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# PLANNING

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Journal





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- ERA Architects, Centre for Urban Growth and Renewal, United Way Toronto, City of Toronto & Toronto Public Health**
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- City of London**
- ReThink London

### City of Kitchener

- Love My Hood: Kitchener's Guide to Great Neighbourhoods

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- The London Plan
- City of London**
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- Windmill Development Group, Dream Unlimited, Perkins + Will, and Fotenn Planning + Design**
- Zibi Master Plan

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- City of Kitchener**
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On behalf of OPPI Council, we would like to thank those who served on the **2017 Excellence in Planning Awards Jury**: Micheal Roschlau, Mary Lou Tanner, RPP, Markus Moos, RPP, Ruth Marland, RPP, Ian Lord, Kathryn Dewar, RPP, Rory Baksh, RPP, David Wood, Hon Lu, RPP, Paul Ferris, Chris Tyrrell, RPP, Dayna Edwards, RPP, Kevin Stolarick, Steven Heuchert, RPP, Lee Anne Doyle, RPP.

Further information is available on the OPPI website at [www.ontarioplanners.ca](http://www.ontarioplanners.ca)

Cover: RPP stamps and seals can be ordered at <http://ontarioplanners.ca/PDF/RPP-Certificate-Seal-Order-Form>.



RPP

# Informing choices. Inspiring communities.



By Jason Ferrigan, RPP

It's all about value.

Professional Planners provide value... to communities, public decision-makers and the people who live and work in Ontario. RPPs provide a trained, disciplined and independent voice on behalf of the public interest. RPPs are skilled at balancing diverse perspectives in complex environments. Ethically committed, RPPs provide leadership in a bias-free context. And, to quote the eloquent Bob Rae at the 2017 OPPI Conference, RPPs strive to “make space for conversation.” RPPs inform choices and inspire communities in the public interest.

OPPI is focused on enhancing value... through implementation of our strategic plan—INSPIRE OPPI—facilitating passage of the proposed Registered Professional Planners Act, 2017, and undertaking the associated renewal of our governance frameworks. We are building the RPP brand with decision makers through an externally focused communications strategy, and engaging stakeholders to promote change within our planning system. We will also continue to engage and lead on the national stage with our partners at the PSB, PSC, other PTIAs and CIP.

OPPI is committed to providing value to you, our members. We will continue to ensure you have the platforms necessary to exchange knowledge and information, which is so vital to shaping communities in new and evolving ways in our rapidly changing world.

Member value will continue to be Council's guiding metric. In this regard we will continue to engage you on a regular basis to ensure that your views are reflected in our strategic discussions and that the Institute continues to deliver high quality services. But it is a multi-layered conversation: engage with us to take ownership of our organization.

Members deliver value by serving in a wide range of volunteer leadership roles across the organization. Your passion and commitment is inspiring.

The following feature articles by former OPPI presidents contemplate what it means to be an RPP: where the

profession has come from, where it is today and what it looks like moving forward. You can join this conversation by going online and responding to three Big Questions Inspiring Ideas:

- I am an RPP (or an aspiring RPP) because...
- What do you do in your community to increase the RPP brand...
- What could you do in your community to increase the RPP brand...

I look forward to working with Council and all of you over the next two years to ensure that OPPI remains a strong, sustainable organization that remains relevant and delivers value to you.

I am RPP!

*Jason Ferrigan, RPP, is the President of OPPI and director of planning at the City of Greater Sudbury.*



## What is being said at Queen's Park...

"One thing can't be emphasized enough: Professional planners play a crucial role in ensuring that Ontario and its various municipalities evolve in a way that protects our economic well-being, vital resources and healthy lifestyles."

~ Peter Milczyn, MPP, Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Ontario Liberal Party

"...As shifting policy objectives and competing interests in communities continue to evolve with social and technological changes, planners, in my belief, have a significant role in terms of encouraging Ontario residents to think about the public realm first and the role it can play in effectively developing healthy and sustainable communities."

~ Lorne Coe, MPP, Whitby-Oshawa, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

"I will be supporting this bill because it's time to bring it up to date, but also because I support the accountability piece, and that is protecting the Ontario consumer by making the planning profession accountable to the people through various changes; namely, ensuring consumers are receiving evidence and advice from accredited professionals."

~ Bill Walker, MPP, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

"Madam Speaker, this act is significant to the Legislature and to the province because it governs an institute and its professional members who are integral to the work we do in this House, as well as the work the municipalities do across the province."

~ Sylvia Jones, MPP, Dufferin-Caledon, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

"...I'll just say that absolutely at no time in our history has planning been more important than right now. I'm happy to do anything to facilitate that process with professional planners. Updating this legislation that governs them is absolutely apropos, and of course we will support it."

~ Cheri DiNovo, MPP, Parkdale-High Park, New Democratic Party of Ontario

"Having regulated, capable planners whose opinions are weighed by municipal politicians—in large municipalities and small ones—and applying their advice without having the OMB overrule them all the time is going to be critical. So what the member has brought forward is a good bill. It just needs further action..."

~ Peter Tabuns, MPP, Toronto-Danforth, New Democratic Party of Ontario

"I can speak as a former city councillor and as a former small-town mayor. I know planning is really critical, and the better we are at it, the easier it is to turn our cities into communities and our streets into neighbourhoods. I think that's what professional planners, when all is said and done, when they're doing their job well—and most of them do it very, very well—that's what it's all about."

~ Ted McMeekin, MPP, Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale, Ontario Liberal Party

"Planners across this province work tirelessly to beautify the places we live, ensure that it is easy for us to get to the places we work, while at the same time making sure that our communities have places to grow for generations."

~ Cristina Martins, MPP, Davenport, Ontario Liberal Party

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# Evolution of Practice: Planners and Leadership

By Wayne J. Caldwell, RPP

One hundred years ago, Thomas Adams wrote about the importance of planning as a tool to address the fundamental challenges facing Canadian Society. In what is generally recognized as the first text on planning in Canada he pointed to issues of poverty, public health, resource utilization and land speculation as key issues to be addressed by governments through planning.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, his work culminated in the formation of the Town Planning Institute of Canada to which he was the first president. In this role he helped the institute advance planning ideas and ideals, set a high standard for planning practice, promote research, disseminate knowledge and encourage the establishment of university programs in planning.<sup>2</sup>

Over the last 100 years the planning profession has continued to evolve. The Town Planning Institute of Canada eventually morphed into the Canadian Institute of Planners and provincial affiliates have come to play an increasing role in the life of the profession. Current initiatives to enhance the regulation of the planning profession are a continuation of the professions on-going efforts to serve the public interest. Within Ontario, the proposed Registered Professional Planners Act, 2017 strives to advance the public interest by safeguarding the public through the definition of who is a Registered Professional Planner. The accreditation of professionals helps to assure the public of the independence and integrity of the advice they are receiving.

As I reflect on this initiative I am reminded of an article written by Floyd Dykeman and published in *Plan Canada* 25 years ago.<sup>3</sup> Within this article Dykeman reflected on the planner's leadership role. In my view the proposed Registered Professional Planners Act captures the best of these leadership traits. In Dykeman's article he identified four leadership roles—that of visionary, strategist, innovator and creator.

*Visionary*—While planners are expert in helping communities to identify and develop a vision, they also have their own perspective on the future and a mastery of the tools required to help achieve an outcome that serves the public interest. Working with communities, in combination with their training and experience, they are able to articulate a vision that helps to influence and shape future directions. Recent work in the area of healthy and age-friendly communities are examples of linking a planning vision to action.

*Strategist*—Planners need to bring a strategic perspective to issues. They balance competing interests by sorting through complex information with evolving issues connected to sustainability, including important social, economic and environmental considerations. Planners in urban and rural contexts have provided leadership developing a number of initiatives under the general heading of “sustainability planning.” Planning for resilience is also important. Planning

builds on a vision for the future but implies much strategic thinking in the pursuit of action.

*Innovator*—Innovative solutions are increasingly required in response to complex environmental, social and economic issues. Climate change is an example of an issue that will test the planning professions resolve to speak out for action, to lead through policy initiatives and to develop new options and strategies. Leadership will need to be augmented by societal trust—trust in the deeds and actions articulated by the profession as a whole, as well as in the words of individual planners.

*Creator*—Creativity implies a willingness to think “out of the box” to create something new and valuable. Creativity occurs in a number of ways, but includes dialogue and the exchange of ideas. This is an inherent aspect of the planning profession and demonstrates the leadership potential. While creativity has always been central to the planning profession, society will increasingly look for leadership that is creative, informed and in the public interest.

The proposed Registered Professional Planners Act demonstrates leadership. It also represents the continued evolution of the profession. As Adams advocated a 100 years ago we have planning programs across the country that provide graduating planners with the skill set to step into the profession, we have embraced continuous professional learning, and we have adopted a Professional Code of Practice that planners are required to uphold. This code affirms democratic values that speak to the importance of engaging the community and giving voice to those whose voices are often not heard in public decision-making. The proposed Registered Professional Planners Act seeks to ensure that planners are held to a high standard of accountability and it speaks to the on-going evolution of the profession.

*Wayne Caldwell, RPP, is associate vice-president research (interim) at the University of Guelph and a professor in Rural Planning. He is a member of OPPI and a passionate advocate for the betterment of rural communities. Wayne was OPPI President 2007–2009.*



## Endnotes

- 1 Thomas Adams. 1917. *Rural Planning and Development*. Republished in *Rediscovering Thomas Adams – Rural Planning and Development in Canada* edited by Wayne J. Caldwell. UBC Press. 2011. Vancouver.
- 2 Wayne Caldwell. 2011. Introduction – *Rediscovering Thomas Adams*. In *Rediscovering Thomas Adams – Rural Planning and Development in Canada*. Edited by Wayne J. Caldwell. Vancouver.
- 3 Floyd Dykeman. 1992. *Leadership and Community Renewal: Exploring the Planner's Role*. *Plan Canada*. September, pp. 7–11.



RPP

# Looking back, moving forward

By John Livey, RPP



In a time of fake news, populism, social media, the public's distrust of government and all experts (except those who agree with you), it's easy to look back 31 years to 1986 the year OPPI was formed with a sense of nostalgia.

It was a different time.

Brian Mulroney and Ronald Regan were singing "When Irish Eyes are Smiling," comrades in arms against the Soviets and setting the stage here in North America for Free Trade. There were portents of the future now part of today's world. Japanese quality management systems were revolutionizing North American businesses, the personal computer had just been introduced, Air India was bombed, Tamil refugees were rescued off the coast of Newfoundland, "The Fly" by David Cronenberg was in the theatres, and to my dismay, Montreal beat Calgary for the Stanley Cup.

The energy crisis of the '70s had passed and with it came the first wave of energy conservation. Acid rain was a pressing environmental concern.

Ontario's population was 9.1 million bolstered in part by the exodus of head offices out of Montreal and by sustained immigration. There was a pause in regional planning after the Parkway Belt West Plan was enacted partly because of the negative reaction across Ontario to the provincial expropriations required for many of the plan's corridors. Official plans and zoning had been put in place across Ontario enabling the province to back out of direct intervention in local planning. Instead, the province began issuing policy statements and delegating authority to local councils, under the auspices of a "new" *Planning Act* (1983).

The federal downloading of housing and infrastructure coupled with the burgeoning cost of health care and education had tapped-out the province. No new significant transit investments, aside from the Sheppard subway, would be made for decades as the provincial debt mounted.

Today, Ontario is home to 14-million people, diverse and aging. By 2031, 25 per cent will be 65 years or older. The economy has recovered from two recessions: one in the early '90s and the most recent in 2008/09. Manufacturing employment declined as the economy in Ontario shifted to services, high-tech and government. The Ontario Hydro coal plants have been decommissioned and overall energy use has abated in response to higher rates, new energy-efficient lighting and building technologies. "Green" standards, better water management systems and planning, recycling, reduction and re-use are successful first-generation programs for cutting waste.

New transit funding is flowing and new projects are being opened across the province in all major cities. OC Transit, formed in 1983, led the way with busways across the Ottawa Region and is now poised to open the Confederation Line in downtown Ottawa. York Region Viva, Brampton Zoom, the Mississauga MiWay BRT and the Hamilton Light Rail projects are expanding. And in Toronto, the Toronto York Spadina Subway extension will be open this December. The Eglinton Cross Town LRT is under construction, soon to be followed by the Finch LRT.

With federal, then provincial downloading, we have still not as a society come to grips with how to provide affordable housing and stem the rising inequality of income in the province. Neither the feds, the province, nor large cities have been able to sort this out. If left unchecked, the increasing degree of social inequality and lack of affordable housing we are witnessing today will strain our health care systems and hospitals. It's not a recipe for success.

On the positive side of the ledger, we as planners are increasingly collaborating with others in allied fields: public health, economic development, social & community services, engineering, finance and emergency service professionals. Urban design is no longer a superfluous consideration, and design panels have demonstrated their worth. Environmental considerations, green standards, energy conservation, low-carbon thermal networks and district energy are slowly being integrated into our planning processes.

Despite this, we, as planners, still have some persistent systemic issues to address. The current *Planning Act* and Ontario Municipal Board processes are crumbling under their own weight. Too many policy initiatives are stalled at the OMB awaiting hearing dates. NIMBY-ism runs rampant, and many are afraid to call it for what it is. Some developers play the extra density game and planners often retreat to process. Too often we are too busy with procedures and reporting deadlines to be effective problem solvers.

It's no wonder then that the province is setting out to reform the OMB. We've been talking about this since the 1977 *Planning Act* Reform Committee when Eli Comay first suggested abolishing the OMB. And the *Environmental Assessment Act* continues to add unnecessary time delays and process, and therefore cost to many projects (the Transit Project Assessment Process a notable exception). There are significant societal benefits to streamlining these acts without diminishing the quality of planning decisions. We should strive to create greater accountability by

municipal councils for the outcomes instead of fobbing off that responsibility to the OMB.

Aside from two small cases, the development permit system has been a bust. Comments such as “too rigid,” “not flexible enough to react to market conditions,” and suspicion by ratepayer associations that the DP system will damage communities are some of the reasons for the opposition to piloting the system. Worse, it would involve a time-consuming, expensive OMB hearing to get a large-scale pilot off the ground.

So, what does it look like going forward for the profession? For me, I hope we can do several things:

1. Build on the success of integrating allied professions and skills into planning. Urban design for denser urban settings requires superlative sidewalks, parks, complete streets, green infrastructure and urban art. Planners are expected to pay close attention to the quality of the public realm.
2. Energy planning needs to be folded into our city building far more deliberately now than ever. If climate change is to be addressed, we must make our buildings more energy efficient. With over 50 per cent of CO<sub>2</sub> in cities generated by existing buildings, change cannot happen fast enough. New buildings are the easy part; retrofits will be the challenge. Fortunately, there are many new advances in local network technologies, thermal distribution and storage that can be employed.
3. Addressing housing affordability cannot be avoided any longer. Public housing has provided shelter for well over 70 years and while some mixed-income communities have been models of best practice, governments are reluctant to provide more dollars for bricks and mortar, and are falling behind in the urgently needed repairs and unable to tackle the growing waiting lists. Adding insult to injury, the province is extending rent controls that will continue to discourage the construction of badly needed rental housing. The province, the federal government and municipalities, working together with the development industry, will all have to be part of the solution to build communities that meet the needs of the full spectrum of society, whether by program or legislation, or a better functioning housing market.

Ontario and the federal government have done a good job at re-establishing funding for much needed transit. If we are to remain competitive in the global context, the pace and predictability of this investment needs to be sustained.

No speculation on the next 30 years can avoid the coming impact of artificial intelligence and deep learning algorithms. As the cost of predicting things has dropped precipitously, some activities will diminish and at the same time the value of human judgement to use those predictions, apply critical thinking and take action will increase. Today, no one would say automated bank terminals are a bad thing because they process routine banking services to humans. We can expect the same thing for machine learning applications. As new models are developed, planners will have to be on the watch for poor data, modelling errors, faulty/shaky assumptions and systemic biases.

It will be interesting to see what will happen with autonomous vehicles as machine learning replicates human behavior, eliminates errors and improves driving. Together with electric vehicle technology, autonomous vehicles should have a positive impact on pedestrian, cycling and vehicular safety, reliability of traffic flow, and streetscapes and street capacity. As with any new technology, policy, etc., planners will need to be mindful of and prepared to mitigate any unintended consequences. Machine learning has the potential to improve health outcomes and hopefully curtail health costs. It should assist us in our old age.

Finally, if we as a profession are to be successful we must communicate our ideas in easy and accessible ways. We only set ourselves up for failure when we don the mantle of “expert,” sounding like we are part of the elite that is unsympathetic to the public we serve. Some suggestions: write shorter reports in plain language; get rid of the jargon; lose the acronyms. Be positive and optimistic about the future of planning here in Ontario.

*John Livey, RPP, has extensive municipal, regional and provincial experience and is currently the deputy city manager at the City of Toronto. John is a member of OPPI, a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners and holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Toronto. John was the first OPPI President, 1986.*



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# OPPI—Now More Than Ever

By Mary Lou Tanner, RPP

I am amazed that it has been six years since I stepped into the role of OPPI President. Those two years flew by so quickly, and those six years since that day in Ottawa seem like mere weeks ago. So much has been accomplished in those six years, thanks to the work of many people.

OPPI is a high-performing organization, and what it achieves year over year is well beyond what one would expect of similar-sized organizations. Yet each and every year, OPPI has made significant advances in gaining recognition for the planning profession, building stronger relationships nationally, and setting the course for even stronger legislation for RPPs in this province.

I was fortunate to take the mantle of President as the Planning for the Future Project—new national standards and process—was concluding. Council's job was to get it across the finish line in Ontario and nationally, and we did it. At the same time, we began rethinking what OPPI was and is as an organization, to determine what our focus should be now that we were out of the professional examination role. We concluded that OPPI would pursue new RPP legislation, position the Institute to be the self-regulating body for the profession, deliver education and professional development, take strong positions on public policy, and renew and support our Districts.



It is rare to see an organization transform in such a short time. Today OPPI is a strong, thriving organization, supporting its members and advancing the profession.

Expectations have never been higher as challenges grow in a diversity of planning related fields—housing, transportation, the environment—with four provincial land use plans and a *Provincial Policy Statement*. Making the broader connections between health and communities is the job of planners, whichever side of the counter we are on.

One of my favourite quotes is this: “Change is inevitable, growth is optional.” Our world is changing, faster than it ever has, and our profession is growing to meet those changes. Each RPP contributes to the profession's success. Together, through OPPI we can make a significant difference.

We're a passionate bunch who love what we do, care about communities, and want to build a better Ontario. Being part of a strong team helps each of us deliver our best professional work, ethically and competently—that's why OPPI exists. And now, more than ever, I am proud to be a member.

*Mary Lou Tanner, RPP, MCIP, 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.*



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RPP

# What it means to be an RPP

By Sue Cumming, RPP

This question has been asked over the years and most will recall at some point in their planning careers answering this to a friend, community member or co-worker. Many of us will have a vivid flashback to that first year in planning school when the question, “What is planning?” was posed with much anxiety about how to answer it.

As professional planners we create, advise and implement plans and policies that affect the livability and health of communities. We work in collaboration with a wide range of disciplines, other professions, not-for-profit organizations and community stakeholders to plan for and address community needs in a manner that must balance the interests of communities and individuals. Today, there may be no other profession with the skills and knowledge to engage in the dynamic complexities that are evident in every aspect of community life.

As professional planners we are involved in land use planning and development, environment protection and sustainability, transportation, community engagement, social and health planning to cite a few areas of practice. Many planners are involved in addressing climate change, food security, poverty reduction, reconciliation, community health, community revitalization and economic growth. No matter the type of work, the requisite skills and competencies that the Registered Professional Planner exhibits, service in the public interest is at the core of what it means to be a professional planner.

I had the pleasure to serve as OPPI President from 2009 to 2011 at the time when the Planning for the Future Project—a national examination of professional standards—was being hotly debated at meetings within Ontario and across the country. I have lost track (thankfully) of the many hours spent debating the competencies required to be a professional planner and the organizational structure needed to move the organization forward. Much has evolved in the intervening years with the leadership of presidents, Councils, volunteers and staff, together with the Canadian Institute of Planners and other affiliates (now known as PTIAs). What it means to be a professional planner today results from this work—Professional Standards, an updated Code of Practice



and the Candidate Member process for becoming an RPP. These initiatives have significantly strengthened the accountability of the profession.

The planning profession in Ontario is at an exciting place in its history with recent efforts to create stronger regulation through Bill 122.

I believe that the importance of having stronger regulation goes together with the elevated recognition of the role of the RPP. More public understanding of what planners do, how they become planners and what it means to be a professional planner is necessary to address any number of evolving challenges that impact the work that planners do.

*Planning is undertaken in more than 140 characters*—Social media is having a significant impact on the planning process. A tweet about an idea that is being implemented in one community can lead to interest in another. But it can also lead to unintended consequences such as distrust of planning professionals. I recently encountered a presentation against a project made up entirely of tweets from opinions of planners in other jurisdictions that were used to challenge the professionalism of the staff who were involved in developing recommendations based on the policies and needs of the community.

*One size doesn't fit all*—As professional planners, we understand that an idea that may work well in a densified urban area may not be good planning for a smaller or rural community and vice versa. Increased conflict is occurring in planning processes as demonstrated in citizen blogs and social media which criticize the profession for not making plans that seem to be attractive in other areas. An important role of the professional planner is to assess the context within which a plan or initiative is being undertaken and identify solutions that best fit that community.

*It takes more than a day to create a great community*—There is much frustration in communities about the timeline for solving problems. There seems to be an increasing expectation that plans will happen faster than the natural progression or transition enables. An important role of the professional planner is to assess, articulate and develop short- and long-term plans to address community needs and to communicate how to achieve these regardless of the pressures for an immediate solution.

*Emerging culture of everyone as an expert*—Cynicism exists about who is an expert and the



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planning process is not immune to the impact of fake news and misinformation. Who does a municipal council rely on to give it the advice that is necessary to weigh the pros and cons of plans and policies? A better understanding of what it means to be an RPP is a key step in creating more public knowledge about the expertise of professional planners.

*Striving for representative perspectives—* As planning professionals we have the responsibility to bring forward different perspectives on issues and plans so as to create a more inclusive and equitable future. While planning has always had to address competing interests, more is required today to ensure that all voices can be expressed and protected from the silencing of any opinion that is different from the vocal majority.

As RPPs, our work affects people in communities across the province, and impacts the long-term livability of communities and neighbourhoods. The impartiality of providing planning opinions is a hallmark of our ability to further the public interest across the province, and sets the bar high for the profession. A key foundation of Bill 122 is the safeguarding the public interest through strict practice regulation and accountability of RPPs. Moving forward, we must strive to communicate what it means to be an RPP and recognition of the profession, the important work it does and why this matters to Ontarians.

*Sue Cumming, RPP, is an OPPI member, principal of Cumming+Company and a facilitator and community engagement consultant. She is also an adjunct lecturer teaching public participation at the School of Urban and Regional Planning, Department of Geography and Planning at Queen's University. Sue was OPPI President 2009-2011.*

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# A professional journey worth taking

By Paul Stagl, RPP

I've benefited from two very sage pieces of advice in my career. The first was "If you don't like the direction that you're being taken in, don't complain, get involved and help change the direction."

When I started my career in the early 1970s, we were a profession struggling with identity, recognition and purpose. Many aspired to be part of a professional community that was more than just a group of regulatory land use planners, to be more than a circle of select practitioners, and to have a more diverse role in the visioning and shaping of our communities. It was a time of big plans and big ambitions: truly a cross roads for the profession and a very exciting time to become a planner.

Since then, I have witnessed a full generational turnover of practitioners together with some very exciting changes to our communities, and some milestone changes to our profession. My journey has indeed been instructive and I think is very exciting for the next generations of professional planners.

By virtue of public policy we are looked to vision and to protect the future of our communities. We counsel how to manage that change. While we sometimes don't take our own counsel on how to manage change, we have indeed achieved success in effecting many changes to our profession. We are a very different profession today than we were 40 years ago (I didn't say we were fast, but we have been very effective).

In 1978 Ontario planners, with the encouragement and support of our provincial colleagues, established the Ontario Association of Planners, a federation of the then four Ontario CIP chapters. OAP was to be the provincial "voice" for professional planners and quickly became the platform for professional identity, recognition and purpose in Ontario.

By 1985/86, with great debate and soul-searching, Ontario planners agreed it was time to take the next step and to elevate the voice of planning to a full professional governance body. It meant we would have to dissolve the individual Ontario CIP chapters together with OAP, but in 1986 we put in place the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. We had a new provincial platform, which also served as the new CIP affiliate. That was a major leap of faith for many. It was a decision to let go of the past, but more importantly, it meant we were committed to moving forward and to spreading our wings to establish a provincial brand and a professional commitment. The inaugural executive and council had its work cut out for it.

During this time we experienced considerable growth, not just in the number of members but also in our brand of professional identity, recognition and purpose, as well as in our diversity of practice areas. I recall being struck by the caliber of provisional members who were then regularly coming through for their exam interviews, not just by their commitment to the profession but also by their ever-expanding scopes of practice areas. It seems our training in multi-disciplinary problem solving was helping to take us into new areas of community building.

By 1993 our professional wings had us on the cusp of

legislative professional recognition. The ground breaking *Ontario Professional Planners Act, 1994*, launching the Registered Professional Planner title, established a milestone in terms of professional accountability and commitment to the public interest.

RPP has now been duplicated in almost all of Canada's provincial and territorial jurisdictions, often with improved and enhanced legislation to that which was originally introduced by Ontario. RPP has been adopted as the brand that is to ultimately be replicated across Canada.

From my journey, I can tell you with firsthand experience that Ontario's professional planners are seen worldwide as strong leaders in ensuring that the planning of our communities, resources, environment and spaces is undertaken in the public interest. Our 1994 act is studied by jurisdictions around the globe as an example of professional regulation that ensures effective and sustainable development in the public interest.

Our brand has continued to grow and today, the RPP brand is regularly sought out and relied on. Our identity is strong. Our commitment to the public, to each other and to the profession is recognized and valued. Many now understand that while they do not have to agree with our respective opinions, they can rely on, and be assured, that the opinion is independent.

If my journey has taught me anything, it is that you cannot stand still and a profession needs to adapt to new challenges. I am thrilled to see that Ontario's professional planners are not content to simply celebrate yesterday's achievements. The Registered Professional Planners Act, 2017, is a timely upgrade of the previous milestone 1994 act, setting the new benchmark for the next generation of community and resource growth management and public interest accountability.

I also continue to be inspired by the next generation of professional planners. Their expectations, aspirations, enthusiasm, commitments and practice diversities will, I have absolutely no doubt, take the profession into many new and exciting areas of community building.

It has indeed been an inspirational experience to watch this profession mature and to see the exciting direction in which it is going.

Oh, just in case you've been wondering, the second piece of sage advice I received early in my career was that "change is inevitable so embrace it, enjoy it, work with it and help to improve it." Good, sound advice.

Oh, and finally, the source of that sage advice was my then soon to be wife, Ann Marie.

*Paul J. Stagl, RPP, is president of Opus Management Inc., providing land use planning and development consulting services to both public and private sector clients. He has been a practicing planner for over 40 years and is an active member of OPPI. Paul was OPPI President 2013-2015.*





RPP

# Get Involved

By Valerie Cranmer, RPP

**S**ometimes it takes an issue for someone to get involved with their professional organization. With me it was the dwindling membership compounded with a convoluted membership process. There may be a few members still around who remember the AGM at the Annual conference in Deerhurst in the early 1990s when membership issues became a main focus of discussion. There was a fear (or perhaps hope) that the floor would collapse and the Council would drop into the pool.

When I was first elected to Council in 1993, many of the more senior members of the planning profession, both in the municipal and private sectors, were not members of the Institute and saw no real incentive to join. With the legislation for planners nearing final approval, it was time to get planners excited about OPPI, give them a reason to become a member and increase the membership. Over a number of years, Council revamped the membership process which resulted in enticing a majority of the senior members of the planning profession to join the Institute. A mentoring program and a series of seminars/workshops were developed that would encourage recent graduates to become involved in the Institute.



It is disappointing that Bill 122 is stalled at the province. It is important that the present legislation be up-dated and I hope that it will be passed before the next provincial election. Since the original legislation was passed 25 years ago, OPPI has become a very

professional organization that is widely respected in Ontario, throughout Canada and other countries. With the rapidly changing times, the Institute needs to continue to change and grow to remain relevant to its members.

I encourage every member to volunteer to participate in the activities of the Institute. Your involvement can range from attending seminars and workshops, to becoming a membership examiner, or even making the commitment to be on Council. Both the Institute and volunteers benefit greatly from the interaction with planners from all areas of the province. OPPI depends on its volunteers to identify new challenges, new issues to be addressed and to keep the profession strong and respected. The interaction among volunteers provides for face-to-face networking (yes, I am a dinosaur), the expansion of knowledge, and great friendships.

It is great to see how OPPI has grown with the involvement of planners of all ages and experience. The variety of OPPI activities offer many opportunities to participate. Over the years the number of staff has grown and their contribution and support of Council and members is amazing. It was a privilege and an honour to serve the membership on Council and I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities provided by OPPI to get involved in furthering your profession and keeping OPPI strong.

*Retirement is in the near future for Valerie as she hopes to close her consulting practice in 2018. This should leave more time for travelling. Valerie Cranmer, RPP is a member of OPPI and was OPPI President 1996-1998.*

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RPP

# Past, Present, Future

By Tony Usher, RPP

One of Paul Gauguin's most famous paintings is inscribed with the words, "D'où Venons Nous/Que Sommes Nous/Où Allons Nous." The contemplative questions the *Journal* has posed.

## Where do we come from?

In my professional lifetime, the nature of planning has been utterly transformed. But while the techniques and technologies have changed, the core of what we do has not: we provide planning opinion. The organized profession has been equally transformed. We have always had some practitioners who were ultra-professional, but among planners at large, the sense of belonging to a profession and what that means are much more profoundly understood now than when I started out.



The establishment of OPPI in 1986 and the passage of the *OPPI Act* in 1994 were turning points, which we can now see completely upended the paradigm of the organized profession from a national to a provincial base. The end of the 1980s was another turning point, when the way we plan in Ontario started to swing from a decentralized, "good planning" approach typical of postwar Canada, to a centralized, policy-directed system unique in North America. (See my article, "Project X Revisited" in the September/October 2011 OPJ.)

## What are we?

Planners present evidence-based advice to decision-makers and the public on the placemaking choices before them, making sure that our environment, economy, and society, not to mention fiscal reality, are all fully considered. That includes advising on how to get the job done, once the choice is made. And we do all this without fear or favour, keeping the public interest paramount.

Planners are not the only people who provide such advice, and we work with our sister professions to make sure the best and most complete advice is provided. But we are the only profession whose professional knowledge, skills, and experience are uniquely focused on that planning opinion core.

That's how we, and our fans, see ourselves. But then there's the funhouse mirror version that many others believe. We've long been seen as either ivory-tower bureaucrats or hired guns. But worse now, we are experts, part of the elites, with all the negative

connotations those words carry for many. We are part of the swamp that needs draining, part of the establishment that needs to be crushed underfoot.

## Where are we going?

Today we face challenges at many levels. Bill 122, the proposed new RPP Act, will be a turning point in our growth as a profession that will put planners on par with our professional peers. We have never doubted that we are just as capable as they are, but with public legislation, we will be their equals in law, and hopefully in the eyes of decision-makers. Whether it will become law, though, in the declining days of this legislature, and possibly of this government, remains to be seen. OPPI faced similar challenges in getting its 1994 act passed. We need to work together to get the same result this time.

Bill 139, the repeal of the *OMB Act* and associated changes to the *Planning Act*, faces similar political uncertainties. But if it becomes law, it will completely reorient the planning process, with impacts far beyond the disappearance of hearings as we know them. Councils will become the initial and final decision-makers in almost all cases, even though they may not be suited either procedurally, or by inclination, to give the reasoned consideration one expects from tribunals. Planning authorities will have a choice of whether or not to require complete and transparent evidence-based planning opinions from all parties, including staff, and figure out how to carefully consider those opinions. Alternatively, they may decide on the basis of who screams the loudest and who throws the most money around, and make no bones about it.

The funhouse mirror version of the planning profession that I described earlier, is a challenge far beyond one profession and one country. To even start to figure out how to respond, we must first accept that many others see us very differently, and try to understand how and why. Wrapped up with that challenge is another one: every fibre of what we do should be consultative and inclusive (sometimes subject to confidentiality, but only temporarily so). But again, that is not how many others see us, and we have to understand how and why before we can even think about responding.

And I can't ignore the challenges the world is throwing at us: climate change, global transportation of contaminants and invasive species, artificial intelligence, the sharing economy, the retail revolution, autonomous vehicles, and so on. Planners and decision-makers are confronting more and faster changes. But our ability to respond to them is, if anything, getting

slower. We have so bureaucratized and complicated how we do things, that we are often responding effectively to phenomena that appeared 10 or 20 years ago, and are now far behind us. We must figure out how to respond and adapt faster, or we will drown in change.

We are so fortunate to live here in Ontario. As yet, we seem to be relatively unaffected by the rising tide of ignorance, intolerance, hysteria, xenophobia, and tyranny that threatens the bastions of democracy and inclusiveness elsewhere. But we must keep swimming against that rising tide, no matter how hard it may run in the future.

Our responsibility as professionals is to maintain our core values in everything we do. Our job is to help build and enhance communities that are inclusive, healthy, and sustainable in every respect. And our obligation is not to do, or not to support anything that goes against that.

*Tony Usher, RPP, is a member of OPPI and principal of Anthony Usher Planning Consultant in Toronto. He has practised since 1972, and became a full member of OPPI's predecessor in 1983. Tony was OPPI President 1992-1994.*

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**EASTERN DISTRICT**

## Eastern District hosts its first professional exam event

By Justyna Garbos, RPP

**O**n September 5, Eastern District hosted an information and networking event for Candidate members

intending to write the professional exam in the near future. About a dozen Candidate members



attended and had the opportunity to ask three newly minted RPPs questions about the exam, pick up useful study tips and find a study buddy. Eric Bays, Justyna Garbos and Teresa Thomas presented three different options for writing the exam. Eric had used the University of Carleton's proctor services, Justyna had organized a room and invigilator at her workplace, and Teresa had travelled to Toronto. Visit the Professional Standard Board's [website](#) to learn more about the exam.

Eastern District is interested to hear about Candidate members' experiences with the exam and hopes to organize another preparatory session next year. Please email [Eric](#) to share your comments or volunteer to speak at our next event.

*Justyna Garbos, MCIP RPP is a*

*member of OPPI and is Secretary of the Eastern District Leadership Team and works in public consultation at the City of Ottawa.*

**LORETTA RYAN**

## An OPPI Career To Be Proud Of

By Mary Ann Rangam

**Y**es, this sad, yet very exciting time has come when we have to say farewell and thank you. Loretta Ryan, RPP, OPPI's Director of Public Affairs, is leaving OPPI to take a new opportunity to create change as the executive director of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies.



Loretta joined the Institute from the Board of Trade in June 2000. Her prior experience as an RPP and policy advisor—along with her great sense of humour—was an ideal addition to the OPPI team. Since

she arrived she has worked to enhance the voice of the Institute through ensuring that our messages, partnerships and policy initiatives all align in the best interests of OPPI. With more than 120 policy submissions under her belt, over the past 17 years, Loretta has worked tirelessly to build relationships with key stakeholders province-wide.

Throughout her time at OPPI, Loretta has engaged, and worked with many hundreds of volunteers and members to achieve four significant OPPI strategic plans. Today, we are a high performing organization and a stronger profession for it.

Loretta's vast knowledge of planning, and infectious passion for the planning profession has no doubt inspired a generation of Ontario planners. From all of OPPI's volunteers, past and present, Council and staff we thank you Loretta for your dedicated service to OPPI. We wish you all the best in the future.

*Mary Ann Rangam is OPPI Executive Director.*

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**MINISTERS AWARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE**

## RPP recognized for contribution to research and innovation

In June of this year Dan Leeming, RPP, (The Planning Partnership) was awarded the 2016 Ministers Award for Environmental



Excellence. The award, presented by then Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Glenn Murray, recognized Dan's research and applied work on climate change in

the design of low carbon communities. Dan was the only planner among seven award recipients.

Through his practice and teaching, Dan stresses the interrelationships among high quality urban design, climate change mitigation and public health as it relates to built form. And he focuses on the practical means by which needed change can be achieved.

**MARIA GO**

## Celebrating 10 Years with OPPI

By Robert Fraser

When Maria Go joined OPPI in 2007, she was a new resident to Canada from the Philippines. She took on the role as Administrative Clerk where her focus was on membership renewal, and for those members that were in the Provisional member category, member logs. Maria excelled in the role and became the Administrative Coordinator taking on the role of

coordinating OPPI and District Continuous Professional Learning events. She is the one that you contact regarding logging your CPL activities. She is also responsible for placing Job Advertisements and Consultants Directory listings on the OPPI website. Many of you have met her smiling face at OPPI Conferences and Symposiums. Please join me in thanking Maria for her dedication and service, and in celebrating her contributions.



Robert Fraser is OPPI Director of Finance and Administration.

**Correction**

Member Service Award winner Kira Dolch's name was misspelt in the September/October issue of the Journal. OPJ regrets the error.

## Congratulations New RPPs!

### New Registered Professional Planners become Full members

Congratulations to our 48 new Registered Professional Planners, who successfully completed their Full membership certification in Fall 2017. The title RPP signifies both their achievement and their pledge to abide by OPPI's Professional Code of Practice. We applaud their commitment to the public interest, to quality professional standards, and to advancing healthy and sustainable communities.

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David Biggar  
Kandas Bondarchuk  
Danny Brown  
Aaron Cameron  
Hamish Campbell  
Neil Chadda  
Liam Doherty  
Boaz Mike Dror  
Althaf Farouque  
Anna Froehlich  
Gregory Gilbert  
Kaitlyn Graham  
Caitlin Graup  
Anthony Greenberg

Keith Hamilton  
Samuel Haniff  
Anthony Hommik  
Jonathan Karavos  
Jacob Kaven  
Kerri Killen  
Suzan Krepostman  
Mollie Kuchma  
Youko Leclerc-Desjardins  
Aneesah Luqman  
Lisa Marden  
Adam Mattinson  
Kelly McRae  
Emily Miranda

Jennifer Mondell  
Grant Munday  
Mishal Naseer  
Shawn Parry  
Alejandra Perdomo Ibanez  
Victoria Prouse  
Craig Rohe  
Jennifer Roth  
Lorraine Santos  
Michael Sawchuck  
Michael Seasons  
Yousaf Shah  
Mazen Shuhaibar  
Rebecca Smith

Alexander Stecky-Efantis  
Kristen Sullivan

Michael Testaguzza  
Evan Weinberg  
Britney Williamson

The notice is accurate at the time of publication. For questions regarding membership, please email [membership@ontarioplanners.ca](mailto:membership@ontarioplanners.ca) or call 416.483.1873 ext. 222.

RPP stamps and seals can be ordered at <http://ontarioplanners.ca/PDF/RPP-Certificate-Seal-Order-Form>.



Book review

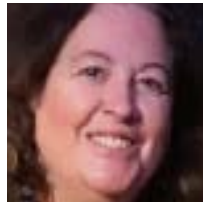
# I Was the Only Woman, Women and Planning

By Sue Hendler, with Julia Markovich  
 UBC Press (March 1, 2017)  
 284 pages

Reviewed by Sue Cumming, RPP

Planners who had the opportunity to work and study with Sue Hendler, were awed by the passion with which she sought to daylight and advance diverse representation in all that is planning. This book, completed posthumously by her student and later colleague Julia Markovich, describes women’s historical and contemporary representation in the planning profession in Canada from the 1940s to the 1970s.

The project began out of frustration that the current study of planning history is devoid of the voices and work of woman planners. This is not a book about woman planners for woman planners, but rather a book that sets out to create a resource for telling planning history, including the institutionalization of the profession. It is a first historical account of woman in the planning profession and should become an important resource for planning education in Canada.

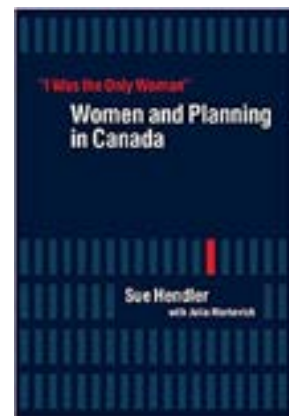


The book is based on research and interviews with the woman and family members who shaped the evolution of the Community Planning Association of Canada and the Town Planning Institute of Canada / Canadian Institute of Planners. The book tells the stories of women planners working in Canada from the 1940s to the ‘70s—Anne Beaumont, Jessica Coulter, Jean Crawford Downing, Kathleen Ferguson, Elinor Good, Jackie Hoag, Silvia Flora Hudson, Esther Wilson Kerry, Louise Joslyn, Barbara Lambert, Blanche Lemco van Ginkel, Bessie Luffman, Mary Louise Lynch, Yvonne Morin, Mary Rawson, Mary Rose, Margaret Scrivener and Hilda Symonds. We learn what constitutes planning, who counts as planners, and how these women prevailed in changing what it means to be a professional planner.

The book highlights how women’s interest in and focus on

housing, social planning and citizen engagement, for example, has contributed to a re-thinking of urban cities and planning approaches. Several interwoven themes document and analyze how different representation can lead to different approaches to planning. As the authors state, “similar, then, to other groups who bring different ideas, practices and identities to the field (such as people of colour, and gay men and lesbians), woman may contribute to better reflecting the diversity of the publics they serve”.

“I Was The Only Woman”, Woman and Planning provides an important historical account and includes many lessons relevant today. Involving a diversity of representative views creates the environment for acting on these ideas and interests to create a more meaningful, inclusive and equitable future in Canadian communities.



*Sue Cumming, RPP, is an OPPI member, principal of Cumming+Company and a facilitator and community engagement consultant. She is also an adjunct lecturer teaching public participation at the School of Urban and Regional Planning, Department of Geography and Planning at Queen’s University. Sue was OPPI President 2009–2011.*

*If you want to suggest a book for review or want to submit a book review contact the [editor](#).*

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# Mediation for Minor Variances in Toronto

By Leah Birnbaum, RPP

The City of Toronto is running a one year pilot program offering a free mediation session to people who are applying for minor variances and may have neighbours or residents' associations opposing their proposals. Instead of trying to work it out in the hallway or simply presenting competing views to the committee of adjustment and hoping for the best, people can sit down with a neutral mediator and a neutral planner and talk through their differences.

As one of the planners on the pilot program's roster, I am paired with a professional mediator for each session. These are offered in two different formats—one format offers scheduled mediations between parties either leading up to or following a committee of adjustment hearing; the other offers same-day mediation to people attending committee of adjustment hearings—moving the self-directed hallway discussions into a private meeting space with neutral facilitators.



The first mediation I attended didn't really go anywhere. The proposal was to sever a lot in a residential neighbourhood and build two smaller detached houses. The local residents' association was against it. We learned pretty quickly that there isn't much to mediate for a severance application: either the lot will be severed, or it won't. It's not the kind of proposal where you can help the parties meet somewhere in the middle.

Later mediations have been more fruitful. When the proposal involves an addition or a new house construction, and neighbours are concerned about the impact of the proposal on their own properties, there are usually issues that can be mediated. Sometimes these relate directly to the variances—such as scaling down or re-configuring an addition to retain sunlight to a neighbour's window. And sometimes they don't—such as agreeing to re-build a shared fence or working out construction times with which both sides can live.

The planning approvals process can be difficult to navigate for those who haven't encountered it before. In mediations my most common role is to help the affected parties understand what is being proposed. Variances are worded to highlight the difference between what is permitted under the by-law and what is being proposed. However, in Toronto, many features of buildings do not conform to the zoning by-law as written, and variances are often requested to legalize conditions that already deviate from the zoning. Neighbours want to understand the difference between what is currently built and what is being proposed; which is not always clear from reading the requested variances.

One mediation involved several people objecting to their

neighbours' plan to enclose a front porch. The proposed front-yard setback had the neighbours alarmed that the addition would be bringing the house much closer to the street. We sat down and looked at the plans. I explained the property lines, how front-yard setbacks are measured, and how the front main wall of the house would be re-defined. Once the neighbours understood that it was a simple porch enclosure, they withdrew their objections and left without needing to speak before the committee (the application was approved).

We don't always help people come to agreements. Regardless of what is discussed or decided in mediation, the committee of adjustment has the decision-making power. Those opposing an application may still want to have their say in front of the committee after participating in mediation. The difference is that the mediation process gets people sitting down face to face with each other, discussing the plans, and listening to each other's concerns. Even when disagreements persist the parties leave mediation having made an effort to work things out. This is very different from waiting for one's turn to speak, and then leaving a committee of adjustment hearing having won or lost, and possibly planning an appeal of that decision.

As a neutral planner who is not paid by either side I'm able to explain the plans and help people understand what is actually being proposed without having any stake in the outcome. In my consulting practice I used to represent clients at the Toronto Committee of Adjustment, and I would find myself out in the hallway facilitating impromptu discussions between neighbours. My clients and I would have discussed strategies, gambling on how much to reveal or withhold to the other party before we got our chance to speak to the committee. While I always advised and helped my clients to discuss proposals with their neighbours well in advance, once we went to the committee we would be focused on either winning the approval or the refusal that we sought. My role was different: while I would be glad to facilitate an agreement between the parties, I had to look out for my client's interests first.

Once, with the consent of my client, I knocked the proposed third storey off a new house to placate the neighbours, eliminating the contentious height variance. I recalculated the density variance and went back to the committee to present an altered house design rather than risk a refusal or a deferral. This had been our strategy. The neighbours, who had told us they would appeal any decision to approve the application, were forced to consider a radically altered proposal within minutes. In that case, they withdrew their opposition but the discussions were strained and it was not really fair to ask them to assess new plans before the clock ran out and the committee called us back in. A session with a mediator would have allowed us to present the altered

proposal through a neutral mediator and planner, in confidence, diffusing tension and allowing both sides to make clear and calm decisions.

On another case I represented neighbours opposing an addition to the other half of their semi-detached house. Leading up to the hearing date I facilitated several meetings between the two parties but we were unable to come to a solution as my clients were reluctant to agree to any proposed changes and the proponents were reluctant to reduce their proposed addition, which they felt might be approved by the committee of adjustment.

At the committee of adjustment hearing we attempted negotiations in the hallway and nearly reached a settlement but time ran out before the proponents could calculate the revised density variance. The matter was deferred to a later hearing date. Tensions were very high during these negotiations as we raced against the clock and the deferral was not the outcome that either party wanted. My client left city hall in tears, knowing that they'd have to go through it all again at the next hearing date.

In the end my clients refused to meet with the proponents in person as considerable animosity had grown between them. I was directed by my client not to speak to the other party's agent. They were paying my fee and they wanted me to do everything I could to get the application refused. That was it. Without a neutral mediator, negotiations completely stalled. Even if I could have seen opportunities for reconciliation with the applicants, I wasn't able to approach them. This is why neutral, skilled mediation is such a welcome addition to the planning process.

In the mediation pilot program I can offer advice and explanations to both sides in a dispute. If I see a path to resolution I can mention it and explore it freely with both parties. I don't work for one side or the other, and neither party pays my fee. Instead, I work on behalf of a dispute resolution process—a process that fosters mutual understanding and possible resolution.

I'm there to demystify the process, to answer questions about the variances, and to offer advice if asked. A good outcome for a mediation is having parties who are able to continue speaking to each other to resolve any issues that might come up as construction takes place (or doesn't take place). When I represented clients at the committee, a good outcome was getting a file approved or refused.

The mediation pilot program is helping to re-frame the minor variance process. While the majority of minor variance and consent applications are presented and decided without dispute, those that are contentious can pit neighbour against neighbour with the threat of a 'winner takes all' outcome. Offering mediation—for everyone who wants to use it—changes the tone of the whole process, moving it toward a less adversarial, more collaborative, more community-minded one. That's the kind of planning process I want to contribute to and I hope that mediation continues to become an integral part of Toronto's planning approvals and appeal processes.

*Leah Birnbaum, RPP is a member of OPPI and an urban planning consultant in Toronto.*

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# Cross border dialogue

By George McKibbin, RPP

*"In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable."*

~ attributed to Dwight D. Eisenhower

Cross border dialogue among planners along the Niagara River can benefit our profession. We share the Niagara Falls and entry points into both nations. In a facilitated workshop, 30 planners, drawn equally from OPPI's Western Lake Ontario District and APA's Western New York Section met and explored similarities and differences in professional practice.



Planners provide advice to parties where discussions of public policy and land use occur. Beyond this common practice, significant differences abound.

In New York State, planners design plans and ordinances to achieve accepted standards of public welfare, safety and equity. In Ontario, planners design plans and zoning by-laws to be consistent with provincial policy (*Provincial Policy Statement, 2014*).

In New York State, lawyers oversee the drafting and application of municipal ordinances. Case law and legal principles apply and their application can be and often is reviewed by the courts. In Ontario, planners provide advice to municipal councils and the Ontario Municipal Board on whether planning decisions are consistent with the *PPS 2014* and conform to official plan policies.

In New York State, the home rule principles apply to municipal government. Little municipal amalgamation has occurred. However, municipal decisions can have the same legal status as New York State legislation. By contrast, in Ontario municipalities are creatures of the province and municipal amalgamation is common. Municipal by-laws are subservient to provincial legislation.

Professional membership as Registered Professional Planners is paramount for Ontario's planners. Without this credential, we are at a profound disadvantage when providing opinion evidence at Ontario Municipal Board hearings and before municipal councils. In New York State, certification in

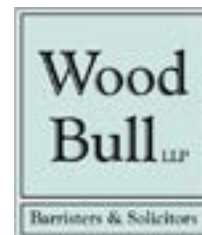
the American Institute of Certified Planners isn't required to practice planning. Planners focus on factual evidence, and much less on opinion evidence.

On Ontario, OPPI is the recognized voice of Ontario's planners, with over 5,000 members. In New York State, the American Institute of Certified Planners is the recognized voice of certified planners with over 17,000 national and international members.

Planning is both a noun and a verb. As a noun, it stands for a professional domain. As a verb it includes professional activities that vary, often significantly between countries. Our dialogue explored these varieties, and expanded our appreciation of activities that define our professional planning practice.

*George McKibbin, RPP, AICP CEP, is a member of OPPI and the American Institute of Certified Planners. He is an adjunct professor in the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development, Ontario Agricultural College, University of Guelph.*

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# Duty to Consult Evolves...

By Clara MacCallum Fraser & David J. Stinson, RPP

**O**n a sunny June morning, about 30 people mostly from the local region gathered in the Grey County council chambers. They were Indigenous and non-Indigenous planners who met to learn from one another about navigating the shoals of land use planning in the uncertain waters of the duty to consult and accommodate. The intention of the workshop was to raise awareness about the intersection of land use planning and Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

The day involved perspectives from Indigenous consultation specialists. Saugeen Métis lands, resources, and consultation coordinator George Govier provided a case study that demonstrated how lessons can be learned from an affirmational experience with a corporation (Bruce Power). The process this community has developed relies on mutual sign-offs of discussions, and site visit verifications. The outcome of the engagement plan has been used as part of the corporation's license renewal. Saugeen Ojibway Nation land use planning coordinator Doran Ritchie offered a second case study, involving the complexity of cross-jurisdictional planning that take place between First Nation communities and adjacent municipalities.

The case studies were designed to facilitate straightforward discussions of best practices, but they also illustrated the rich potential of creating a space, not only to share experiences, but to begin a process of collaboration about which we share an intense interest... land! This hoped-for evolution demonstrates the importance of creating bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous planners.

Doran closed the workshop with some poignant thoughts saying that the *conversations* that were had throughout the day are one example of the reconciliation work which needs to take place.

*The workshop was organized by OPPI and facilitated by the Shared Path Consultation Initiative.*

*Clara MacCallum Fraser is the co-founder of the Shared Path Consultation Initiative and a Ph.D. candidate in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University. David J. Stinson,*

*RPP is a member of OPPI, a partner with Incite Planning, and is on the board of Shared Path Consultation Initiative. He is also a member of CIPs Indigenous Community Planning Committee.*



Clara MacCallum Fraser



David J. Stinson

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## Certification process

# RPP Certification Process

By Monika Rau

**T**o become a Registered Professional Planner (RPP) in Ontario, one must undertake the certification process through the Professional Standards Board (PSB), a national body that administers the certification process. Once the PSB confirms your candidate member eligibility, you can apply to become an Ontario Professional Planners Institute Candidate member and work towards becoming a Full Member.

### Eligibility & process

There are three ways to be eligible to become a Candidate member and begin the certification process: 1) Accredited Planning Degree Route, 2) Prior Learning Assessment Recognition Route, and 3) Reciprocal Agreement Route (for foreign professionals). To receive certification through any one of the three routes, one must

complete the following steps: application assessment for candidate status, completion of sponsorship and mentorship, and successful completion of the Ethics and Professional course (take-home test, minimum 70 per cent to pass) and Professional Examination (spring and fall, minimum 80 per cent to pass).

### Mentorship/sponsorship

The mentorship component must be at least one year and your mentor will sign off on a Record of Mentorship once satisfied it meets program objectives. The record will include a log of all meetings and topics covered. Within 90 days of application submission to the Professional Standards Board, you must also secure a qualified person as your sponsor who can validate your record of logging your planning experience (two years through the Accredited Degree Route).

The choice of a mentor and sponsor is a very important part of this process and will help you in your professional growth



as a planner. They must be an MCIP/RPP in good standing for at least three years and cannot be the same person. Note that it is your responsibility to find your mentor and sponsor; however, OPPI and PSB can assist you with a list of RPP volunteers to serve in either capacity.

### Associated fees

Becoming a Certified Planner in Ontario is not cheap so be sure to plan for these expenses. I took the accredited degree route through a university degree planning program (University of Guelph) and the following is a cost breakdown to become certified. Application to the PSB costs \$375 and the total cost to take the Ethics and Professional course is \$600. The Professional Examination costs \$500. In total, the certification process costs about \$1,500 (inclusive of taxes).

### Importance of certification

Professional certification demonstrates a commitment to your chosen profession. Certification and continuous learning

shows learnt skills and ever-expanding knowledge of planning to employers, colleagues and clients. The RPP designation is increasingly becoming a prerequisite to work in the field, particularly in a senior role.

I recently attended the reading of Bill 122 – the *Registered Professional Planners Act, 2017* at Queen's Park. This bill raises further awareness of the planning profession and a planner's own profile as a committed professional. Sooner than later, I hope that the RPP certification in Ontario becomes a regulated profession to establish planning as a "right to practice" legislation.

*Monika Rau is a development coordinator at Dream with a focus on mixed-use communities within the GTA and the revitalization of underutilized lands. She is a Candidate member of OPPI and is a member of the Toronto District Leadership Team. Monika received a BA in Geography from Wilfrid Laurier University, MSc in Rural Planning and Development from the University of Guelph, and holds a real estate license.*

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## Commentary

# So you want to be a chief planner...

By Mary Lou Tanner, RPP

**B**ecoming a chief planner or developing a career path with this goal isn't all about planning skills and ability.

For some time, the role of chief planner in a municipality has encompassed four distinct parts: being the planner who advises council; being a member of the senior management team running the municipality; being the face of the department with the development industry; and being the head of a municipal department. A new fifth dimension has been added more recently: being the voice on social media. Consider these broad and varied roles.

Chief planners advise council on planning matters. We are the face of the department to the councillors at their meetings and in the public eye. This means developing and sharing a vision for the community with council, the community, the development industry, and staff. The chief planner must be the one who can competently and capably answer questions from councillors on everything from large issues to more day to day matters. The most important aspect of this part of the job is supporting and developing the staff who work on the various projects. Ironically, as a chief planner, you do very little planning work but you are the one who signs off on the work. So being a strongly grounded and experienced planner is critical because you will be tested publicly. Your job is to make sure that staff members have the tools and resources to be at the top of their game. Your job is to work with council



to get the work approved. It's called political acuity.

Chief planners, both in municipal organizations and private sector firms, are part of the larger management team that runs the organization. We spend a lot of time on corporate issues such as budgets and finance, organizational structure—how do we organize ourselves to get our work done—human resources policy issues—the new minimum wage and what it means, collective bargaining, health and safety, human rights—governance—relationships with agencies, boards and commissions, and council's committee structure—agenda management, building major projects, and more strategic issues. The latter includes such issues as how we build high performing organizations, and how to implement council's strategic plan. This part of the role means needing to get comfortable working in areas where we are not experts and building relationships with colleagues across the organization. Working as a team is critical for the organization's success. As one wise soul said: "If there's chaos at the top, there's chaos throughout."

Chief planners must have a strong working relationship with the development industry. This means regular face-to-face meetings, answering inquiries promptly, and doing the day-to-day work to sustain good communication. It doesn't mean always agreeing, but it does mean respecting and working with people who are investing significant amounts of money in your community. There's a lot of risk involved with that amount of money and pressures that most of us can't even imagine. Chief planners must be a problem solver and follow through on commitments. And remember that time is money.

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

**O** PPI, 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.*



## SOCIAL MEDIA

# Are Our Days Numbered?

By Rob Voigt, RPP, contributing editor

**W**hen it comes to imagining the future and the role that technology will play in shaping that vision there is one area where few planners focus their attention, and that is the impact technology will have on the profession itself. To be prepared for the future and our ability to continue doing the important work we do as professional planners, we need to understand how we will be changed by what lies ahead.

I am not referring to the benefits the tools of new technology provide for planning practice—such as greater breadth of communication, more compact and powerful sensing and mapping technology, or, stunning visualization software and 3D presentations for urban design. Nor am I talking about how technology will be changing human activity through the use of autonomous vehicles, greater institutionalization of telework, and the increasing use of online and on-demand retailing.



My point is that the profession itself will be dramatically altered by technology. However, like many other professionals, planners generally seem to be either unaware, or unwilling to consider how much their work environment is going to change in the next few years, and the power that technology has in driving this change. Planners do not seem prepared for what may be a completely disruptive change. Let me briefly describe three areas where I see profound and disruptive changes coming to the planning profession as a result of technological advances.

### Data-driven planning

There are numerous initiatives underway in which people are trying to describe and understand cities and towns as equations. The underlying goal is to be able to undertake predictive work based on calculations. This seems to me to be a kind of modernist perspective of the city as a machine whose success rests in better engineering and design.

This view considers simplicity, efficiency, and objective analysis to be the most desirable way of understanding and building our cities. Big data and the evolving Internet of Things allows for this kind of work to move forward. However, this perspective has the potential of focusing planning primarily on the city as an object, as opposed to a view of the built environment as something that puts the community/people first and supports human needs and interactions.

It may appear that data-driven planning is a bias-free, seemingly mathematical, approach to our profession that will lead to greater insights and effective planning. However, it

raises significant issues associated with eliminating the human perspective, creates challenges associated with the ethics of data and algorithms, and access to data and personal privacy. Each one of these challenges could result in harm to the communities and citizens we plan for if we cannot address them.

### Magnifying individual capacity

The tools and knowledge available to planners today just through their laptops, mobile devices, and specialty tools is staggering. On my mobile phone alone I have the capacity to create and view 3D imagery, illustrations and maps, conduct surveys, take and edit videos and photos, measure distances, speed, and temperature and pilot my drone, in addition to a myriad of online tools, services and social networks.

Almost everyone one of these tools was unavailable less than a decade ago. It was the introduction of the iPhone that went on sale on 29 June 2007, that made these powerful computing tools available on a device that fits in the palm of your hand. Until then, many of these commonly used tools either involved more people, longer timelines, greater cost, or generally all of the above. Then of course there are those that weren't even available at all.

From a human resources perspective this means that individual planners are capable of doing far more technical work than ever before. Along with leveraging capacity and skill sets, access to this technology also changes the dynamic between professionals and citizens. This same technology is available to amateur planners. While they may not have the training and experience of RPPs, the technology gives them the ability to communicate and participate in planning matters with far greater proficiency than ever before. This ability of non-professionals to duplicate and/or mimic the work of planners can cause a reduction in citizens' trust and the perceived value of planning, particularly when coupled with increasing distrust in government and strained municipal budgets that reduce the capacity to do quality planning work. The result could be a reduced reliance on RPPs and therefore a corresponding reduction in the ability of communities to prepare for and guide their evolution.

### Replacement through automation

Finally, and the most disruptive result of technology in my perspective, is automation. Entire industries are being disrupted through automation. Even the technologies I mentioned above are directly involved in this. Algorithms are being developed that use big data and machine learning to replace an astounding number of jobs. One of the underlying characteristics that make this possible is that algorithms can be used to replace many tasks that include repetition and/or a



series of distinct patterns of actions. This includes significant portions of many jobs such as those in medical, human resources, insurance and financial sectors and professions involved with transactions. All of these sectors have experienced increasing amounts of automation, and a shrinking of their work forces. Transportation service jobs are being replaced by autonomous vehicles. Robotics, and the algorithms that they run on, are no longer just being used to replace people in dangerous or repetitive manufacturing jobs, but also with increasing depth and breadth in other industries. Examples ranging from restaurant services to warehouse workers.

Development application processing, counter enquiries, mapping, and ongoing monitoring of community services all include planning tasks that could be automated in a similar way. Those areas of planning that require complex analysis, community development, and design are not under the same foreseeable threat of replacement through automation because they involve judgment and/or human interaction. Quite frankly, this means that a vast number of jobs in the planning field are in danger of being replaced through automation.

These three simple descriptions of changes that are currently underway, make it obvious that the planning profession will have to adapt to major challenges in terms of ethics, relevance, and value. We are well versed in guiding and facilitating communities through these same kinds of threats, now we must take similar action with an inward looking perspective on our own profession if we are to succeed.

*Robert Voigt MCIP, RPP is a member of OPPI. He is a professional planner, artist and writer, recognized as an innovator in community engagement and healthy community design. He is a senior practitioner in planning, landscape architecture & urban design at WSP Canada, chair of the OPPI Planning Issues Strategy Group, and publisher of [Civictblogger.com](http://Civictblogger.com). Contact: [@robvoigt](mailto:@robvoigt), [rob@robvoigt.com](mailto:rob@robvoigt.com).*

## URBAN DESIGN

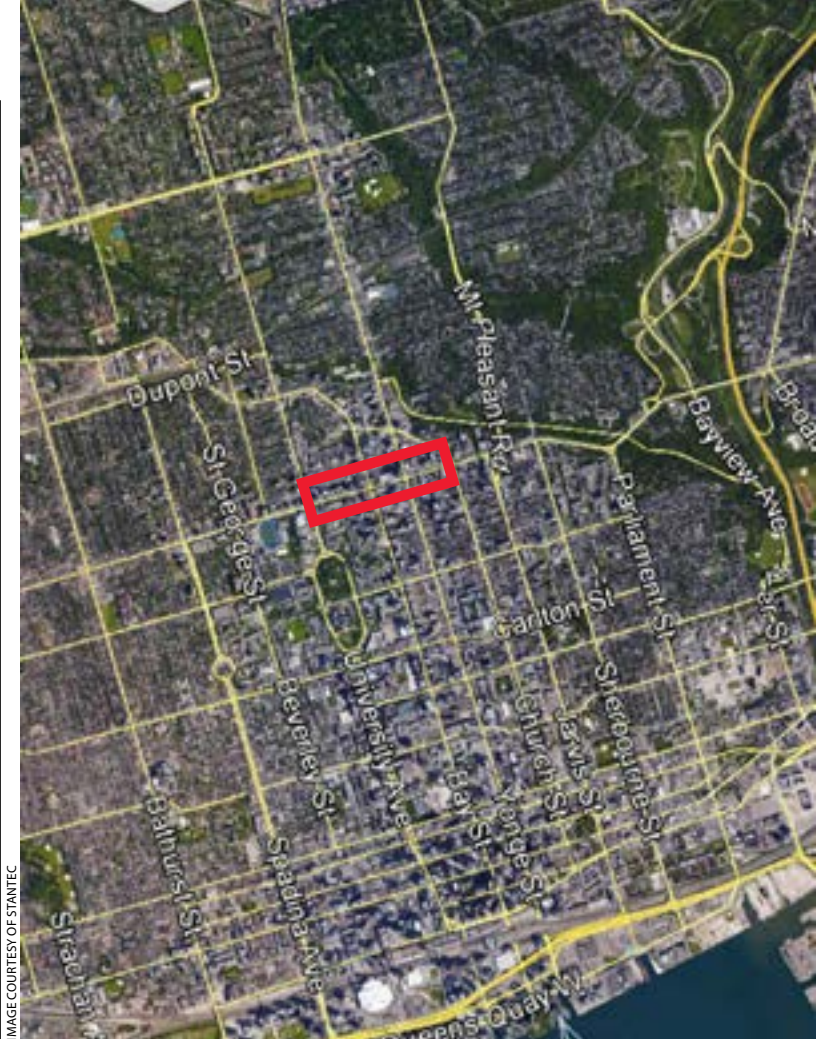
# Transforming Streetscapes

By Harold Madi, RPP, contributing editor

**S**treetscape improvements are a well-established means of enhancing and supporting the pedestrian environments of street-oriented shopping areas.

Typically, these improvements aim for a consistent and uniform treatment to the sidewalks, landscaping, furnishing, signage, and lighting poles and/or fixtures. In rare instances they venture into the roadway with articulated crosswalks and sidewalk bump-outs where possible.

These improvements occur most often in conjunction with other more routine street-related capital improvements. Though municipalities coordinate and undertake these improvements, the cost of installing and maintaining any features beyond the standard



Bloor Street Transformation area

state-of-good-repair, is typically paid for by the local Business Improvement Area through levies collected from its commercial property owners. Thus, these improvements usually are more about beautification than about transformation.

In recent years, however, there has been a notable rise in the number of municipal streetscape initiatives that move well beyond beautification with very deliberate intentions to be transformative enhancements—not just in physical appearance but also in the role, function and operation of the entire street. Examples include King Street in Kitchener, Carden Street in Guelph, and Toronto's Queens Quay, Front Street at Union Station and Market Street. In all cases, the design and configuration of these streetscapes prioritize active transportation modes while enhancing their qualities as destinations.

Despite numerous precedents and irrefutable evidence of economic, social and environmental benefits, these streetscape schemes continue to be extremely challenging to implement. The greatest obstacles consistently result from interdepartmental knowledge gaps and a misalignment of municipal priorities. To address this robust metrics are needed that are comprehensive, collected at least one year in advance of the transformation and for at least five years following the installation. Additionally, a base case comparison should be undertaken with a street that is similar in function and character, in close proximity, and where only standard improvements are made. I am aware of only one comprehensive study undertaken to date that has thoroughly

measured and assessed the impacts of various streetscape schemes, including their comparison to base cases scenarios—[Paved with Gold: The Real Value of Good Street Design, 2007](#), Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE).

### Potential benefits

Transformative streetscape enhancements, designed to unlock the latent potential of the street to attract more foot traffic, businesses and investments, can add tremendous value to a community.

*Property values*—In *Paved With Gold*,<sup>1</sup> CABE studied the financial value of good street design. The results show direct links between high-quality streets and higher retail and residential value. The analysis found that better quality streets result in higher market prices for home and retail spaces.

These findings help to justify the investment in high-quality street design. Based on the streets surveyed there was a 4.9 per cent increase in retail rents. Survey results showed that pedestrians are willing to pay more for a high-quality street, residents are willing to pay higher taxes and higher rents, and transit users are willing to pay higher fares for a high-quality streetscape.

*Retail sales*—In New York City, the economic benefits to redesigning streets has benefitted business through increased retail sales and fewer retail vacancies.<sup>2</sup> For example, when the cycletrack was installed on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Manhattan, there was an increase of 9 per cent in retail sales in stores along this corridor and a decrease in vacancies. On Pearl Street in Brooklyn, the conversion of on-street parking to seating areas resulted in a 14 per cent increase in sales for business adjacent to the new seating.

*Civic profile and tourism*—A study conducted by the Nordic Innovation Centre showed that tourists top-two destination choices are (1) to visit specific sights and/or attractions, and (2) to go to specific streets or squares.<sup>3</sup>

*Stimulation of private investment*—Public realm

### Attributes to look for when contemplating a street for successful place-making:

- High density, mixed-use urban context with a critical mass of mixed-use activities, day and night animation, exposure to tourism, and is walkable such as a downtown, centre or main street
- Intact heritage structures and landmarks contribute to the streets distinct profile and authenticity with potential to draw cultural, entertainment and hospitality uses
- Pedestrian scaled and oriented, including existing or potential narrowed roadway, as well as buildings and uses that are close to and focussed on the street
- Transit-oriented with access to rapid transit station within walking distance
- Proximity to cultural and civic functions of community-wide importance

Attributes of an enhanced streetscape that is transformative—non-standard approach to the function, modal delineation, and selection of materials and fixtures—include, to varying degrees, the following elements (CABE):

- Dropped curbs, tactile paving & colour contrast
- Smooth, clean, well-drained surfaces
- High-quality materials & high standards of maintenance
- Pavements wide enough to accommodate all users
- No obstructions, no pinch points
- Enough crossing points, in the right places & not excessive traffic levels
- Sense of security, good lighting, no graffiti or litter, no signs of anti-social behavior
- Signage, landmarks and good sightlines
- Public spaces along the street
- Street that is a pleasant place to be

enhancements, including streetscapes, are a catalyst for private sector investment. The private sector is responsive to urban design (and subsequent development) initiatives due to the increased use and profile of revitalized and enhanced areas, leading to accelerated city-building and the provision of potential privately owned public spaces.<sup>4</sup>

*Reduction in transportation expenses*—CABE also reported in *Paved With Gold* that individuals save significantly on reduced transportation costs in walkable and bike-able places. Residents have reduced costs in automobile ownership, parking costs and fuel.<sup>5</sup>

*Environmental benefits*—Bevan et. al. notes that streetscape enhancements can reduce impacts on the natural environment, and encourage and support biodiversity.<sup>6</sup> This includes enhancements to the pedestrian environment, where people are encouraged to walk rather than drive, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Planting trees reduces the urban heat island effect by providing shade on hardscaped surfaces. Choice of paving material also contributes to this reduction (e.g. reflective surfaces such as concrete vs. asphalt, Spellman, 2008).<sup>7</sup> Water quality is improved through planters, specifically “rain garden” planters that absorb water and filter it with plant material before it is drained into the stormwater system.<sup>8</sup>

*Social*—A number of factors play a significant role in users’ sense of place, attachment to place and a sense of community. Participants of the CABE study indicated that one of the qualities of a great street is that there are no signs of anti-social behavior.<sup>9</sup> Streetscapes are the support for cultural events, gatherings, festivals, as well as everyday social interaction between individuals.<sup>10</sup>

*Health*—Our bodies are designed to move, and our streets should be too. The evidence is clear. The International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity states that increased levels of physical activity are commonly associated with positive outcomes<sup>11</sup>—reduction in crime, pollution and traffic, and improvements in productivity, academic performance, health and well-being. Cities that make physical activity a priority convert existing spaces into active spaces,



Enhancements: Narrowed street, widened sidewalk, large planters, grated tree pits, granite sidewalk, bicycle sharrows, bicycle rings, seating, lighting

creating a legacy of public health. Active Living Research, in its report—A Guide for City Leaders: Designed to move—found that active cities are competitive cities, where active spaces lead to economic benefits including increased tax revenue, lower individual health expenses, and higher property values.<sup>12</sup>

**Safety**—In enhanced streetscapes all users move through more cautiously and are aware of each other. The City of New York improved its streets to make them safer for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. By focusing street improvement efforts on streets and intersections along major corridors and at complex intersections where traffic accidents are most common, the city witnessed a 29 per cent decrease in the number of people killed or severely injured since 2001.<sup>13</sup>

*Harold Madi, RPP, MCIP, BURPl, MArch, MRAIC, is an OPPI Member and Urban Places Canada lead at Stantec. He has two decades of planning and urban design experience leading numerous large-scale, multi-faceted and visionary projects across Canada and internationally.*

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BEFORE



AFTER



Year: 2010; budget: \$24 million; magnitude: 5 blocks, 1 km (0.6 mi); function: retail streetscape; design team: architectsAlliance, Brown & Storey Architects

# RPP-ortability

By Brian Brophrey

Members of Canadian planning institutes have for many years enjoyed an ability to move and work across the country, easily transferring their professional memberships and having their certifications recognized and respected. This seamless fabric of portability, however, is actually woven from complex historic strands behind the scenes.

The provincial planning institutes were originally chapters or affiliates of the Canadian Institute of Planners. The affiliation agreements they signed with CIP spelled out the right of CIP members to easily transfer from one province's affiliate to another—more easily than was often the case in other professions.

Canadian-American negotiations in the early 1990s led to the North American Free Trade Agreement. In light of NAFTA, trade barriers between provinces made less sense than ever, and in 1994 the provinces signed an Agreement on Internal Trade. The “labour mobility” provisions of the agreement required provinces to accept and recognize professionals with certifications from other provinces, in certain listed professions.

In the following years, the agreement was implemented in various provinces in various ways. Ontario's 2009 *Labour Mobility Act* implemented it, and included OPPI in Table 1 under “non-governmental regulatory – private acts” (referring to the 1994 *Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act*). The *Labour Mobility Act* governed the transfer of professionals into Ontario, and some other provinces had similar legislation. Notwithstanding the legislation, in practice the provincial institutes all continued to respect the right of members to transfer easily between provinces. This and the continuing maturation of planning as a profession made the arrangements with CIP seem increasingly archaic.

Portability is now formally enshrined in the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, which came into force July 21, 2017. This agreement builds on and goes further than the Agreement on Internal Trade, for instance requiring that professional certifications be recognized between provinces, unless they are explicitly excluded.

The planning institutes across the country and the national Professional Standards Committee are aware of these developments, and will most likely act to ensure that planning institute members



across Canada continue to be free to transfer their memberships easily, to be able to move and work in other provinces, and to have their RPP designations respected.

Brian Brophrey is OPPI Registrar & Director, Member Relations.

PROVINCIAL NEWS

# Growth Plan implementation

By Kevin Eby, RPP, contributing editor

Key to the successful implementation of the revised *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* will be the development of a wide range of supporting materials by the province. The lack of such supporting materials during the conformity update and subsequent Ontario Municipal Board processes clearly contributed to what can be described as inconsistent implementation of various policy directions in the original Growth Plan. To its credit, the province is committed to rectifying these issues through the preparation of guidance documents, FAQs and a land needs assessment methodology. Once finalized and released, these documents will help planners, municipal councils, stakeholders and members of the public to better understand the goals and expectations of the municipal official plan conformity process. Stay tuned for more on these implementation tools.



In addition the province is providing grants through the [Places to Grow Implementation Fund](#) to facilitate the development of a range of innovative materials to assist in the implementation of the Growth Plan, 2017. It is anticipated that these, the technical documents being prepared by the province, and materials prepared by organizations such as the Neptis Foundation, the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation and the Ryerson Centre for Urban Research and Land Development will provide a wealth of information to help inform the Growth Plan, 2017 municipal official plan conformity update processes.

Kevin Eby, B.Sc, MA, RPP is a member of OPPI, the OPJ provincial news contributing editor and the former director of community planning with the Region of Waterloo. He previously worked on secondment to the province to help with the formulation of the original *Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*.

# Summary of Determination & Decision

**In the matter of a hearing under the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act and in the matter of a complaint regarding the conduct of a Member of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute and holder of the Registered Professional Planner (RPP) designation.**

## Background

The complainants had retained the Member as a land use planning consultant with respect to their development application for property X. The complainants and the Member were business partners with respect to a completely separate development application for property Y. With respect to property Y, the Member did not act as a professional planner, and another individual was retained as the professional planner.

In October 2011, another developer who was making a development application in the same area as property X approached the Member and retained him as a land use planning consultant for that project.

When the complainants discovered this situation later in October, they telephoned the Member to discuss it and the discussion became heated. The retainer between the Member and the complainants regarding property X was then terminated. The complainants and the Member also parted ways with respect to their business relationship pertaining to property Y.

Subsequently, the complainants' application regarding property X was deemed complete in March 2012 and was approved in April 2013. The Member then assisted the other developer in objecting to and appealing the complainants' approved development applications.

## Complaint & Discipline Hearing

In 2015, the complainants filed a formal complaint against the Member with OPPI. The complaint was investigated and referred to a hearing of the Discipline Panel. Several prehearing conferences were held to attempt to settle the matter, and/or to narrow the scope of the proceedings.

A five-day contested hearing was scheduled for May 2017. The Member requested that the hearing be closed to the public, the complainants took no position on this request, and the Discipline Panel so ordered. The hearing was completed in three days and a decision was issued on May 25, 2017.

## Findings

The complainants alleged that a number of

the provisions of the Professional Code of Practice ("Code") had been breached by the Member:

*Section 2.1 ("Member must... impart independent professional opinion to clients, employers, the public, and tribunals...")*

*Section 2.2 ("Members must... work with integrity and professionalism...")*

*Section 2.3 ("Members must... not perform work outside of his/her professional competence...")*

Regarding the above-noted allegations, there was no evidence of unprofessional or incompetent work by the Member in his role as land use planner for the development application for property X up until October 2011.

*Section 2.6 ("Members must... respect the client or employer right to confidentiality of information gathered through a professional relationship...")*

When the Member assisted the other developer in objecting to and appealing the complainants' development applications after April 2013, the appeals were with respect to the scope and content of the complainants' applications, which were by then public knowledge. There was no evidence of any breach of confidentiality.

*Section 2.7 ("Members must... inform the client or employer in the event of a conflict between the values or actions of the client or employer and those of this Code, in a timely manner...")*

There was no evidence of any conflict between the values of any of the Member's clients and the values imposed by the Code.

*Section 2.8 ("Members must... ensure full disclosure to a client or employer of a possible conflict of interest arising from the Member's private or professional activities, in a timely manner...")*

While still retained by the complainants, the Member did accept a retainer from another developer which proposed a development application in the same area as the complainants' development application. There was a clear potential that the two developers could have competing interests in the overall development of the area.

While the complainants may have been informally aware that the Member had some past connection with this other developer, the Member did not disclose to either the complainants or the other developer that he would be acting for both.

Upon hearing the full evidence, the Discipline Panel concluded that the Member was in breach of section 2.8 of the Code.

*Section 3.5 ("Members must... not in professional practice, extra-professional activities or private life, engage in dishonourable or questionable conduct that may cast doubt on the Member's professional competence or integrity or that may reflect adversely on the integrity of the profession...")*

The Member did not dispute the allegations concerning the telephone call with the complainants in October, 2011. He admitted in his evidence that it "was not a good conversation" and that "bad language" was used. The Member declined to apologize for this conduct, although he was asked to do so by the complainants' legal counsel.

This evidence supported a finding by the Discipline Panel that the Member had breached section 3.5 of the Code.

The Discipline Panel noted that: This should serve as a warning to OPPI members of the difficulties that might arise in undertaking business relationships while separately and concurrently providing professional independent planning services pursuant to the Professional Code of Practice.

From the OPPI perspective, the onus rests with the planner to ensure that those potential conflicts and role confusion come to bear.

## Penalty

The Discipline Panel imposed the following penalty:

Regarding section 2.8 breach (conflict of interest), the Member shall confirm to OPPI in writing his obligation in all future retainers to ensure full disclosure in writing to his clients wherever there is any possibility of existing or future conflicts of interest.

Regarding section 3.5 breach (dishonourable or questionable conduct), the Member shall provide an unequivocal written apology to the complainant and complainants' counsel for the unprofessional nature of the exchange that occurred during the telephone conversation that took place in October 2011, that has led, in large part, to the extended adjudication process.

The Member shall pay a fine of \$1,000 to OPPI.

The full decision of the hearing panel, including the names of the parties, can be accessed at <http://ontarioplanners.ca/Special-Pages/Discipline/Summary-of-Determination-and-Decision>

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** Members are encouraged to send letters about content in the *Ontario Planning Journal* to the [editor](#). Please direct comments or questions about Institute activities to the OPPI president at the OPPI office or by email to the [executive director](#). Keep letters under 150 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

**JOURNAL THEMES** OPJ is seeking ideas for 2018 themes. Send suggestions for upcoming themes to OPJ editor [Lynn Morrow](#).

## 2018 Membership Renewal

OPPI's 2018 membership renewal begins in November. Your renewal notice will arrive via email, so please login to your profile at [ontarioplanners.ca/member-login](http://ontarioplanners.ca/member-login) to verify that your email on file with OPPI is current. Once you receive your renewal notice, your profile page will display a red "Renew My Membership" button. Thank you for your continued support.



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