

Contributors

What are RPPs focused on today? What do they see as priorities in meeting the needs of the people of Ontario? Here is what three contributors to this issue of *Y Magazine* have to say.



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Dave Hardy, MCIP, RPP
PRESIDENT OF HARDY STEVENSON AND ASSOCIATES LIMITED AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE FOR NEW SUBURBANISM

I'm fortunate to have great clients and wonderful staff whose support has allowed me to research and advocate on planning issues that need more attention. To this end, I've been able to explore the best examples of suburban planning and the role of suburbs in relation to urban core and rural areas through the Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited supported Institute for New Suburbanism. My role as a planner includes the creation of human cities and helping local communities achieve and maintain quality of life. At times, this means advocating land-use and environmental policies that have a contrarian nature.

As my work occurs across Ontario, I've seen the need for planners to better contribute their skills to deliver equitable socioeconomic outcomes for all residents. Addressing the out migration of rural communities, delivering higher order transit to suburban racialized communities, and redefining what it means to be a healthy community are all priorities.



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Dr. Leela Viswanathan, FCIP, RPP
FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL OF VISWALI CONSULTING

As a planner, I draw from human-centred design practices and research to address the diverse needs of people in their various organizational, institutional, and everyday living environments, as we tackle complex issues together. For me, this means that equity, inclusion, education, and cross-cultural relationship building are foundational to all the services that I offer. I also offer career mentoring support to people in planning-related occupations and to academics.

I think it is important to meet people where they are at, and so a priority for planning should be to invest time to strengthen interpersonal relationships to build more inclusive, transparent, and ethical planning processes. It is crucial to reach out to people who have lost trust in the planning profession due to their communities' experiences of historical exclusion and systemic discrimination. Ultimately, relationship building needs to remain a priority for planners, long after a project or plan is completed.



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Izabela Molendowski, MCIP, RPP
URBAN PLANNER WITH URBAN STRATEGIES INC.

My focus as a planner revolves around securing long-term growth and developing communities through master planning, amendments to policy, and introducing a series of strategic initiatives and guiding principles into local planning frameworks that are informed by qualitative data. I'm interested in further exploring how developing progressive policy and influencing policy change could have significant long-term impacts on shaping inclusive and comprehensive communities, while actively incorporating the public interest.

A continuing priority for meeting the needs of people in Ontario should include ensuring that meaningful and progressive change is established at the policy level. Development of policies and master plans should be informed by community members and the leaders representing their interests. Existing demographics should be taken into consideration when proposing change in communities, and planners should ensure that representation from all demographic groups within the community is accounted for and incorporated into plans.