mitchell *(UBC)*
Christiane Newcombe *(SFU)*
Amanda Passero *(UBC)*
Miranda Russell *(Joint with OPPI)*
Jasper Rye *(SFU)*
Mireta Strandberg-Salmon *(UBC)*
Samantha Lucille Tancontian *(SFU)*
Graham Thibert *(SFU-B)*
Ben Torry *(UBC)*
Naiya Tsang *(UBC)*
Tyra Uppal *(McGill University)*
Lindsay White *(UBC)*
Melody Wise *(UBC)*
Robert Wisla *(University of Calgary)*
Jane Ye *(UBC)*
Rynn Zhang *(UBC)*

Member Changes

It was further recommended to and approved by the Board to grant or acknowledge the following status changes for 9 Certified and 1 Candidate members, as noted:

FROM CERTIFIED TO MEMBER ON LEAVE:
Michelle Babiuk
Jasmin Basi
Benjamin Daly
Jessi Jackman
Morgan Hillary
Glenn Morris
Regina Sadilkova
Sairah Tyler
Savannah Zachary

FROM CANDIDATE TO MEMBER ON LEAVE:
Cleo Breton

It was also noted by the Board that the following 2 Certified members had returned to active practice, thus returning to active membership:

FROM MEMBER ON LEAVE TO CERTIFIED:
Samantha Huchulak
Julie Thompson

It was further noted by the Board that the following 5 individuals ceased to be members of the Institute.

RESIGNED:
Samuel Ofoe
Scott Wiltshire
Nok (Aiden) Woo
Sara Yip
Miljana Zmukic

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
JANUARY 30, 2026

Welcome New Members!

Congratulations and welcome to all the new PIBC Members!

At its meeting of January 30, 2026, it was recommended and approved by the Board to admit the following 5 Certified, 30 Candidates, 10 Pre-Candidates, 5 Students and 7 Retired to membership in the Institute as noted

CERTIFIED:
James Demens *(Reinstate)*
Jason Ferrigan *(Joint with OPPI)*
Cara Fisher *(Reinstate)*
Lisa Larson *(Transfer from APPI)*
Mayna Vancaillie
(Transfer from CIP INTL)

CANDIDATE:
David Attema
Cody Bator
Makayla Berger
Willow Cabral
John Cabron
Laura Chow
Rishab Gaba
Natalie Gerritsen
Laura Gibson
Shiming Huang
Heather Kee
Alima Khoja
Justin Kim
Johnny Kurelek
Jake Lam
Joshua Lee

Christine LeFloch
Jennifer Maximattis-White
(Transfer APPI)
Pearl Morrison
Emma O'Reilly
Tanja Oswald
Saranya Parthiban
Tharini Prakash
Krista Robinson
Lauren Smith
Amritjot Sran
Kavita Srinivasan
James Taylor
Tamara White
Changhao Zhou

PRE-CANDIDATE:
Thor Boe
Geneva Calder
Fatima Canales Gonzalez
Jacqueline Costanzo Lima
Kelsey Hutt
Jelena Kocmaruk
Monique Macpherson
Satyam Soni
James Stanley
Kaitlyn Suzuki

STUDENT:
Frances Berardino
(Joint with OPPI –Waterloo)
Oscar Hafez *(UBC)*
Jeremy Loh *(SFU-B)*
Tammy Ma
(Joint with OPPI - Queens)
Kevin van der Meer
(Joint with APPI – Calgary)

RETIRED:
Paula Huber
Angela Letman
Gina MacKay
Eunice Mak
David McRae
Chris Sholberg
Michael Vaughhan

Member Changes

It was further recommended to and approved by the Board to grant or acknowledge the following status changes for 18 Certified and 4 Candidate members, as noted:

FROM CERTIFIED TO MEMBER ON LEAVE:
Liberty Brears
Emma Chow
Robert Conway
Janae Enns
Tomoko Hagio
Robin Hawker
Caitlin Hinton
Adrian Kopystynski
Shannon Lambie
Camille Lefrancois
Ruibin Lee
Hannah McDonald
Hollie McKeil
Jimin Park
John Reid
Sarah Sheridan
Tegan Smith
Kristi Tatebe

FROM CANDIDATE TO MEMBER ON LEAVE:
Kevin Cooper
Hussein Elhagehassan
Karin-Ann Jaques
Alisha May

It was also noted by the Board that the following 8 Certified and 3 Candidate members had returned to active practice, thus returning to active membership:

FROM MEMBER ON LEAVE TO CERTIFIED:
Kristina Bouris
Gregory Gebka
Shelby Mark
Karen Moores
Kent Munro
Erin Rennie
Dawn Smith
Taylor Zeeg

FROM MEMBER ON LEAVE TO CANDIDATE:
Emily Notley
Kai Peetoom
Loretta Pellegrino

It was further noted by the Board that the following 28 individuals ceased to be members of the Institute.

RESIGNED:
Cecila Achiam
Mark Andison
Lesley Baker
Daniel Burke
Christine Carter
Damien Crowell
Margaret Eberle
Thomas Fletcher
Corine (Cory) Gain
Steve Gauley
Devon Harlos
Samantha Huchulak
Marvin Kamenz
Boris Karn
Rhonda Maskiewich
David McLellan
Caleb Nakasaki
Joanna Patton
Cameron Power
Jordan Rea
Robert Roycroft
Deborah Sargent
Huda Suwi
Alexandrea Wallace
Cathy van Poorten
Kathleen Wilker
Cheryl Wirsz
Nathan Zemp

MEMBERSHIP TIME LIMITS:
It has been reported and confirmed by the PIBC Board of Directors on December 31, 2025, that the following individuals have reached or exceeded the prescribed time limits to remain a Candidate member and, in accordance with the Institute bylaws, ceased to be Candidate members of the Institute effective as of December 31, 2025.

Jaime Dubyna
Michael Fujii
T. Scott Low
Darren Lucas
Chelsea Medd
Rene Tardiff
James Taylor

It was further reported and noted that 60 Student members ceased to be members due to the expiration of applicable time limits on remaining as Student members.

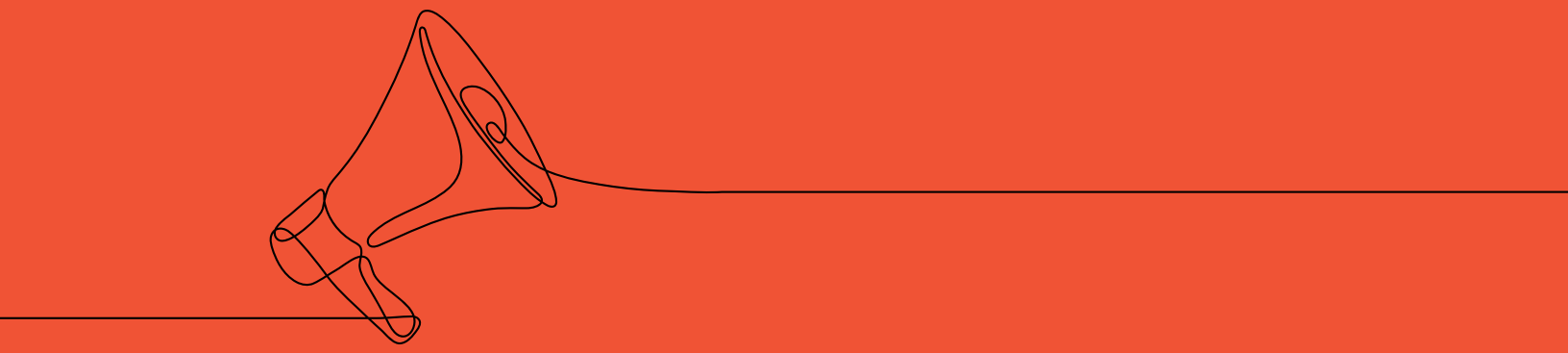




Image credit: Monique Song Overlandlady.com

KISKATINAW BRIDGE – DAWSON CREEK, BC

Thirty kilometres north of Dawson Creek, in Kiskatinaw Provincial Park, stands the first curved wooden bridge built in Canada.

Constructed from 1942 to 1943, the now historic Kiskatinaw Bridge was one of over 130 permanent bridges constructed by in partnership with the US Public Roads Administration (PRA) as part of the original highway to Alaska. The construction of the bridge, at that time, was considered a phenomenal engineering feat due to the unique curvature (a nine-degree curve spanning approximately 534 feet in length) standing 100 feet over the steep-banked Kiskatinaw River. It was the first wooden curved bridge to be built in Canada and its construction met with many challenges, including cold weather snaps that froze the concrete crucial for building the bridge.

Now listed in the Peace River Regional District's Heritage Registry and a well-known scenic and historical checkpoint within Kiskatinaw Provincial Park for campers and tourists, cars are no longer allowed to cross the Kiskatinaw Bridge but it continues to offer an inspiring view of the northern mountains and river below for those who set foot on this historical wooden structure.



Sources:
https://visitnortheastbc.ca/2021/05/05/see-the-historic-kiskatinaw-bridge/

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President of New Economy Canada





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Uytae Lee

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