



## OPPI Council Meeting Recap

February 27 & 28, 2025

OPPI Council held the first quarterly meeting of the year and is excited to share a few updates with the membership.

### Path Forward Initiatives

As you are aware, OPPI has a few large projects underway, which we are calling our Path Forward Initiatives, that will set the foundation, or path, for OPPI to move forward in priority areas.

#### **Leadership in diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), reconciliation & social justice**

Since September 2024, OPPI Council and the staff leadership team have been working with Ian Rolston, Principal of Decanthropy, alongside Brian Porter, Principal of Two Row Architect (a 100% Indigenous-owned practice in the Grand River First Nation), to better understand organizational opportunities, challenges, and expectations when it comes to DEI and reconciliation and social justice.

Ian and Brian have led OPPI Council members through two rounds of strategic engagement, conducted several one-on-one interviews with members, and met with current and future strategic partners to learn more about OPPI, the planning profession, and the role of planners within Ontario's legislative framework. They have benchmarked our efforts against those of similar organizations and have invested time researching opportunities that could support our work.

During the OPPI Council meeting, Ian presented a preliminary report of findings and recommendations that included three key components:

- A statement of action from OPPI
- A system of change for OPPI to be successful
- A multi-year implementation plan

OPPI Council has provided input on the draft components, and the staff leadership team is working on the implementation plan and associated budget. Final approval is expected to occur at the OPPI Council meeting in July.

### **Tailored member benefits through member census survey**

In January, OPPI issued a member census survey to better understand some of the nuances of today's planning professionals and practices to provide insight on how OPPI could continue to support our members.

We are pleased with the response rates, which are almost double the industry average. Thank you to the many members who participated, giving us confidence that the results we received were representative of the profession!

OPPI Council and staff are excited to leverage this new knowledge and understanding of our membership to inform future initiatives and opportunities, like:

- A robust career path support program for Candidate and Student members
- Advocacy initiatives related to the most pressing planning issues
- Current and future collaborations and partnerships
- Future educational offerings by practice area and career stage
- Communities of practice initiatives for our largest sectors and areas of focus

Most importantly, the details within the survey will be used to inform OPPI's new strategic plan, as well as the staff team's operational plan and budget for 2026 and beyond.

If you have any questions about the member census survey results, contact [s.wiggins@ontarioplanners.ca](mailto:s.wiggins@ontarioplanners.ca).

### **Staff Council Meeting Reports**

OPPI staff prepared a number of reports for OPPI Council to celebrate recent successes through the work of the Membership, Communications, and Special Projects teams.

### **Membership Renewal**

By January 31, 2025, an overwhelming 96% of members had renewed their OPPI membership, putting the total number of members at 5,286.

The breakdown of the main OPPI membership categories is below. Other membership categories include non-practicing, out-of-province, and retired members.

- 3,093 – Full

- 871 – Candidate
- 282 – Pre-Candidate
- 644 – Student

## **Media Relations**

From 2022 to 2024, OPPI embarked on a three-year engagement with StrategyCorp to begin increasing awareness of the RPP designation and positioning OPPI as the voice of the planning profession. Through this work, we have proactively elevated OPPI's voice across digital platforms, secured media coverage in targeted outlets (like the Toronto Star, Canada's National Observer, and others), and trained spokespeople to speak to reporters on behalf of OPPI. We are very pleased with the results of our efforts to reach external audiences. Going forward, we will continue to build on this momentum, using the resources of our in-house Communications team.

## **Practice Guides**

You may have seen the recent announcement of the newly launched Climate Change Adaptation Practice Guide, which marks the first in a series of OPPI Practice Guides. Future topics include a Planning Legislative Framework in Ontario Practice Guide, and an Indigenous Engagement and Consultation Practice Guide, both of which are anticipated to be launched in the spring and early summer.

## **Unit of Study**

OPPI has developed a Grade 9 Geography (GCG1W) unit of study to introduce high school students to planning. Once the unit of study is ready to be shared, OPPI will begin presenting the curriculum to schools. If you're interested in getting involved as a presentation volunteer, contact Ryan Des Roches at [r.desroches@ontarioplanners.ca](mailto:r.desroches@ontarioplanners.ca).