

PLANNING INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

PLANNING WEST

Winter 2026

*FORWARD THINKING
SHAPING COMMUNITIES*

**WORLD TOWN
PLANNING DAY
& CELEBRATING THE
PLANNING PROFESSION**



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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), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwəta (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

PIBC celebrated new and longstanding Certified members and special guests at its 2025 World Town Planning Day Gala at the Pan Pacific Hotel located inside the iconic Canada Place (Vancouver, BC).

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President's Message



Over the last few months, I have had the opportunity to discuss the importance of the planning profession in British Columbia and the Yukon with planners, other registered professionals and elected officials. The introduction of Bill M216 *Professional Reliance Act*, currently being considered by the BC Legislative Assembly, has highlighted that registered professional planners are one of the key professions that are required to responsibly guide development and strengthen the well-being of urban and rural communities and regions.

In PIBC's submission to the Select Standing Committee reviewing Bill M216, we emphasized that what sets planning apart from other professions is the overarching ethos to uphold the public interest, actively seeking to understand and balance the goals of a multitude of stakeholders, recognize the interplay between the built and natural environments, and to ensure a future-oriented perspective on building resilient, livable, and equitable communities.

In practical terms, planners take on a variety of responsibilities, such as:

- Providing unique knowledge and expertise to help communities and decision-makers navigate local, provincial and federal regulations as they relate to land use planning and development with a future-oriented eye on the big picture;
- Coordinating and working alongside other professional practitioners from many different specialized disciplines, such as architects, engineers and building officials, in addition to working with the public, proponents, stakeholders, and decision-makers through land use planning and development processes;
- Convening and facilitating dialogues with key interests and stakeholders – proponents, developers, local government officials, other professionals, and citizens;
- Undertaking technical analysis of many key interrelated factors, such as demographics and transportation demand; plan and policy preparation that complies with laws and regulations; and
- Providing informed, knowledgeable independent professional advice and recommendations to decision-makers and clients.

As a professional organization, PIBC is committed to supporting, connecting, and advancing the planning profession in BC and the Yukon through professional certification, upholding ethical standards, continuous learning, and advocacy. I would encourage you to visit PIBC's website to read PIBC's submission to the Select Standing Committee and to keep updated on the progress of the Bill.

PIBC once again celebrated World Town Planning Day last November in Vancouver. This day provides an opportunity

to celebrate the profession, welcome and acknowledge our newest Registered Professional Planners (RPPs) and those planners celebrating the milestone of 25 years as an RPP. There were also local events held throughout BC and the Yukon by PIBC Chapters. I would like to acknowledge all the hard work that volunteers and the PIBC staff put into each event and thank everyone for celebrating our profession.

The PIBC Board held its first meeting of 2026 at the end of January. This meeting is held annually in Victoria to provide PIBC an opportunity to connect with the Province of BC (including the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs) to discuss topics of mutual interest and opportunities for ongoing dialogue and collaboration.

Lastly, as it is 2026, it's time to put the PIBC Annual Conference in your calendar! This year, the conference will be held June 2nd to 5th in Penticton, BC, and I am looking forward to connecting, learning and celebrating the hard work put in by the Okanagan Interior Chapter. Early registration is already available, so be sure to register and book your plans to join us in Penticton this June.

The annual PIBC Awards program is also underway, with submissions for our various awards for excellence in planning and individual achievement now being sought. Be sure to check out the PIBC website or the regular e-News for full details on the conference and 2026 Awards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenna'.

Kenna Jonkman RPP, MCIP

OUTLINES



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



What's Trending?

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

With the arrival of artificial intelligence into the mainstream, prompts for human-centric designs and solutions are taking center stage, especially by professionals and organizations advocating for *Universal Design* for persons with disabilities and those who are building smart cities for humans of all kinds. In this issue, we share resources from two global educators that can be applied locally to improve accessibility and “smart city” needs.

IAAP

accessibilityassociation.org

The International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP) is a member association made up of professionals and organizations that define, promote and improve accessibility for people with disabilities worldwide. A division of the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict), IAAP's mission is to build a global community to advance the fundamental human rights of persons with disabilities. When *Universal Design* principles are applied, everyone's needs are considered and accounted for while creating inclusive and sustainable built environments for all.

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.

Get Educated, Get Started

The IAAP’s online Education section offers a range of informative resources, including a searchable online database as well as webinars and podcasts. Listen to its “United in Accessibility” podcast to hear and learn from people with disabilities and their supporters on current trends for solutions and innovations that build diversity and inclusion. You can also sign up for IAAP’s newsletter which shares current accessibility developments worldwide including South Korea’s latest accessibility investments and VRBO’s ongoing improvements for inclusive options for travellers with disabilities.

www.accessibilityassociation.org/education-overview

SmartCity 2026

SMARTCITY
EXPO WORLD CONGRESS

smartcityexpo.com

Hosted in Barcelona since 2011, each year the Smart City Expo World Congress brings together leaders from global companies, governments and strategic organizations to imagine and build better cities for all. With the imminent push of AI and the latest technologies, a theme is emerging to actively shape an improved urban paradigm – one that is more sustainable, efficient and human-centered.

Not everyone may be able to attend the Expo (the next one will be in November 2026) but the Smart City World Congress Research Papers are available for everyone online. These include:

- AI Cities Strategy Conceptual Model – Application to Four Cities: New York, Buenos Aires, Barcelona and Madrid
- Citizen-Centered Generative AI for Urban Transformation
- The Caatinga as a Living Lab: Climate, Resilience and Smart Cities
- Preplanned City: BGI (Blue-Green Infrastructures) in Songdo

Take a read here:

www.visualpublications.es/SAUC/issue/view/456

Planning West Call for Submissions

Spring 2026 Issue:

Northern Horizons: Building Sustainable Communities Across the North

Submission deadline: Mar 15, 2026

Summer 2026 Issue:

PIBC 2026 Annual Conference & Awards

Submission deadline: June 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!

As part of our ongoing priority to continue delivering enhanced benefits and value to PIBC members, we are pleased to offer reduced pricing for our Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) webinars for 2026!

Pricing for individual and group member registrations are now \$22 and \$55 plus GST respectively (a reduction of approximately 50%).

Take advantage of these new prices – register and join us!

(CPL webinars are eligible for 1.5 CPL units each.)

February 25, 2026
Building Climate Resistant Communities

March 25, 2026
Practical Skills for Planners

April 29, 2026
Topic to be announced

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 latest information.

Visit the PIBC Webinars webpage www.pibc.bc.ca/pibc-webinars for information on current CPL webinars, registrations and the latest available recordings.

Visit the PIBC PLN website www.pibc.bc.ca/pln for current PLN webinars, past webinar recordings and the latest peer learning network resources.



Member in Focus

Kai Okazaki RPP, MCIP
 Social Planner at City of Burnaby and
 Co-Chair of PIBC’s Justice, Equity, Diversity,
 Decolonization, Inclusion and Accessibility
 (JEDDIA) Working Group



During PIBC’s annual World Town Planning Gala events, it is always a pleasure to hear the proud cheers and applause from colleagues, mentors, friends and family who come to celebrate and recognize those officially receiving their member certificates as new Registered Professional Planners or those who have earned the achievement of holding professional certification for 25 years or more. This past November, we were excited to have Kai Okazaki cross the stage to receive his certificate. We caught up with Kai after the celebration to learn more about how growing up in a

tight knit community in rural Alberta shaped his career path towards social planning and his thoughts, as Co-Chair, on the work ahead for the PIBC JEDDIA Working Group.

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

While I was studying natural resource conservation for my undergraduate degree at the University of British Columbia (UBC), I was introduced to the world of planning through a part-time job at the university’s Campus and Community Planning (C+CP) department. In this role, I met all sorts of dedicated, curious people (including a few planners) working on interesting projects, from campus planning and community building to climate action and transportation. I was still navigating my education and possible career paths at the time, so I wanted to learn more about their jobs, interests, and what led them to working for the university. Looking back now, what a neat opportunity this was for me! I was able to connect and hear different people’s stories of how they were all striving to serve the university community.

Through C+CP, I learned about the SCARP Symposium. UBC’s School of Community and Regional Planning held this annual event to invite professionals, academics and students for a full-day discussion on emerging planning issues. To be honest, I wasn’t familiar with the topics or issues, but I decided to register anyways. It was a good thing that I did attend because it was there that I met my future faculty advisor.

After completing my undergraduate degree, I worked a few years to gain experience elsewhere and pay down my student loans. Before applying to UBC SCARP, I spoke with a few alumni, current students and professors about the planning school. What I

took away from these conversations was that attending this program would help with my career path in becoming a planner.

When I was accepted into graduate school, I took a wide range of planning courses and still continued working part-time to support myself. It gave me the chance to work with my faculty advisors in SCARP and my former faculty (the Faculty of Forestry) who both shaped a lot of my thinking still to this day. Now as an alum, I am always reminded of the great people I met personally and professionally in the planning community. I’ve made some wonderful friends along the way, and I enjoy reconnecting with them regularly to hear about their projects. And here we are, years later, with this interview. It feels like a full circle.

Congratulations again on becoming a Certified Member and Registered Professional Planner! For others starting or going through the certification process, what advice would you share?

For those thinking about starting their RPP certification journey, I would look at the PIBC and CIP websites to understand the process, time commitment and costs. I would also recommend attending any free information sessions offered year-round. It’s also helpful to start thinking early about potential mentors and sponsors (and reading through the information that explains each role). I found it helpful to connect with a few different people to determine who might be the right fit – it might be based on your planning interest areas, or it might be the interpersonal connection that works best for you.

I found meeting with other Candidates extremely helpful while going through the certification process. I was fortunate to know a few other people who were going through the ethics & professionalism course at the



I organized a birthday fundraiser in response to the Jasper wildfires in 2024. Collectively, we raised \$2,500 for the Jasper Community Team Society with friends and their loved ones (some are not captured in the photo but made contributions to the fund).

Top left: Receiving my RPP certificate at the PIBC 2025 World Town Planning Day Gala (Nov 2025).

same time as me. We talked about the course content and questions, prepared for the exam together, and met as a group throughout the year (which usually included spicy bánh mì for dinner). This built some studying accountability and helped us all plan and prepare for the final professional exam. An added bonus - we had a mix of working professionals in different sectors and fields of planning which provided broader perspectives and context throughout our conversations.

I also took my time getting my certification. I could have started this process shortly after graduating, however, I found that when I started working, I was eager to learn a lot early on in my career and focused on advancing my career through work experience. Working on a range of projects actually gave me insight into what planners *actually do*. Over time, this allowed me to build my understanding of the skills and competencies needed as part of the certification process.

Did growing up in a small rural town in Alberta influence your decision to make planning your profession? How did social planning become your passion and area of professional focus?

People still find it interesting that I grew up in a National Park – in Jasper, Alberta. Not many people can say that, so I understand the intrigue. For those that are unfamiliar with Jasper, the town resides in a National Park on the border between BC and Alberta. It is still, in many ways, my home, as my family still lives there today.

One of many things that made Jasper a special place to grow up, and likely similar in other smaller communities, was the people. You get to know the people – and each other – quite well and this really builds a strong bond in the town.

For me, growing up in a small town was my blueprint to what a 'sense of community' means – knowing your neighbours, caring for one another and uplifting others when they need it. During the recent 2024 Jasper wildfire, I am so grateful for the surrounding small towns and many other communities that immediately took care of my family, friends, neighbours, and the people I grew up knowing for many years. Even though everyone made it out safely, there is still a long road ahead to rebuilding the town to what it used to be. Through all of this, I still believe that the community resilience is there and it is holding strong.

In Jasper, I was really shaped by the people who showed me the importance and strengths of community building. I think this deeply influenced how I show up for myself in my professional life and goals that I want to achieve. To me, the field of social planning

is the people part of planning that focuses on community building. I naturally gravitate towards this type of work and how relational planning is. It takes two (likely many more) to tango and this is evident as we tackle complex social issues that no single entity can address alone. At this point in my career, I find the work rewarding and meaningful to the communities and partners that I am so fortunate to collaborate and share this experience with. No two days are the same and I am grateful to listen, learn and work in communities on their ongoing and emergent needs.

Thank you for your volunteer work as Co-Chair of PIBC's Justice, Equity, Diversity, Decolonization, Inclusion and Accessibility (JEDDIA) Working Group. What motivated you to volunteer and what do you identify as a top potential opportunity or challenge to successfully integrating JEDDIA into the planning profession?

I was interested in volunteering and joining the JEDDIA Working Group to better connect with PIBC and to learn more about what this work could look like for the institute. I also wanted to support the broader JEDDIA work within the planning profession and improve my connections with other members in BC and the Yukon who are also passionate about this topic.

I appreciate getting to work with my Co-Chair and PIBC Board member, Eve Hou RPP, MCIP. Together, we have been navigating a lot of very tough questions with the working group on what and how the JEDDIA project process would look like. As we are still working through the project, I think identifying concrete actions while balancing people's different views and understanding of JEDDIA will be a challenge, but this is also a great learning opportunity. As a group, we look forward in providing some recommendations on how JEDDIA work can be integrated into the planning profession.

Beyond work, do you have a favourite activity or way to unwind?

I have recently recovered from a knee surgery, so I am back to my running, strength training and soccer regiments. My e-reader has multiple books on-the-go, so keeping up with those at a coffee shop is nice (I seem to enjoy memoirs of former political figures).

This year, my partner and I recently moved into a new place, so finding ways to make the space feel like home is my current project. If anyone has some good ideas on interesting art pieces, reach out and let me know!

Lastly, I want to give a special note of thanks to Kate, Jenna and Jean for their kind advice on this interview and for being the best RPP study group!

Planning Podcasts

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

City Talk Canada Podcast from Canadian Urban Institute (CUI): Barrie's mayor on declaring an emergency over encampments

Podcast summary by: Steffi Sunny Communications Committee Member with special thanks to Sidney Elliott, PIBC Student Member & Community Planner at Urban Systems, for recommending this podcast.

Run time: 28 minutes

Host: Mary Rowe, President & CEO of the Canadian Urban Institute

Guest: Alex Nuttal, Mayor of Barrie, Ontario

Podcast link
youtube.com/watch?v=5WWDK0UNm0zw

Podcast Summary

Across the country, people are increasingly turning to encampments for shelter. These informal communities spotlight many complex challenges, from housing affordability to substance use and mental

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



health issues. Encampments also present challenges to the social and economic functioning of neighborhoods and downtown areas.

For the last few years, CUI has been talking with community leaders, stakeholders with lived experience, civic organizations and business operators to look for mutually respectful, effective solutions to ensure Canadian cities are accessible, safe and equitable for everyone. In this episode, Mary talks with Alex Nuttal, Mayor of Barrie in Ontario, to discuss what led to his decision to declare a state of emergency and how he intends to move forward given the limits of the city's power.

Why Planners Should Listen

This podcast addresses an issue that remains prominent in many Canadian communities, including those in British Columbia and the Yukon. It features the City of Barrie which, despite its geographic distance from BC, faces similar challenges. Urban planners acknowledge the existence of social and economic barriers affecting communities provincially, nationally, and globally. Developing effective strategies to navigate these challenges is integral to contemporary planning practice.

Mayor Nuttal brings over two decades of service across multiple levels of government and shares his efforts to implement initiatives aimed at reducing homeless encampments, as well as associated drug and crime concerns within Barrie. In response to many years of criminal incidents and the continued declining levels of local safety, he declared Barrie in a 'state of emergency' to get actions rolling out immediately. His focus is on fostering a safer city environment for all residents and delivering targeted support and resources to individuals most in need of help. Nuttal further observes that federal government intervention is required, attributing this need to insufficient action and accountability in addressing these crises.

The mayor also discusses the complexities introduced by safe consumption sites, which created additional challenges in Barrie and elsewhere in Canada. He expresses his belief that these sites should not be implemented at all, and that continued disruptive behavior by individuals who decline available assistance should not be permitted, and that such individuals may be served a trespassing notice.

This podcast showcases one community's approach towards problems such as public substance use, drug related crimes and extreme homelessness within their municipality. What lessons might it provide for other communities elsewhere?



Spacing Radio Podcast, Episode 90: Bless This Urban Mess

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

Run time: 57 minutes

Host: Glyn Bowerman, Spacing Radio

Guests: Dylan Reid, Zahra Ebrahim, Leslie Woo — Co-Editors of *Messy Cities*; and Danielle Goldfinger, Executive Director of The Laneway Project

Podcast link

<https://spacing.ca/toronto/2025/10/14/podcast-spacing-radio-90-bless-this-urban-mess/>

Podcast summary

Change in cities is often slow when using official channels. There is a desire to achieve the perfect plan, one that balances everyone's needs and preferences but sometimes you need to get down and dirty. In this episode, this host talks to three of the co-editors of the new book *Messy Cities: Why We Can't Plan Everything*. Spacing Executive Editor Dylan Reid, public interest designer Zahra Ebrahim, and CivicAction CEO Leslie Woo talk about this collection of essays that embraces the beautiful messiness of urban communities. Danielle Goldfinger, executive director of The Laneway Project, also shares details of a project aimed at helping communities make the most of their laneways.

Why Planners Should Listen

Bless This Urban Mess explores tensions in modern urban planning. The episode is centered around this provocative question: Would our cities be more lively and more livable if we just "broke the rules" a little more often?

Drawing inspiration from the book *Messy Cities: Why We Can't Plan Everything*, the conversation unpacks the yin and yang of urban development. Cities need structure but they also need openness, improvisation, and the freedom for people to shape spaces from the ground up.

The guests reflect on how urban migration (people arriving from somewhere else and remaking their lives in a city) naturally produces complexity, diversity, and, yes, messiness. So, if cities are inherently messy, then trying to eliminate messiness through bylaws and extreme regulatory planning may undermine what makes a city a city.

Rather than romanticizing disorder, the podcast carefully acknowledges the real challenges tied to noise, conflict, inequity, and safety that come with messy cities. At the same time, it highlights how "cleaning up" urban messiness can unintentionally clean out the very people, cultures and activities that make cities vibrant.

The discussion questions whether our regulatory impulses have gone too far. Why does a neighborhood spend years debating a single corner store, or get mired in controversy over essential health services like safe consumption sites? At what point does regulation and planning become paralysis? Guests talk about the book's core argument that crowded streets, eclectic architecture, graffiti, street vendors, and the broader "kaleidoscopic city" are signs of urban vitality rather than poor governance.

Two Toronto examples ground these ideas:

- Kensington Market: A neighborhood that has resisted gentrification enough to preserve its personality, multiculturalism, informality, and spontaneity, qualities that make it one of Toronto's most beloved districts.
- Laneway Revitalization Projects: Community-led transformations where residents, businesses, and organizations work together to turn utilitarian laneways into welcoming, multi-use public spaces, complete with local art, pedestrian lighting, safety measures, and green elements.

Overall, the episode offers a thoughtful, hopeful lens on the future of cities. It invites listeners to reconsider what we regulate, why we regulate it, and whether the pursuit of order sometimes works against the very urban life we're trying to improve.



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

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

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A Night for the Profession: PIBC's World Town Planning Day Gala

Jared Kassel RPP, MCIP, PMP *Planning West* Editor



On the evening of Saturday, November 8, 2025, the Pan Pacific in downtown Vancouver filled with the excitement of catch-up conversations, the clink of glasses and the familiar slap of name tags — signs that the planning profession had come together in force. The Planning Institute of British Columbia's World Town Planning Day gala returned this year with the purpose of a profession that, increasingly, is being asked to solve some of the most consequential questions facing communities today: how we house people, move people, protect the environment, and bind diverse voices into a single, liveable city. The event gathered planners from across B.C. and the Yukon to honour new members, long-serving members and to hear reflections from senior voices in the profession.

The keynote speaker of the evening was Oleg Verbenkov RPP, MCIP, founding principal of Pacific Land Group, who closed the

night with a reflective oral history of his more than four-decade career. Verbenkov began his planning journey in 1981 as a Planning Assistant with the City of Surrey, and his presentation traced the evolution of both his practice and the profession itself. He guided the audience from an era of dusty council chambers, hand-typed reports, and hand-drawn maps to today's planning landscape shaped by data, modelling, and even artificial intelligence. More than a catalogue of projects, Verbenkov's talk offered a thoughtful reflection on how planning has matured in its understanding of the public good, risk assessment, and the long arc of development decision-making.

As a mid-career planner myself, what resonated most was Oleg's blend of detail (through lived experience), and human scale. He described early career projects — heritage conservation efforts, complex industrial

build-to-suits and community design exercises — with the kind of specificity that reveals the daily craftsmanship of planning. He credited mentors, recounted setbacks and, crucially, foregrounded the ethical choices that planners make when technical trade-offs meet community values. Oleg's humour and the modesty of his storytelling invited the room to consider planning as both a technical discipline and an ongoing conversation with place. His talk felt like a passing of the baton: a reminder that institutional knowledge — the lessons learned on specific sites, with specific political realities and neighbours — remains indispensable even as tools change.

The program was rounded out by a slate of respected leaders from across the profession. Lesley Cabott RPP, FCIP, President of the Canadian Institute of Planners, spoke briefly and emphasized the national picture: climate resilience, equitable growth and the imperative



to build planning capacity in municipalities of all sizes. Keri-Ann Austin, President of the Local Government Management Association, spoke to the operational challenges local governments face in turning policy into built reality, and the need for stronger collaboration between administrators and planners. Dan Huang RPP, MCIP — an established voice within CIP and a frequent presence in regional planning conversations — offered reflections on professional responsibility and the need to keep planning's ethical compass aligned with public trust. Their remarks underscored that while the challenges are shared, the solutions require coordination across disciplines and jurisdictions.

A central and celebratory element of the evening was the recognition of newly accredited Registered Professional Planners (RPPs) and those marking long service. The stage saw the awarding of pins and certificates, and

during this portion of the evening a generational cross-section was on display: newly minted RPPs fresh from graduate programs and pathway exams beside colleagues with 25 years or more of service. Pacific Land Group's announcement of Oleg's 25+ years of certified membership mirrored the evening's theme — that institutional memory, mentorship and formal professionalization all matter to a field that is often judged by its results decades after a project is completed.

Beyond awards and speeches, the gala provided an informal yet important forum

for networking and discussion. Conversations over dinner ranged from density bonusing and affordable housing delivery to the inclusion of Indigenous reconciliation in project approvals. There was much talk about the evolving tools of the trade — how GIS, scenario modelling and emerging AI tools change the planner's workflow — but equally strong was a concern that technology must not replace the relational work that is at the heart of planning. From a personal perspective, I left the night hopeful: inspired by senior colleagues' long view and excited by the sense that the profession is

welcoming new approaches while protecting core values.

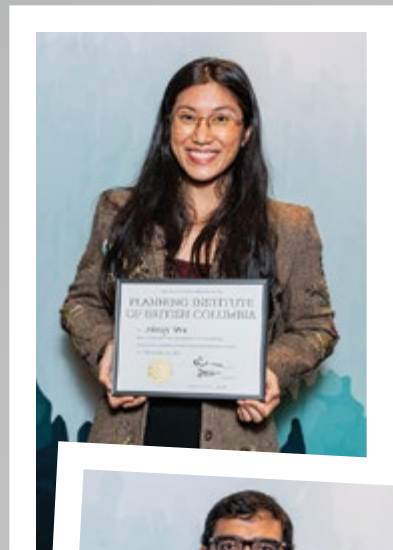
Celebrated on November 8th in many countries, World Town Planning Day was founded to raise public awareness about planning's role in creating sustainable, equitable communities. The celebration is global in scope; in many places it's a moment to reflect on the profession's past achievements and future responsibilities. At the gala, a brief segment traced the day's origins and its growth into an international moment of solidarity among planning organizations — an appropriate framing for an evening that drew together municipal staff, consultants, academics and provincial regulators. The history of WTPD serves as a reminder that while planning's methods evolve, its core mission — shaping better places for people — remains constant.

What came through in table conversations after Oleg's keynote was recognition for planners who steward a long career without losing a capacity to adapt. Oleg's own narrative — moving from hand-drawn plans and hand-written council reports to projects that now require digital engagement strategies, environmental modelling and multi-stakeholder consensus building — inferred the broader story of planning's modernization. He encouraged younger planners to become conversant in both the technical and human aspects of their work: utilize all the technology that is available, but also don't neglect the conversations that create trust. His mix of humour, humility and judgement made his message feel less like a lecture and more like mentorship.

The night was not without its sober moments. Speakers acknowledged the scale of the challenges ahead — housing shortages, climate-linked infrastructure needs, and the social inequities that planning must address. But those acknowledgements were accompanied by pragmatic optimism: examples of successful policy adjustments, evidence-based transit investments, and rapidly proliferating partnerships between municipalities and community groups. While the profession cannot solve structural problems alone, it remains uniquely positioned to bridge the technical, the political and the social.

This was the second WTPD gala I have attended, and I find that it offers more than a ceremonial pat on the back; it provides a platform where institutional memory meets the future. Oleg Verbenkov's four-decade practice is a testament that planning is a career of patience, craft and public service. The new RPPs, the long-service members, and the leadership voices from CIP and LGMA who shared the stage all emphasized that the future of planning depends on the concept





PIBC members in attendance and receiving recognition at the 2025 World Town Planning Day gala. Congratulations to the many new and long serving RPPs!

of learning from past experiences while embracing future innovation. For anyone watching the profession from a distance: planning matters, people in planning matter, and the work goes on.

If there was a single takeaway from the gala event, it was that planning is an intergenerational project: one that needs the institutional memory of experienced practitioners like Oleg Verbenkov, the stewardship of professional bodies like CIP and LGMA, and the energy of a new cohort of RPPs ready to shape the next four decades.

Jared Kassel, RPP, MCIP, PMP is the Editor of *Planning West* magazine. Jared has been a planning practitioner for 20+ years, working in both B.C. and Alberta in both the private and public sectors. Currently he is the Manager of Planning at the District of Peachland.



100 Years of Zoning: Part 2

Bill Buholzer FCIP

In Part 1 of this article, published in the Summer 2025 issue of *Planning West* magazine, we examined the context surrounding the enactment of British Columbia's 1925 Town Planning Act. This included planning influences from Britain, the United States, and other Canadian provinces; model planning legislation promoted by the Commission of Conservation and its town planning advisor, Thomas Adams; and the Act's provisions authorizing the preparation of official town plans.

Zoning Bylaws: land use control and an opportunity to be heard

The scope of zoning regulations authorized under the *Town Planning Act* was limited to the use of land and the use, height, bulk and siting of buildings; development standards were required to be uniform throughout the designated districts. (Municipal councils were enabled, but not required, to indicate future zoning district boundaries with their respective land use regulations in the official town plan.) Management of the architectural design or appearance of buildings was not within the scope of a zoning bylaw; this would eventually be permitted generally under the Vancouver Charter and on the University Endowment Lands, and for buildings other than single-family dwellings by way of the development permit system under the Local Government Act. A municipal council enacting zoning regulations under the *Town Planning Act* was required to "have due regard" to six enumerated considerations (which would be retained in the zoning enabling legislation for decades and can still be found in the recitals to some B.C. zoning bylaws):

- the promotion of public health, safety, convenience and welfare;
- the prevention of overcrowding and the preservation of the amenity of residential districts;
- the securing of adequate access, light and air;
- the suitability of districts for particular uses;
- the conservation of property values;
- the direction of development.

The Commission of Conservation had strongly emphasized the promotion of public health as a principal concern for town planning – a focus that garnered support from organizations like local boards of trade that might otherwise have been at best ambivalent about planning legislation.

Procedurally, the Act required the Council to afford to “all persons who might be affected by the proposed bylaw” an opportunity to be heard on the matters covered in a zoning bylaw. This language would be amended in 1928 to require a hearing at which “all persons who deem themselves affected by the proposed bylaw shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard”. To what extent has this early shift in wording from “might be affected” (suggesting an objective test of standing to speak at a hearing) to “deem themselves affected” (indicating a subjective test) been responsible for the subsequent evolution of public hearing practices in B.C., including the affording of opportunities to be heard on proposed land use changes to pretty much anyone who shows up at a hearing?¹ Also added in 1928 was authority for the Council to, without further notice, “give such effect as it deems fit to representations made at the hearing” – authority that would subsequently be narrowed (but not in Vancouver) by limiting post-hearing density reductions and prohibiting post-hearing changes in permitted land use.

In relation to amendment and repeal of a zoning bylaw, the 1925 Act permitted owners to “protest” such a bylaw. If at least 20% of the owners of affected street frontage (or properties across the street or lane from affected frontage) presented their protest prior to the public hearing, the bylaw could be adopted only by a 3/5 vote of all members of Council. This feature would be repealed.

The *Town Planning Act* contained simple provisions dealing with non-conforming uses, withholding of building permits during Council consideration of a zoning bylaw “when the Council is of opinion that the construction of the building would interfere with the work of zoning”, and property being deemed not to be taken or injuriously affected by the passage of a zoning bylaw – the “no compensation” rule that continues in both the *Local Government Act* and the *Vancouver Charter*. This rule replaced provisions of the Commission of Conservation’s model Act that required compensation for impairment of land value attributable to planning but also subjected owners to a planning betterment levy that anticipated (by a half-century) “land value capture” mechanisms such as community amenity contributions. Zoning boards

of appeal were given jurisdiction to relax the zoning bylaw not only where literal enforcement would create “unnecessary hardship”, but also where an appellant was simply dissatisfied with the decision of an official charged with the administration or enforcement of the bylaw. The latter aspect of board of variance jurisdiction survives only under the *Vancouver Charter*.

Town Planning Commissions: citizen planners

In the early 20th century, town planning was often initiated by civic associations and civic-minded individuals rather than local politicians or planning professionals. The preparation of Vancouver’s first city plan, for example, was overseen by the Vancouver City Planning Commission, which engaged the U.S. firm Harland Bartholomew & Associates to prepare the plan. The *Town Planning Act* accommodated this approach by authorizing the creation of town planning commissions acting in an advisory capacity to the Council. Once a TPC was established, any proposed zoning bylaw had to be referred for recommendations on appropriate district boundaries and associated regulations. This was not required for official town plans, though councils could have chosen to refer a proposed plan to their TPC. Any proposal to undertake public works that were not consistent with an adopted official plan (which a council could approve by a vote of 2/3 of its members) had first to be referred to the TPC for consideration and report. (Such works now cannot be undertaken under any circumstances.) Apart from some provisions for *ex officio* TPC membership for mayors (eventually replaced by a prohibition on elected official participation in these advisory bodies), and the mandatory referral of proposed zoning bylaws (all such referrals are now discretionary), the current enabling provisions for advisory planning commissions in the *Local Government Act* and *Vancouver Charter* differ very little from those in the 1925 *Town Planning Act*.

Launching the Legislation: building attractive cities

Having granted Royal Assent to the *Town Planning Act*, the Lieutenant-Governor in closing the second session of the Sixteenth Parliament towards the end of 1925 mentioned the Act as a highlight of the session: “The Town Planning Bill is designed to encourage a more scientific and better-adjusted system governing the erection of buildings in populous centres, and should be the means of imparting an added attractiveness

to our growing cities.” This mildly-stated enthusiasm for planning can be contrasted with Herbert Hoover’s preface to the revised 1926 version of the Department of Commerce’s Standard State Zoning Enabling Act, in which he boasted that the “discovery that it is practical by city zoning to carry out reasonable neighbourhood agreements as to the use of land has made an almost instant appeal to the American people”, citing the enactment of 170 new city zoning ordinances in the U.S. between September of 1921 and the end of 1923, and more than 200 more by the end of 1925. In our province, by the 1960s most municipalities of any significant size had adopted official plans and enacted zoning regulations, with only a handful of regional district electoral areas steadfastly resisting the allure of zoning. No B.C. municipality or regional district seems ever to have repealed its official plan or zoning bylaw without replacing it, and recent changes to Part 14 of the *Local Government Act* related to housing supply have eliminated that option. With the addition of tools like rental tenure zoning and inclusionary zoning (which would perhaps not have had “instant appeal to the American people” 100 years ago), our planning and zoning tools have been modestly updated to deal with 21st century land use management issues. Whether the “attractiveness of our growing cities” mentioned in the Legislature 100 years ago can be further enhanced by means of land use regulations that support or require a broader range of housing opportunities than B.C.’s planning legislation has produced so far, will be a principal concern as our planning legislation enters its second century.

Bill Buholzer FCIP is a retired municipal lawyer. He has taught planning law at the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning and at Vancouver Island University and is the author of *British Columbia Planning Law and Practice*.

¹A footnote to the U.S. Department of Commerce Standard State Zoning Enabling Act asserted that both “parties in interest” and citizens generally *Local Government Act* should have an opportunity to be heard because “it is right that every citizen should be able to make his voice heard and protest any ordinance that might be detrimental to the best interests of the city” – not, it may be noted in relation to the NIMBY phenomenon, detrimental to their own best interests.

PIBC's Professional Governance Research and Engagement Project – A Focus on You!

Deborah Jensen RPP, MCIP (Chair, RPP Regulation Sub-Committee, PIBC Policy & Public Affairs Committee)

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

Since the Fall of 2024, PIBC and its RPP Regulation Subcommittee has been actively engaging with our membership about professional governance. This follows from the PIBC Board direction in December 2023 to undertake outreach and education about the *Professional Governance Act* (PGA) and its opportunities and implications for PIBC and its membership. This includes engaging PIBC members about professional standards and the PGA, presenting research and analysis on issues identified, and addressing potential opportunities and tradeoffs.

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. So far, six professions

have been regulated under the PGA, including architects and engineers; but does not yet include planning professionals. No action has been taken by either PIBC or the provincial government that would lead to planners being regulated by this legislation. The current project is in no way intended to result in a decision on whether the planning profession should be regulated under the PGA; but rather to gather and analyze information regarding the pros and cons of such a move should it occur, and to provide a comprehensive review to the Board to further inform future decision-making.

A comprehensive approach to professional governance was developed to engage and educate the membership, including numerous activities that have now been completed:

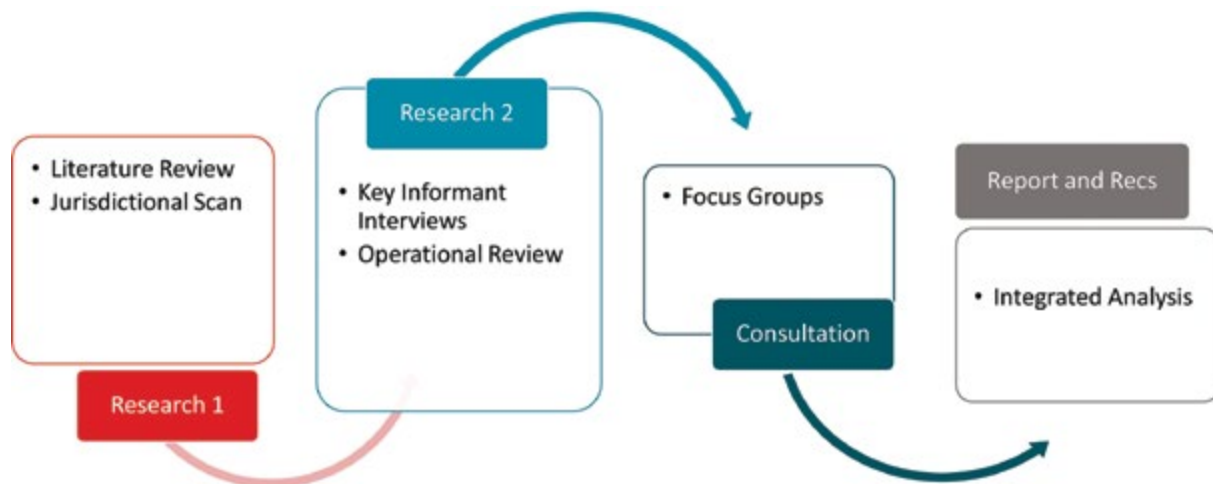
- ✓ Initial engagement survey with PIBC membership;
- ✓ Discussions with other organizations operating under the PGA or similar legislation;

- ✓ Publication of articles in *Planning West* (see Fall 2024 and Spring, Summer and Fall 2025 issues);
- ✓ Initial webinar introducing the Project;
- ✓ Session at the annual PIBC conference; and
- ✓ Consultation with PIBC membership through focus group sessions.

As previously reported, PIBC retained the services of The Regulator's Practice to undertake a strategic assessment of professional governance for the planning profession in BC. Their work includes background research, preparation and facilitation of nine focus groups, and an overall synthesis and integration of all research and information gleaned from the membership and elsewhere (see **Figure 1: Focus Group Process**).

Focus groups were completed in the Fall of 2025. A request for participation was issued to the PIBC membership in September, resulting in 93 responses. In the end, 69 members participated in a total of nine focus groups.

Figure 1: Focus Group Process



The majority of participants came from the Okanagan, Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, but also included five planners from the Yukon (see **Figure 2: Focus Group Demographics**).

Why conduct focus groups as part of this project? The groups provided an opportunity to hear directly from planners to gauge the level of knowledge about the PGA, and to identify those topics of importance to the membership. They are not unbiased activities, but rather a qualitative research method where participants can express their current points of view. And while the majority of participants indicated a limited knowledge of the PGA, and so comments may not be directly related to the PGA, the fulsome discussion that occurred within the groups showed what the issues are from a ‘front line’ perspective. The focus groups provided valuable qualitative input to help inform future decisions of the Board regarding the PGA and PIBC initiatives.

Going into the focus groups, several topic areas were identified to help steer the discussion. We wanted to hear from the members about the public interest mandate and prevention of risk of harm to the public; reserved practice and what that means for the planning profession; changes to government oversight; and potential operational changes for PIBC and the impact on members and administration. While these topics were covered in all groups, some particular areas received more attention than others.

Public interest and risk of harm was a topic of much discussion across all nine focus groups. Specifically, the issue of ‘risk of harm’ was considered to be usually of a longer time frame - within the scope of planning decisions, as compared to an engineering project, for example. Participants also identified that some aspects of planning, such as transportation policy or development planning affecting floodplains or climate change considerations, would have a greater impact on the

public interest and risk of harm than other types of planning.

A challenging discussion took place regarding the idea of reserved practice. Participants did discuss reserved practice in depth but recognized that it would be difficult to define given the broad scope of planning practice. The bulk of the discussion focused on unintended consequences of reserved practice, potentially resulting in creating exclusivity, diminishing diversity within the profession, and negatively impacting smaller communities with limited resources.

Participants did voice concern that the change to government oversight would limit the advocacy work undertaken by PIBC. The greatest concern, relating to the change in regulation and membership, was that the planning profession could become more exclusionary, and this might affect PIBC’s commitment to diversity and reconciliation, particularly with respect to First Nations.

Figure 2: Focus Group Demographics



Figure 3: Focus Group Summary



There was limited discussion regarding any operational changes to PIBC that may occur should the planning profession fall under the PGA. What conversation did take place focused on the potential for fee increases, with approximately 70% of participants concerned about cost increases. The remaining 30% saw possible fee increases as the “cost of doing business,” with fees ultimately passed along.

In the end, one focus group indicated full support for the planning profession falling under the PGA. Participants felt such a move would increase public trust, garner greater respect and recognition as a profession, and result in greater accountability. Six of the nine focus groups indicated a preference to retain the status quo and not seek regulation under the PGA. These participants indicated that planners already act in the public interest, and it would be too complicated to define ‘planning’ and establish a scope for reserved practice. The remaining two focus groups felt they needed additional information prior to indicating a preference for inclusion under the

PGA (see Figure 3: Focus Group Summary).

Overall, the participants were very engaged in the discussion and indicated the groups had been a positive experience. They also expressed their satisfaction with PIBC, stating that they believe the Institute supports members in both this project and other initiatives. And PIBC would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants for their input through the focus group sessions.

At the time of writing, the expectation is for the consultant to deliver a strategic assessment report in January that presents an analysis of the high-level pros, cons, and tradeoffs of professional governance options, and includes an analysis of information gleaned from the focus groups. PIBC will conduct a second member survey and webinar in February; and then the Board will take the entire body of information generated to determine the appropriate path ahead.¹

The project webpage (www.pibc.bc.ca/professionalgovernance) continues to be updated to make information available to the

membership, providing FAQ resources, PGA information, the project Work Plan, Planning West articles and more. So please stay up to date with this web page and take every opportunity to provide feedback through the engagement activities.

Deborah Jensen RPP, MCIP is the Principal and Senior Planner of PlanningWorks Consulting, and a regular consultant with JRTW Planning Services. With over 25 years of volunteer experience with PIBC, Deborah is currently the Chair of the RPP Regulation Subcommittee.

¹The 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 now sits with the Select Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members’ Bills for consideration. This proposed Bill may have an impact on future decisions regarding this professional governance project.



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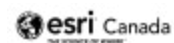
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75 Years of Planning Education at UBC: Celebrating the Past and Preparing for the Future

Mark Stevens RPP, MCIP, James Connolly, Jessica Barudin, Andi Binet, Holly Caggiano (Candidate Member), Kuni Kamizaki, and Theo Lim

Greetings from the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at the University of British Columbia! We have exciting news to share: SCARP turns 75 years old in 2026, and to celebrate our “Diamond Anniversary” we are currently planning “SCARP 75”, a series of activities and events that spotlight the impacts our alumni and faculty have had on cities over the years by extending the SCARP History Project that began with our 60th anniversary. While we cannot capture it all, we will be gathering and sharing stories from our past with an eye toward lessons for future planning education. Please keep an eye out for these stories and related events on our social media and website.

For now, we would like to update you on recent additions to our School’s faculty. SCARP was a small School from its founding in 1951 into the late 1960s, with 3-4 faculty members during that time. But just as the scope of the planning field has expanded from an early focus on land use and physical design to a contemporary focus on broader issues of social equity, participatory planning, and even decolonization, SCARP too has grown in recent years in both number of faculty and scope of planning-related topics that we study and teach.

We have been fortunate to hire several new faculty in recent years that help to keep us young and (hopefully!) on the cutting edge of planning research and teaching. In fact, our School’s faculty has undergone a major generational transition in recent years to the point that many of our alumni would probably not recognize most of the faces that now occupy SCARP’s classrooms and offices.

Since 2018, we have added seven new Assistant Professors, two Associate Professors, and two (full) Professors, as well as one part-time Assistant Professor of Teaching and one part-time Lecturer. Those of us who have been at SCARP for a while are grateful to witness firsthand the energy and fresh ideas that these new colleagues bring to planning research and education at SCARP, and we would like to share our excitement with the planning



Theo Lim and his students at Virginia Tech University, facilitating a “serious game” to help Roanoke High School Students explore resident preferences in parks planning

community in B.C. by briefly introducing you to some of these new folks and the innovative research they are conducting as we speak. In particular, it is our great pleasure to introduce new Assistant Professors Jessica Barudin, Andi Binet, Holly Caggiano, and Kuni Kamizaki, and new Associate Professor Theo Lim, each of whom joined SCARP in the past two years.

Jessica Barudin is Kwakwaka’wakw and a member and elected leader of the ‘Namgis First Nation. As such, she brings personal knowledge and understanding to her teaching in SCARP’s Indigenous Community Planning concentration. Jessica believes in relationship-centered and holistic approaches to community planning and wellness. Her doctoral research involved partnering with Kwakwaka’wakw and other First Nations

women to co-create and implement a culturally-responsive, trauma-informed community wellness program, including a focus on physical movement and yoga. On that note, yoga has become a very important part of Jessica’s community-centred work: she is the co-creator of the First Nations Women’s Yoga initiative that offers a culturally-rooted, trauma-informed yoga curriculum, and she is a founding member of the Indigenous Yoga Collective, which seeks to support the well-being of Indigenous yoga teachers and educators. Jessica has been teaching a SCARP course on urban Indigeneity, and is designing a new course on planning for Indigenous health and wellness.

Andi Binet is a Canadian who joined SCARP via M.I.T., where they co-led a

long-term study on the relationship between gentrification and community health in nine Boston-area neighborhoods. Andi brings to SCARP a commitment to expanding community-engaged research in planning, hoping to make more room for community knowledge to influence planning priorities, processes and interventions. Andi is particularly interested in better understanding how urban environments shape our health, and how planning can be used to address the “crisis of care” and to promote health equity. Their ongoing research explores how planning decisions shape the “urban infrastructure of care,” and how changes in this infrastructure shape the burden of caregiving and the well-being of caregivers. To advance this research agenda, Andi is currently launching a new project studying the role of planning in creating childcare and building an equitable universal childcare system in Canada. At SCARP, Andi teaches two courses in the new BA Urban Studies program, Methods of Community Engagement and the year-long Urban Studies Capstone, and one graduate course, Planning for Health Equity.

Holly Caggiano is a New Jerseyite who was a postdoctoral fellow at Princeton University prior to joining SCARP. Holly’s research broadly explores the planning dimensions of climate and energy transitions with attention to how communities navigate technological, social, and environmental change. Her work evaluates both top-down and bottom-up approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation, asking questions about decision-making, governance, and collective action. Holly seeks to work collaboratively with people that are impacted by both climate change and the plans and policies that are developed to help mitigate climate change impacts. Holly has been teaching a SCARP course on sustainability and resilience in planning and a course on planning for just energy and is currently designing a new undergraduate course on planning cities for climate change.

Kuni Kamizaki made his way to SCARP from Japan, via the University of Toronto where he was previously an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Planning. Kuni is trained as a community-based planner and has more than 10 years of experience in housing, social planning, community development, and social-solidarity economy. In a general sense, Kuni’s research focuses on issues of poverty, displacement, and housing inequality, as well as community-led alternatives for social and racial justice, with a goal of contributing to transformative change with accountability to communities.



A Collaborative Data Analysis workshop for community researchers, facilitated by Andi Binet

He is currently engaged in two strands of research: studying the decline of Tokyo and planning responses to nation-wide population shrinkage and aging in post-growth Japan, and community-engaged research exploring the potential of community land trusts to address displacement and to promote housing justice. Kuni has been teaching a SCARP course on city-making from a global perspective, and is currently designing a new course on planning for housing justice.

Theo Lim was an Assistant Professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at Virginia Tech University before joining SCARP as an Associate Professor. Theo’s research has focused on climate adaptation in cities and how communities can become more resilient to climate change impacts, whether through state-led policy or grassroots participatory action. He also has an interest in the use of diverse forms of knowledge and ways of knowing in planning, which he has explored in part through a study of how computer models that integrate diverse types of information can be better managed to be useful in evolving policy and scientific knowledge production contexts. Theo has a wide range of professional experience outside the university and the planning field, including having worked as an environmental data scientist in the agricultural technology industry,

a civil engineer focused on sustainable water infrastructure planning and design, and a public health and urbanization researcher in Northeast China. Theo has been teaching a SCARP course on information and analysis in planning, and a course on research design and methods.

We at SCARP look ahead to turning 75 years old in 2026, but we also look around now at the growing uncertainty that communities face in a world characterized by rapid and unpredictable change. As planning researchers and educators, we feel both privileged to welcome Jessica, Andi, Holly, Kuni, and Theo to our School, and better-positioned for the challenge of preparing future generations of planners in B.C. and elsewhere for careers that contribute to the kinds of transformative change that are desperately needed in 21st-century society.

We hope to partner with you in tackling that challenge, and to see you at a SCARP 75 event!

Mark Stevens RPP, MCIP is an Associate Professor at the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at UBC and faculty liaison to PIBC. Mark joined SCARP in 2009 and is currently the Chair of SCARP’s Master of Community and Regional Planning Program.

Municipalities across British Columbia are navigating increasingly complex challenges; advancing housing, infrastructure, climate adaptation, and mobility simultaneously. These priorities demand integrated thinking and coordinated delivery.

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How Do Youth *Want* to Participate in Planning Processes?

Keisha Maloney & Joanne Nellas

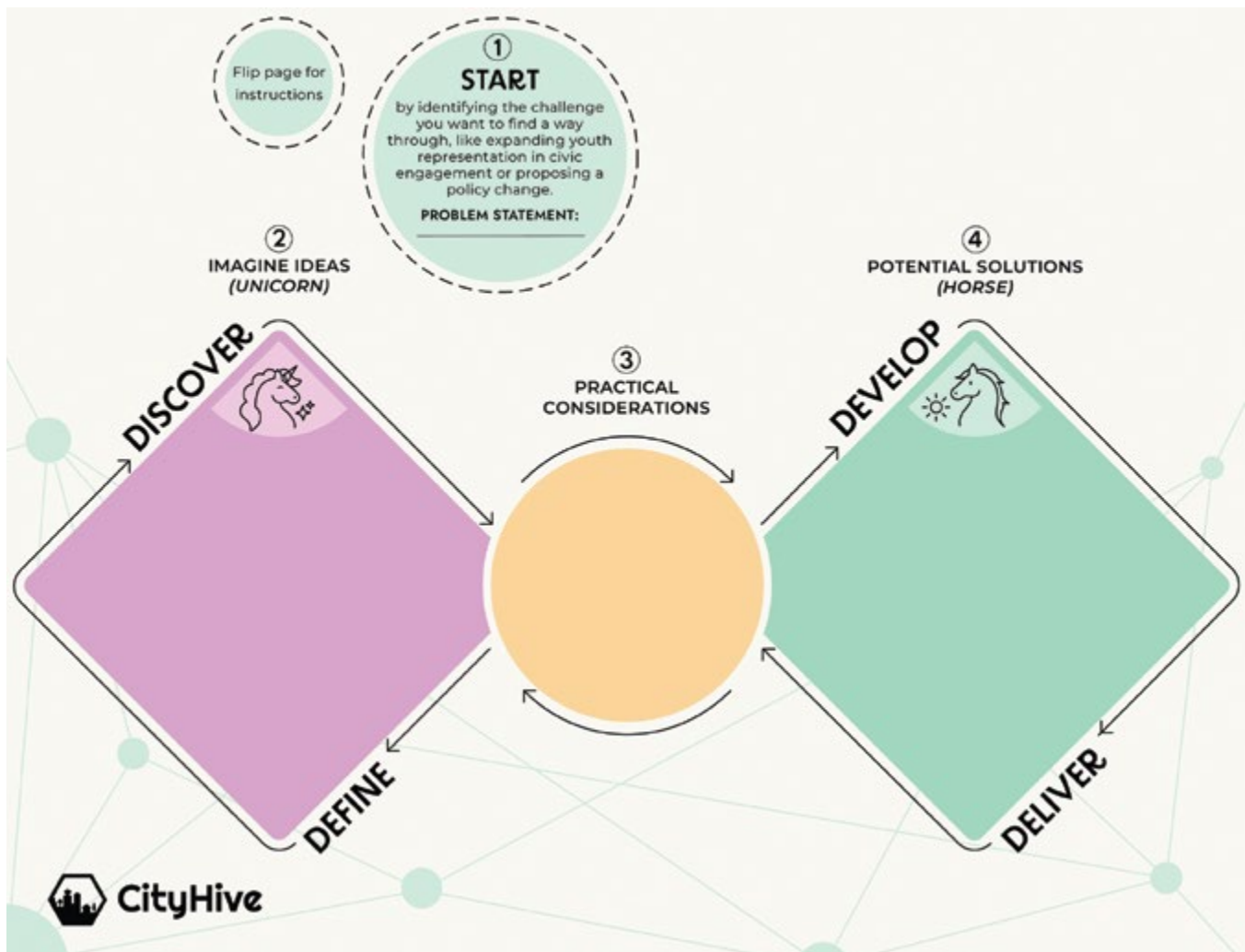
Changing climactic conditions, deepening inequality, and political polarization are rapidly reshaping communities across British Columbia. As youth prepare to inherit these crises, many want to intervene *now*, before these challenges become even more difficult to reconcile. Motivated by passion and creative thinking, youth have ideas about how planners and decision-makers can shape the future of our communities. But many of the young

people we work with do not feel welcomed or respected in decision-making spaces or find that their advocacy seldom informs action. As planners continue to innovate solutions to complex problems, we may also need to innovate our approaches to engaging with youth.

As a youth-led and youth-serving Metro Vancouver-based organization, CityHive responds to this challenge by bridging the gap between young people and municipal

decision-makers. In collaboration with partners at UBC, CityHive held a workshop series with 30 youth participants aged 18-28, *Expanding Youth Civic Engagement*. Here, we report on the recommendations participants generated that can support planners in creating youth-centered participatory planning processes. We have also produced a zine that further details youth-centered civic engagement methods (Maloney et al. 2025).

Figure 1: Double diamond design model handout used in CityHive workshops, adapted from the British Design Council, and designed by Lisa Besnier.



Youth Inclusion in Planning Processes

Planners have an uneven record of including youth in decision-making processes. Some planners assume youth do not have meaningful contributions to make to local decisions, believing youth lack content-specific and institutional knowledge. Consequently, planners may think youth perspectives can be assumed by “keeping kids in mind” (Checkoway et al. 1995). This is an inaccurate and dangerous assumption that homogenizes the perspectives of youth, who represent every social demographic beyond age, and perpetuates the problematic notion that planners hold the expertise to make decisions for others without needing to hear their opinions.

Youth desire and deserve agency over their collective future, as they will live with the impact of today’s decisions longer than any other demographic. When planners have

engaged youth, planners report that, given their stake in the future, young people tend to consider the long-range impact of decisions and develop more innovative and sustainable planning initiatives. Mobility and safety limitations often lead youth to focus on the community scale, generating interventions that also benefit lower-income and elder demographics (Chawla 2002). But planners have infrequently employed engagement approaches that enhance youth agency by partnering with or delegating power to youth, which can lead to disengagement and disenfranchisement from civic institutions (Botchwey et al. 2019). While there is an increasing trend among planners to engage with youth, planners may benefit from hearing how youth want to be meaningfully engaged in the planning process.

Expanding Youth Civic Engagement Workshop Series

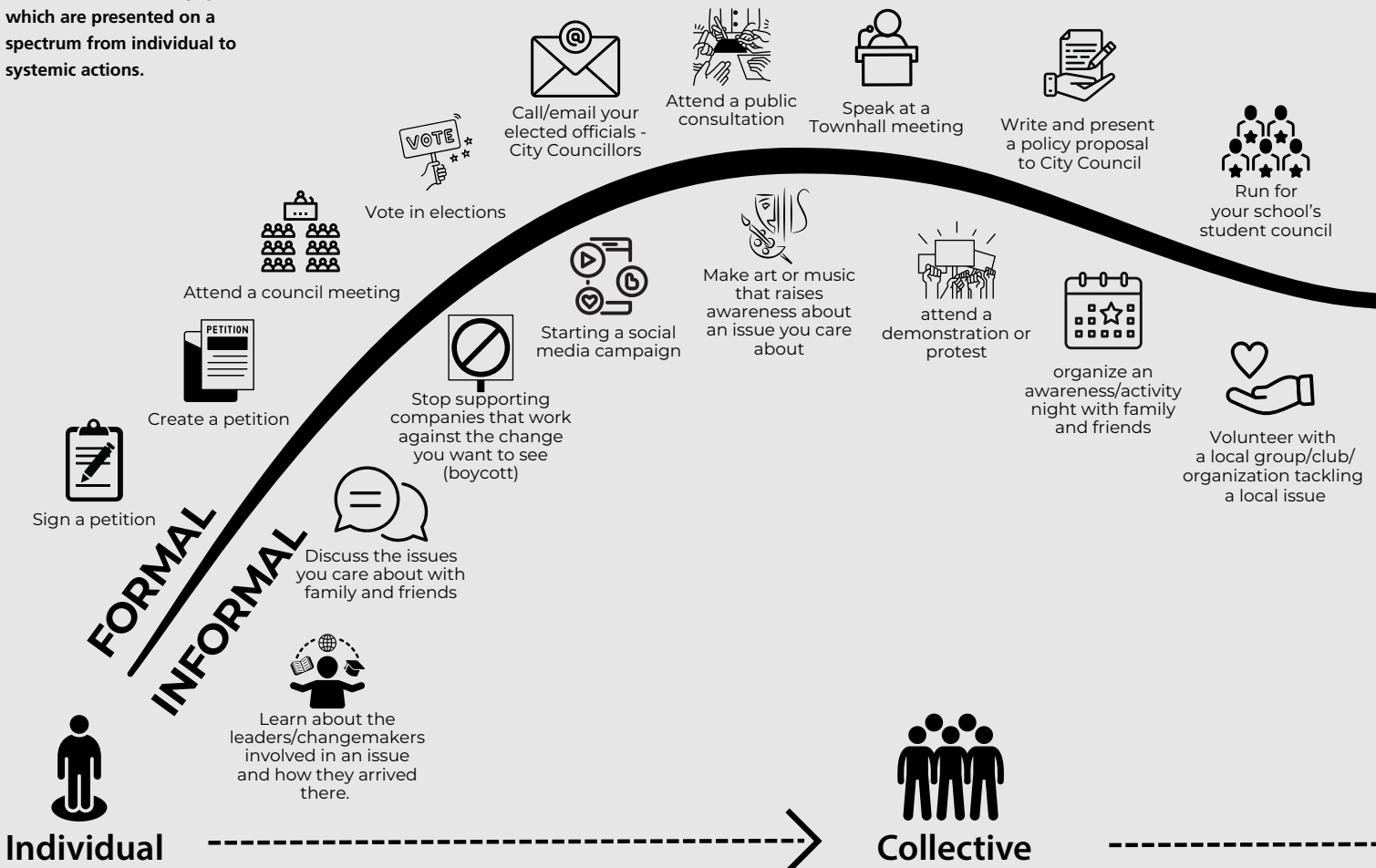
Our two-part workshop series empowered young people to articulate how they wish to engage in participatory planning spaces. To support youth in imagining alternative modes of civic engagement, we employed the double diamond model, which is a design thinking tool that provides a framework for generating a proposal that balances pie-in-the-sky visions against practical constraints (Figure 1). We see potential for this tool to be used in participatory planning spaces to support community members in devising actionable strategies to challenge the status quo.

The first workshop focused on CityHive’s ‘civic action continuum’ (Figure 2) to understand what calls youth to action and surface their experiences in civic engagement spaces. In the second workshop, we facilitated a

THE CIVIC ACTION CONTINUUM

ACTION can look like...

Figure 2: CityHive’s Civic Action Continuum details formal and informal modes of engagement, which are presented on a spectrum from individual to systemic actions.



collaborative visioning exercise based on the question, 'Imagining 20 years from today, how might we gather to participate in local governance?' After a reflective discussion on imagined alternatives, we invited participants to define their visions using the double diamond method.

Participant Reflections on Civic Engagement Spaces

Youth Engagement Experiences

We activated the civic engagement continuum with participants and asked them to use pink sticky notes to mark modes they've engaged with and blue sticky notes for modes they'd like to try but face barriers in accessing (Figure 3). This revealed that youth commonly engage in both formal and informal venues, but desire more formal,

systemic modes of engagement. Participants had complicated feelings about voting, which they felt was a necessary but insufficient mode of engagement, but ultimately decided that voting "is about the process, not the outcome." Participants commonly engage in extra-institutional activities such as creating and signing petitions, protesting, discussing urban issues with family and friends, and joining youth councils - spaces where they feel a sense of community and direct action. When participants discussed attending town halls or workshops, they consistently identified barriers in accessing and feeling respected in such spaces.

Barriers to Participation

Youth often encounter barriers when participating in formal modes of engagement. Participants, especially international students, commonly expressed that technical

and political jargon prevented their ability to understand and contribute to discussions. One participant commented that "it can be challenging to participate in municipal spaces because we might not speak the lingo, which makes it really intimidating." When youth do contribute, many feel that their voices and perspectives are not meaningfully valued, leading to disengagement from formal civic settings. This includes a perceived lack of proactive outreach and engagement from city staff and planners. Racialized youth expressed that they often face discrimination and feel dismissed when sharing their perspectives. These barriers impede youth agency and discourage future participation.

Opportunities for Youth Engagement

When asked about their desired modes of engagement, participants advocated for options that range from easy, low-barrier entry points

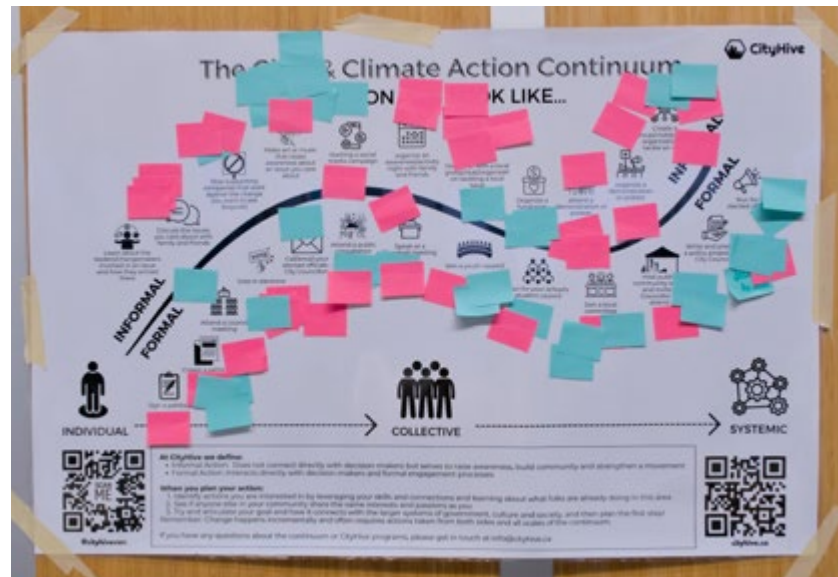
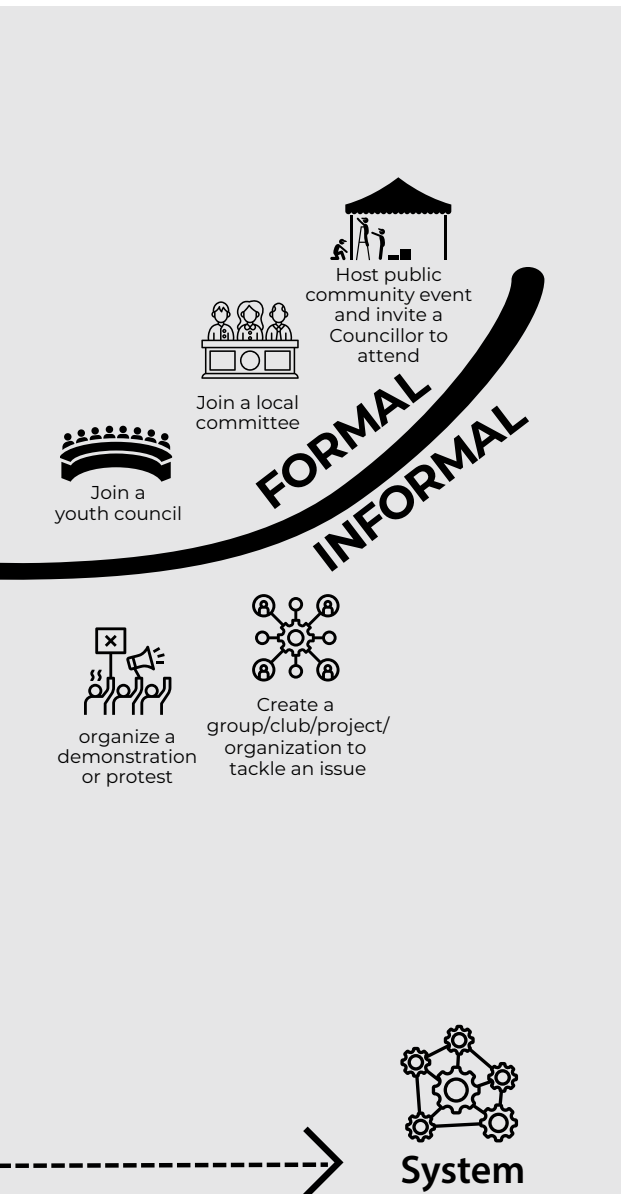


Figure 3: Distribution of participants' sticky notes, where pink represents modes of engagement youth have accessed, and blue represents modes they hope to access.

to fostering deep, reciprocal, and collaborative experiences. Quick, accessible modes offered online or through social media were seen as a powerful tool for collective organizing and knowledge mobilization. But participants also felt that deeper engagements that build connections among participants and co-generate knowledge can be transformative experiences. Examples included city-led youth councils and design-a-thons, where youth can critically explore topics, co-create solutions, and influence decision-making. This diverse engagement strategy, from simple advocacy to in-depth projects, is necessary for empowering youth to be proactive shapers of their communities.

Recommendations for Planners Engaging with Youth

1. Apply principles of reciprocity by treating engagement as an opportunity to collaborate on ideas.
2. Reduce anxiety and power differentials by bringing city staff and elected officials to youth spaces, including schools, and encourage open dialogue.
3. Address competing demands on youth time by offering accessible options (e.g.

online) and tangible incentives (e.g. food, honoraria).

4. Support youth in refining their transformative ideas into feasible proposals, including with design thinking tools.
5. Value youth perspectives by using inclusive language, acknowledging power imbalances, and providing diverse avenues for engagement.
6. Communicate how participants' input is activated, and small milestones as they are met, to encourage sustained participation.

We encourage planners to activate these recommendations to create spaces where youth ideas can inform local decision-making. Youth have passionate, innovative visions for the future of their communities. Planners can leverage youth perspectives to address contemporary challenges and shape the future of the field. To do so, we need to design engagement spaces where youth feel that their presence and contributions are valued. The onus is on planners to create spaces where youth can exercise their agency in formal decision-making and create communities that youth are proud to inherit, continue taking care of, and pass down to future generations.

Keisha Maloney is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of British Columbia.

Joanne Nellis is the Programs Manager at CityHive Youth Engagement Society.

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Living Lab Vida Loca

Meg Holden RPP, MCIP, Lisa Leblanc and Angela Kim

In local government, as in life, an uneasy tension exists between knowledge and action. Planners often find themselves at the nexus, juggling priorities and perspectives from the many voices around the table. Planners' role is to appreciate, relate, negotiate, integrate, demonstrate –and clear the path for innovation. How to actually fulfill this role is frequently hard to articulate, let alone replicate. The phenomenon of the local government living lab is an active response to this conundrum.

Living labs are also sometimes called studios, with the name in both cases giving a nod to what works best in a higher education context when it comes to hands-on experimentation and applied knowledge creation. As partnership arrangements between local governments and higher education institutions, living labs have existed for at least 20 years, and are sometimes traced back further to the Scandinavian participatory design movement of the 1960s. An expanding array of models, methods, intentions, and outcomes exist. McCrory et al. (2022) examined a set of 53 local government-higher education partnership labs around the world and typologized these in terms of the objective that motivate them, ranging from exploration and education, to design and fabrication, to *fixing things* and empowerment. When it comes to evaluating results, however, researchers have been stumped to provide clear answers, beyond a recurrent finding that labs are dynamic, and that they are not all about technology (Kemp & Scholl, 2016; Morales et al., 2023). We spoke with lab leaders from six living labs in B.C., Alberta and Ontario to find out what the primary values of these efforts are to local governments.

As a local government plan-gineer, a professor of planning and urban studies, and a student in the 2025 iteration of the lab, we set out to substantiate what we could about the value of our three-year pilot urban innovation lab with the City of New Westminster and Simon Fraser University. For three years running, the City of New Westminster has opened its doors to a class of interdisciplinary students willing to get off campus and curious about the workings of local government. Over a semester, lab participants engage with staff leadership, other staff guides from across the organization, and with sites and projects throughout the city itself. The lab works toward a small number of scaled, innovative solutions that cross departmental workplans, borrow ideas from other jurisdictions and

areas of research, and stand up to multiple iterations of tough feedback. We present these in an open Ideas Charrette that holds the innovations up for further contemplation and testing yet, across the organization. The model has clicked with students and staff participants as an exciting and unusual opportunity to think differently about challenges and to see solutions from a different view. At the same time, amidst all the assembled diversity of the UIL, we have recognized that we are operating with some diverse understandings of what the lab is accomplishing, and what constitute the principal challenges and opportunities for the lab, to move beyond pilot phase into the future.

We found that this mix of perspectives and priorities is replicated amongst other living labs across the country. What labs saw as their challenges and opportunities are shown in the word cloud below, with the bolder colours indicating the challenges and opportunities shared by all the labs we examined, and the faded colours representing factors shared by one or a few. The labs all led on student experience, which was also considered a pipeline to workforce development, and they all saw value in the labs related to bridge-building beyond city hall. City staff experience was also rated high on the list of opportunities of living lab involvement, with access to the research and knowledge repositories and capacities of



The 2025 SFU Urban Innovation Lab cohort with Dr. Meg Holden and former City of New Westminster CAO, Lisa Spitale.

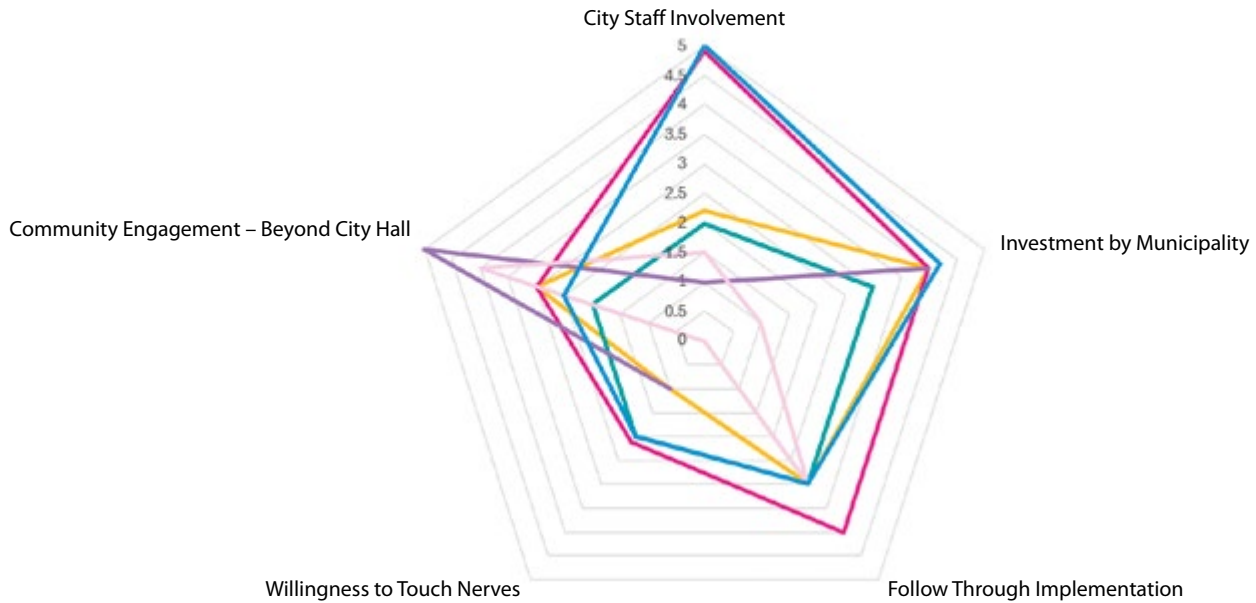
Challenges to Opportunities



Emerging Themes and Frequencies



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academia as a value that could help the city meet its policy commitments. On the challenge end of the spectrum, all labs had challenges funding their labs, and labs faced other capacity deficits as well, related to turnover of leaders and staff participants. None of the labs had undergone a fulsome evaluation and none had levelled up to meet a threshold of what could be considered continuous development.

In a qualitative and relational way, we also charted lab performance on the five most recurring outcome variables of the labs we examined. Our choice of these outcome variables is admittedly selective and based on our own curiosity about how best to optimize what our own lab partnership has to offer our communities. The results shown in the spider chart below demonstrate a diversity of performance, driven by a diversity of models and priorities. That is to say, for some lab models, maximizing the involvement of city staff is a marker of the success of a lab, whereas for others, more targeted involvement is preferred. There is a bit of an inverted relationship here with the labs that place high value on their ability to reach into the community in new ways. In terms of the direct cost and benefit, whereas a lower investment by the municipality in lab projects and coordination makes for lab stability, other municipalities view their annual cash and in-kind investment in the lab as a marker of the leverage that they are able to obtain in lab-related services and results, including via matching grants. As is consistent with the notion of innovation, the labs we looked at all showed some level of commitment to move beyond concepts to implement and test demonstration projects. On the other hand, the labs' sense of daring to touch

political nerves and pursue more controversial ideas and projects was less well developed. >

We are grateful to the lab leaders for sharing their successes and worries about their efforts with us, which all of them did in a collaborative spirit. We are hopeful that this means the time to foster a healthy ecosystem of living labs across Canada is near! Back home at our own Urban Innovation Lab, we are filtering these lessons into our evaluation and planning for future lab iterations. Beyond the photo ops, clever conceptual diagrams, and pilot project designs, the most poignant value of the Urban Innovation Lab to city staff has been the invitation to take a step outside their core role in order to reflect on their professional practice within the municipal organization as a whole; and to share these reflections with a mentorship and service leadership attitude. Staff reflected: "It has been eye-opening to ... think about making a contribution that falls outside of day-to-day but that fits within our model for what is valuable to do in our jobs." If the lab can continue to motivate and offer momentum for can-do collaboration within local government and across the knowledge-action divide to post-secondary institutions, then their value is real, although it may be the kind of value that is only recognized once staff step into the lab. "If we don't take time to do these things, we will keep doing what we are doing."

Meg Holden RPP, MCIP is the Professor of Planning and Urban Studies at Simon Fraser University. Lisa Leblanc P.Eng., M.Sc. is the Director of Engineering and Deputy CAO at City of New Westminster. Angela Kim B.Env. is a student and research assistant at SFU.

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Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to leaders of the following living lab organizations for sharing their practices with us:

- CityStudio <https://citystudiovancouver.com/>
- Guelph Lab <https://www.guelphlab.ca/>
- Urban Alliance <https://research.ucalgary.ca/urban-alliance/about>
- Visionary Communities <https://visionarycommunities.ca/research/>
- VivaCity <https://www.vivacityyc.com/>
- Teaching City Oshawa <https://www.oshawa.ca/business-development/>

Data Centres Community Planning Considerations

Eric Aderneck RPP, MPL, BCOM, DULE



Data centres have received a growing amount of attention over the past few years. Ranging from *boosterism* and *investment-mania* to environmental concerns and skepticism, with a certain amount of curiosity and confusion. This article addresses community planning considerations for this new class of development that does not fit into conventional land use categorization.

An Introduction to Data Centres

Data centres are a unique use, responding to the demand for increased computing power for Artificial Intelligence (‘AI’) and online storage (‘cloud’). These facilities, with sophisticated buildings and significant equipment, require a major source of stable power, and possess some industrial as well as infrastructural attributes.

A data centre is a room, building, or facility that houses equipment for running applications and storing data. Data centres have evolved from small facilities serving an individual corporation (‘enterprise’) to large, shared cloud facilities run by service providers (‘hyperscale’). Data centres can vary widely in terms of size, power requirements, and other specifications. There are different types of facilities for different user needs, and the technology is changing rapidly, thus there is no simple ‘average’ or ‘typical’ scenario.

Technology Trends and Building Structures

Demand is growing for ever-larger data centres that can achieve economies of scale and support advanced online computing needs. Newer facilities are far denser, with

more powerful and intensive server equipment, significantly higher electricity demands, and much larger building footprints. While servers are typically replaced every five years, AI, blockchain, and cryptocurrency operations require far more frequent upgrades to keep pace with advancing technology.

Data centres range widely in size—from small colocation facilities of roughly 10,000 square feet located within the basements of commercial buildings, to hyperscale centres exceeding 100,000 square feet and occupying many acres of land. Inside, these buildings contain cages, cabinets, and server racks, along with power distribution units, backup systems such as batteries and generators, HVAC cooling, and fire suppression systems, all designed to provide multiple layers of redundancy.

Substantial electrical infrastructure is essential, as data centres consume enormous amounts of energy. Some newer hyperscale facilities are even bypassing traditional power grids, connecting directly to wind, nuclear, or gas power plants to secure reliable energy supplies.

The cost of IT equipment within a data centre is enormous—often reaching into the hundreds of millions of dollars—and can easily exceed the combined costs of the building and the land itself.

Plug-in Power

British Columbia through BC Hydro offers clean energy, with over 98% coming from renewable sources mostly dams, which is an attraction for data centre operators.

Large-scale, energy intensive operations require transmission service connections to BC Hydro's highest-voltage systems. Following a conceptual feasibility review with BC Hydro, a system impact study is prepared to further explore a large load connection, including point of interconnection and transmission infrastructure, and associated costs. These connections can take years to plan, design, and construct.

The size of data centres is quoted in Megawatts (MW). Data centre capacity is less than the electrical service amount, as there are allowances for power, load, and efficiency factors.

The Province of British Columbia recently made changes to prioritize power availability for new natural-resource and manufacturing projects. Some power is still availability for data centres through a bidding process, but not for cryptocurrency mining.

Heat Reuse

Data centres generate considerable excess heat, which can be a captured as a resource used for other purposes, such as:

- Space Heating: distributing heating to other buildings.
- Water Heating: preheating water for domestic use in nearby buildings.
- Industrial Processes: preheating water for industries.
- Agricultural Applications: heating greenhouses for horticulture.

Site Selection

Data centres are an emerging “alternative” asset class, distinct from traditional real estate and business uses. Sophisticated proponents are able to choose among jurisdictions across British Columbia and North America, making site selection highly competitive and global in nature. Location decisions are driven by technical, economic, and regulatory considerations rather than local market factors alone.

Key criteria for suitable data centre locations include:

- **Access to electricity** – proximity to major substations providing clean, stable, and low-cost power.
- **Cold climates for natural cooling** – cooler regions can significantly reduce operating costs.
- **Water availability for cooling** – access to clean water sources supports operations and may benefit local utilities.
- **Proximity to markets** – low latency and reliable connections for data-intensive services.
- **Fiber optic connectivity and redundancy** – high-speed, resilient network connections are essential.
- **Labour availability** – access to skilled technical workers.
- **Risk avoidance** – minimizing exposure to seismic, fire, flood, and transportation hazards.
- **Data sovereignty** – compliance with Canadian data residency and privacy requirements.
- **Costs** – land, power, and operating costs, sometimes offset by incentives.

Economic Impacts and Community Benefits

The economic, employment, and taxation impacts of data centres on host communities are generally modest and can be grouped into initial and ongoing effects.

Initial Impacts

- **Construction of the building shell and utilities** (municipal works and BC Hydro interconnections) generates short-term regional economic activity and employment.
- **Server and computer equipment** represents a major capital investment, but is almost entirely manufactured outside the region (and country), resulting in limited local economic benefit.

Ongoing Impacts

- **Property taxes** are based on the assessed value of land and buildings, excluding data centre equipment, and typically provide a net fiscal benefit.
- **Employment levels** are low relative to traditional industrial or commercial uses, although positions are generally well paid and highly skilled.
- **Electricity purchases from BC Hydro** support provincial power generation rather than localized economic activity.
- **Data centre services** are delivered to external markets, resulting in minimal direct local economic spin-offs.

Host municipalities should hold realistic expectations. While data centres contribute to

the tax base and require few municipal services, they can place significant demands on electrical infrastructure. With few on-site employees, data centres generate limited traffic and parking demand. Yet job density alone should not be the sole measure of land use efficiency.

There may be indirect benefits, including contractors supporting operations and the potential to attract similar investments, creating a cluster of related technology firms.

Other Considerations

- Data centres are uniquely capital intensive, and require huge amounts of electricity. Land cost is a relatively small consideration, while access to secure power (ideally sustainably generated) is paramount. Yet, the local economic and employment impacts may be relatively modest, considering much of the facility inputs and outputs are far-flung. The initial local impact is largely in the form of building construction, and during operation staffing and property taxes.

Municipalities and proponents should clearly communicate benefits and address concerns, including:

- **Electricity demand** – confirm that BC Hydro can provide the needed power service and connection.
- **Environmental impacts** – ensure that the facility is well-sited to avoid environmentally sensitive and hazard areas, and meets municipal policy and regulatory requirements.
- **Surplus heat** – to support sustainability, plan to reuse surplus heat for other activities.
- **Local economic impacts** – encourage data centre operators to buy from local businesses.
- **Employment opportunities** – hire local as much as possible, and also provide training programs.
- **Property taxes** – data centres do not consume many municipal services, thereby allowing for lower residential taxes.

An optimal data centre site requires: reliable access to power, telecommunications, municipal services, and water; a cool climate; avoidance of hazards; proximity to skilled labour; good highway and airport access; low land costs; minimal land use conflicts; and opportunities for heat reuse. In BC, renewable energy provides a competitive advantage, with long-term success dependent on balancing energy supply, land use and infrastructure planning, environmental protection, and community and economic benefits.

Eric Aderneck, RPP, MPL, BCOM, DULE is a planner with focus on industrial lands and employment uses in communities throughout British Columbia. He can be reached at eric@aderneck.ca and www.IndustrialLands.ca.

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PIBC BOARD NOTES

On **July 11th, 2025**, the newly elected PIBC Board of Directors met in Vancouver, BC.

It was acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

MEETING MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on June 10th, 2025.

PRESIDENT

Members of the Board present introduced themselves and Kenna Jonkman RPP, MCIP welcomed everyone to the new Board term. K. Jonkman provided an update on various activities as President.

BOARD & GOVERNANCE

The Board discussed and noted some of the key roles and Committee Chair positions to be appointed for the new term, as circulated. An overview of each Standing Committee was provided.

KEY APPOINTMENTS & ROLES

The Board approved the updated signing authorities for the Institute. The Board approved the appointment of Sara Muir RPP, MCIP as the Institute's Secretary-Treasurer for the new term.

The Board also approved the appointment and re-appointment of a number of members to the Professional Conduct Review Committee. It was noted that consideration of the appointment of Committee Chairs and other key appointments would be tabled for discussion at an upcoming special meeting of the Board.

The Board further reviewed, discussed, and approved updates to the regular Board meeting schedule for the two-year term.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

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

INSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS & BUSINESS

Brief updates on the activities of the university planning programs at VIU and SFU were

provided by the student member representatives from these programs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & BUSINESS

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

Member Engagement Committee: The Board received an update on the Member Engagement Committee's engagement at the 2025 Annual Conference. It was noted that a range of positive and useful feedback was received. There was some further discussion relating to how the Institute can further engage with members who have not been engaged to date.

Policy & Public Affairs: The Board reviewed and discussed an update report from the Housing Task Force on the Peer Learning Network (PLN) and reviewed and discussed the status of two PLN initiatives including engaging consultant support to research and

develop Housing Advisory Bulletins, and the design of a pilot intelligent online inventory of local government plans and regulations. It was agreed that further consideration of these initiatives would be tabled to an upcoming meeting of the Board.

Professional Standards & Certification: The Board approved the admission or approval of a number of new members including 1 Certified, 6 Candidate, 3 Pre-Candidate, and 2 Student members. The Board also noted a number of membership transfers, resignations and other changes.

NEXT MEETING(S)

It was noted that the next regular meeting would take place on September 26th, 2025, and that a special meeting would take place prior to September to address outstanding items of business, following the Board's strategic planning retreat.

Marine Building in 1947



On **July 29th, 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.

BOARD & GOVERNANCE

The Board approved the appointment of several members to key Institute roles, including: Stacey Lightbourne RPP, MCIP and Zoë Morrison RPP, MCIP as co-chairs of the Professional Standards & Certification Committee; Kenna Jonkman RPP, MCIP as Chair of the Student Internship Program Committee; Narissa Chadwick RPP, MCIP as Chair of the Policy & Public Affairs Committee; Andy Yan RPP, MCIP as Chair of the Member Engagement Committee; Eve Hou RPP, MCIP and Kai Okazaki RPP, MCIP as Co-Chairs of the Justice Equity, Diversity, Decolonization and Inclusion Working Group.

The Board also approved the appointment of Sara Muir to the Policy & Public Affairs Committee; Eric Aderneck RPP, MCIP to the Policy & Public Affairs Committee and the Communications Committee; Kristina Bell to the Member Engagement Committee; and Emile K. Adin RPP, FCIP to the Justice Equity, Diversity, Decolonization and Inclusion Working Group. It was noted that that further potential appointment(s) of other Board member(s) to Institute roles would be considered at an upcoming meeting of the Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & BUSINESS

Policy & Public Affairs: The Board reviewed and discussed the report from the Housing Task Force on the Peer Learning Network (PLN) and the accompanying research and PLN budget allocation proposal. It was noted that additional background material was circulated. It was noted that the proposed intelligent online inventory pilot was recommended by the Task Force based on review and feedback in keeping with the PLN action plan. After discussion the Board approved the proposed PLN research work and budget allocation as recommended.

NEXT MEETING(S)

It was noted that the next regular meeting would take place on September 26th, 2025, in conjunction with a budget workshop session.

On **September 26th, 2025**, the PIBC Board of Directors met in Vancouver, BC.

It was acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Prior to the regular Board meeting, the Board met for a workshop session to review, discuss, and finalize the proposed operating budget for 2026, as well as membership fees for the coming year. A number of adjustments were made to the draft budget.

DELEGATION

Dr. Christopher Lamb, Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee Member, provided an overview and update on the UBC-PPRC-Mitacs Research Project and additional funding request.

MEETING MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes of the previous meetings held on July 11th, 2025, and July 29th, 2025.

PRESIDENT

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

BOARD & GOVERNANCE

The Board discussed and noted the outcomes of the Board strategic planning session held in July 2025. A workshop was held to review and finalize the draft revised strategic plan held the day prior to the regular Board meeting, and a number of identified revisions to the draft were agreed. The Board then adopted the revised strategic plan as presented, with the agreed revisions.

Further to discussion of committee appointments and roles, it was agreed and noted that C. Corbett will support Institute committees on various projects and initiatives, as required.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

The Board reviewed the 2025 unaudited financial statements to August 31, 2025, for information.

The Board approved the schedule of membership fees for 2026, with a modest increase to PIBC fees for the coming year. The Board reviewed and approved the continued col-

lection and remittance of applicable CIP membership fees and insurance premiums for members, in accordance with existing agreements with CIP.

The Board also approved and adopted the Institute's 2026 operating budget as developed, discussed and revised at an in-depth budget workshop, prior to the regular Board meeting. The budget as approved reflected anticipated gross revenues of about \$1.24M (including provincial government funds) and expected costs and expenditures of around \$1.42M (reflecting allocations for key special projects and initiatives, and an expected deficit for 2026).

The Board also directed staff to work with the Secretary-Treasurer to review reserves policies and current reserve funds, develop a new long-term financial plan, to explore potential operating budget expenditure revisions, and provide information and recommendations to the Board at an upcoming meeting.

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

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Board received an update bulletin from the national Professional Standards Board (PSB) for information, providing information on ongoing national professional standards and accreditation activities.

The Board reviewed and discussed the CIP 2025-2026 Pre-Budget Submission memo and noted the importance of proactive engagement with CIP and other allied partners. It was agreed that the Institute memo be distributed to all of PIBC's standing and operational committees for information.

INSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS & BUSINESS

Brief updates 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

Governance and Nominating Committee: The Board reviewed and approved revised terms of reference for the following committees: Continuous Professional Learning

Committee; Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee; and Local Chapter Committees, as circulated.

Professional Conduct Review Committee: The Board received an overview of the PIBC review process of the Draft PSB - National Code of Ethics Standards. It was agreed that the PCRC would further review the draft and provide the Board with feedback for endorsement and submission as the Institute's input to the PSB.

JEDDI Working Group: The Board received a brief update on the work of the JEDDI working group noting that the equity audit work is underway with the consultants engaged for the work. It was noted that members and non-members are being engaged as part of the work.

Member Engagement Committee: An update on the work of the State of the Profession Study was provided and it was noted that RFP submissions were now under review.

Policy & Public Affairs: The Board reviewed and discussed an update report from the Housing Task Force on the Peer Learning Network (PLN) noting recent PLN activities including ongoing PLN webinars and the in-person PLN session held at the annual PIBC conference.

The Board also discussed and approved potential new PLN activities including proposed further research topics, and potential collaboration with external third-parties and local chapters on PLN events. The Board also discussed and endorsed extending the PLN timeline to wrap up the remaining activities for the PLN initiative.

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 ongoing work, with consultant support, on analysis of the Professional Governance Act and member engagement on the topic of professional regulation for the planning profession.

Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee: The Board discussed the proposed UBC-PPRC-Mitacs Research Project funding request and proposed Phase III consultant supported work by the Committee. The Board approved convening a joint learning session with the Board, the Committee and consultants to provide and

update and further explore the ongoing work of the Committee.

Professional Standards & Certification: The Board approved the admission of a number of new members including 4 Certified, 22 Candidate, 4 Pre-Candidate, and 27 Students. The Board also approved and or noted a number of membership transfers, resignations, and other changes.

NEXT MEETING(S)

It was noted that the next regular meeting would take place online on November 28th, 2025.

On **November 17th, 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.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & BUSINESS

Planning Practice & Reconciliation Committee: The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed PPRC Phase III work and consultant proposal, noting the recent successful joint learning session with the Board, PPRC and consultants held on November 7th, 2025. After discussion, the Board endorsed the PPRC Phase III proposal and approved the allocation of funds for the work as outlined.

The Board also reviewed, discussed and approved the updated UBC-PPRC-Mitacs Research Project proposal and funding request as outlined.

It was also agreed that a letter on behalf of the Board to the PPRC would be sent to the Committee to express support for their ongoing work and request continued regular information updates and engagement with the Board on the work moving forward.

BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

Following discussion, the Board directed staff to develop an internal structured policy process for the proposal and consideration of larger internal Institute projects, along with an examination of how ongoing project funds are allocated and committed.

NEXT MEETING(S)

It was noted that the next regular meeting would take place remotely on November 28th, 2025.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

JULY 11, 2025

Welcome New Members!

Congratulations and welcome to all the new PIBC Members!

At its meeting of July 11th, 2025, it was recommended and approved by the Board to admit the following 1 Certified, 5 Candidates, 3 Pre-Candidates, and 2 Students to membership in the Institute as noted:

CERTIFIED:

Rida Khan (*Joint with OPPI*)

CANDIDATE:

Carolyn Donnelly

Jason Issler

Kuni Kamizaki

Milad Panahifar

Sarah Shaw

PRE-CANDIDATE:

Kayvon Bahrami

Kyra Madison Mcleish

Morgan McLeod
(*Transfer from APPI*)

STUDENT:

Mihai Aneculaesei (*SFU-B*)

Andreas Gunster (*SFU*)

Member Changes

It was further recommended and approved by the Board to grant or acknowledge the following status changes for 2 Certified and 1 Candidate members, as noted:

FROM CERTIFIED TO MEMBER ON LEAVE:

Susan Lightfoot

Urszula Oram

FROM CANDIDATE TO MEMBER ON LEAVE:

Katie Thomas

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

FROM MEMBER ON LEAVE TO CERTIFIED:

Gillian McKee

It was further noted by the Board that the following 2 individuals ceased to be members of the Institute.

RESIGNED:

Leah Irvine (*Certified*)

DECEASED:

Joseph Balderston (*Certified*)



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

Welcome New Members!

Congratulations and welcome to all the new PIBC Members!

At its meeting of September 26, 2025, it was recommended and approved by the Board to admit the following 4 Certified, 23 Candidates, 4 Pre-Candidates, and 27 Students to membership in the Institute as noted:

CERTIFIED:

- George Fujii** (*Reinstate*)
- Rosemarie Humphries** (*Joint with OPPI*)
- Brian Miller** (*Reinstate*)
- Savannah Zachary** (*Transfer from APPI*)

CANDIDATE:

- Ariella Barmash**
- Joshua Blackman**
- Kendra Cheeseman**
- Sadie Chezenko**
- Adrian Clark**
- Matthew Gauthier**
- Maedeh Hedayatifard**
- Cole Johnson**
- Meaghan Lien**
- William Mackey**
- Serena Manhas**
- Lindsay Monk**
- Erik Morden**
- Julie Mundy**
- Erin Munsie**
- Paul Sizemore**
- Griffin Slimkowich**
- Adam Smith**
- Adrian Smith**
- Matthew Thomson**
- Jordan Wilson**
- Sean Yilmaz**

PRE-CANDIDATE:

- Benjamin Lee**
- Victoria Lin**
- Navdeep Sidhu**
- Jenna Singh**

STUDENT:

- Maya Balcaen** (*SFU-B*)
- Bryan Buraga** (*UBC*)
- Matthew Cusanelli** (*UBC*)
- Christina Dinh** (*UBC*)
- Jacob Ereshefsky** (*SFU*)
- Talia Fan** (*UBC*)
- Claire Gordon** (*UBC*)
- Diane Huang** (*UBC*)
- Kenji Johnson** (*UBC*)
- Elliot Kachan** (*UBC*)
- Maxwell Kittner** (*UBC*)
- Jaden Koon** (*UBC*)
- Sara Ladhani** (*SFU-B*)
- Erin Laverty** (*UBC*)
- Ryan Jui-Hsiang Lee** (*UBC*)
- Joshua Mathewson** (*UBC*)
- Georgia McWilliams** (*UBC*)
- Emmanuel Moore** (*SFU-B*)
- Verere Mujakperuo** (*UBC*)
- Austin Page** (*UNBC*)
- Caitlin Roach** (*SFU-B*)
- Alex Ryan Tucker** (*SFU-B*)
- Joel Satre** (*Queens / Joint with OPPI*)
- Vyakhya Srivastava** (*UBC*)
- Louis Wight** (*SFU-B*)
- Mo Yi** (*SFU-B*)
- Bobby Zhang** (*UBC*)

Member Changes

It was further recommended to and approved by the Board to grant or acknowledge the following status changes for 3 Certified members, as noted:

FROM CERTIFIED TO MEMBER ON LEAVE:

- Peter Duke**
- Patricia Reynes**
- Mateja Seaton**

MEMBERSHIP REPORT (CONT'D)

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

It was also noted by the Board that the following 7 Certified and 3 Candidate members had returned to active practice, thus returning to active membership:

FROM MEMBER ON LEAVE TO CERTIFIED:

Jocelyn Black
Chloe Boyle
Bethany Dobson
Julia Dykstra
Eleni Gibson
Lea Hastie
Kailey Quirk

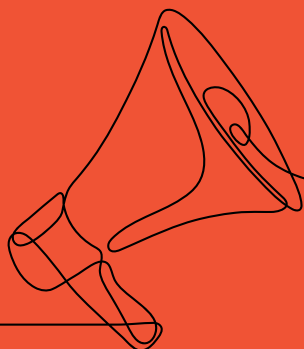
FROM MEMBER ON LEAVE TO CANDIDATE:

Divyanga Ganesh
Alicia McLean
Kirsten Pichaloff

It was further noted by the Board that the following 6 individuals ceased to be members of the Institute.

RESIGNED:

Sidrah Anees
Matthew Jeffrey
Rebecca Relkov
Collins Takyi
Alicia Vanin
Christopher Wilkinson



What Membership Means to Me

PIBC members include not only professional planners but also students from the accredited university planning programs in BC and the Yukon. In this issue, a Student Member shares how his Student Membership became an integral part of building his community and a path towards the planning profession.



Thane Greydanus

Accredited Student Member and President of the UNBC Student Planners Association

“ Over the last four years of my Northern and Rural Community Planning degree at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), my community involvement varied significantly. I originally signed up for candidate membership and started engaging in UNBC’s Student Planners Association (SPA) events out of a sense of obligation. I don’t think that it was necessarily bad motivation and there are definite benefits, but the thing that stands out most is the community.

Membership, to me, is an extension of community. Graduating at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and returning to school entirely online meant that, despite being born and raised in Prince George, I knew no one in my program in my first year. As a somewhat introverted person, this was my worst nightmare, but over the years, I have met so many amazing people from the program and at PIBC events.

Attending SPA meetings allowed me to meet some of my upper-classmen, who took me under their wing almost immediately. From there, I was hooked. I attended almost every meeting as a general member before being elected as the social media coordinator.

I truly cannot overstate the importance of membership in my life; it has grown my passion for planning and helped me forge friendships I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

As I am writing this, I have been elected as the President of SPA. My goal as president is to show people the value of membership and encourage them to sign up for student membership the way my predecessors did for me. If I could talk to myself in the first year, I would tell myself that the most important part of membership is the people you meet. ”

Thank You to our 2025 Volunteers!

Eric Aderneck RPP, MCIP

Emilie K. Adin RPP, FCIP

Kristin Agnello RPP, MCIP

Braden Alexander

Lindsay Allman RPP, MCIP

Anmol Anand RPP, MCIP

Haniya Ashfaque

Aishwarya Thabitha Ashok Kumar

Christopher Atkins RPP, MCIP

Sarah Atkinson RPP, MCIP

Xerxes Au

Jada Basi RPP, MCIP

Eric Beach RPP, MCIP

Larry Beasley, CM RPP, FCIP

Kristopher Belanger RPP, MCIP

Kristina Bell

Stephen Bentley RPP, MCIP

Steven Bercek RPP, MCIP

Anne Berry RPP, MCIP

Robin Beukens RPP, MCIP

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Mairi Bosomworth

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Christine Callihoo RPP, MCIP

Luigi Carvello RPP, MCIP

Narissa Chadwick RPP, MCIP

Lindsay Chase RPP, FCIP

Kendra Cheeseman

Kerri Clark RPP, MCIP

Angele Clarke RPP, MCIP

Melissa Clements RPP, MCIP

Brad Clifton RPP, MCIP

Odessa Cohen RPP, MCIP

Lisa Colby

Jill Collinson RPP, MCIP

Steven Collyer RPP, MCIP

Norm Connolly RPP, MCIP

Cleopatra (Cleo) Corbett RPP, MCIP

Barbara Crawford

Devin Croin RPP, MCIP

Benafshaw Dashti RPP, MCIP

Anoop Dayal

Donna Dean RPP, MCIP

Craig Dedels RPP, MCIP

Patricia Dehnel RPP, MCIP

Bryce Deveau RPP, MCIP

Michael Dickinson RPP, MCIP

Jesse Dill RPP, MCIP

Brad E. Dollevoet RPP, MCIP

Colin Dring

Julia Dugaro RPP, MCIP

Robert Dykstra RPP, MCIP

Jacqueline East RPP, MCIP

Gordon Easton RPP, MCIP

Margaret Eberle

Hussein Elhagehas-san

Brent Elliott RPP, MCIP

Qwuy'um'aat (Eyvette) Elliott RPP, MCIP

Cherie Enns RPP, MCIP

Silvia Exposito RPP, MCIP

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Gregory Mitchell RPP, MCIP

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Saranya Devi Parthiban

Kerry Pateman RPP, MCIP

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Danielle Patterson RPP, MCIP

Kira Penner RPP, MCIP

Aaron Penner RPP, MCIP

Madeline Peters RPP, MCIP

Tharini Prakash

Emily Proskiw

Nicholas Redpath RPP, MCIP

Matthew Rempel

Brigid Reynolds RPP, MCIP

Danica Rice RPP, MCIP

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Jeff Zukiwsky RPP, MCIP

Thérèse Zulinick RPP, MCIP



Wellington City Council, photographer Neil Price

TE NGĀKAU CIVIC SQUARE – WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

Recognized by the Smart City World Expo Congress as one of the most accessible cities in the world, Wellington, the capital of New Zealand, is working to rebuild and reconnect its citizens to the natural beauty and gathering spaces within its earthquake-damaged civic square.

New Start in 2026

The Rebuilding of the Te Ngākau Civic Precinct

Due to earthquakes in 2013 and 2016 that severely damaged the Te Ngākau Civic Precinct, the final stages of redevelopment are underway that will reinvigorate the once beloved shared spaces of this vibrant civic square.

Te Ngākau (pronounced Nah-koh in Māori, the official Indigenous language of New Zealand) means “the heart” and the civic square and surrounding areas literally serve as the cultural heart of Wellington. The square’s new design is guided by the concept of te taiao or the “living environment”. Specifically, the new paved paths and landscaping shapes were inspired by the streams that once ran through the area, connecting the square to Te Whanganui-a-Tara, the Māori name for the Wellington Harbour. Aside from Te Ngākau, several other structures will also open by Spring 2026, including the Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library (the name means “the window to the big world” in Māori).

*Fun fact, aside from Māori and English, New Zealand Sign Language is also recognized as an official language of the country.

The city plans to celebrate the re-activation of its civic square and public library with pop-ups, music, art and performances. Wellington’s city council is excited to invite locals and visitors back to the accessible and welcoming spaces where everyone can rest, gather and celebrate Wellington’s cultural gems by the waterfront.



Sources:

<https://www.smartcityexpo.com/smart-cities-accessibility-ranking/>

<https://wellington.govt.nz/your-council/projects/te-ngakau-civic-precinct-programme/revitalising-te-ngakau-civic-square>

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