

PIBC PEER LEARNING NETWORK

PHASE 2 ACTION PLAN

Sep 2024 - Mar 2026



Contents

Executive Summary	3
What We Heard in Phase 1	4
PIBC Strategic Priorities	6
PIBC-PLN Input and Engagement Survey	7
PLN Phase 2 Action Plan	8
Reporting and Accountability	13

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Executive Summary

The PIBC Peer Learning Network was formed in January 2024 to support practitioners and local governments across British Columbia as they implement new policies and regulations in alignment with newly enacted provincial housing legislation.

In collaboration with the PIBC Board and Province's Ministry of Housing, the following initial priority areas were identified to guide Phase 1 activities in the PLN project:

1. Provision of peer support at the regional level, including sharing information and approaches specific to each region across the province.
2. Access by local governments to targeted legal guidance to support the revision of their zoning bylaws and other regulations.
3. Development of a digital knowledge centre to centralize information delivery and sharing, and facilitate timely access to emerging and wise practices.

PIBC recently completed all tasks and actions associated with its PLN Phase 1 Action Plan. As local governments shift their focus from legislative compliance toward understanding, projecting, and addressing housing need and proactive planning in their communities, PIBC is working to evolve its PLN activities to continue to meet the needs of practitioners across the province.

The PIBC Board participated in a PLN Strategic Planning workshop on June 27, 2024. PIBC also conducted a second input and engagement survey, which was open from July 16, 2024 to August 14, 2024 and received 301 responses from practitioners across the Province. The purpose of these activities was to ensure that the PLN project continues to support practitioners as they focus on the implementation and management of newly amended zoning bylaws, create additional regulations to support development, and comply with impending proactive planning requirements.

This Phase 2 Action Plan is a living document that is expected to evolve as the implementation of individual actions proceeds and further meaningful feedback is generated. PIBC will continue to deliver peer education through access to virtual learning opportunities and digital resources, allowing practitioners to access the topic-specific resources they need, when they need them. Recognizing the critical importance of collaboration in achieving housing and development targets, PIBC is also redoubling its efforts to build effective relationships with allied built environment professionals, to support impactful action and productive collaboration today and in the future.



Credit: CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.

What We Heard in Phase 1

Wherever possible, PIBC has modified its PLN activities to address practitioner concerns and is committed to continuing to provide relevant and timely resources throughout Phase 2. While the PLN project's Phase 1 activities were not intended to be consultative, several themes emerged from the peer learning sessions which influenced the development and delivery of PLN activities. Key themes are summarized in the table below.

<i>What We Heard in Phase 1</i>	<i>Phase 2 Response</i>
Many participants were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the new legislation and regulations and expressed difficulty in understanding the priority, sequence, and consequences of changes.	The PLN project will shift toward offering topic-specific learning opportunities, delivered in alignment with provincial timelines.
There was a lack of broad-based consultation during the development of the legislation.	At the end of Phase 1, PIBC sent a letter to the Minister of Housing regarding work completed through the PLN project to date. PIBC requested ongoing consultation with the Province on legislative matters moving forward. PIBC will continue to work to build a reciprocal/advisory relationship with the Province
The 'one-size-fits-all' approach does not work for all communities. For example, smaller, more rural communities do not have the same redevelopment opportunities as urban and suburban communities.	PIBC has undertaken a Phase 2 survey to identify where practitioners require additional support. PIBC will also work to build engagement in the PLN Online Forum so that practitioners in similar communities can share experiences and strategies relevant to their local context.

Some elected officials and local government staff feel their mandate has been limited by the new legislation.

PIBC, through the PLN project, will work with practitioners to share ideas about how policies and regulations can be tailored to address a specific community's needs, while complying with the legislation.

Some practitioners question whether there will be actual improvements to housing affordability and supply.

PIBC hosted a "Housing Affordability" webinar in Phase 1 and will continue to partner with allied organizations to research and share affordability strategies. In Phase 2, PIBC will continue to build relationships with the development community to support information sharing on how to preserve affordability while increasing supply.

Practitioners have questions about physical infrastructure capacity and upgrades (especially related to fire safety, water, sanitation, roads, and stormwater infrastructure) as well as social infrastructure (e.g., capacity of schools, hospitals, communities, and childcare centres) to service the increase in density. Several questions were posed about which body is responsible for funding infrastructure upgrades.

PIBC hosted a "Servicing and Infrastructure" webinar in Phase 1 and will continue to build partnerships with allied organizations (e.g., Asset Management BC, Public Works Association of BC) throughout Phase 2. Phase 2 PLN activities will include a webinar concerning new DCC and ACC authorities and wise practices for local governments.

Practitioners posed questions about how to balance density with green space (public and private space), environmental impact(s) of the density increase, and how to assess climate hazard areas such as wildfire and flooding areas before density is considered.

In Phase 2, PIBC will consider developing a webinar, in collaboration with PIBC's Climate Action Subcommittee, to support practitioners in addressing climate impact and other environmental factors as they amend their Official Community Plans to comply with the new legislation.

PIBC Strategic Priorities

The PLN Phase 2 Action Plan has been designed in broad alignment with PIBC's three Strategic Priority Areas, established by the Board, as outlined in this document. These PLN project actions and their related activities have been designed taking into consideration those broader PIBC Strategic Priority Areas. These principles help to guide and manage all PIBC and PLN actions, including planning, resourcing, delivering, and reporting activities.

PIBC's three strategic priority areas for 2023-2025 are:

- Pursue Justice, Equity, Diversity, Decolonization and Inclusion;
- Enhance Value, Engagement and Recruitment; and
- Advance the Profession

PIBC's strategic priorities support and encourage effective peer-learning and support. Using these strategic priorities as a signpost for action, the PLN project can include programming through which local knowledge is valued and in-demand and seen as an essential tool to effectively assist local governments in meeting their housing objectives and complying with legislative requirements.



Credit: CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.

PIBC- PLN Input and Engagement Survey

The PIBC Peer Learning Network (PLN) released its second Input & Engagement Survey in July 2024. The survey was designed to support an updated understanding of the evolving challenges, concerns, and questions practitioners across BC are facing as they implement newly-approved zoning bylaws and begin to develop proactive planning strategies in line with provincial requirements.

The survey was open for input from July 16, 2024, to August 14, 2024 and received 301 responses from every region of BC, including the Lower Mainland (29.9%), Fraser Valley (12.9%), Sunshine Coast (3.1%), Vancouver Island (26%), Okanagan and Interior BC (14.7%), Northern BC (9.4%), Kootenay and Rocky Mountains (8.1%), and the Gulf Islands (2.7%).

Recognizing the importance of collaboration, this survey also included broader invitations to, and responses from, allied professionals, including, but not limited

to, planners and planning managers, architects, landscape architects, engineers, developers and real estate professionals, building officials, housing providers, and home builders.

The survey requested, and received input concerning:

- Feedback on Phase 1 PLN Activities
- Preferences for Phase 2 PLN Online Learning Opportunities
- Research Products and Topics

The results of this survey will be used to determine the focus of PLN activities for the remainder of 2024 and the beginning of 2025. There will be opportunities to provide additional input into the content and direction of PLN project activities in the future.

Survey Respondents by Sector

Local Government	68.1%	Provincial Government	2.3%	Federal Government	1.3%
Private For-Profit	20.9%	Private Non-Profit	2.3%	Other Public Sector Organization	4.3%
Islands Trust	0%	Student	4.7%	Volunteer	1.0%

PLN Phase 2 Action Plan

The PLN Phase 2 Action Plan has been designed to build on Phase 1 activities to continue to support practitioners as they develop and implement new regulations and activities in response to the new provincial housing legislation.

The PLN Phase 2 Action Plan is focused around three priority areas:

- Facilitate peer learning and ensure that appropriate and reliable information (including legal information) is available when needed.
- Grow and maintain an online digital knowledge portal to centralize information delivery and facilitate timely access to emerging and wise practices.
- Foster transformational leadership and representation by raising the profile of planning to support interdisciplinary collaboration on future implementation activities.

The PLN Phase 2 Action Plan recognizes that the three priority areas outlined in this document work together to either enhance or limit peer learning. PIBC recognizes that success of the PLN is dependent on undertaking sustained and coordinated action – guided by PIBC’s strategic priority areas – on all priority actions, in coordination with the Province of BC and allied professions.

This Action Plan has been designed to align with provincial timelines concerning the development of Interim Housing Needs Reports (January 1, 2025), the optional creation of Development Cost Charge and Amenity Cost Charge bylaws, and amendments to Official Community Plans and Zoning Bylaws (December 31, 2025) to incorporate housing targets, proactive planning, and related concerns.

This Action Plan spans the remaining 18 months of the PLN funding agreement (ending March 31, 2026). It is anticipated that PIBC staff and consultants, in collaboration with the PIBC Housing Task Force and with direction from the PIBC Board, will continue to monitor and evaluate progress toward its priority actions and PIBC strategic priority areas throughout the duration of this phase. PIBC will also continue to gather feedback from PLN participants and, where necessary, activities (and delivery) may be revised or refined to ensure that programming and resources continue to address the evolving needs of practitioners across BC.

Priority Action 1: Deliver Peer Learning

The PIBC Peer Learning Network's primary objective is to support local governments and practitioners as they review, update, and align policies, regulations, and procedures to comply with new provincial housing legislation. Phase 2 activities build on this mandate to ensure practitioners have access to timely and relevant information (including legal information) to support them in meeting provincial requirements and addressing local objectives.

Goal

Facilitate peer-to-peer learning and ensure that appropriate and reliable information, including legal information, is available when needed.

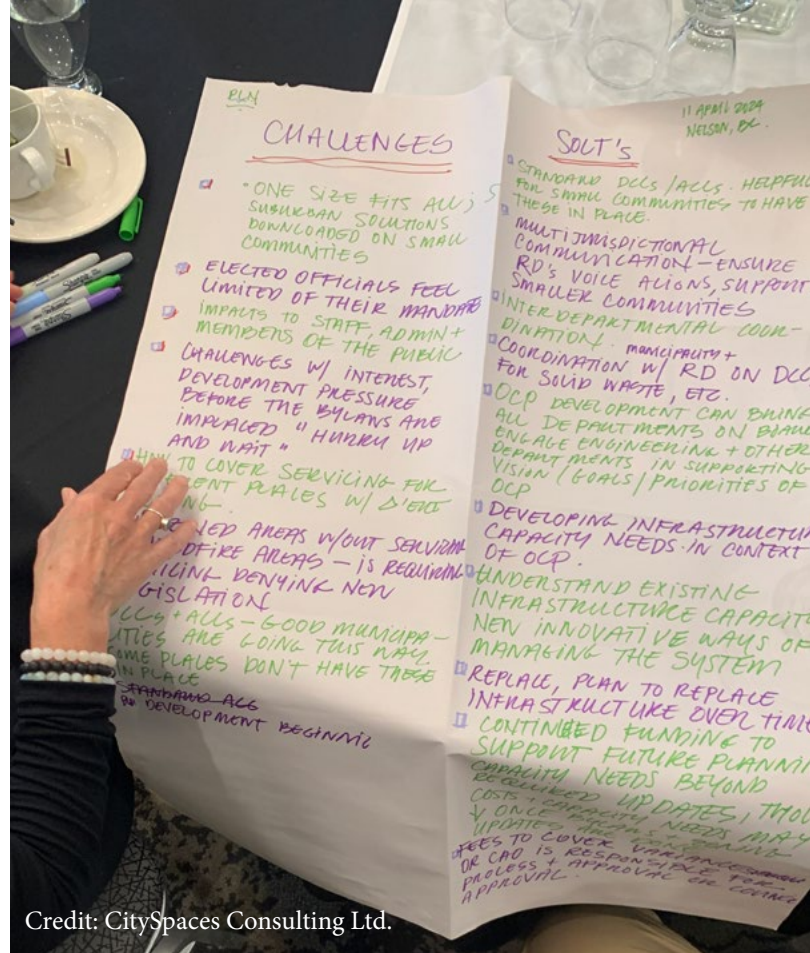
Objective

Practitioners will have access to the information and shared knowledge necessary to comply with provincial requirements and meet local objectives.

Key Activities: July 2024 – March 2026

To best support practitioners as they undertake the remaining work required to comply with the provincial housing legislation, topic-specific peer learning activities will be delivered primarily over the next 3-9 months. Where further information is required to support practitioners, additional webinars and learning opportunities may be added.

- Conduct a second input and engagement survey to update our understanding of practitioner needs with respect to peer learning and knowledge sharing (July-August 2024)
- Organize and deliver up to three topic-specific webinars approximately every four to six months. All webinars would typically include both legal and



Credit: CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.

practitioner perspectives related to the particular webinar topic or focus. Topics will be informed by the survey, discussions with the Province, and feedback from practitioners in relation to the timing of implementation activities in the housing space. Anticipated topics include Housing Needs Reports, development financing, development approvals/permitting, proactive planning/ OCP and zoning updates, intersections with affordability and climate sustainability, etc. (September 2024 - December 2025).

- Complete the ongoing investigation and implementation of subsidized access to *BC Planning Law and Practice* resource for local government practitioners in BC (September – December 2024)
- Continue to promote and fund the creation and delivery of local “Peer Learning Pods” (September 2024 – December 2025)

- Organize and deliver a second “Ask a Lawyer” webinar and Q&A document (January - March 2025)
- Continue to subsidize Quickscribe online legal resources for practitioners (August 2024 – December 2025)
- Periodically monitor and assess the PLN program and activities to ensure peer learning opportunities are addressing practitioners’ ongoing and emerging needs (September 2024 – December 2025)

Alignment with PIBC Strategic Priorities

Priority Action 1 aligns with the PIBC Board’s strategic priority to “Enhance Value, Engagement and Recruitment.” Through the engagement survey, PIBC is working to deepen its understanding of practitioners’ needs in order to tailor its PLN programming to both planners and allied professionals. PIBC will continue to

maintain transparency and accountability by reporting on activities, successes, and lessons learned throughout the remaining project term.

Priority Action 2: Grow and Maintain an Online Digital Knowledge Portal for Practitioners

In Phase 2, the PIBC Peer Learning Network will focus on redesigning the PLN webpage(s) into a more fulsome digital resource that will be maintained beyond the project term. The intent of the webpage(s) is to facilitate timely access to emerging and wise practices and ensure that practitioners have a reliable, centralized location for information delivery and sharing. PIBC will also continue to encourage PLN participants to connect directly through the online forum in order to facilitate more localized peer support and knowledge sharing for local governments and regional districts across BC.

Goal

Build and maintain an online digital knowledge resource to centralize information delivery and facilitate timely access to emerging and wise practices.

Objective

Practitioners, local governments, for-profit and non-profit development community, academia, consultants, and allied professionals will have a trusted source for information, wise practices, and resources.

Key Activities: July 2024 – March 2026

- Develop and launch a regular digital PLN newsletter (September 2024 – December 2025)
- Redesign the PLN webpage(s) into a “Peer Learning Portal” where



practitioners can search for wise practices, case studies, links, and resources (September 2024 – beyond March 2026)

- Commission and/or participate in relevant research activities (e.g., wise practices, case studies, etc.) in support of practitioners working to implement the provincial housing legislation. Topics will be informed by the survey, continued discussions with the Province, and feedback from practitioners (September 2024 – December 2025)
- Grow and maintain the PLN Online Forum. The intent of this Forum is to allow practitioners to ask questions and share wise practices, precedent, and proposed solutions relevant to the implementation of the provincial housing legislation (September 2024 – beyond March 2026)
- Ensure ongoing access to archived peer learning resources (e.g., webinar and event recordings, summaries, etc.) (September 2024 – beyond March 2026)
- Seek opportunities to further engage directly with partners and allied organizations (e.g. Union of BC Municipalities, Local Government Management Association, Association of Regional District Planning Managers, Asset Management BC, Association of Engineers and Geoscientists of BC, Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Advisory Committee, relevant allied professional organizations, etc.) (September 2024 – beyond March 2026)

Alignment with PIBC Strategic Priorities

Priority Action 2 aligns with the PIBC Board's strategic priorities to "Enhance Value, Engagement and Recruitment" and to "Advance the Profession." Depending

on the resources and wise practices that are produced through targeted research, there is also an opportunity to contribute to building and sharing knowledge in support of promoting "Justice, Equity, Diversity, Decolonization and Inclusion." Throughout Phase 2 of the PLN project, PIBC will endeavor to develop and share digital resources both in support of current practice and as a legacy resource for local governments, planners, and allied professionals. Through transformational leadership, practitioners will be able to take a more active role in guiding, directing, and implementing future legislative and regulatory changes across the province.

Priority Action 3: Strengthen the Community of Practice and Planning Representation

As part of this PLN Phase 2 Action Plan, PIBC is redoubling its efforts to establish and nurture effective partnerships for impact. Leadership and representation activities recognize the downstream collaborations required to ensure sustainable impact; therefore, the intent of this action is to raise the profile of planning and other built environment professions, while breaking down silos between disciplines.

Goal

Foster transformational leadership and representation in local governments and allied professions to support interdisciplinary collaboration on future implementation activities.

Objective

Elevate the visibility, influence, representation, and contribution of planning and other human settlement and built environment professions through

partnerships and opportunities for future collaboration.

Key Activities: July 2024 – March 2026

- Establish and develop reciprocal relationships between PIBC and allied professions and human settlement and built environment organizations, including sharing invitations to participate in PLN project activities and events (September 2024 – March 2026)
- Contribute to newsletters and communications circulated by allied organizations (September 2024 – March 2026)
- Participate in conferences and events hosted by allied organizations (September 2024 – March 2026)
- Facilitate relevant opportunities for planners and other practitioners to

communicate with the Province of BC on matters relating to the built environment (September 2024 – beyond March 2026)

Alignment with PIBC Strategic Priorities

Priority Action 3 aligns with the PIBC Board's strategic priorities to "Enhance Value, Engagement and Recruitment" and to "Advance the Profession." These activities raise awareness of the PLN project while building a positive profile of the planning profession. Building relationships with allied organizations enhances opportunities for practitioners to collaborate across disciplines to achieve their objectives, thereby enhancing value for both PIBC members and allied practitioners.



Reporting and Accountability

The Planning Institute of British Columbia maintains overall responsibility for the design and implementation of the PLN project, ensuring that the actions outlined in this plan are completed and progress toward objectives is monitored over the course of the project period.

In its implementation of the PLN project, PIBC staff and consultants work collaboratively with the PIBC Housing Task Force (established under the Policy & Public Affairs Committee) to ensure that its strategic direction is in alignment with PIBC Board priorities.

The PLN project will also continue to be delivered in collaboration with the Province of British Columbia to facilitate coordinated action and ensure that practitioners receive the most up to date information available.

Following up on the July 2024 progress report, a further progress report will be developed and issued in 2025, outlining achievements and actions of the PLN project to date and identifying next steps.

