

2026 PIBC Awards for Excellence in Planning

Kelly Chan, Manager of Member Programs & Services

The PIBC Awards for Excellence in Planning honour the best in professional planning work undertaken by members in communities and regions across British Columbia and the Yukon. Award winners were celebrated in Penticton, BC on June 4, 2026, at the PIBC Annual Conference – *Bold Plans. Local Action.*

Award for Excellence in Planning Practice, City & Urban Areas

GOLD WINNER

Title: **Rupert and Renfrew Station Area Plan Implementation**

Organization: **City of Vancouver**

Partner: **Still Moon Arts Society**

The Rupert and Renfrew Station Area Plan provides a vision for the future of a large area (over 260 blocks) anchored by two existing rapid transit stations, a large area designated for employment uses, and one of the last remaining salmon-bearing streams in the City of Vancouver. The plan focused on including only 'implementation-ready' policies that could move quickly from vision to reality, and key planning and engineering projects are already being implemented.

The jury appreciated the inclusive, creative public engagement and the incorporation of sustainability from multiple lenses. The emphasis on incorporating public input into the planning process is evident and meaningful, helping to build trust and ensure the plan reflects community needs. Supported by a robust implementation plan, it demonstrates readiness to move from vision to action.



Award for Excellence in Planning Practice, City & Urban Areas

SILVER WINNER

Title: **A Guide to SSMUH (Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing) Developments**

Organizations:
City of Port Moody and Schema Office of Architecture

The purpose of Port Moody's Guide to Small Scale Multi-Unit Housing is to provide information related to SSMUH development including eligibility, development potential, important considerations, the approvals process, design guidelines, and other useful resources for applicants. While comprehensive in content, is intended to streamline and facilitate the expedient review of applications to encourage uptake of this development form and get more housing on the ground in the community.

The jury appreciated the guide's responsiveness to the current challenges faced by the profession to align with provincial legislation to intensify suburbs without destroying character and sense of neighbourhood coherence. It provides a clear, step-by-step roadmap for advancing SSMUH, identifying key stakeholders, resources, and considerations needed to facilitate these projects in the community.



Award for Excellence in Planning Practice, Small Community & Rural Areas

GOLD WINNER

Title: **CYFN Family Preservation and Wellness Centre**

Organizations: **Council of Yukon First Nations, CitySpaces Consulting, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects, Ketza-Walker Joint Venture, and Connective**

The Council of Yukon First Nations Family Preservation and Wellness Centre is a landmark project in Whitehorse, YT that provides culturally safe emergency housing and supportive services for Yukon First Nations and Indigenous women and children fleeing violence. It is a first-of-its-kind initiative by Yukon First Nations women for Yukon First Nations women.

What began as a planning initiative evolved into a capital development

project, culminating in a purpose-built, culturally safe centre with sustainable operations funding that directly responds to Yukon First Nations-identified needs.

The jury found this project to be timely, relevant, and filling a deep community need. Culturally respectful with a thorough research and engagement process, it illustrates the impact of focused Indigenous-led planning that transforms evidence, interest-holder engagement, and strategic vision into real world solutions.



Award for Excellence in Planning Practice, Small Community & Rural Areas

SILVER WINNER

Title: **Fraser Canyon Complete Community Assessment**

Organizations: **Fraser Valley Regional District and Dialog BC**

Partners: **City Squared, WATT Consulting Group, and Binnie**

The Fraser Canyon Complete Community Assessment represents a transformative approach to rural planning in British Columbia, reframing how “complete communities” can be applied in low-density, hazard-prone regions. Faced with housing unaffordability, limited services, and geographic isolation, it advances a corridor-wide, implementation-focused framework that adapts urban metrics to rural realities. Rather than importing

metropolitan standards, the Assessment redefined “complete communities” through rural evidence, lived experience, and financial realism.

The jury felt the use of a “complete communities” framework in a rural context to be inspiring, especially with populations in decline. It is a great example of how a focused review of emerging issues in a community can be carried out and inform an update to the OCP.



Award for Excellence in Planning Practice, Small Community & Rural Areas

HONOURABLE MENTION

Title: **ReMembering Youth
Official Community Plan
Youth Consultation on
the Sunshine Coast**

Organizations: **Sunshine Coast
Regional District, School District
46, and Vancouver Coastal Health**

Partners: **School District 46 -
staff and students, BC Healthy
Communities, Vancouver Coastal
Health, and Natalie Gerum**

High schools on the Sunshine Coast were invited to participate in a collaborative project enabling youth to engage directly with the official community plan development process, sharing their visions and concerns for the future of the region. Project results will directly inform drafting of a new official community plan.

The jury appreciated the unique approaches taken to engaging with youth, who are typically underrepresented in planning, and demonstrating that meaningful planning does not always require a large budget.

Award for Excellence in Policy Planning, City & Urban Areas

GOLD WINNER

Title: **Burnaby 2050: Official Community Plan**

Organization: **City of Burnaby**

Partners: **Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue and Urban Systems Ltd.**

Burnaby 2050 was adopted in 2025 bringing together four years of research, policy development, and community engagement. The City's previous OCP was adopted in 1998 and had seen very little change despite the City's dramatic population growth and change. Envisioned as a wholesale replacement, this undertaking demanded a robust engagement process as well as considerable research and policy development initiatives and introduced new policy tools that had

never been used in Burnaby such as Development Permit Areas.

The jury appreciated the robust overhaul of the OCP that was grounded in a deep and inclusive community outreach process, including Indigenous communities, non-English speakers, and other underrepresented groups. It demonstrates that good work takes time, and serves as a model for how engagement needs to happen but is often not happening in contemporary plan making.



Award for Excellence in Policy Planning, City & Urban Areas

SILVER WINNER

Title: **Chilliwack 2050: Your City Our Future – Official Community Plan Update**

Organizations: **City of Chilliwack and MODUS Planning, Design & Engagement**

Partners: **Licker Geospatial Consulting and Mulholland & Parker Land Economists**

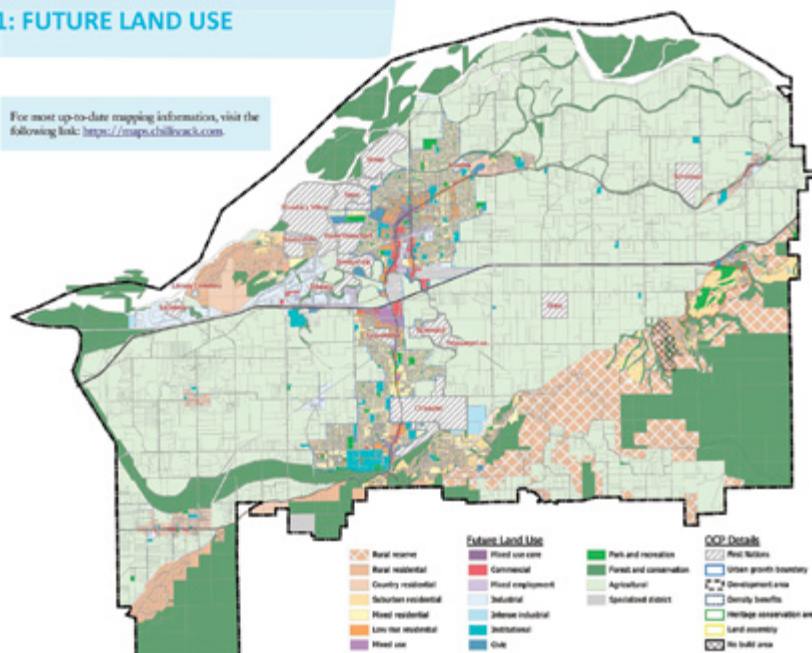
‘Chilliwack 2050’ is the City’s newly adopted Official Community Plan, providing a clear, user-friendly framework to manage rapid growth and changing conditions. Shaped through an ambitious 15-month process, the plan consolidated nearly 90 land use designations into 18 and whittled down hundreds of policies to just over 100, while incorporating input from decision-makers, First Nations, interest holders, the public, and City staff. Key innovations include a new urban structure and growth management approach, the direct integration of land use plans from neighbouring First Nations, a parcel-based model for projecting growth, a new standard for engagement, and an easy to navigate and understand document with highly legible imagery and maps.

The jury was impressed with the robust and meaningful Indigenous engagement, and how it thoughtfully addresses current challenges faced by the city, including infrastructure servicing, environmental protection, and social wellbeing, among others.



1: FUTURE LAND USE

For most up-to-date mapping information, visit the following link: <https://maps.chilliwack.com>



Award for Excellence in Policy Planning, Small Community & Rural Areas

GOLD WINNER

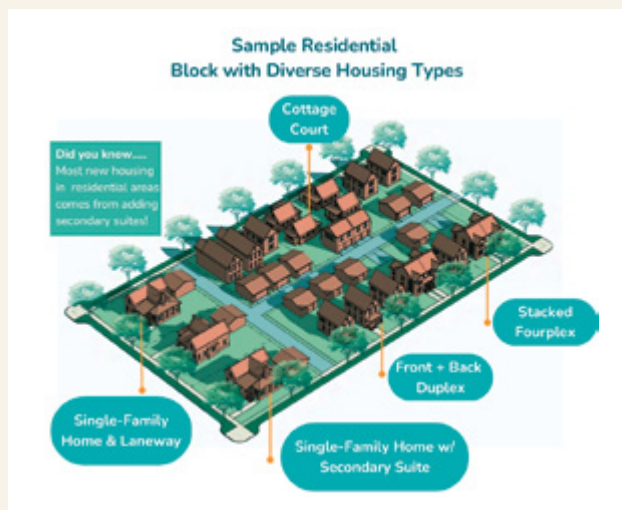
Title: **Nelson 2050 – Leading the way together**

Organization: **City of Nelson – Development Services & Climate Leadership**

Nelson 2050 is the City of Nelson's Official Community Plan, adopted unanimously in 2025 following a 30-month, fully in-house planning process. The plan establishes a long-term framework for land use, housing, climate resilience, infrastructure, economic development, and community well-being. Grounded in community-defined foundation values and guided by the principles of equity, health, and climate, Nelson 2050

integrates environmental, social, economic, and cultural sustainability directly into policy, land use designations, and implementation tools.

The jury appreciated how the policy was rooted in local needs rather than hypothetical ideals. Produced in-house with a small budget, the plan is very transparent with a depth of public process, which is reflected in a final plan that feels authentic and specific to the City.



Award for Excellence in Policy Planning, Small Community & Rural Areas

SILVER WINNER

Title: **City of Langford Official Community Plan (“The Langford Plan”)**

Organizations: **City of Langford and Toderian UrbanWORKS**

“The Langford Plan” is a forward-looking Official Community Plan and an innovative policy model that combines the structure of a typical OCP with an action plan focused on implementation, follow-through, and accountability. Developed over 18 months, public engagement was central throughout the process. Early introduction of ideas

allowed multiple rounds of feedback, giving the community real influence over how proposals developed.

The jury found the plan concise and visionary, with the incorporation of capital planning and the use of targets and commitments to drive the vision forward. It is aspirational and practical, with detailed policies to support the vision.



Award for Research & New Directions

HONOURABLE MENTION

Title: **Stanley Park Mobility Study**

Organizations:

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, Mott MacDonald, and MODUS Planning, Design & Engagement

The Stanley Park Mobility Study is a multi-phase research initiative led by the Vancouver Park Board to examine current and future mobility, access, and transportation conditions within Stanley Park. The study responds to increasing visitation, fixed roadway capacity, and the need to balance access, safety, environmental protection, and user experience in a highly constrained urban park setting.

The jury felt that this project highlights how comprehensive public processes can lead to more informed and balanced outcomes, and how phased implementation can facilitate a smooth transition from policy to on the ground action.

Award for Research & New Directions

GOLD WINNER

Title: **Towards a Shared Vision Island Rail Corridor CVRD**

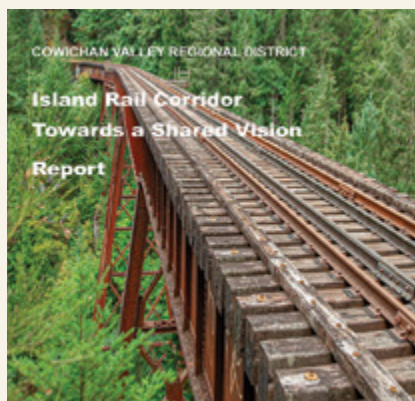
Organizations: **Cowichan Valley Regional District (Coralie Breen, PhD, RPP, MCIP, Alison Garnett, MCP, RPP, MCIP), Stantec Consulting Ltd., K I Squared, and MODUS Planning, Design & Engagement**

Partners: **About Here, Bone Creative, and Island Corridor Foundation**

The Towards a Shared Vision Island Rail Corridor Cowichan Valley Regional District project evaluated future uses of the CVRD portion of the Island Rail Corridor by considering First Nations' interests, environmental impacts, and risks related to current and possible changes in how the corridor might be used. The focus was on assessing which potential uses would be suitable both in the

short and long term from land use and transportation standpoints.

The jury felt that this project demonstrates how other communities can address the complex task of balancing goods movement with recreational use and housing pressures adjacent to existing rail corridors. It serves as a playbook for other jurisdictions considering options for similar corridors across the country.



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Award for Research & New Directions

SILVER WINNER

Title: **Charged and Ready: EV-Ready Residential Building Experiences in BC**

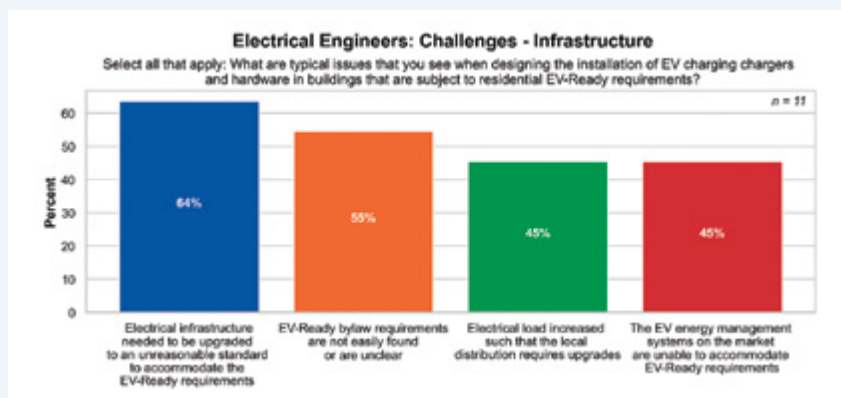
Organizations: **City of New Westminster, Metro Vancouver, BC Hydro, WATT Consulting Group, and Introba**

Partners: **District of Saanich, The University of British Columbia, City of Nanaimo, Community Energy Association, Affine Climate Solutions, City of Vancouver, City of Richmond, Township of Langley, and City of Victoria**

The Charged and Ready: EV-Ready Residential Building Experiences study evaluates the effectiveness of EV-ready bylaws in new residential buildings and provides recommendations to address barriers and challenges to successful implementation of these bylaws.

The jury appreciated the strong transferability of this work, with

research findings applicable to communities of all sizes. It addresses an important and timely topic, focusing on EV-ready bylaws in residential developments, and identifies the resources necessary to translate EV policies into actionable programs, and establishes a comprehensive public engagement process.



Awards for Individual Achievement

Award for Distinguished Professional Contribution: Christine Callihoo RPP, MCIP

Over more than twenty-five years, Christine Callihoo has advanced climate resilience, natural asset management, and risk-informed planning from emerging concepts to embedded professional practice — while mentoring generations of planners and strengthening the institutional foundations of the profession itself.

Her influence spans local governments, First Nations, federal guidance, international assessment processes, and professional education. Yet what most distinguishes Christine is not the breadth of her résumé, but the sustained, values-driven leadership behind it: a planner who gives back, builds others up, and elevates the profession through action.



Annual Student Fellowship Award Winners



Author:

Ella Champion

**Simon Fraser University's
Master's of Resource Management
(Planning) program**

Presentation:

**Nature-based Solutions for Wildfire
Risk Reduction in the Okanagan:
Challenges and Potential**

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are an ever-growing area of planning research that looks at how ecosystems and other nature-inspired measures can be leveraged to address planning challenges, in ways that benefit both nature and human societies. One such challenge is the growing impacts of climate change-exacerbated wildfire regimes on communities around the world—including those felt acutely across the BC Interior. NbS measures for wildfire risk reduction include prescribed and cultural burning, and protecting and restoring landscapes in ways that make them less prone to uncontrollable wildfire. Their implementation can be challenged by interjurisdictional coordination issues, but can create new opportunities for collaboration. This session will cover recent research looking the current and potential use of NbS for wildfire risk reduction by Okanagan communities, and what we can learn from the region about interjurisdictional collaboration on landscape-scale NbS.



Author:

Brooke Euloth
Vancouver Island University,
Master of Community Planning

Presentation:

A Third Place: Data Collection
for Support-Based Planning

This presentation introduces a walking-based planning method designed to document forms of informal, everyday urban life that are routinely excluded from formal municipal data systems. Drawing on an in-progress case study from an urban neighbourhood in Nanaimo, BC, the research demonstrates how informal social gathering, intergenerational presence, harm-reduction activity, and grassroots placemaking function as meaningful, support-based land uses. These practices reveal forms of community life, care, and spatial knowledge that are often missed by conventional public engagement and data collection methods. By recognizing informal activity as legitimate planning data, the research highlights opportunities for more inclusive representation and identifies ways municipalities can better support existing community initiatives and respond to local needs.



Author:

Simonne Mikolay
Simon Fraser University's
Master's of Resource Management
(Planning) program

Presentation:

Planning for Urban Water
Resilience to Extreme Heat

Extreme heat is changing how much water communities have, and when it is available. This presentation explores how planners can help communities adapt to a hotter, drier future through integrating water availability into the planning process, bridging the gap between siloed disciplines, and building urban water resilience.



Author:

Megan Turcato
Vancouver Island University,
Master of Community Planning

Presentation:

Stay Cool: Activating Downtown
in a Changing Climate

As climate change progresses, hotter and longer heat waves are coming to B.C. communities. How is that sweltering heat already changing the use of our urban cores? How can we prevent downtowns from becoming quiet and deserted each summer as residents flock to air-conditioned spaces? Based on recent research out of Vernon, learn how heat is already impacting residents' use of public space and practical strategies to address those changes by placemaking in the heat.