

Part of the fun of this job is being the head of the Planning Department. It's a great job. You get to take all those ideas that you have, and the frustrations you've experienced, and do something. You get to define what the role is for you. But mostly you get to work with amazingly talented planners and challenge them to be their best. There's a whole management side to the job. And there's likely parts of the department where you are not a subject matter expert (building, by-law, culture, perhaps economic development). You'll need to get comfortable in these areas. But most importantly, you need to have colleagues heading all of your various teams that share your vision and hopefully your passion.

Finally, some thoughts on social media. It is the fifth dimension of the chief planner job. Each of us needs to decide

how prolific and engaged we are going to be—some more, some less. But the most important lesson is to be yourself. Keep your public and private social media presence separate. Be mindful and knowledgeable of your organization's social media policy. Don't reply when your emotions are getting the best of you. Decide how you will deal with trolls before it happens. And remember that you have a valuable opportunity to share the great work your planning team is doing and your organization is doing. Use your voice wisely.

Mary Lou Tanner, MCIP, RPP is a member of OPPI and the chief planner for the City of Burlington. She was previously chief planner for Niagara Region and has worked extensively in the western GTHA. Mary Lou was OPPI President 2011–2013.

Commentary

OPPI Leadership Pipeline

By Bruce Curtis, RPP

OPPI, like most professional organizations, is run for its members by its members. This requires a strong volunteer commitment and leadership by the organization's members to make it a strong and viable entity. OPPI has a long history of dedicated members serving in various leadership positions to help manage and move the organization and the profession forward. But where do these members come from, and how are they developed and supported? This question was the focus of a session at the 2017 OPPI Conference, organized by the Governance and Nominating Committee.

The session raised awareness among members and provided insight into the Institute's need for leaders, the types of opportunities available, and the skills and competencies that are helpful. It also provided an understanding of the personal and professional rewards of



becoming involved and taking a leadership role in the organization.

The session helped members consider potential roles on the OPPI leadership team, find out how and where to get involved, understand the available staff support, and discover the rewards of being actively involved. This session was recorded for the Digital Learning Library and is available for members to access from the OPPI website.

The members of the Governance and Nominating Committee of OPPI are Bruce Curtis, RPP, Kathy Suggitt, RPP, Jason Ferrigan, RPP, Diana Rusnov, RPP, Ben Puzanov, RPP, Don McConnell, RPP, and, Rob Armstrong, RPP.

Bruce Curtis, RPP, is an OPPI Council Director and Chair of the Governance and Nominating Committee. Now retired, he is the former regional director, at the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

