

Contributors

What are RPPs focused on today? What do they see as a priority going forward?
Here is what three contributors to this issue of *Y Magazine* have to say.



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Garrett Stevenson, MCIP, RPP
MANAGER OF DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
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Kitchener is one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada and is experiencing a development boom, with many new infill developments occurring within existing neighbourhoods. An increased focus on meaningful community engagement is a vital component of the planning process as neighbourhoods grow and change. Ensuring there are opportunities to have conversations about intensification is key as Kitchener's Urban Growth Centre and Major Transit Station Areas experience unprecedented growth.

Given the extraordinary demand for housing in our communities, I believe it is a priority to ensure that a variety of housing options are permitted in all neighbourhoods throughout the city to ensure housing needs can be met for all members of our community in all stages of their lives. Land use permissions that allow for a variety of housing types, including supportive housing, at different scales and forms would accommodate additional needed housing supply throughout the city.



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Kara Naklicki, RPP, MCIP
PLANNING RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS
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My focus as a planner is on data: collecting, analyzing, and presenting data to support the work of planning colleagues and help answer questions about how to make the city a better and more equitable place. I want to increase data legibility and usefulness for all through tools, like interactive maps and dashboards, to support conversations about planning that are based on facts.

A continuing priority for planning in Ontario should be to use data to help drive change. In Toronto, point-of-sale data was used to track customer spending during the King Street pilot project and helped address concerns about the economic impact of street redesign on local businesses. Recently, the work of public health professionals in creating live dashboards to present COVID-19 trends has allowed individuals to understand and mitigate health risks and experts to recommend targeted vaccination strategies. One further step I would like to see is to make data a two-way street: to invite communities to contribute more broadly and to document and share local knowledge for the benefit of all.



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Jocelyn Deeks, RPP, MCIP
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My focus is on community engagement, primarily in the context of planning applications. I've worked in various planning roles over the years, and I think breaking down the jargon and decision-making process is key to getting meaningful input. It's been helpful for me to draw on my public and private sector experience as an RPP to find ways for community members to be a part of the change that is happening in the neighbourhoods.

The GTHA is experiencing dramatic growth and a shift in the way that people live, work, move around, and enjoy neighbourhoods. I think being nimble in developing an early understanding of what works, what needs to be improved, and how can we employ best practices from home and abroad is critical to understand how to support this growth. I think that we need to prioritize access to the consultation process for everyone – so that we can learn and share with people of all backgrounds, living circumstances, and age groups.