

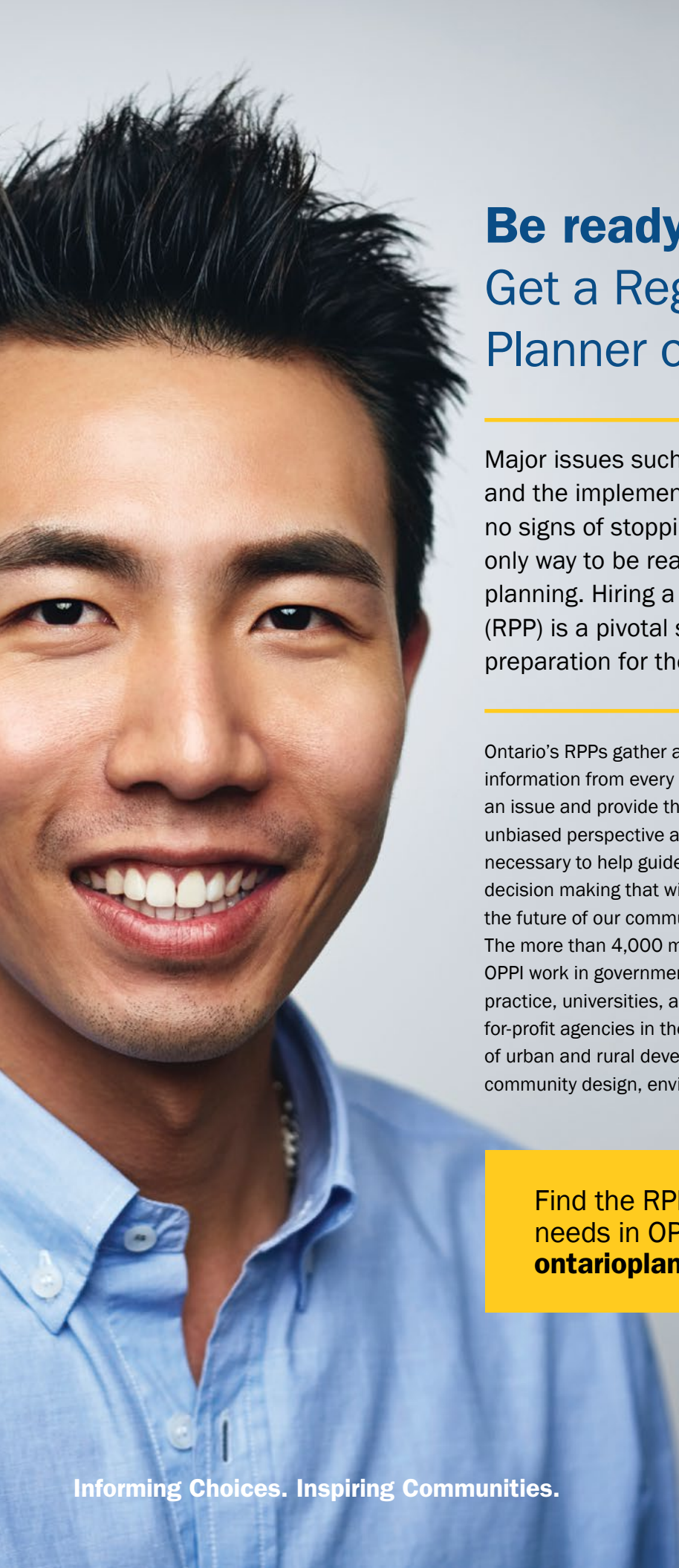


IDEAS AT THE CROSSROADS OF INSPIRED COMMUNITIES



THIS ISSUE:

Without public policy action, the housing situation will further deteriorate as population forecasts estimate an increase of 2.27 million people in Ontario over the next decade. 05



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Publisher, OPPI

Susan Wiggins
Rupendra Pant
Sarah Bradbury

Editor

Carolyn Camilleri

Design

Tenzing Communications Inc.

Print Production

14forty

Digital Production

Seventyeight Digital Inc.

For advertising inquiries:

Chantelle Bonham and Liz Buttigieg
advertising@ontarioplanners.ca

For feedback and story ideas:

editor@ontarioplanners.ca

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Ontario Professional Planners Institute
4881 Yonge Street, Suite 401
Toronto, Ontario, M2N 6Y9

T: 416-483-1873 or 1-800-668-1448
E: info@ontarioplanners.ca
W: ontarioplanners.ca

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INSPIRE



OPPI TAKES ACTION TO MEET ONTARIO'S HOUSING CHALLENGES

Many challenges have led to Ontario's current housing affordability crisis. Some of these go beyond the realm of the planning profession, such as a low interest rate environment, speculative demand, labour shortages, and other factors. Many barriers have been identified and solutions proposed by stakeholders in the past few months. Some innovative and worthy concepts are emerging.

Planners have an important role in meeting Ontario's housing challenges. OPPI has worked with the Province of Ontario to advance measures to streamline the land use planning approvals process. OPPI recently collaborated with stakeholders across the municipal and development sector to seek changes to the *Planning Act* that enhance delegation of minor approvals. We thank the Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing, for adopting these measures in Schedule 19 of Bill 13, *Supporting People and Businesses Act, 2021*.

Additional delegation will help, but it is not the panacea for Ontario's housing

affordability crisis. Much more work is needed at all levels of government to create a comprehensive plan that adequately addresses this generational challenge. Within the land use planning policy regime, many potential changes to plans and policies could help accelerate housing supply. It is in this regard, that OPPI has continued to offer its ongoing advice to the Ministry as it seeks to implement changes to address the crisis.

On February 10, 2022, OPPI submitted a letter to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing, outlining its top 10 recommended measures to address housing supply and affordability in Ontario. That letter had built upon the initial three recommendations OPPI submitted on December 20, 2021, to the Housing Affordability Task Force in advance of its report.

OPPI has further reinforced its position with the development of OPPI's *Top 10 Housing Supply & Affordability Recommendations*. That report has been submitted to the Ministry and is now available for download at ontarioplanners.ca.

It's time to take action

It is no secret that housing affordability and supply is a major public policy challenge of our generation. Home ownership is increasingly out of reach for too many Ontarians, and rents continue to rise faster than incomes. The price of the average home has nearly tripled in the last 10 years.¹

Among G7 countries, Canada has the lowest number of homes per capita with 424 units per 1,000 people. Within Canada, the Province of Ontario has the lowest housing per capita relative to any other province or territory.²

Without public policy action, the situation is likely to further deteriorate as population forecasts estimate an increase of 2.27 million people to Ontario over the next decade. Close to one million net new households need to be formed to accommodate this growth.³

Many barriers have been identified and solutions proposed by various organizations in recent months. Experts have cited labour shortages, increasing cost of materials, increasing government fees and charges, challenges with population forecasts, and speculative demand among other issues. Many have suggested the planning process is to blame.

There is no shortage of statistical evidence and rationale for how we got here. What seems to be in short supply is a comprehensive toolbox of actions that will aid provincial and municipal leadership in meeting the challenge head on, now.

The housing challenge is complex with multiple dimensions that involve all orders of government. However, as professional planners, our focus is on land use planning. We have developed OPPI's *Top 10 Housing Supply & Affordability Recommendations* to help the Government of Ontario improve the affordable housing situation.

Our recommendations are actionable. They are supported by the planning profession. They reflect Ontario's economic and social diversity. And they include solutions that can impact the inequities faced by Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC).



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Lowes'.

Paul Lowes, MES, MCIP, RPP
President
Ontario Professional Planners Institute

¹ Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force (February 2022), *Report of the Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force*, p. 4

² Scotiabank Chief Economist (January 2022), *Housing Note: Which Province Has The Largest Structural Housing Deficit?*, p. 1

³ Smart Prosperity Institute (October 2021), *Project Ontario's Growing Number of Families and Their Housing Needs*, p. iii



OPPI's Top 10 Housing Supply & Affordability Recommendations



Ensuring Accountability

1. Create an Office of the Chief Planner of Ontario (CPO) as an independent, non-partisan Office of the Legislative Assembly to provide oversight of municipal implementation of provincial land use plans and policies.



Streamlining Approvals

2. Encourage Community Planning Permit Systems (CPPS) in Strategic Growth Areas by providing implementation funding to municipalities.
3. Require Registered Professional Planner (RPP) sign-off on Planning Justification Reports to indicate completeness of application prior to submission by a proponent.
4. Enhance delegation framework for technical planning implementation approvals.



Building Capacity

5. Establish a Planning Modernization Fund to align outdated zoning with Official Plans.
6. Align provincial infrastructure funding and financing programs with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to ensure provincial support is targeted towards essential servicing for new housing developments.



Promoting Innovation

7. Lead the development of a single data standard for planning and development applications in collaboration with municipalities and industry.



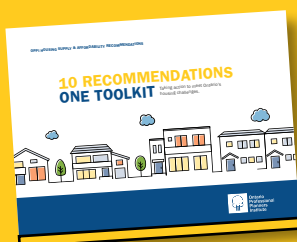
Driving Affordability

8. Drive more affordable units into the mix of new housing supply.
9. Promote innovative approaches and provide capital funding for rehabilitation of existing social housing stock.



Providing Stability

10. Provide provincial policy stability in land use planning once upcoming changes are in place.




READ THE WHOLE REPORT

OPPI's full submission to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is available at ontarioplanners.ca.

New Foundations in the City of Barrie

BY MICHELLE BANFIELD, RPP



“Interesting that in five years, the goal was technically surpassed, yet affordability seemed more of a challenge than ever.”

The City of Barrie is growing up. The most recently adopted official plan is planning for growth and development into the year 2051, where the *Places to Grow Act* is forecasting people and jobs at 298,000 and 150,000 respectively. That’s up considerably from the population of just over 153,000 in 2021. Every development application in recent years and those to come is changing the face of the city. Once predominantly a destination with single detached homes, development in most recent times has moved into built forms that are increasing the city’s overall intensification and density.

For many years, that initial switch in built forms, from single detached homes to townhouses or low-rise apartments, did a lot towards providing a range of housing types and price points for various homeowners. Then came along second suites and even third suites (detached accessory dwelling units) and more options were available not only for the owners of the properties, but also in providing new rental opportunities. Combined, the change in built form and the additional units on existing lots really helped to address housing affordability.

So, it worked... until it didn't. With real estate prices and construction costs increasing, a change in built form alone was no longer enough to truly tackle the issue of housing affordability in Barrie. This is not a unique situation, but with that in mind, the reality is that across the province, affordability remains a topic of concern for professional planners, all levels of government, and everyone looking for a place to call home.

REVAMPING THE STRATEGY

The City of Barrie's current affordable housing strategy was to be in place for a 10-year period from 2015 to 2024, with a goal of providing an additional 840 affordable housing units within that time period. The 2020 annual report, published in 2021, indicated that actually 872 units were created since we started in 2015. Interesting that in five years, the goal was technically surpassed, yet affordability seemed more of a challenge than ever.

The City of Barrie is not a housing provider – we partner with the County of Simcoe to provide social housing in the city. As City of Barrie staff reported, it was evident that what we were currently doing needed to be revamped. Staff proposed a number of city-initiated amendments that could make it easier to get affordable housing built. Amendments to the zoning bylaw were finalized in October 2021, including:

- Waiving application fees for affordable housing projects;
- Reviewing standards for second suites and detached accessory dwelling units;
- Reviewing standards for minimum dwelling unit floor area requirements in all zones, as well as opportunities for permitting tiny homes;
- Considering amendments to non-conforming uses to include provisions allowing the conversion of existing non-conforming buildings to affordable housing; and
- Adding residential uses on properties zoned institutional to allow for the collocating of institutional uses and residential uses.

The more I learn about housing affordability, the more I realize that there is not one solution to tackle it. If there was, we'd all do it and housing affordability would not be an issue. As I described earlier in this article, the items that helped with affordability in the beginning no longer were enough five years later. I equate it to working out in the gym – always doing the same workout is, after a time, not going to be effective in your getting stronger or faster or fitter.

I also know the only way we are going to get more affordable

housing built is through partnerships. The three basic elements include land to build on, construction, and operation of the housing units. Each stage requires funding of various amounts from various sources, and all levels of government have a role to play in creating more affordable housing.

NEW FOUNDATIONS

In 2021, the City of Barrie began a program called New Foundations that offers property owners the chance to undertake a feasibility study, with the aim of creating more affordable housing in Barrie. It builds on the city-initiated amendments to permit residential uses on properties zoned institutional. City Council allocated funds to prepare feasibility studies to help the owners of such properties with the “art of the possible” to build residential housing units on their properties. The program is available for properties zoned institutional or a church or place of worship location zoned for residential uses. Previously, if a property wanted to explore housing on a church site, place of worship, or other property zoned institutional, a rezoning application would be required. With the city-initiated amendment, these proposals would be able to go straight to preparing a site plan for the development, saving time and costs.

Staff contacted as many properties as possible to advise of this program and hosted a workshop for interested parties. Afterwards, online expressions of interest were submitted and are currently being reviewed by staff. Interest in the program has been promising with nine properties, and staff will now work with the property owners and a consulting team to do the feasibility studies. We anticipate being in a position to hire a consulting team by summer in the hopes that the feasibility studies can be completed by the end of the year.

New Foundations is intended to provide the land availability portion of an affordable housing development. As we look past completion of the feasibility studies, we know that these organizations, should they wish to continue with the construction process, are going to need continued support by the municipality and may need support with construction and operation of the housing units. Staff are using our collective resources to set these projects up for success by not only providing initial support but also matching the property owners with people who can build and people who can manage the units afterwards.

It is early days in the program, but we are optimistic that New Foundations will provide land for the creation of additional affordable housing options across Barrie. ♻️

Find more information at <https://www.barrie.ca/Living/Housing-and-Property/Pages/Affordable-Housing-Initiative.aspx>.



Michelle Banfield, RPP, is a Member of OPPI and the Director of Development Service at the City of Barrie. She is the Vice-Chair of the Lakeland District Leadership Team. Members can contact Michelle at michelle.banfield@barrie.ca.

A case for transit-oriented transit

BY SEAN HERTEL, RPP



“Growing up in Windsor, Ontario, I understood taking public transit to be a sign that something was wrong.”

Land use and transportation planning have become so integrated, beginning around 2003–2005, that hearing an engineer wax on about the virtues of “complete communities” is no more unusual than we planners understanding (or at least better at pretending we do) the relationship between “O-D pairs” and “VKT.”* Official plans from Niagara Falls to Thunder Bay to Ottawa have policies on active transportation, transit-oriented development, and complete streets. Real estate listings and new development brochures often boast about their “Walk Score” and sometimes even include which transit routes are or will be nearby. We, as a society and a profession, have changed lanes in our thinking about how people should move around our communities.

Or have we?

Growing up in Windsor, Ontario, I understood taking public transit to be a sign that something was wrong. Your car died. You got laid off. Or worse, you lost your license by doing something stupid. Unless, of course, you took the “Tunnel Bus” under the river to Detroit for a game or concert. That was a different thing entirely, a universally accepted exception to the rule.

“Framing transit in the context of having or not having a car will not get us there.”

As a planner, living and working in the Toronto area for the past 25 years, I wonder if this transit-car binary still holds. I think often of the time when co-workers from my first “full time with full benefits” planning job, having heard I took the bus to work, were concerned that I was on contract and barely scrimping by.

Think about the many planning policy documents we’ve either read or written, and I guarantee we’ll find the line “transit for people who cannot afford to own a car” or “transit options for people earning lower than average incomes” or the ubiquitous “not all residents have cars.” This is well-intentioned, of course, and everyone deserves to live and work in communities that make it easy and affordable to get around regardless of income or car ownership. But framing transit in the context of having or not having a car will not get us there.

Just before the first COVID-19 lockdowns, in March 2020, Ontario Premier Doug Ford posted a video on Twitter of himself in the passenger seat of an SUV, speaking to Ontarians to promote his government’s latest transit announcement: “We’re sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic here... familiar to thousands of people every single day. It’s costing us billions and billions of dollars in gridlock throughout Toronto and the GTA. We’re building subways for the people... we’re finally going to get the city moving again.” If this were true, he would have made that video in a packed slow-moving bus or subway car or waiting five-people deep to get onto a train in rush hour.

Folks, we’re planning transit around drivers instead of transit riders, perhaps in the same way that the fate of future residents in any given neighbourhood is in the hands of a disproportionate number of single-detached homeowners. Think about this. New BRT (bus rapid transit)? Keep the same number of traffic lanes for cars. LRT (light rapid transit)? Let’s bury it, even though it adds billions of dollars and years to the project schedule, so drivers won’t spend an additional five minutes on their commute. New subway? Great idea but stations are expensive so let’s get rid of a few.

“But what about the transit at the centre of these new communities — is it the right kind?”

These silly things actually happened in transit projects I’ve had a role in, and there’s more to come if things don’t change.

Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) is the latest of many terms added to the planning dictionary; it’s the Province’s doubling-down on requiring minimum residential and employment densities at and around existing and planned rapid transit stations. In principle, this makes a lot of sense. TOC planning permissions equivalent to

brand new cities, some the population of Guelph or Peterborough, are being foisted onto municipalities by the Province to support billions in new rapid transit lines and stations and to deliver much-needed affordable housing (the extent to which the latter is true, or even possible, needs a few more pages). The Province, through Infrastructure Ontario, is packaging development-ready public lands near rapid transit stations at a pace and scale comparable to any jurisdiction anywhere. The bet is a big one and the stakes are huge.

But what about the transit at the centre of these new communities — is it the right kind? Will it integrate well with future development? What about walking, cycling, and connections to the new lines and stations? Will there be community facilities and services to support new residents and workers? In many cases, because of the transit facility design (remember, let’s not anger drivers or single-detached homeowners!), it’s physically impossible to build on top of the lines and stations; again, transit-development integration suffers. Community connectivity and cohesion suffers.

“Transit is meant to support density, not the other way around. Yes, the difference may be subtle but it’s no less profound.”

We mean well, I really do believe that, but we’ve lost the plot. Transit is meant to support density, not the other way around. Yes, the difference may be subtle but it’s no less profound. Imagine if we planned and built sewers the same way we’re approaching rapid transit these days: people would get a nasty surprise if they dared flush their toilets! Or surgeons, can you imagine? “You need a heart transplant, but it would leave a nasty scar, so sorry...”

It’s all ridiculous, of course, and that’s my point.

In all seriousness, with perhaps only a dash of ironic cynicism, what’s needed is Transit-Oriented Transit (TOT). That is, plan and build transit to make it successful; to support transit decisions that are in service to those who rely on, and could rely on, public transit. Better transit, more ridership. More ridership, more density. More density, well, you know the rest.

It’s simple. It’s complicated. It’s also non-negotiable if we’re serious about planning and building the kinds of communities we say we want and need. (Y)

**Origin-destination pairs and vehicle-kilometres travelled*



Sean Hertel, RPP, is a Member of OPPI and Principal of Hertel and Associates Urban Planning and a lecturer in the schools of planning at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University), University of Waterloo, and York University.



Shifting our thinking on how to tackle the housing crisis

BY BRAD BRADFORD

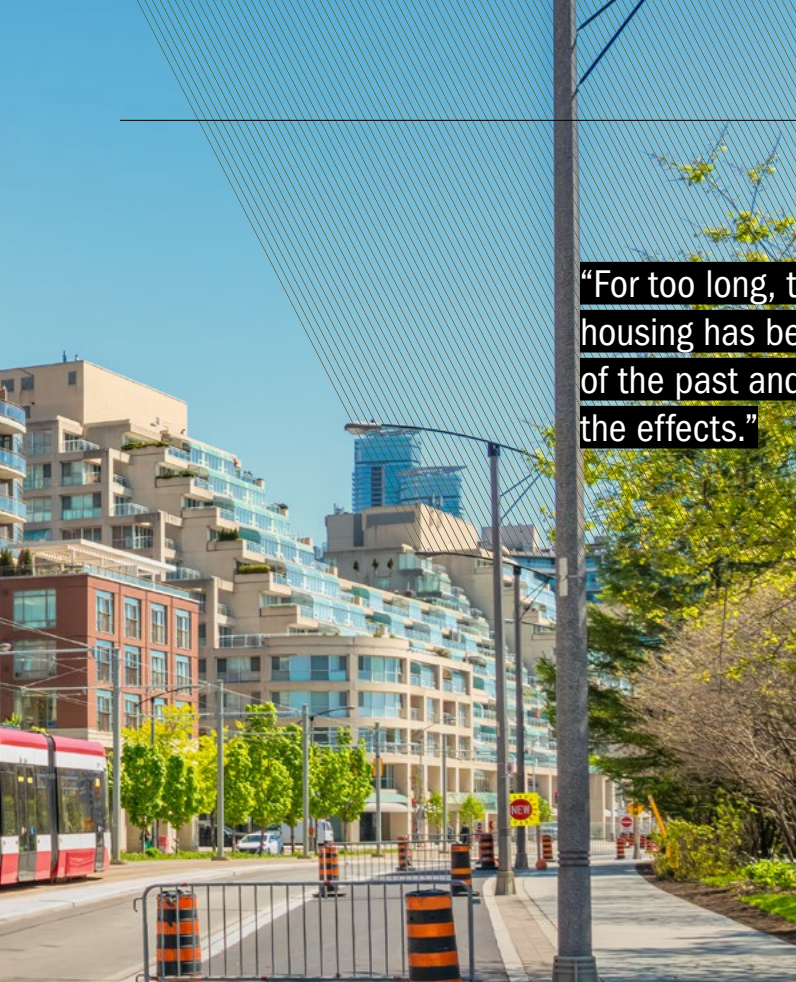
Toronto has been tasked with tackling one of our most urgent and complex intergenerational challenges: the housing crisis. It cannot be stressed enough that making significant progress on the issue is the only way to ensure the future success and sustainability of our city.

“The laneway suites experience has shown us that we cannot afford to look back in another 12 years and regret the time lost.”

Average home purchase and rental prices across the city have been increasing steadily, leaving more and more Torontonians unable to afford safe and sustainable housing. Rental options have become scarce and expensive, and the housing resale market has experienced such a significant boom that ownership for many is now simply off the table.

For too long, the way we have viewed housing has been grounded in ideas of the past and, today, we are seeing the effects. When frontline workers essential to the functioning and economic growth of a city can no longer afford rent, when young professionals who have built their careers here are forced to leave, when seniors cannot downsize in the neighbourhoods they've contributed so much to – it's time to reevaluate our approach. It'll require collaboration across government and self-reflection by planners and city-builders alike.

With entire generations cut off from residing in many parts of our city, we're seeing how the forces of



“For too long, the way we have viewed housing has been grounded in ideas of the past and, today, we are seeing the effects.”

inertia and status quo have had a stranglehold on housing, and we’ve reached a breaking point. For years, the most modest efforts to introduce gentle density have been met with ferocious opposition, and our successes have been too few and too small.

Take laneway suites, for example: the path to legalize these units represents a drawn-out success story for Toronto. After 12 years of slow-moving progress, each step fought loudly by established voices of opposition, they reached final council approval in 2018. Since then, applications are climbing, year over year.

While it’s good news, we’d be much further ahead today if it had not taken 12 years to reach the green light. Laneway suites represent only a small unlocking of Toronto’s yellow belt but were the genesis of shifting our thinking on exactly how we’re going to enable more opportunities for more folks to join us in the neighbourhoods we know and love.

THE EHON PROGRAM

In Toronto, the Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods (EHON) program has been advancing the work to open up neighbourhoods, creating new policies to encourage more missing middle housing forms, and moving us incrementally towards ending the types of zoning that have acted to exclude people from our neighbourhoods long before the current crisis.


When the program first kicked off, I put up my hand to bring a missing middle pilot to my ward of Beaches-East York. The work is underway on assessing both city-owned land parcels and a development partner to create tangible missing middle housing. We’re intentionally working through the same hurdles a small-time property owner or developer would experience. As we do

that, we are bringing community into the fold early – it’s sparking conversations about the type of Toronto we need to build while we create a real-life example to point to. Ultimately, this approach will allow us to reverse engineer the policy changes for better housing outcomes to be replicated across the city.

In all areas of housing work, it’s clear the pace must proceed at a rate that meets the housing crisis facing our city. The laneway suites experience has shown us that we cannot afford to look back in another 12 years and regret the time lost. This sense of urgency is derived from the everyday lives of Torontonians – the need for more housing choices is reflected time and time again in the conversations that I have with constituents at the doors, in phone calls and emails to my office, and in discussions with family and friends. In Toronto, we all know someone who has been impacted by rising housing costs or has struggled to find housing.

SPARKING TOUGH CONVERSATIONS

As the important technical work to expand housing options moves forward – with all the urgency that the current crisis demands – it’s imperative that we leverage the real-life examples and dinner-table discussions on housing that’ll keep the fire alight. As planners, we need to reach across our conventional aisles, and start conversations about the type of neighbourhoods we need – not just as technical experts or within urbanist circles, but with our different neighbours and local communities.

Laneway suites opened a door to a conversation about what housing in Toronto looks like, but it remains up to us to keep the wind in the sails. If we’re going to add much-needed housing options to our city, it’ll take more than good planning practices. I’d invite you to foster those tough conversations with both urgency and patience, right on your local street. The difficult but vital work of community-led change and collaboration is how we’ll get the best outcomes for Toronto’s housing future, together. 



Brad Bradford is a Candidate Member of OPPI, Non-Practicing, and the Toronto City Councillor, Beaches-East York.

Planning for cemeteries as community assets and green infrastructure: What the pandemic revealed

BY NICOLE NATALIE HANSON, MCIP, RPP

Over the past two years, the pandemic has repositioned cemetery land uses as community assets and green infrastructure to be planned for. Cemeteries across the world took centre stage as changing strains of the pandemic revealed how cities struggled to keep up with the demand for burials, whether full body or cremation.

To date, there have been approximately 12,479 COVID-related deaths in Ontario¹ and 6.2 million COVID-related deaths worldwide.² The overwhelmingly high mortality rates and demand for burial space in cemeteries made it clear that 444 municipal planning departments in Ontario need to plan for the end-of-life cycle in cities to address this environmental crisis. This is especially the case across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, one of the fastest-growing regions in North America.

“The lack of diverse cemetery land uses for many communities has been a land-use planning issue in Ontario for more than a decade.”

This article aims to engage in a deeper conversation as professionals tasked with planning in the public interest by repositioning cemeteries as community

assets and green infrastructure to be planned for. How environmental planners respond and provide cemetery land-use solutions tells communities how we value their cultural and religious needs in death. It will not only convey this message within a 20- to 35-year planning horizon, but also for a 100-year-plus cemetery planning horizon – in perpetuity really.

Moreover, it is imperative to engage in deeper planning policy conversations and recommendations that *entirely* value new urbanism, complete communities, 8-80 cities, inclusionary zoning, and the 15-minute city in relation to new and sustainable cemetery land uses. The lack of diverse cemetery land uses for many communities has been a land-use planning issue in Ontario for more than a decade, where the issue of death equity has become more evident.

HOW DEATH IS AN EQUITY ISSUE IN ONTARIO

Spatially, death in Ontario was identified as a land-use planning equity issue in 2015. Death equity means that there's a growing need for full-body in-ground burial or cremation, and the demand exceeds available land supply within a geographical area. Many municipalities do not have diverse and adequate cemetery land uses (small-scale cemetery, cemetery parkette, memorial garden, ecological memorial park, memorial public art installation in public space, etc.) to equitably accommodate the population's cultural and religious needs in death.

Municipalities are licenced cemetery operators under the *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002*, and are required to meet constituents' cultural and religious

needs in death. But most municipal planning departments have been unable to identify the environmental crisis cemeteries are facing. This is because, historically, when a municipality assumed a cemetery, cemetery demand, supply, and capacity were never evaluated but only seen as a private-sector problem. Further, cemetery feasibility studies and cemetery needs analysis for an official plan review were never or rarely conducted. The adoption of a cemetery master plan by council was unheard of and not practised, thus, rendering the spatial need to plan for death in cities and rural communities as invisible, unnecessary, unquantifiable, and now inequitable.

Death equity has been an issue in pre-existing land-use conditions in Ontario since before COVID-19; but the pandemic has brought the issue to the forefront while illuminating broader issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is evident that the absorption of cemetery land and production of its space is impacted by markers of health equity, racial equity, vaccine equity, death of seniors in long-term care homes, mental health, the opioid crisis, people experiencing homelessness, income polarization, employment precarity, immigration, the increased mortality rates of baby boomers, aging in place, and the list goes on. This is why it is imperative for planners to reconsider how to approach spatial planning for death in cities by repositioning cemetery land uses as perpetual community assets and green infrastructure to be planned for.

“COVID-19 has brought this issue to the forefront while illuminating broader issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

QUESTIONS MUNICIPAL PLANNERS CAN ASK THEMSELVES AND ADDRESS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

1. Have we considered a cemetery needs analysis for an official plan review in the public interest?
2. Have we considered a cemetery feasibility study in the public interest given our urban growth areas, changing cultural needs in death, and the impacts of COVID-19 on municipal cemetery capacity?
3. Have we considered planning beyond a 20- to 35-year planning horizon to address death as an equity issue in our city?
4. How should we engage with the community to plan for their cultural and religious end-of-life needs in order to limit cultural/religious erasure and community displacement in death?
5. How do we secure cemetery land uses as community benefits in processing development applications, such as official plan and zoning bylaw amendments? How can we work with the development community to address this issue?
6. How can we work with conservation authorities to support/designate environmentally sensitive land with natural cemetery land uses to better protect such lands from development?

PLANNING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Meet with religious and private cemetery operators to obtain information about their capacity and resources, as well as feedback about the community’s current and future interment needs.
2. Outline strategic guidelines for the future designation, siting, and planning of cemeteries and crematoriums.
3. Draft a cemetery master plan for municipally owned/operated cemeteries.
4. Conduct an official plan review cemetery needs analysis/cemetery feasibility study.
5. Obtain population and death rates from Hemson Consulting’s Long-Range Forecasts 2011-2051, Statistics Canada, Public Health Ontario, and Ontario’s Open Data Catalogue.
6. Extrapolate future demand and expected use patterns of urban cemetery services from historic interment, cremation, and current sales trends in Ontario.
7. Calculate the cemetery market capture by comparing the annual number of interments at city-owned cemeteries to the annual number of resident deaths in the city (by the form of disposition: cremation versus traditional burial).
8. Explore the age distribution of the population and demographic trends.
9. Explore the political economy of death and modern landscape architecture practices to understand communities cultural and religious needs in death.

By spatially tracking the positionality of municipal cemeteries as a place of necessity and value, planners will be able to solve this perpetual housing crisis for the dead – it’s a respectful place where we all have an imminent appointment. (V)

1 Public Health Ontario. Data for April 5, 2022: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/infectious-disease/covid-19-data-surveillance/covid-19-data-tool>

2 World Health Organization. Data for April 5, 2022: <https://covid19.who.int>



Nicole Natalie Hanson, MES (PL.), RPP, MCIP is a Member of OPPI and an environmental planner and educator. As a researcher with continued field experience in cultural planning, she has developed policy recommendations and facilitated region-wide consultations enabling municipalities to spatially plan for death equitably in policy and practice. Hanson’s work on cemetery urbanism has been recognized globally. Hanson is also a co-founder of the Black Planners and Urbanists Association.

01



“The Tiny Home Village for Veterans is envisioned to be a place of community, camaraderie, and celebration, while also commemorating the City of Kingston’s rich military history.”

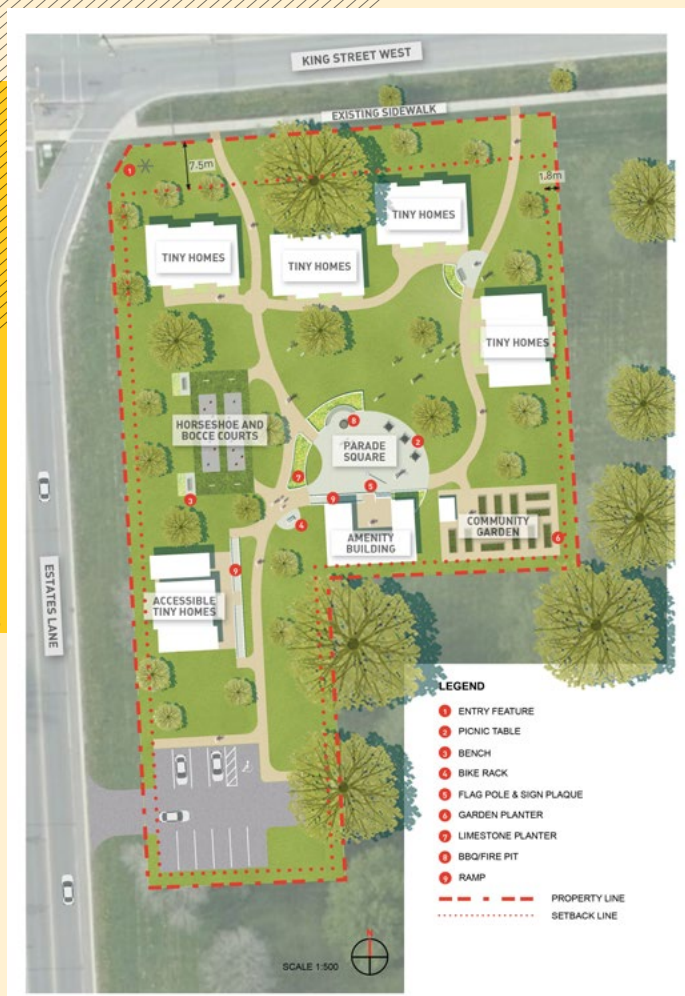
Tiny but mighty villages: Homes for Heroes Foundation’s approach to housing Veterans experiencing homelessness

BY JILL MACDONALD AND MICHAEL FLOWERS

On November 10, 2021, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced funding of nearly \$2 million for Homes for Heroes Foundation (H4HF) to assist with the development of a Tiny Home Village in the City of Kingston.

Located at the former site of the Kingston Provincial Campus, south of King Street West, 0.2 hectares of land will be redeveloped into the new village, which will house Canadian military Veterans

- 01 908 ATCO village in Calgary, Alberta, which opened on November 1, 2019, and houses 15 Veterans (Image Credit: PCL Construction and Homes for Heroes Foundation).
- 02 Proposed Conceptual Plan for the Tiny Home Village for Veterans at Kingston Provincial Campus (Image Credit: NAK Design Strategies).
- 03 Artistic rendering of the proposed Tiny Home Village for Veterans (Image Credit: NAK Design Strategies).



03



“Currently, there are upwards of 5,000 Veterans in dire need of housing assistance across the country.”

Considerations have also been made to preserve historical viewsheds and existing trees. A curvilinear internal path network and strategically placed limestone materials have been incorporated into the plan to be reminiscent of the original 19th-century entrance road that curved from King Street towards the historical Rockwood Villa and other heritage buildings on the grounds.

HOMES FOR HEROES FOUNDATION

H4HF was established in 2016 and designated a registered charity in 2018 to address a gap in services for Veterans experiencing varying levels of homelessness.

“Currently, there are upwards of 5,000 Veterans in dire need of housing assistance across the country,” says Jacqueline Howard, Director of Planning and Development at the H4HF.

To date, the H4HF has launched two other Tiny Home Villages for Veterans, one in Calgary, which opened in November 2019, and one in Edmonton, which opened this past December.

WHY TINY HOMES FOR VETERANS?

H4HF’s build concept is the result of a comprehensive interview process undertaken with the Veterans themselves to confirm the preferred type of housing and social service supports. More than 200 individuals were consulted as part of this process.

“There are several reasons we have chosen to steer away from traditional walk-up apartment-style developments and townhouses,” explains Howard. “[Firstly], the biggest reason for the design is to create a community of peers within the village. Through our research, we have learned that apartment-style developments, although wonderful for many segments of the population, do not encourage the same neighbourly cooperation and community that our village design affords.”

The layout of the village ensures residents continually engage with each other and are aware if someone requires support. Having an on-site counsellor, resource centre, and amenity space also provides

who are experiencing homelessness. The village will feature 20 single-storey tiny homes, four of which are accessible, all measuring less than 28 m² (300 ft²) in total floor area. The village will also incorporate a central resource centre, counselling office, community garden, and other amenities. Zoning approvals were granted this past fall, and H4HF is currently working with the City of Kingston to obtain site plan approval.

The Tiny Home Village for Veterans is envisioned to be a place of community, camaraderie, and celebration, while also commemorating the City of Kingston’s rich military history. H4HF has placed a focus on social interaction in the design through the inclusion of bocce and horseshoe courts, a community garden, picnic-table seating, and a fire pit. Homes will be arranged barracks-style and oriented internally towards a central Parade Square and amenity building. Each home is designed to comply with the Ontario Building Code and contains its own living quarters, bedroom, kitchen, and bathroom.

“The tiny home design also means H4HF can achieve a medium-density built form within a single-storey due to the smaller building footprint.”

an additional layer of opportunity for interaction.

As for the tiny homes themselves, Howard says: “For many individuals experiencing homelessness, when they transition into private housing, a larger space can be overwhelming to manage. The small individual units are designed to be very efficient and easy to maintain.”

The tiny home design also means H4HF can achieve a medium-density built form within a single-storey due to the smaller building footprint.

ONLY THE BEGINNING

Having experienced great success already with the initiation of their first tiny home village in Ontario, H4HF has only just begun their outreach outside of Alberta. A new project in Winnipeg has recently been announced, and discussions are underway with several municipalities in Ontario, British Columbia, and the Maritimes.

Howard offers some lessons learned for groups or organizations working on housing solutions to address homelessness.

Build your team. H4HF attributes their successes to their team who was willing to go above and beyond to build the first Tiny Home Villages within a major urban municipality in Canada. Attracting forward-thinking, passionate professionals who possess a firm belief in their mandate is key.

Be patient. Doing something unique means there will be a learning curve for everyone involved. Start discussions early and engage with

as many departments and stakeholder groups as possible within the municipality. In Alberta and Ontario, H4HF is greatly appreciative of the opportunity to work collaboratively with affordable housing advocates, planners, engineers, and real estate teams, among others.

Understand your surroundings and celebrate them. It is imperative to incorporate a visioning phase into the design process as individual communities within cities have a unique identity, energy, different areas of interest, and goals for the future of their neighbourhoods. H4HF worked with various stakeholder groups in Kingston prior to the commencement of the visioning phase of the project. Having these initial consultations ensures the future Tiny Home Villages will be well integrated into the community and a place of pride for the citizens of Kingston. ♻️



Jill MacDonald is a Candidate Member of OPPI and a Planner at WSP in Ottawa. **Michael Flowers, P. Eng.** is a Civil Engineer at WSP's Kingston office. The authors would like to thank **Jacqueline Howard, MCIP, RPP**, Director of Planning and Development, Homes for Heroes Foundation, for sharing this important story with us. For more information, visit homesforheroesfoundation.ca.



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Gentry in the new park, c. 1870. By Sipes, William B., d. 1905; Pennsylvania Railroad. Passenger Dept, Public Domain. Retrieved from: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=44285778>

Equitable access and enjoyment of green spaces

BY SKY CARVILLE, ALISON LUMBY, AND ANDRIA SALLESE, RPP

Public parks are valuable community assets that have traditionally provided opportunities for social interaction, recreation, and programmed activities, as well as quiet contemplation and relaxation. Planning and designing good quality parks – parks that are diverse, well-distributed, accessible to all walks of life, and contribute to healthy living – are important considerations in planning for the future of cities.

The design of our traditional park spaces, however, has not always focused on inclusivity. Often these spaces were – and continue to be – entrenched in the history of place based on a colonial structure.

These predominantly British concepts emerged during the Victorian era in response to a shift to living in highly urbanized areas and often centred around the idea of parks as refuges from crowded housing conditions.¹ Examples include Frederic Law Olmstead's Victorian planning concepts for New York City's Central Park and Prospect Park in Brooklyn, both envisioned as places where residents could enjoy year-round fresh air and exercise away from crowded tenements and places of industry.²

However, this was a time when men and women of means were considered the primary users of these new parks. Green spaces were designed from the perspective of, and to suit the needs of, typically wealthy white males, a paradigm systemically reinforced through policy, codes, and standards that persist today. This baseline can influence every other user group's experience of these spaces.³

EXPERIENCE OF PLACE SHAPES WHO WE ARE

It is human nature to infer that what we know and what we see around us is all there is and the only way for things to be. Planners, urban designers, and landscape architects play an important role in expanding perspectives, raising awareness, and empowering all user demographics in seeking representation of themselves and their needs in the design of places. They also play a pivotal role in working collaboratively with those who plan, fund, and maintain these spaces to enable a shift from a colonial planning paradigm and break down the barriers to design parks for a modern age and population.

The environments in which we live deeply influence our quality of life and mental and physical well-being.⁴ Access to green space is well established as important to health. Landscape design, and our engagement process in the design, conveys a message about our level of belonging and how welcome we feel in that space individually, as a demographic, and as communities. Proactively inclusive, equitable design should acknowledge and welcome open dialogue on the differences in needs, personal safety, and barriers. In doing so, it can promote not only equitable access, but also equitable enjoyment of a place by addressing differences between gender, culture, social demographics, age, and abilities.

In planning parks and public spaces, emphasis should be placed on engaging vulnerable peoples historically left out of the design process and needs assessments. Women, particularly Indigenous women, women of colour, single mothers, women over 65, and women with disabilities, many of whom have experienced compounding intersectional barriers to representation, should be at the forefront of the dialogue.

For example, consider single mothers in low- to middle-income neighbourhoods, one of the many groups of people who face daily obstacles in how they travel, move, and live in the built environment. To understand the experience of low-income single mothers in the McQuesten neighbourhood in Hamilton, Sky Carville, a co-author of this article, conducted a focus group in 2020 with community members to replicate their daily routes and experiences using interpretive research strategies. This method requires the facilitator to become a social actor and engage in making sense of the experiences the subjects encounter.⁵ It builds a narrative of the real-world user's experience based on valid observations and interviews. In this way, Carville created a representational avatar to analyze and

understand a day in the life of a mother with young children and her experience accessing a local park.

THE "HOW" TO IMPROVE USER EXPERIENCE OF GREEN SPACES

So how do we break out of systemic design thinking? We need to acknowledge that we cannot fully understand the perspectives of others. Our base principle is not to make assumptions on how a space might be used. We believe we need to engage those user groups to gain some insight into how they may want to use those spaces. We propose starting with the question "What counts as a park?" followed by, "Who may use it? And how can we understand how they may use it?" Only then should we consider location, land value, size, program, and amenities to be accommodated.

As designers, it is important to recognize how both the tangible and intangible aspects of our environments can influence behaviours, lifestyle choices, and social interaction and contribute to mental and physical health and well-being. As leaders in the way green spaces are programmed, we must consider alternative approaches, because traditional design methods do not acknowledge the routines and lives of people in the here and now.

We must reinvent the physical and social structure of the built environment to reveal the full importance of lived experiences; it's one of the most important changes we can make. Fully empathetic, life-enhancing environments will not be achieved until communities and decision makers acknowledge and value the aspects of human experience that have been historically undervalued and overlooked. Working together should be our collective responsibility to achieve this objective. While engaging the community during the design process, we must ask "What voices need to be heard?" Meaningful engagement, if done right, will result in a design that reflects the people who will experience these green spaces. ♿

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Andria Sallese, RPP, is a Member of OPPI and a Project Manager, Urban and Community Planning, with WSP. **Sky Carville** is a Landscape Architect with WSP, and **Alison Lumby** is an Urban Design Lead with WSP.

Radial development strategy: The answer to the future realities of South-Central Ontario Growth

BY DALE TAYLOR

South-Central Ontario, also known as the Greater Golden Horseshoe, faces two realities: huge future growth and already seriously threatened natural environment and local agriculture. This means we face two urban planning policy imperatives: fast growth adaptation and equal environmental defence.

Unlike some, I don't think South-Central Ontario (SCO) can or even should try to head off huge future growth. Toronto's greater urban region is now growing at the fastest rate of any of the largest North American urban regions. Our area is an extraordinary urban attractor, offering three huge current advantages. Economically, it is strong and diversified, featuring a relatively flat and, thereby, inexpensive land area to service and develop. Our governance and development/building industry are relatively consolidated, thus, enabling (though not ensuring) effective large-scale planning. And socially, we are one of the most diverse and welcoming places to live in the world, and the federal government continues, as it should, to allow for rapid, diversified immigration. That makes us a magnet for persistent growth. That is not going to stop.

“Toronto’s greater urban region is now growing at the fastest rate of any of the largest North American urban regions.”

POPULATION GROWTH

SCO has grown from one million in 1945 to today's nine million and has been growing for a while at about 125,000 per year. Compare

that with the growth history of the greater New York region, which took 160 years from 1860 to grow from one million to over 19 million today. That is an average annual growth rate of 113,000. For another comparison, the greater Los Angeles region grew from one million in 1925 to today's 13 million in 95 years at an average annual growth rate of 126,000. Chicago, after its first million, grew to today's 10 million in a similar time span at a similar rate. In our area, the least we might expect is 20 million in SCO by the end of this century.

Let us pause a moment here. The key to a successful diversity in Canada has been and will continue to be diversified immigration – that is, no one group is so large as to change the already diverse social complexion of the country or its basic values. The SCO is – and should be – a leading global and continental growth attractor. Indeed, we will likely have additional growth pressure because of global climate change: people not only from beyond the sea, but also people from our own severely climate-threatened North American shores seeking less environmentally challenged country inland.

READ MORE...

Keep reading Dale Taylor's article “Radial development strategy” on OPPI's Planning Exchange blog at <https://ontarioplanners.ca/blog/planning-exchange>.



Dale Taylor is a retired economist, Municipal Finance Branch, from the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, where he occasionally worked with the planning division on policy related to economic growth. daletaylor@rogers.com



The only law that really matters: An interview with Kerry-Ann Charles-Norris about sustainability and Indigenous wisdom

BY CAROLYN CAMILLERI

For Kerry-Ann Charles-Norris, our hope for a sustainable future lies in building trusted, respectful relationships with Indigenous communities and integrating traditional knowledge into everything we do. She has built her career and her life around getting that message out.

Kerry-Ann is a member of the Chippewa of Georgina First Nation and the Environment Partnership Coordinator at Cambium Indigenous Professional Services (CIPS). She brings broad experience to that role, including bylaw development, waste management, housing, and a term as a Councillor in her Community. She has developed funding proposals that helped to build her First Nations Environment Department and has assisted other First Nations Communities in securing funding to undertake projects such as climate change adaptation and implementation plan development.

The relationships she fosters are just as broad, influencing all areas of life. Current projects include working with the Public Health Agency of Canada on the connection between climate change and health,

conservation authorities on flood-plain mapping, Global Affairs Canada on a translation project to amplify the role of women in ensuring peace around the world, Greenbelt Foundation and Southern Ontario Nature Coalition on the importance of near-urban nature protection, and York Region District School Board on embedding land-based learning from an Indigenous perspective into school curriculums.

The theme tying them all together is Indigenous knowledge, and the way to bring that knowledge to the forefront is by building relationships.

“The theme tying them all together is Indigenous knowledge...”

“Those partnerships and relationships are key to ensuring we have a sustainable, healthy environment for our next seven generations,” she says, referencing a fundamental component of Indigenous wisdom, that every decision should be sustainable for seven generations. “I work with communities in being able to identify their climate change vulnerabilities. We do that by identifying their traditional ecological knowledge and bringing to the forefront the changes that they’ve seen over time and the stories they’ve heard about the

changes over time to be able to use that as a foundation for climate change adaptation.”

Understanding requires a shift in how we may think about the environment and the place of humans in it.

“You need to understand the environment from the perspective of being part of the environment rather than being dominant to the environment...”

“You need to understand the environment from the perspective of being part of the environment rather than being dominant to the environment to be able to prepare for things that are coming,” she says.

Of course, what is coming is more intense climate change.

“When we’re talking about climate change, especially in the urban settings, where with the rise in temperature, they’re going to start to feel those effects more because of the heat islands that will be created. Green spaces are needed to be able to, one, help cool things down and, two, to give people a place to go to for some reprieve,” she says. “Those green spaces within the urban settings will not be sustainable or healthy if we don’t focus on the health of the water systems, those streams and ravines and rivers that run through everywhere and that sustain everything.”

Because water is life – literally.

“People don’t always put the two and two together that water is life, it sustains everything, that water does not need us. It gives and takes life away. If we don’t protect and preserve our water and have that be at the forefront of everything we do, we might not see those effects right now, but those effects of our degrading water systems and water bodies will eventually come back to haunt us.”

Kerry-Ann says there is a disconnect in understanding where water comes from and the connection to the natural environment and the climate crisis.

“In our prophecies as Anishinaabe people, as Indigenous people, we are now in what we call the Seventh Fire, which depicts whether or not we’re going to survive. Our prophecy states that at this point in time, we need to do some real reflection and either turn back to the Indigenous Peoples and their connection to the land and have them lead us through all of these crises that we’re in right now – the climate crisis, the biodiversity crisis, the species decline crisis, the biodiversity collapse – or we continue down the same road we’re on, which is the road of technology and materialism and pursuing economic gain rather than protecting and preserving that which really sustains us.”

WHERE WE ARE NOW

While some steps are being taken to integrate Indigenous perspectives in a number of fields, including planning, health, and education, much more needs to be done.

“There’s a lot of learning on the non-Indigenous side – the settler side – that has to happen in terms of the histories of the Indigenous Peoples and communities that were here first,” says Kerry-Ann.

For example, consider informed consent.

While informed consent from Indigenous communities has become a requirement in planning and development, along with a push to build relationships with Indigenous Peoples, what is often lacking is a clear understanding of the reasons behind it all.

“People are being pushed to act but nobody really understands why they’re acting,” she says, “It’s that ‘truth’ in truth and reconciliation. People are being asked to reconcile but few understand what that truth piece is, and you need to know that first before you can act. You need to know that history to understand where you’ve come to in the present, so that you can make plans to have a better future. Until you know that history, how do you know you’re not making the same mistakes?”

“...water is life, it sustains everything, that water does not need us. It gives and takes life away.”

Kerry-Ann says the discovery in May 2021 of children’s remains at a former residential school in Kamloops started a movement of people wanting to know and understand the history – the truth part of truth and reconciliation. While “215,” stands out for people, more remains have been discovered and a more accurate number is expected to be closer to 8,000. Of the 139 residential schools in Canada, only about 20 have been searched so far. After the initial discovery and the public reaction, we hear less about it now.

“That history needs to be ingrained in everything that we do. We need to make sure people are aware of not just what we’re doing and how it benefits us as a whole but also why we’re doing it,” she says.

Here is something else that needs to change. Oftentimes, Indigenous knowledge – for example, about the existence of graves or knowledge of the natural world – isn’t fully believed until western science backs it up.

“That’s something that actually happens with us a lot and it really needs to be turned on its head,” she says. “We get asked for our opinions, and we get asked for our recommendations and our advice and our knowledge, but then it has to be verified.”

Kerry-Ann explains that Indigenous perspectives and western science are different in significant ways.

“Western science is very focused, very scoped, very emotionally unattached. It’s short periods of time where decisions and observations are being made,” she says. “Indigenous knowledge is quite the opposite of that, a complete 180. It’s observations over

time. It's understanding those connections and being able to adapt to situations based on the natural environment. Something that's really ingrained into our culture and our teachings is that the environment, the animals, the birds, the plants, the swimmers, the insects, all of those folks are teachers. They are connected with each other in a way we will never really understand fully, but the Indigenous Peoples have a connection to them as well. That's part of our responsibility and part of our gift from the Creator. We were given that gift of being able to recognize and understand how the natural environment works, so we could live sustainably. Our responsibility is to share that knowledge with the other human beings."

"...the discovery in May 2021 of children's remains at a former residential school in Kamloops started a movement of people wanting to know and understand the history."

With climate change intensifying and because Indigenous knowledge keepers are aging and passing away, we are at a crisis point.

"That knowledge needs to be acted on and incorporated meaningfully into policies and procedures and in a very timely manner," she says, adding: "People often don't understand the tie between Indigenous Peoples and the environment, especially when it comes to climate change and the responsibilities that we have as a people. And it's not just Indigenous People but as a people collectively around the world and our responsibilities to that which sustains us – Mother Earth."

"Planners are a big piece of this whole puzzle."

THE FUTURE

While the global situation is alarming, Kerry-Ann sees hope in the progress being made.

"Being able to work in the environment field and with the people in this field, I do see a positive movement in being able to create those partnerships and what we call respectful reciprocal relationships," she says.

That includes planners.

"Planners are a big piece of this whole puzzle. They're the ones planning and designing and developing urban centres and new communities. If they have a good understanding and a respectful reciprocal relationship with the Indigenous communities, I believe there's lots of hope for our future and our next seven generations," says Kerry-Ann. "Because planners are the ones who then can pass those messages and share those teachings and learnings with the greater public and the municipalities and governments and all of those other folks who may not have the opportunity to build a

→ LEARN MORE

Planning For Our Shorelands: June 16

On Thursday June 16, 2022, at 1 p.m. (EDT), the Planning For Our Shorelands program is presenting Sustainable Waterfront Planning Through Reconciliation. This collaborative workshop is aimed at familiarizing local decision makers with Indigenous relations to water and the importance of vegetated shoreline buffers, as well as engaging the audience to reflect on ways they can take steps to include Indigenous voices in decision-making processes around waterfront development and planning.

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/sustainable-waterfront-planning-through-reconciliation-tickets-311238963117>

relationship or have an understanding of the importance of those relationships."

The bottom line: "There is one overarching law for survival for everybody on Mother Earth and that is the natural law – sometimes it's termed as the Creator's law – and if that law is followed, we will have a sustainable, healthy, bright future forever."

Kerry-Ann encourages planners to understand the true history of Canada and why it is vital to include Indigenous perspectives. She also suggests thinking back to elementary school when we learn about the "web of life," an important lesson in how everything in nature is connected.

"If a piece of that web gets taken away, it affects the rest of the web and can cause a collapse," she says. "It's unfortunate that as we get older, we forget about that."

In an urban setting, that means protecting green spaces and all the creatures that rely on those green spaces.

"Are we ensuring those habitats are there and are going to be sufficient for all creatures to survive? A big part of that is ensuring that our waterways are in good health, because everything stems from the water. It's all connected back to water." ♻️



Carolyn Camilleri is the editor of OPPI's *Y Magazine*.

OPPI HAS A NEW HOME IN TORONTO

As of May 1, OPPI has a new home at Yonge and Sheppard in Toronto!

After 27 years in our old office at Eglinton and Mount Pleasant in Toronto, the space was no longer meeting the needs of OPPI members, volunteers, and staff. So, we undertook an exhaustive due diligence process, with real estate and interior design consultants, to explore many different options before finally settling on building a new, custom headquarters to suit our specific needs.

“I give huge kudos to Council members who came before me and saw the wisdom of saving to invest in OPPI’s future,” says Paul Lowes, OPPI President. “Their wisdom to ensure that, when the time came, capital funds would be available to expand our footprint and our presence gave OPPI Council the confidence we needed to move forward.”

The new office space will support and reinforce OPPI’s role as a facilitator, regulator, member service provider, and voice of the profession. With focus on a hybrid work environment, OPPI Council meeting spaces, committee gathering places, classroom learning, and networking opportunities, the new headquarters will become a multi-purpose, branded space that everyone can enjoy.

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SEPTEMBER 21 AND 22: OPPI-OALA JOINT CONFERENCE

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) and the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects (OALA) have partnered to host a joint conference in London, Ontario, this fall.

On September 21 and 22, the joint OPPI-OALA conference will explore the important role that professional planners and landscape architects play in the natural and built environments, including the ongoing climate crisis, racial and social injustice, the inherent rights and title of Indigenous Peoples, and other relevant topics impacting Ontario communities.

The joint OPPI-OALA conference will be especially exciting as it marks a return to in-person events for both organizations since the beginning of the pandemic. Professionals and industry experts from across Ontario will gather for the first time, face to face, for two days of insightful keynote speakers, thoughtful panel discussions, and meaningful breakout sessions. Programming for the conference will also be available online for those who wish to attend virtually.

Find more information at ontarioplanners.ca/2GETHER.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE PANEL: NOVEMBER 26, 2021

In the matter of a hearing under the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act, 1994 as amended, and the regulations set out thereunder; and in the matter of allegations of breaches of the Professional Code of Conduct referred to the Discipline Committee under section 5.1 of Appendix II of OPPI's Bylaw, Council is required to publish a summary of every decision of the Discipline Committee in its annual report and may publish each decision or a summary thereof in any other publication produced by the Institute. Section 5.2 specifies that in carrying out such publication, Council shall not publish the name of the member unless the member has been found guilty of professional misconduct or has requested the publication of their name. As this matter was stayed without findings being made and the Member has not requested the publication of their name, the Member's name is not included in the summary below.

COMPLAINT

In December 2020, OPPI's Complaints Committee referred allegations of professional misconduct against a Member to OPPI's Discipline Committee. The statement of allegations alleged that the Member had violated section 3.5 of the Professional Code of Practice by engaging in dishonourable or questionable conduct in their professional practice, extra-professional activities or private life that may cast doubt on their professional competence or integrity, or that may reflect adversely on the integrity of the profession.

The complaint related to the Member's alleged conduct while they were an elected municipal councillor. The allegations raised concerns about allegedly rude and/or unprofessional conduct by the Member towards other members of OPPI and/or to colleagues while the Member was dealing with planning matters as part of their duties as a municipal councillor. The allegations also raised concerns about whether the Member took the necessary steps to avoid perceived or actual conflicts of interest while acting as a councillor, in that the Member allegedly did not make it clear that they were not providing professional planning advice or acting in the capacity of an RPP when commenting on planning matters.

DISCIPLINE HEARING

A panel of the Discipline Committee convened on November 26, 2021, for a virtual hearing of a motion brought by OPPI with the Member's consent. The Member chose not to be represented by legal counsel and did not participate in the hearing.

The motion sought a stay of the allegations of professional misconduct against the Member, on the basis of an Undertaking, Agreement & Acknowledgement that the Member voluntarily signed on October 5, 2021 (the "Undertaking"). The terms of the Undertaking included:

- Permanent resignation of membership in OPPI effective December 31, 2021, and irrevocable surrender of the Member's certificate of registration;
- Prohibition on seeking membership with OPPI at any time in the future;
- Relinquishment of the title of "Registered Professional Planner"; and
- Prohibition on implying, suggesting, or holding out as a full member or a retired member of OPPI.

In exchange for this voluntary Undertaking, OPPI sought a stay of proceedings without any finding being made on the allegations of professional misconduct, with the stay to remain in place so long as the Undertaking remains in full force and effect and the Member remains in compliance with the terms of that Undertaking.

OUTCOME

The motion for a stay of proceedings was granted by the Discipline Committee, subject to the Undertaking remaining in full force and effect and the Member remaining in compliance with all the terms of the Undertaking.

The Discipline Committee considered whether the public interest would be protected by the proposed resolution. It concluded that the Member's Undertaking, coupled with OPPI's ability to lift the stay if the Member breached the Undertaking, would protect the public interest. This resolution would also avoid the costs of a full hearing.

The Discipline Committee concluded that OPPI's obligation to deal with complaints and discipline in a transparent manner was satisfied by the term of the Undertaking that permitted OPPI to publish a summary of the Statement of Allegations in its Annual Report and/or its other publications, and to state that the Member entered into the Undertaking while the discipline proceeding was pending.

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Brampton Mobility Hub Render
© Mabel Mai & Benjamin Truong

ACADEMIC

Planning Studio: Heritage Heights Boulevard Design for Northwest Brampton

BY MABEL MAI, GRACE GONG, BENJAMIN TRUONG, AND NICHOLAS MALTA

The Heritage Heights Secondary Plan Area in Northwest Brampton is organized around an urban boulevard rather than the provincially proposed Highway 413. In 2021, fourth-year planning students reviewed the Heritage Heights Secondary Plan and developed a new design for the proposed urban boulevard.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

A comparison between the key elements of Highway 413 and an urban boulevard was conducted to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each respective proposal. This stage was completed through an economic, environmental, and transportation lens

“...an urban boulevard would create economic opportunity through high-density development and private investments through commercial, mixed-use, and residential developments.”

and affirmed the benefits of an urban boulevard instead of the proposed highway, which will provide greater growth potential for Northwest Brampton.

The initial research process was multifaceted. Our examination included: analysis of provincial, regional, and municipal policy documents, international case studies, and consultation with Brampton Planning and Urban Design staff. Through this research, the group established goals and visioning for the project, with the intent to create a boulevard that promoted a complete community.

FINDINGS

Our findings concluded that an urban boulevard would create economic opportunity through high-density development and private investments through commercial, mixed-use, and residential developments. These investments will benefit all Ontarians at the local, municipal, and regional levels. We discovered that an urban boulevard would establish complete and connected communities, reducing pollution by creating urban nodes with transit options for more people to live, work, and play within walkable distances. An urban boulevard included green spaces and other environmentally friendly features.

“...our vision towards creating a community that is more accessible to pedestrians, transit-oriented, and a great place to live and work.”

There was also a greater focus on transit-oriented development with the urban boulevard as there were more opportunities to promote multi-modal transit, active living, and complete communities. This is attributed to the increased accessibility to multiple transit options associated with the boulevard, including a bus rapid transit system, existing connections to transit from the City of Brampton, and a new GO Transit station proposed at the heart of the mobility node.

As our group recognized the benefits of an urban boulevard, a revised concept was formed. The proposal is based on the design developed by the City of Brampton and further modifies it into a comprehensive concept formulated by the group. This new vision utilizes four distinct zones: the Urban Zone, Green Zone, Mobility Zone, and Public Space Zone. Each zone is designed to serve a specific purpose in the boulevard and will ensure the area remains interconnected, attractive, and supportive of our vision.

The Urban Zones would serve as the main walkable area for pedestrians along the edges of the boulevard. It consists of the spaces located directly between building frontages and the parallel parking lanes, featuring spaces that primarily promote pedestrian activity, accessibility to storefronts, and room for outdoor seating. On the opposite side of the parallel parking lanes, the Green Zones consist of two lanes dedicated to cycling in each direction, with small green medians on both sides to ensure adequate space. This would further encourage forms of active transportation throughout the boulevard and increase safety for cyclists.

To ensure vehicular travel is possible throughout the boulevard, we designed a Mobility Zone, which would feature two general vehicle lanes and a dedicated bus lane in each direction to support the bulk of vehicular traffic and improve pedestrian safety. Furthermore, to promote activity in the middle of the boulevard, the Public Space Zone was developed and is dedicated to streetscape amenities pedestrians may enjoy. These features include workout parks, public fountains, seating areas, and plenty of green space. Given the boulevard’s width, it would provide a purpose for pedestrians to use more of its central space and improve safety in crosswalk areas.

“With the growing need to create healthy communities in Ontario, a well-designed boulevard addresses the needs of future residents of Heritage Heights”

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Our group believes these proposed revisions to the boulevard’s design would support our vision towards creating a community that is more accessible to pedestrians, transit-oriented, and a great place to live and work. With the growing need to create healthy communities in Ontario, a well-designed boulevard addresses the needs of future residents of Heritage Heights.

We continue to support developing a grand boulevard in place of a highway. A grand boulevard would present more transit, innovative design, and programmable space opportunities to better serve the community’s needs. Ultimately, discussion surrounding the boulevard will continue through the upcoming provincial election and further. These conversations are essential to ensure a pedestrian and transit-oriented community is sustained. As Brampton remains in favour of a boulevard and opposed to the highway, we are committed and eager to continue this conversation should another opportunity arise.

Acknowledgements: With leadership from the faculty supervisor Allen Appleby, RPP, 12 students from the Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) Urban and Regional Planning Program completed a comprehensive report for the clients, Andria Sallese, RPP, and Nick Trajkovski. Members of this 12-member group included: Ahmad Shahid, Amirtha Anpalagan, Andrew Lam, Benjamin Truong, Grace Gong, Mabel Mai, Malcom Adejobi, Michal Stolarczyk, Nicholas Moore, Nicholas Malta, Sina Zekria, and Sofia Pietrolungo. (Y)



Grace Gong, Benjamin Truong, Nicholas Malta, and Mabel Mai are students from Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) Urban and Regional Planning Program. **Mabel Mai** is a Student Member of OPPI.



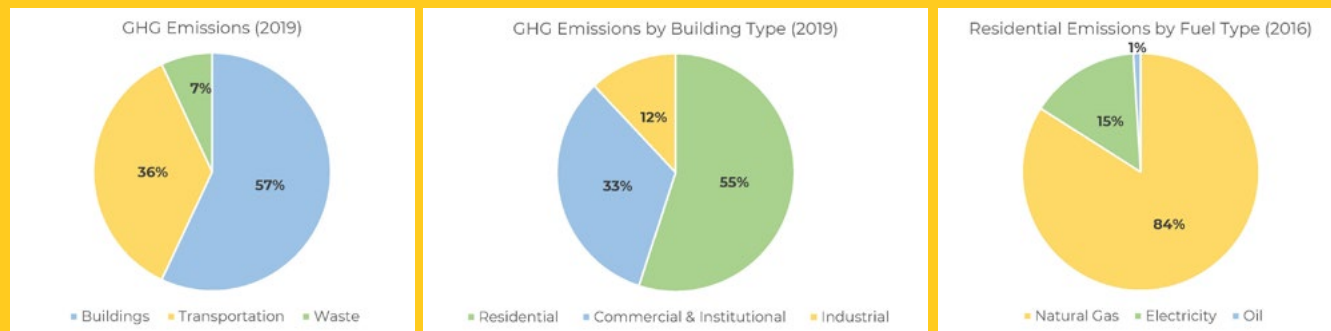
ACADEMIC

Planning for environmental sustainability? The limits of Ontario municipalities to regulate for low-carbon, low-rise housing

BY ALLISON EVANS, DANIEL HALL, AND PAUL DOWSETT

Above TABC's award-winning Green Accessible Garden Accessory Dwelling Unit is an accessible, affordable, energy efficient, and durable home with built-in flexibility. Designed as Net Zero Ready with zero direct GHG emissions.

Implementing policies to reduce operational and embodied carbon in new buildings is a pressing issue facing Ontario municipalities and planners. In response, cities and towns across Ontario are planning for a net-zero future, creating plans, policies, and strategies as pathways to net zero and instituting green standards for improved sustainability and building performance.



01-03 Charts depicting the proportion of Toronto's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by sector, building type, and fuel source, adapted from a recent GHG inventory.^{1,2}

However, going green has challenges and barriers, especially where “small” low-rise buildings are concerned. While researching the cost-effectiveness of no/low carbon Garden Suites in Toronto, we found sustainable policy does not effectively regulate the decreased fossil-fuel energy consumption required to meet the city's climate goals. Accordingly, our findings raise an apropos question: how can we plan for environmental sustainability in low-rise residential housing – the largest built form sector – beyond policy propositions?

During a winter 2021 research study, *Step to a Greener Future*, The Architect Builders Collaborative Inc. (TABC) examined the carbon and financial cost of Garden Suites in Toronto, part of City Planning's *Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods* policy and planning study. With the understanding – gained from years of sustainable architectural practice in the low-rise housing sector – one of the perceived barriers to constructing more sustainable buildings is the cost, we set out to investigate the extent of the added cost relative to reducing operating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in alignment with the policies of the Official Plan, TransformTO, the Zero Emissions Building Framework, Toronto Green Standard (TGS), and the Ontario Building Code (OBC). The main goal of our study was to present City Planning with a pathway for new Garden Suites to meet the City's net-zero emissions targets

and to show a way for all new homes and buildings designed and built to be near zero GHG emissions.

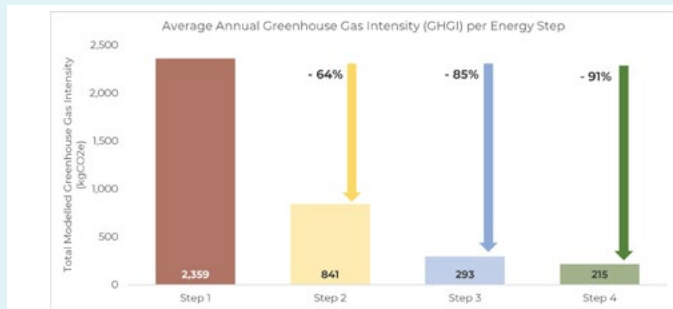


04 Graphical representation of the energy efficiency continuum conceptualized as four increasingly efficient Energy Steps.

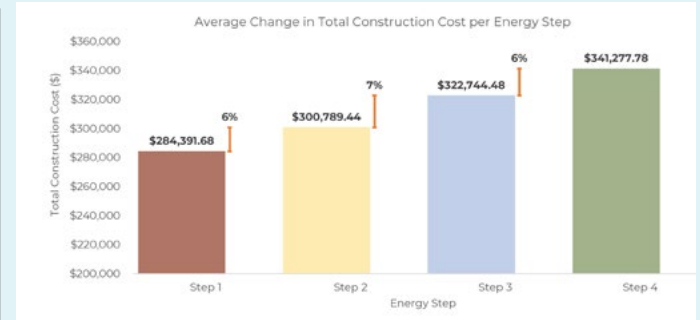
Our research design included modelling a one-storey, 600-square-foot garden suite based on the findings of a jurisdictional scan of several Ontario and Canadian municipalities. We then created four different energy steps to compare the same built form across a gradient of increasing energy efficiency, taking a stepped approach modelled after the TGS and British Columbia's Energy Step Code.

Using energy models prepared by local building science professionals and students, we compared four “Energy Steps,” beginning with an OBC minimum baseline reference case along a gradient of increasing energy efficiency towards meeting Passive House Standards. In addition, a group of builders experienced with both conventional and custom green building practices provided construction cost estimates for each of the four performance levels.

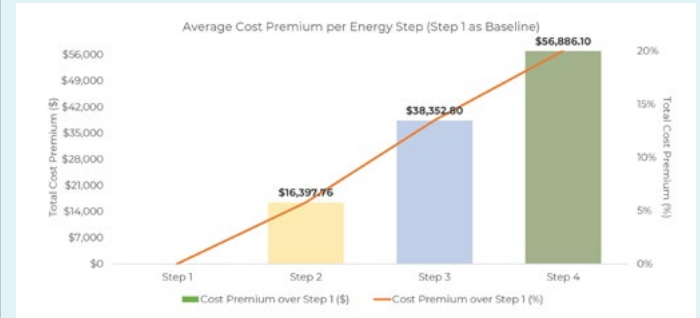
Of our four Energy Step Garden Suites, we found Step Three's Net Zero Ready was the most cost- and carbon-beneficial. Net Zero Ready homes average between 50 to 80 per cent more carbon-efficient than the OBC baseline and cost approximately 13 per cent more. Additionally, our findings suggest an estimated \$12,000 per year in operational cost savings, with a payback period of roughly 60 years. The most exciting finding: Net Zero Ready Garden Suites emit 85 per cent fewer operational GHGs compared to the OBC baseline and only six per cent more GHG emissions compared to the stringent Step Four Passive House Standard, which costs another six per cent more in construction costs and is extremely difficult to achieve on buildings the size and shape of accessory dwelling units.



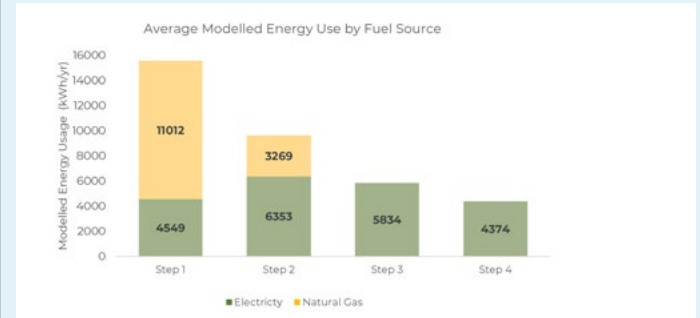
05 Chart depicting the total modelled GHG emissions and per cent reductions for the annual energy use across the Garden Suite Energy Steps.



06 Chart depicting the average costs for comparison between the Garden Suite Energy Steps based on the average of cost estimates provided by three local builders.



07 Chart depicting the average cost premium for each Garden Suite Energy Step above the Step 1 Ontario Building Code baseline reference case based on the average of cost estimates provided by three local builders.



08 Chart depicting the average modelled energy use by fuel source for each Garden Suite Energy Step.

The Garden Suites bylaw – approved by the Toronto City Council on February 2, 2022 – is ambiguous about sustainability, despite sustainability and the adherence to the upper tiers of the TGS being a key issue in an early *Report for Action*. The current official plan amendment and related policies “encourage” sustainable building technologies: green roofs, solar panels, fossil-fuel-free heating systems, and low-carbon building materials. The draft zoning bylaw does not, like Vancouver, include a floor-space ratio exemption for energy-efficient construction meeting the requirements of the upper tiers of the British Columbia Energy Step Code. Vancouver’s zoning provides an impetus, albeit small, to go green by not penalizing those choosing to build to Net Zero Ready and Passive House Standard wall thicknesses, which are at least twice to nearly three times that of their code minimum counterparts.

There is also the question of how planning can be an agent of change in the climate crisis, particularly when faced with a lack

of coordination between environmental sustainability planning policies, small buildings, and regulation. To explain, creating a green standard for low-rise residential, or including low-rise residential construction in Toronto in the TGS is difficult, if not impossible. The Toronto Green Standard is typically triggered through the *Planning Act* and Site Plan Control and for low-rise buildings over four storeys with a minimum of five dwelling units.

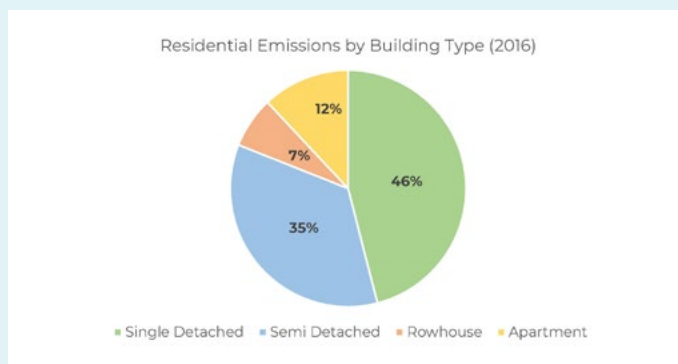
Conversely, “small” low-rise housing forms are processed exclusively through the building department, requiring only zoning bylaw and building code compliance, which currently includes meeting the Energy Efficiency for Housing Supplementary Standard SB-12. Our research shows SB-12 compliance alone is not enough to address the climate emergency. Overall, the energy efficiency authority over “small” low-rise housing forms resides within the *Building Code Act*, not the *Planning Act*, and the enforcement mechanism for low-rise residential design is the OBC.

While the OBC baseline reference was the cheapest energy step, it was also much less efficient and does not meet Toronto’s goal of net-zero GHG emissions by 2030. In addition, recent provincial amendments to the *Planning Act* and the changes to Development Charges (DCs) for accessory dwelling units dashes any hope of leveraging DCs to subsidize green construction. Compared again with Vancouver, a city with the authority to regulate its building bylaws,³ Toronto and other Ontario municipalities are faced with a huge challenge to plan for environmental sustainability where low-rise building forms are concerned. Ultimately, the authority over sustainability constrains the ability of municipalities to regulate for sustainability and places the decision on the homeowner. Another local example is Kingston, Ontario,⁴ where recent OP and zoning amendments allow second residential units while providing only tips to achieve improved energy efficiency.

The addition of Garden Suites to the roster of available housing options provides land for housing in municipalities faced with uneven and unaffordable housing landscapes, in addition to being helpful for homeowners looking to support multi-generational living, age-in-place and rental income. However, the current policies and discourse around Toronto’s Garden Suites (and their counterpart, Laneway Suites) seldom include sustainability, despite the declaration of a climate emergency and a mandate that “all new homes and buildings will be designed and built to be near-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.”⁵ While new “small” low-rise development is understood to be less frequent or less impactful, especially in downtown Toronto, compared to larger-scale buildings, planners should consider the broader context.

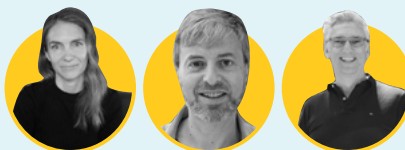
Over two-thirds of Toronto’s land is zoned for low-rise residential housing forms, and Census 2016 data indicates approximately

400,000 low-rise dwellings in the form of single and semi-detached and row houses exist in the city,⁶ many presumably having backyards to accommodate potential accessory dwelling units.



09 Charts depicting the proportion of Toronto’s Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by residential building type, to illustrate the existing emissions portfolio and the potential impact of additional ‘small’ low-rise housing, adapted from a recent GHG inventory.⁷

While not all backyards will satisfy the zoning requirements and not all homeowners will build, we should still consider the energy modelling scenarios from our research. Multiplying the results across the potential sites across the city – not to mention the province – indicates high-performing Garden Suites and other accessory dwelling units can be impactful. And yet, sustainability – often alongside affordability – tends to take a backseat in accessory dwelling unit policies and conversations. Meanwhile, less sustainable, unaffordable Laneway Suites proliferate across Toronto’s backyards. We believe sharing insights from studies such as ours can help start a conversation about pathways for planning environmental sustainability and inform Ontario planners and municipalities about the barriers to the creation of affordable, low-carbon, low-rise housing. ♻️



Allison Evans is a Pre-Candidate Member of OPPI, a recent graduate from York University’s Master of Environmental Studies, Planning program, and an Ontario Association of Applied Architectural Sciences Technologist.

Daniel Hall, OAA, MRAIC, LEED AP, is the founding Principal of The Architect Builders Collaborative, a progressive Architecture and Design studio focused on delivering socially sustainable and affordable low-carbon design.

Paul Dowsett, OAA, FRAIC, LEED AP, the founding Principal Architect at Sustainable, an architectural design collaborative that works towards a healthy planet.

Modelling Toronto’s Low-Carbon Future:

1 City of Toronto, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory 2019: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/8eed-2019-GHG-Inventory.pdf>

2 Modelling Toronto’s Low-Carbon Future: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/970e-TransformTO-Business-As-Planned-Report-November-2016.pdf>

3 Vancouver Building Bylaw: <https://vancouver.ca/your-government/vancouver-building-bylaw.aspx>

4 Second Residential Units, Kingston, Ontario: <https://www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/community-services/housing/programs/secondary-suites>

5 TransformTO: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/water-environment/environmentally-friendly-city-initiatives/transformto/>

6 Type of Dwelling Highlight Tables, 2016 Census: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/hlt-fst/td-tl/Table.cfm?Lang=Eng&T=102&SR=4201&RPP=25&S=2&O=A&VIEW=1&CMACA=0&PR=PR#2016A00053520005>

7 Modelling Toronto’s Low-Carbon Future: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/970e-TransformTO-Business-As-Planned-Report-November-2016.pdf>



Justin Gee, P.Eng., MCIP, RPP, is a member of the Six Nations of the Grand River and a graduate of Queen’s University. He has his professional engineering designation in Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia. Twenty-three years ago, he was given an opportunity to join First Nations Engineering Services Ltd. (FNESL), a 100-per-cent Aboriginal-owned municipal planning and engineering firm that was established in 1995.

Registered Professional Planner

PROFILE

NAME:

Justin Gee, P.Eng., MCIP RPP

LOCATION:

Head office, Ohsweken, ON (Six Nations)

POSITION:

Vice President of First Nations Engineering Services Ltd. Architecture

Joining FNESL meant Justin could live and work in his home community and contribute to its development, including being lead engineer on a new water treatment plant. Justin focuses on First Nations infrastructure and planning projects and, as a FNESL’s Vice President, he shares responsibility for formulating company policies and directing the day-to-day operations of the firm. He is also responsible for delegating tasks to the appropriate personnel and reviewing completed work. As the lead planner with FNESL, he oversees all municipal planning studies.

What led you to your career in planning and engineering? What makes it rewarding?

I was inspired by my high school physics teacher to go into the engineering field. He said it would be challenging yet rewarding – and he was right on both counts. You get to see things develop from concept to reality. Typically, engineering starts at feasibility, but planning is the step before that. I see things from a plan to concept to construction – and that’s very rewarding.

This is especially the case with First Nations projects. The vast majority are green field projects, so the impacts of the plans and projects are large in these smaller communities. A new water treatment

plant, residential subdivision, fire hall, community centre, daycare – these kinds of projects don’t really move the needle in a municipality. Lots of people don’t notice because these kinds of projects are expected. But for small First Nations communities, the impacts are felt much more and felt beyond the finished projects. Along the way, we create jobs and training opportunities and provide an influx of dollars into the community. But the construction has negative impacts, too: dust, noise, road closures, and disruption to quiet communities.

Tell us about a project that was especially interesting for you and why?

Caldwell First Nation Community Planning Study. Most plans are additions to communities. But for the Caldwell First Nation Community, the planning horizon was from day one – a dream planning job. We were able to put the community’s vision for their community on paper – we made it real for them. Being part of the genesis of a community is an opportunity that does not come around very often, if ever, and probably never off-Reserve. But in this unique space, it is possible.

The property had not yet received Reserve Status at the time of the study in 2019. The Caldwell First Nation was a Nation without a Reserve. An 80-hectare property in

Leamington was acquired by the community in 2010 once a land claim was settled, but then they had to apply for Reserve Status in order to use any of their funding to build on the land.

[**Editor's note:** In November 2020, the Caldwell First Nation received Reserve Status for their property in Leamington, and the land that had been taken from them by the Crown 230 years ago was finally fully their own. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/caldwell-first-nation-land-reserve-status-1.5814732>]

“Being part of the genesis of a community is an opportunity that does not come around very often, if ever, and probably never off-Reserve.”

Tell us more about the Addition to Reserve (ATR) process.

If a First Nation acquires land, they have to apply to have it given Reserve Status. The ATR process can take decades – and I mean, decades – to change it from purchased land to Reserve. We have some ATR lands in Six Nations. Oneida has it up in London, and some more clients in Belleville and Kingston area. But here is the catch: once they have the land, they have to pay taxes on it, but none of the funding they get is allowed to be spent on it because it is not a Reserve yet.

What are some of other barriers faced by the communities you work with?

The main barrier is funding for development and for the operation of existing programs. Funding is mainly based on formulas that were developed decades ago and were out of touch back then. With the current state of prices, it's getting worse as opposed to better. The funding gap is getting larger not smaller.

“The results of recently tendered infrastructure projects show that pricing has essentially doubled since pre-COVID estimates.”

At a recent Assembly of First Nations Housing Conference, we compared construction cost differences between feasibility studies prior to COVID with construction cost estimates done this year. For example, the estimated construction cost at the time of the feasibility study for a school in 2019 was \$17,000,000; the current cost estimate in 2022 is \$30,000,000. The construction cost carried in the feasibility study for a new water treatment plant, lake intake, watermain, and elevated storage reservoir was \$40,000,000 in 2020; the detailed design estimate in spring 2022 is \$90,000,000. The results of recently tendered infrastructure projects show that pricing has essentially doubled since pre-COVID estimates.

Funding for infrastructure projects in First Nations communities comes from the federal government. They have money earmarked for capital projects on First Nations that they then divide by

provinces. So, each province gets a certain amount of that. Well, they only have so much, and if everything doubles in price, they can only do half as much work.

While huge cost increases are affecting all municipalities, it is especially worrying for First Nations communities. Why is that?

With the current government programs focusing funding on infrastructure projects, there is almost more work out there than there are qualified contractors. As such, contractors can be selective of which projects they pursue. They can price their services according to the risk associated with material shortages and price volatility. And ultimately, small, remote communities will have a more difficult time attracting qualified contractors.

It gets more competitive for the First Nations themselves provincially. Once the amount needed reaches a certain number – over \$15 million – then you compete nationally with other projects across the country. And these are for basics like water and housing and roadways and schools. For a large percentage of these projects, they aren't upgrades – they are brand new, as in, they have no water treatment plant there at all.

The projects need to get done, but the prices have now escalated ridiculously, and we don't know what's going to happen. The frontline government people we talk to day to day are lower level – not the ones that develop policy or sign the cheque or give the green light to pay. The people we talk to appear to have been directed to proceed as normal. So, we're going through the normal processes, but we know full well there's not that much money available. We don't know what's going to happen.

How does this compare to how projects are funded in off-Reserve communities?

Off-Reserve municipalities have a tax base. And all the provincial money they get, they get directly, and they do what they want with it. But in First Nations, they don't do that. They receive just barely enough to run their organization, but anything outside of stuff that's perfectly planned and day to day, they have to go back for it. It's like the federal government does not trust them. Maybe it's rooted in something, or maybe there's a reason for not trusting from 50 years ago when there wasn't the same accounting that there is now. But they don't allow First Nations communities to run their finances as the community sees fit; there is a level of oversight that is very bureaucratic and overbearing.

“It's a very complex and convoluted system we have.”

What would have to change to improve that situation?

Currently, for major infrastructure projects, every First Nations community is required to hire a professional project manager – basically, someone in between consultants and the First Nations. Not all communities need an outside project manager, but some First Nations need it because they're very small. They're not sophisticated enough, and they need the additional assistance to make sure the budget reporting is done. But the larger First

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Nations obviously do not need a project manager, because they have the department, they have the ability to do it. But all the communities are treated exactly the same. To make a change of this type would require a revisit of all of the government policies because they're so antiquated.

If you could change something about how things are done now, what would it be?

I think the First Nations should be permitted to manage their construction budgets as they see fit. I am not involved directly with housing, but I know when the housing department gets money for their housing, their local guys are building them. The First Nations project manages it themselves or construction company manages it.

But the work doesn't stay on Reserve for the bigger projects. You have to follow the federal tendering policy. These larger projects are almost never done by the First Nations because they typically don't have companies large enough. Companies have a very difficult time getting bonding on First Nations because the bonding company requires you to own something. And land isn't owned on Reserve.

It pertains to ownership of the land and collateral. Obtaining personal mortgages for housing on First Nations is difficult. The banks will not mortgage a home on a Reserve. If a homeowner defaults on a mortgage in a municipality, the bank can foreclose and take possession of the home. The bank cannot own a home on a Reserve so there really is no inherent collateral. In fact, the homeowner does not actually own the land. They may have a Certificate of Possession but the land is owned by the Crown.


So, it is very difficult for First Nations contractors because they can't get a bond. It's a very complex and convoluted system we have.

“Duty to Consult is a great first step, but there's no mechanism or system currently in place for a duty to green light.”

Tell us about the challenges with the Duty to Consult process.

When someone wants to develop on traditional land, they will do the required studies as part of the Duty to Consult. I believe the intent of the Duty to Consult is a good thing, but there are issues with the current system. Proponents will send a 300-page report to the Chief, probably. And what's he or she going to do with this report? He's equivalent to or she's equivalent to a mayor. Is a mayor going to understand an environmental study like they should? Not likely. They can talk to council, but they're farmers and mechanics and all different kinds of trades and not likely experts in the field. What do they do with the report? The proponent has done the Duty to Consult and sent it to the First Nation, but there's no mechanism in the First Nation to be able to review it and no funds to hire a consultant to review it and give them an explanation of what it means. Duty to Consult is a great first step, but there's no mechanism or system currently in place for a duty to green light. The system needs refinement so that the real intent can be achieved and make it a truly meaningful process.

Do you have a message for RPPs and up-and-coming RPPs?

Try to understand your neighbouring First Nations communities, understand their situation. They all have different Treaties. They all have different agreements, so things are all a little different. If we're talking Ontario, these agreements were signed in the 1700s. But if you go out west to BC, some of them still have no Treaties. If planners can somehow get a better understanding of how development occurs on First Nations and the complexity and the amount of bureaucracy in it, maybe they'll have a better understanding of why development on First Nations occurs the way it does. We need support. We need support to change for sure. 

Contributors

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

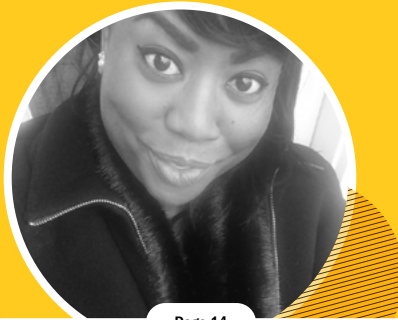


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Michelle Banfield, RPP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES AT THE CITY OF BARRIE

My background includes policy and development planning in both the private and public sectors. My current role at the City of Barrie is tied to managing intensification and growth as the City of Barrie is anticipated to double in size by 2051.

As a planner in Ontario, mentoring and supporting a new generation of professional planners is a priority. This involves making the field of planning a field of choice and presenting leadership in the field as being aspirational to young professionals. To really succeed in the field as a professional planner, you have to be skilled at many things. Providing support to get through the tough projects or rough public meetings is critically important to advance the profession. It's inspiring to witness planners advance in their careers. To continue to plan communities well, we need to continue to foster new professional planners and set them up for success.



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Nicole N. Hanson, MES (PL.), RPP, MCIP
DEVELOPMENT PLANNER

As an RPP, I am passionate about a handful of planning issues related to equitably accommodating urban growth. In reviewing and processing development applications within the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area, I continue to see and understand the impacts of urban growth on infrastructure and community assets.

I am focused on positioning municipalities to recognize and plan for sustainable cemetery land as community assets and green infrastructure. This is a priority to address the impacts of urban growth on the end-of-life cycle for cultural communities and the functionality of cities. I provide policy recommendations through official plan reviews, cemetery master plans, cultural master plans, cemetery needs analysis, and cemetery feasibility studies.

It's time for broader conversations on cemetery land use planning and how cemeteries are connected to creating equitable and liveable communities.



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Brad Bradford
TORONTO CITY COUNCILLOR,
BEACHES-EAST YORK

Elected in 2018 as one of the youngest members of Toronto City Council, I am passionate about bringing community-led change, fresh ideas, and positive politics to City Hall. Before becoming a Councillor, I worked as a planner in the renewable energy sector, helping municipalities reduce their carbon footprint through urban energy strategies and economic development, and in Toronto's Chief Planner's Office on improving operations and creating pathways for residents to be more involved with the planning process.

As Councillor for Beaches-East York in Toronto's East End, I am focused on delivering more housing options, improving transit and road safety, revitalizing main streets, and working with residents to build a better city through thoughtful, pragmatic solutions.

BECOME AN RPP

Registered Professional Planners (RPPs) are people who move beyond simply dreaming of inspired, sustainable communities and choose to start building tangible, actionable plans to bring them to fruition. They visualize an outcome that will benefit our communities for generations to come and use their skills to bring diverse opinions together. The result is an informed, inspired Ontario.

The path to becoming an RPP starts by obtaining an undergraduate or graduate degree from one of Ontario's six university accredited planning programs:

University of Guelph

Toronto Metropolitan University
(formerly Ryerson University)

University of Waterloo

Queen's University

University of Toronto

York University

Students in the planning programs at these schools can apply for student membership in OPPI.

TOP 10 REASONS

FOR STUDENTS TO JOIN OPPI

1. Job postings in the member portal
2. Graduate and undergraduate scholarships
3. Networking opportunities with other students and RPPs
4. Invitations to provincial planning conferences
5. Continuing education, often at reduced rates
6. Research project showcase at OPPI's annual event
7. Leadership opportunities with the student liaison committee
8. Monthly OPPI newsletters
9. Access to the member directory
10. Opportunities to get your work published and read by members

Find more
information at
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Ontario
Professional
Planners
Institute



2GETHER

OPPI • OALA CONFERENCE

2 days, 2 disciplines, 2 ways to participate – defining our professional roles and uniting to build more equitable, accessible and inspired communities.

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) and the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects (OALA) have partnered to host a joint conference in London, Ontario this fall!

The joint conference will bring professional planners and landscape architects 2GETHER for two days of programming and offer two ways to participate: either in person or online.

SEPTEMBER 21 & 22

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