

**Planning Institute of British Columbia**



# **Exploring Pathways for Indigenous Planning Membership**

***Reflections and Recommendations***

***Sənala Planning and the PIBC Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee 2023***



# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
Intention	3
Background	3
Approach for Phase 1: Scoping Process	4
About the Indigenous Advisory Committee	5
Acknowledging the Colonial Implications of Planning	7
Raising up Indigenous Planning Practices	8
Respecting the Sacred	9
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>9</b>
Recommendations for Strengthening PIBC as a Place Where Indigenous Planners are Respected, Represented, and Empowered	10
Recommendations for Improving the Current Certification Process	14
<b>Looking Towards the Horizon</b>	<b>17</b>
Recommendations for PIBC to Support the Creation of an Alternative Pathway for Indigenous Planning Membership	17
References	19
Appendices	20
Appendix A: PIBC Request for Expression of Interest	20
Appendix B: Sānala's Proposed Approach for Phase 2	25

We would like to extend our tremendous gratitude to the Indigenous Advisory Members for graciously guiding this exploration as well as the PPRC for undertaking this important work. We raise our hands to you all and look forward to future collaboration, dialogue, and action.



# Introduction

## Intention

The intention of this document is to raise up Indigenous planners and planning practices within and throughout PIBC, recognizing the colonial harms perpetrated by the Western planning paradigm, to explore the creation of new relationships and pathways to certification for Indigenous planners that provide meaningful benefit and recognition of their knowledge and experience.

## Background

This project is a collaboration between Sānala Planning Inc. (formerly known as Alderhill Planning Inc.) and PIBC's Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee (PPRC). In March 2023, Robbie Knott and Kate Davis of Sānala Planning responded to the PPRC's Call for Expressions of Interest exploring the creation of a pathway to membership for Indigenous Planners (see [Appendix A](#)). The Call for Expressions of Interest sought proposals from knowledgeable individuals or firms to research and support the PPRC in developing processes that acknowledge and honour the deep knowledge and experience Indigenous planners hold, with the intention of developing inclusive pathways to professional membership within PIBC.

Sānala's submission included a proposal for an initial Phase 1 of work: to scope this project in more detail, intentionally seeking guidance from a diversity of other Indigenous planners. Sānala's proposal included a written component and a video conversation that outlined three main goals:

1. Work with PIBC's PPRC to scope a path forward, ultimately co-developing a process that respects, protects and upholds the knowledge and experience of Indigenous planners, Knowledge Holders and communities;
2. Convene an Indigenous Advisory Committee with representation from Indigenous planners from a variety of planning backgrounds (including those deemed "formal" and "informal experience") to explore questions, concerns, and potential approaches towards membership for Indigenous planners; and
3. Provide a summary report with recommendations to PIBC's PPRC regarding potential next steps in the creation of a pathway to membership for Indigenous planners.

With the recognition that this work must be informed by a diversity of Indigenous planners including planners not already certified with PIBC, Sānala's approach to Phase 1 (scoping) was



to host two virtual meetings with Indigenous Advisory Committee members, and allow their insights and perspectives to guide the development of a potential Phase 2 (Project Roll-out). This report outlines our approach to this scoping work, in addition to a series of preliminary recommendations that can be used to inform Phase 2 of this project, as well as PIBC and the Canadian Institute of Planners in creating safer, more inclusive spaces and systems for Indigenous people and planners.

## Approach for Phase 1: Scoping Process

To explore the scope of this work more fully, Sānala conducted Phase 1 in three parts:

### Part 1: Grounding, Research, and Process Design

This included meetings with the PPRC to better understand the context of this project and the work they've done to date, conducting desktop research and an environmental scan for other similar initiatives, and connecting with potential Indigenous Advisory Committee members to inform them of the project and invite their participation.

### Part 2: Indigenous Planning Advisory Committee Meetings

Once the Indigenous Advisory Committee was established, Sānala hosted and facilitated two 2-hour virtual meetings. At the beginning of the first meeting, time was spent doing a fulsome roundtable introduction; getting to know one another, what kind of planning work folks are engaged in, and what brought them to the work they do. After providing an overview of the project began the exploration of what a pathway to membership with PIBC might look like for Indigenous planners, including asking the following questions:

- What opportunities do you see?
- Are there any potential challenges or conflicts?
- What are current barriers to Indigenous planners participating in PIBC membership?
- What benefits could PIBC membership bring to Indigenous planners?

Between the first and second Indigenous Advisory Committee meetings, Sānala reviewed meeting notes and prepared a set of preliminary recommendations. At the second meeting, Sānala presented the recommendations to the Advisory Committee for further discussion.



## Part 3: Writing, Reviewing, Amending

Following the completion of both Indigenous Advisory Committee meetings, honoraria payments of \$200/hour were sent to each Indigenous Advisory Committee member for sharing their time and knowledge. Sānala then spent time reviewing meeting notes, and working to incorporate diverse perspectives on Indigenous planning practices into a set of preliminary recommendations for PIBC's PPRC. A draft version of the recommendations was circulated to Indigenous Advisory Committee members for review prior to the recommendations being added to this report.

### About the Indigenous Advisory Committee

The Indigenous Advisory Committee was convened by Sānala to provide guidance on the exploration of potential pathways to membership with PIBC. Sānala reached out to a number of Indigenous planners working across the spectrum of Indigenous community planning, with the goal of convening a Committee that included representation from youth, Elders, and those doing land-based and community-based planning. Due to busy summer schedules, some Committee members were unable to participate at both sessions.

Indigenous Advisory Committee Membership		
Name	Role	Area of Planning Work
Rachel Wuttunee	MMIWG Social Planner at the City of Vancouver	Social planning, Child and Family, Safety
Samantha Gush	CCP Coordinator, Elder Coordinator, and Councillor for Siska Indian Band	Comprehensive community planning
Cara Basil	Health Planner at Sānala Planning Inc.	Health planning, governance planning, community engagement, facilitation
Jalissa Moody	Masters Student at VIU, Acting Director of Indigenous Asset Management at BC Housing	Housing, Indigenous housing
Steven DeRoy	Director, Firelight Group	Community planning, data



		mapping, housing management planning, community engagement
Gwen Phillips	Advisory, Educator, FNHC Representative	Health planning, data sovereignty, comprehensive community planning, federal implementation of C92
Addison Fosbery	Planner	Wildlife planning, protected areas planning
Jessie Hemphill	CEO, Sanala Planning Inc.	Community engagement, comprehensive community planning, environmental planning

## Working with PIBC's Planning Partnership and Reconciliation Committee

This project is, in many ways, a partnership between Sanala Planning and PIBC's Planning Partnership and Reconciliation Committee (PPRC). From the start of this project, members of the PPRC have demonstrated their commitment to doing this work in a good way; prioritizing the voices of Indigenous peoples and planners and creating space for an open, flexible, and emergent process.

Sanala's approach to planning is grounded in Indigenous values and practices, including nested systems, which underlines the interconnectedness of everything; how the way we do small things must reflect in the way we wish to do bigger things. In this context, as we explored what certification of Indigenous planners might look like, it was crucial that the process itself be conducted in a way that upholds Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing and being. PIBC's PPRC has demonstrated this mindset in their approach to this work; in the way the Call for Expressions of Interest was written, in their openness about their journey of learning and unlearning, by reviewing and adopting OCAP prior to reviewing our submission video, and in their trust and allowance of the Indigenous Advisory Committee to lead this scoping process.

When we think about creating change in a system as large as PIBC it can feel daunting to know where to start. However, we have been heartened by the attitudes and actions of the PPRC members and hope this signals a commitment to doing things differently within the Institute for the betterment of all planners and communities.



## Acknowledging the Colonial Implications of Planning

Recognizing and naming the historical and contemporary colonial harms perpetrated by professional planning is a prerequisite to respectfully engaging in this exploration and moving forward on this journey. To honour Indigenous peoples and planning principles is to first acknowledge these truths and actively work towards unsettling the planning profession in meaningful ways.

“The colonial project has left a legacy of material and ideological marginalization of Indigenous peoples, unmatched in ‘recent’ human history. The very existence of many nation states is built on Indigenous marginalization. And, state-based planning has provided the conceptual and practical apparatus for institutionalizing marginalization. Therefore, knowing and responding to this history is critical.”

- Hirini Matunga, 2017

Today, Indigenous peoples across the territories are leading the way in engaging, healing and empowering their communities, oftentimes without even considering themselves a ‘planner’. As one Advisory member put it, ‘the practice of planning has become institutionalized and remains complicit in colonial land theft of unceded territories’. This statement, along with the tremendous lack of representation from Indigenous folks in the planning profession, continues to bring forward concerns for Indigenous and BIPOC folks such as inclusion, safety, inequity, respect, relevance, and reciprocity.

In order to realize the vision of evolving PIBC certification processes to include respectful pathways to Indigenous planning membership, there needs to be a complete paradigm shift in the way professional planning understands its connection to colonial land theft and Indigenous erasure, and the responsibilities of rebuilding relationships with Indigenous peoples, communities, and planners. These responsibilities go beyond the realm of PIBC and also call upon provincial and federal governments to work alongside one another towards achieving aspirations of reconciliation (including fiduciary responsibility) in an ethical and progressive way.



## Raising up Indigenous Planning Practices

It is difficult to encapsulate the incredible depth of Indigenous planning practices found across what is now known as BC; with over 200 First Nations each with distinct place-based knowledges and planning systems, cultivated symbiotically with the land over millennia. Indigenous planning is not siloed or standardized, it is in direct relation to the land and the living environment (both animate and inanimate) and interwoven with cultural protocol and language, alongside stewardship practices and traditional governance systems.

Just as Indigenous knowledge systems are dynamic by readily and intuitively responding to their environment, so too are Indigenous planning practices. Contemporary Indigenous planning practices are built upon thousands of years of knowledge passed down from the Elders and ancestors, woven in with certain Western modalities that are in alignment with a trauma-informed, community-based approach.

“If you’re Indigenous, you’re a planner.”

- *Indigenous Advisory Committee Member*

Indigenous planning is a tool of collective healing and empowerment, celebrating culture, identity, and connection to the land. It honours the interconnectedness of our relations and seeks to bring forward the wisdom of the collective using inclusive community-based decision-making processes. Each Nation, community, and even individual will have different ways of planning that are a reflection of their own identities, landscapes, cultures, and languages. Upholding Indigenous self-determination in planning requires non-Indigenous planners to pause, listen, and reflect on their own biases, privilege, and unlearning journeys when engaging in this work.

“(Professional) planners don’t even know what they don’t know when it comes to the complexity of Indigenous planning”

- *Indigenous Advisory Committee Member*



## Respecting the Sacred

While PIBC explores the creation of criteria for Indigenous planners, there is a foundational need to understand and respect the longstanding and sacred connection Indigenous peoples have to their lands, languages, medicines, teachings, and ceremonies. This sacred knowledge is imbued into Indigenous planning and must be approached with respect and protected based on the protocols of the Nation/community. There are also considerations and concerns that non-Indigenous planners should be aware of including appropriation, commodification, misinterpretation, power dynamics and paternalistic planning practices.

For example, it would not be appropriate to attempt to evaluate or measure the value of Indigenous Knowledge Holders or submit reporting on ceremonial practice for certification. There may also be stories, songs, ceremonies, sacred spaces, regalia, and medicines that have specific protocols and responsibilities that are not meant for those outside of the community/family. This context will vary but it is important that the inclusion and outcomes of Indigenous planning practices are governed and guided by the Nation/community involved.

## Recommendations

These preliminary recommendations were brought forward by the Indigenous Advisory Committee during two virtual meetings and further developed by Sānala following the completion of a desktop environmental scan.

The recommendations in this report are organized into three sections:

### Phase 1 Recommendations:

1. Recommendations for Strengthening PIBC as a Place Where Indigenous Planners are Respected, Represented, and Empowered
2. Recommendations for Improving the Current Certification Process

### Phase 2 Recommendations:

3. Recommendations for PIBC to Support the Creation of an Alternative Pathway for Indigenous Planning Membership



## Phase 1 Recommendations

The recommendations begin with the foundation of the Institute. PIBC is not an institution where Indigenous people currently feel seen, validated, and in some situations, safe. With very little mention or recognition of Indigenous planning practices, projects, or practitioners in PIBC documents and communications, as well as there being very few Indigenous planners within the Institute, PIBC is currently not a place that many Indigenous planners wish to join. In addition, there is no apparent tangible benefit to Indigenous planners who become certified with PIBC (Bunke, 2021).

### Recommendations for Strengthening PIBC as a Place Where Indigenous Planners are Respected, Represented, and Empowered

Indigenous Advisory Committee members shared that PIBC's standards of planning practice may not align with the planning practices of their Nation or community and that their community, informed by their laws, culture, and ways of knowing are the most important authority to inform *how* planning work should be carried out. Committee members also stated that their planning work cannot be properly validated by PIBC, only by their community or those in the community they are planning with.

“Who can say what’s legitimate? It’s not PIBC; only Ktunaxa can say what is legitimate.”

- *(Ktunaxa) Indigenous Advisory Council Member*

There was also the sense that PIBC's view of planning is inherently western, in many ways at odds with the complexities of Indigenous worldviews and lived experiences. There is no one right way to do planning; there are innumerable ways, each created and nurtured by Indigenous communities and their territories over millennia. Indigenous Advisory members felt that unless PIBC is willing to engage in the complexity of Indigenous planning alongside the complicity of Western planning practices in ways that challenge how we see planning right now, membership may in fact be a detriment to Indigenous planning practices.



“If you brought [PIBC certification standards] to our community, I think a lot of members would not agree with it because our members want a say in how we plan.”

- *Indigenous Advisory Committee Member*

Despite this, there is a recognition that PIBC has power and influence, and that it would be beneficial to have more Indigenous planning perspectives help to shape the Institute if it became a place where those knowledges and experiences are valued, upheld, and advocated for.

If PIBC wants more Indigenous people to become certified, there is much work to be done to make the institution one that Indigenous people want to be a part of. Indigenous Advisory Committee members shared a strong desire to be part of these conversations, and that if and when the work to reform PIBC evolves forward, they would want to be meaningfully involved in the creation of what comes next.

PIBC must create a culture of change in order for the required institutional changes to be embraced and advocated for. As Tuck and Yang (2012) emphasize, the work of decolonization is too often used as metaphor, when the implications of truly decolonizing Western planning practice ultimately involve the active exploration of repatriating unceded and Treaty territories back to Indigenous peoples.

The following recommendations provide some preliminary steps for PIBC to begin evolving the institutional policies, practices, and positioning for Indigenous inclusion and advocacy:

## Recommendations

1. PIBC to create a virtual repository where Indigenous planning documents, guides, and resources can be uploaded and shared.
2. PPRC to conduct an audit of all PIBC documents to identify areas where references to Indigenous planning and reconciliation should be added (i.e. there is no mention of Indigenous planning or reconciliation on the About PIBC webpage, the ‘What is PIBC and why be a member?’ fact sheet, or the ‘What is Planning? What do planners do?’ fact sheet).



“PIBC needs to include the word “reconciliation”. If they don’t write it, then they’re actively not committing to it”

- *Indigenous Advisory Committee Member*

3. PIBC to require the completion of a cultural safety and anti-Indigenous racism course for all candidates as part of the certification process, as well as all existing PIBC members through a CPL process.
4. PIBC to support the creation of an Indigenous-led mentorship program where experienced Indigenous planners (and PPRC allies) are paired with newer Indigenous planners to support their continued growth and wellbeing in the Institute.

“Until every community has a community trained and community based planner, we have not succeeded.”

- *Indigenous Advisory Committee Member*

5. PIBC to engage in education and research that moves beyond colonial understandings of wellbeing, public good, community and land planning, etc.

“Measuring our wellbeing in terms of what is important to Canadians, is measuring assimilation, in my opinion.”

- *Indigenous Advisory Committee Member*

6. PIBC to expand requirements for staff to take justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) training with regular check-ins on the process of implementing these lessons into their work.
7. PIBC to conduct a rolling evaluation on the Strategic Plan Measures of Success with specific opportunities for Indigenous planners and Indigenous community members to provide guidance and feedback in collaboration with the PIBC Board of Directors, as appropriate.



8. PIBC to develop a position/commitment statement (e.g., addressing historic Indigenous exclusion and marginalization through Western planning practice, actively working towards reconciliatory actions, intentionally and meaningfully decolonizing professional planning practices and policy).
9. PIBC to require a minimum number of Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) credits per year that are focused on Indigenous planning, cultural safety, and trauma-informed practices.
10. PIBC to create a tier of membership specifically for Indigenous planners who are not certified to attend PIBC events.
11. PIBC to create a pathway for non-certified Indigenous planners to vote in PIBC Board Elections.
12. PIBC to require all Directors to engage in annual training and reflective practice on advocacy, allyship, anti-Indigenous racism, and reconciliation.
13. PIBC to develop policy (e.g., certification, CPL credits, logbook, core competency etc.) for professional planners to require experience working in respectful partnership with Indigenous communities and planning organizations as part of their certification process.

In fall of 2023, Sənala hosted two working sessions with the PPRC to review and prioritize recommendations and determine appropriate next steps and quick starts that can be set into motion immediately which are outlined below, as well as in more detail in the [Recommendations Assessment Table](#).

## Ongoing Work

- PIBC is currently conducting a review of all calls and recommendations from the MMIWG Calls to Justice, RCAP, TRC Calls to Action, and UNDRIP and identifying how action is being taken and committed to (including the Strategic Plan).

## Prioritized Quick Starts

- PIBC to create a tier of membership specifically for Indigenous planners who are not certified to attend PIBC events.
- PPRC to conduct an audit of all PIBC documents to identify areas where references to Indigenous planning and reconciliation should be added (i.e. there is no mention of



Indigenous planning or reconciliation on the About PIBC webpage, the ‘What is PIBC and why be a member?’ fact sheet, or the ‘What is Planning? What do planners do?’ fact sheet).

- PIBC to support the creation of an Indigenous-led mentorship program where experienced Indigenous planners (and PPRC allies) are paired with newer Indigenous planners to support their continued growth and wellbeing in the Institution.
- PIBC to expand requirements for staff to take justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) training with regular check-ins on the process of implementing these lessons into their work.

## Long-term Goals

- PIBC to engage in education and research that moves beyond colonial understandings of wellbeing, public good, community and land planning, etc.
- PIBC to develop policy (e.g., certification, CPL credits, logbook, core competency etc.) for professional planners to require experience working in respectful partnership with Indigenous communities and planning organizations as part of their certification process.

## Recommendations for Improving the Current Certification Process

As noted, PIBC, an institute of over 1,600 planners in the Province of B.C. and Yukon Territory, has very few Indigenous members. While it is understandable that PIBC is interested in attracting more Indigenous members, it appears that there are very few Indigenous planners who are interested in joining PIBC as it currently stands. Above, we provided recommendations that seek to support PIBC in becoming an institute where Indigenous planners feel safe, seen, supported, and want to participate. Below, we provide recommendations towards the improvement of the certification process itself, to ensure that those Indigenous planners who do wish to become certified are supported to complete the process.



“How can we as planners and educators, settlers and Indigenous people, begin to consider the possibilities for reconciliation when state-based planning and planning education remain constrained within settler colonial frameworks?”

- Leela Viswanathan, 2017

## Recommendations

1. PIBC to hire an Indigenous planner to conduct an audit of the certification process from an Indigenous planner’s perspective to identify further areas for improvement.
2. PIBC to waive the certification process fees for Indigenous candidates.

“I would have kept going with the process had it not cost so much.”

- Indigenous Advisory Committee Member

3. PIBC to create seats on the Professional Standards & Certification Committee / Professional Standards Board for Indigenous planners to share their perspectives in the Institute’s membership admission and certification process.
4. PIBC to support allied planners with experience working respectfully with Indigenous communities to provide mentorship to Indigenous candidates during the certification process.
5. PIBC to accept college-level planning certifications or equivalent certifications and experience (or remove the requirement for post-secondary education) for Indigenous planners pursuing certification.
6. PIBC to require reflective submission expressing candidates’ understanding and recognition of the Indigenous territories they live on, and commitment to active reconciliatory action through their planning work.

“These changes will make PIBC safer for everyone.”

- Indigenous Advisory Committee Member



In fall of 2023, Sḡnala hosted two working sessions with the PPRC to review and prioritize recommendations and determine appropriate next steps and quick starts that can be set into motion immediately which are outlined below, as well as in more detail in the [Recommendations Assessment Table](#).

## Quick Starts

- PIBC to waive the certification process fees for Indigenous candidates.
- PIBC to support allied planners with experience working respectfully with Indigenous communities to provide mentorship to Indigenous candidates during the certification process.
- PIBC to require reflective submission expressing candidates' understanding and recognition of the Indigenous territories they live on, and commitment to active reconciliatory action through their planning work.

## Long-term Goals

- PIBC to create seats on the Professional Standards & Certification Committee / Professional Standards Board for Indigenous planners to share their perspectives in the Institute's membership admission and certification process.
- PIBC to accept college-level planning certifications or equivalent certifications and experience (or remove the requirement for post-secondary education) for Indigenous planners seeking certification.

This exploration illuminated a great deal of insights, considerations and recommendations for transforming PIBC to respectfully include and raise up Indigenous voices, priorities, and planning principles. The rich conversations amongst the Indigenous Advisory Committee and the PPRC provide a strong foundation to continue this important work and explore future opportunities in a potential Phase 2 of the project.



## Looking Towards the Horizon

Upon reflecting on the past and committing to action in the present, we are able to look towards the future excited to collectively evolve the planning profession.

Shortly after completing Phase 1 of the project in October 2023, Sanala and the PPRC submitted a proposal to the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) to host a panel discussion of decolonizing professional planning at the CIP National Gathering July 9 - July 11, 2024. This is a tremendous opportunity to showcase the ongoing learning journey of PIBC and the PPRC as we continue to solidify funding and capacity to undertake a prospective Phase 2 of the project, guided by the recommendations below.

### Phase 2 Recommendations

While Indigenous Advisory Committee members provided many recommendations for how PIBC can move towards being an institute where Indigenous planners want to become members and are well supported to become certified, there was much discussion around what an alternative to PIBC certification could look like. Some of these recommendations speak to the development of an certification process that leads towards a different designation other than Registered Professional Planner (RPP), likely one specific to Indigenous planning practices and methods. Other recommendations are based on the creation of opportunities to explore what a separate body or planning institute could look like that upholds and protects Indigenous Nation-based planning values.

The two discussions surrounding these possibilities merely scratched the surface of what shape or form a new pathway or institute could take. Much more time is required to explore these possibilities fully. The following recommendations can guide a potential Phase 2 of the project, further exploring and researching the development of an alternative pathway within PIBC as well as advancing organizational accountability, commitment, and creating safer, more empowering spaces for Indigenous planners.

### Recommendations for PIBC to Support the Creation of an Alternative Pathway for Indigenous Planning Membership

1. PIBC to seek out sources of funding to undertake Phase 2 recommendations and continue to advance this work in an ethical, intentional, and responsible way.



2. PIBC to support the development of an Indigenous body (or identification of an existing Indigenous body) to establish an Indigenous Planners Network.
3. PIBC to support continued conversations with the Indigenous Advisory Committee, Indigenous community planners and associations on developing a potential alternative pathway to membership.
4. PIBC to support the Indigenous Advisory Committee to develop competencies and indicators of success from Indigenous planning perspectives.
5. PIBC to support a 2-3 day Indigenous Planning Forum where Indigenous planners can explore questions around the creation of an Indigenous Planning Institute.

“For an institute for Indigenous planning to be legitimate, it would need to be distinguishing between each Nation group, with each Nation determining what this looks like to them.”

- *Indigenous Advisory Committee Member*

6. PIBC to continue holding space for generative conversations with other planning institutes and affiliated groups, including Indigenous organizations, communities, and governance and advisory bodies, and elected officials in municipal, provincial, and federal government.

In fall of 2023, Sənala hosted two working sessions with the PPRC to review and prioritize recommendations and determine appropriate next steps and quick starts that can be set into motion immediately, which are outlined below:

## Priorities

- PIBC to support continued conversations with the Indigenous Advisory Committee, Indigenous community planners and associations on developing a potential alternative pathway to membership.



## References

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<https://ontarioplanners.ca/OPPIAssets/Documents/OPPI/Indigenous-Planning-Perspectives-Task-Force-Report-FINAL.pdf>

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<https://www.cip-icu.ca/Files/Policies/policy-indigenous-planning-draft-eng.aspx>

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: PIBC Request for Expression of Interest

### Pathway to Membership for Indigenous Planners – Establishing an Understanding of Traditional Knowledge & Experience

*The Planning Institute of British Columbia recognizes, acknowledges, and appreciates that we are able to live, work, and learn on the traditional territories of the First Nations and Indigenous peoples of BC and Yukon. Acknowledging the principles of truth and reconciliation, we recognize and respect the history, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and all Indigenous peoples of Canada whose presence continues to enrich our lives and our country.*

The Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC) is seeking expressions of interest from individuals or consulting firms to research and help us define potential criteria which acknowledge and recognize the types of knowledge and experience an Indigenous planner should hold, such that inclusive paths to professional membership within PIBC can be created.

#### **PIBC Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee (PPRC): Who We Are**

##### **Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC)**

PIBC is the professional association of planners in British Columbia and Yukon and has been dedicated to the advancement of the planning profession for more than 60 years. PIBC is the westernmost affiliate of the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) – the national association. The Institute was incorporated in 1958 under the Society Act of British Columbia with just eight founding members. There are currently close to 1,600 members.

Professional planners use their knowledge, skills, and experience to help shape more livable, sustainable communities and environments. PIBC members are forward thinking individuals who work in both the public and private sectors, in many different fields of planning – including land-use and development, municipal and regional planning, resource and environmental management, policy planning and law, heritage conservation, transportation planning, economic development, urban design, and more.



One of the key functions of PIBC as a professional association is the certification of planning practitioners in BC and Yukon. This process is based on established standards and requirements that aim to assess and recognize the knowledge, experience, and abilities of planning practitioners.

## Background

PIBC initially established the Indigenous Planning Working Group (IPWG) in September 2020. However, with insight from various collaborators, we recognized that we were not an Indigenous Planning Working Group. Therefore, based on initial learning and with the support of the PIBC Board of Directors, the title and terms of reference were updated to the current Planning Practice & Reconciliation Committee (PPRC).

As the IPWG, we were initially tasked with developing and recommending relevant and achievable strategies and actions for PIBC to respond to outcomes from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). We found the two final reports inextricably linked by collective trauma caused by colonial systems and processes.

*"One of the most critical ways that the security of Indigenous women and girls is jeopardized is as a result of the intergenerational trauma that marks many Indigenous communities, families, and relationships. As witnesses shared with the National Inquiry, meaningful conversation and change aimed at ending interpersonal violence and restoring security to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people must acknowledge the much broader historical context of colonial violence that actively targets Indigenous women and normalizes violence of all forms committed against them." – MMIWG*

Throughout these documents, the message that we identified is a demand for the fundamental right to respect for: First Nations and First Nations rights, culture, knowledge, and traditions. As well, we have learned and continue to learn about planning practice, reconciliation and what reconciliation could mean for PIBC. The TRC itself defined reconciliation:

*"To the Commission, reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness*



*of the past acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour." – TRC*

We developed this as a roadmap and began our work listening and learning about Indigenous experiences with planning from the TRC and MMIWG reports, workshops, research work, webinars, and most importantly, our various teachers (including traditional knowledge holders).

We gained new perspectives and revised our role. We have realized a larger call to action: to decolonize our institutions, practices, and approaches. Our work was broadened to encompass a framework for reconciliation for the planning profession in BC and Yukon. Although we are at the early stages of our work, we have undertaken the following initial steps over the last two years:

1. Recognizing that we are not an Indigenous Planning Working Group, the name and role were revised to the current Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee (PPRC).
2. We developed and articulated our thesis:

How does PIBC address the TRC and MMIWG, but beyond that, expand to actively decolonize the planning practices in BC and Yukon, and support our members in doing this work? How can the Institute undertake truth and reconciliation within the planning profession?

3. We continue to strive to answer a call to justice in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls report to decolonize our approach to the work we are doing:

*"A decolonizing approach aims to resist and undo the forces of colonialism and to re-establish Indigenous Nationhood. It is rooted in Indigenous values, philosophies, and knowledge systems. It is a way of doing things differently that challenges the colonial influence we live under by making space for marginalized Indigenous perspectives." – MMIWG*

4. We continue the deep work of listening and learning.
5. We continue our work to decolonize ourselves, our work as planners, and PIBC.



We have come to know with absolute certainty that PIBC, the planning profession, and our work as planners will be enhanced with the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge. We honour the deep wisdom that comes with stewardship of the land since time immemorial. We recognize that PIBC, as an institution, has not made adequate space for this knowledge. We acknowledge that PIBC requires structural changes to be an inclusive organization that respects Indigenous rights, knowledge, and ways of knowing. We know with certainty that these changes will benefit us and help usher in changes that we need for the profession, the communities in which we work, the environment, and society.

### **Purpose of This Request for Expressions of Interest**

PIBC, through the PPRC, would like to establish a path to PIBC professional membership for Traditional Knowledge holders. Currently, the typical paths to Certified membership require a university degree, some amount of planning work experience, and the completion of various certification steps (such as professional mentorship, examinations, etc.).

We are looking for an individual or consulting firm to research and help us define potential criteria which acknowledge and recognize the types of knowledge and experience an Indigenous planner should hold. Therefore, we seek submissions from traditional knowledge holders to work with us to help create and define inclusive paths to professional membership within PIBC.

We do not have a prescribed format for potential submissions from proponents, as we welcome different formats and approaches.

### **Submission Evaluation**

We ask proponents to submit a response in any format they choose (oral, written, presentation, or any other chosen format). However, we request that submissions include some details about the proponent, their experiences with planning, and what interests them about taking this journey with PIBC.

We will evaluate submissions based partially on the following:

1. Traditional knowledge held as it relates to land stewardship
2. Methods and approaches to using Indigenous knowledge for change-making

We ask proponents to consider the following in their submission:

1. What draws you to this work



2. Approach in supporting us in our goals and objectives for this work
3. Available capacity to work with us (i.e., potential hours per week for this work)
4. Anything else about you and your experiences that make you particularly able to provide the Committee with insights into this topic

Although we ask for the above to be considered, we understand that proponents may have their own thoughts on how best to approach this work, and we are very open to learning about that from the submissions by proponents.

### **Fees & Compensation Structure**

As we do not have clarity on what this path will look like, we are open to:

1. Set fees with a proposal for the work from proponents; or
2. Work with the selected proponent on an hourly rate for the duration of the work or until we have a clearer path forward and can determine a more precise and detailed scope of work.

Please submit Expressions of Interest to Kelly Chan at [kelly.chan@pibc.bc.ca](mailto:kelly.chan@pibc.bc.ca)

### **Timeline**

**Call for Expressions of Interest Opens:** February 15, 2023

**Submission Deadline:** March 15, 2023 at 11:59 pm PT

**Shortlist/Follow-up with Proponents:** March 27-31, 2023

**Final scope of work/Project outline agreed to by:** April 13, 2023

**Expected Project Start:** April 17, 2023



## Appendix B: Sānala's Proposed Approach for Phase 2

Below, Sānala has provided two potential pathways forward, should PIBC wish to continue into a Phase 2 of this exploration and institutional commitment. To conclude the initial Phase 1 of the project, Sānala will:

- a) Provide Recommendations to Indigenous Advisory Committee for review and revisions, as needed;
- b) Bring forward recommendations to certified Indigenous Planners for review and revisions, as needed; and,
- c) Provide the PPRC with a final draft of recommendations for review and finalization, pending any needed revisions.

Once the PPRC and PIBC have had a chance to review recommendations and engage internally, Sānala offers the following two potential pathways forward (which are not mutually exclusive):

### 1. Continuing the Conversation with Indigenous Advisory Committee and others:

- a. Host further Indigenous Advisory Committee meetings, and invite others
- b. Facilitate modules / series of workshops
- c. Exploring Nation-based planning processes and alternative streams of planning certification

### 2. Supporting PIBC with Recommendation Implementation:

- a. Continued and strengthened professional development opportunities / workshops centred on: Indigenous planning practice and principles, trauma-informed practice, decolonial practice and action, allyship, etc.
- b. Undertake Indigenous Ethics Audit: comprehensive review of current certification process, policy, and membership.
  - i. Application, Candidate Membership, Mentorship and Work Experience Log, Ethics and Professionalism Course, Professional Examination