



IDEAS AT THE CROSSROADS OF INSPIRED COMMUNITIES



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TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION:

To understand and acknowledge the truth and to push forward with meaningful actions that can address reconciliation. **06**

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Continuous Professional Learning:

Where Registered Professional Planners find trusted resources to guide their journey from truth to reconciliation

Contemporary approaches to planning have not always reflected Indigenous traditions and perspectives. The planning profession is focused on the disposition of land and resources, and planners rely on processes and tools borne out of the colonial era.

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) recognizes its responsibility to participate in the national discussion on truth and reconciliation and to respond to the Calls to Action set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2015. OPPI and Registered Professional Planners (RPPs) are committed to improving the understanding of the detrimental impacts of the imposition of colonial laws and policies on Indigenous Peoples.

In June 2019, OPPI Council approved in full the recommendations in the *Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force Report*. Education for planners is a critical aspect of those recommendations, and resources to guide that education are available through Continuous Professional Learning (CPL). The CPL Program Guide has been updated to reflect the importance of Indigenous learning and encourages members to build knowledge and understanding of Indigenous perspectives, worldviews, histories, cultures, belief systems, and the system of constitutionally protected Treaties that govern our relationships within Canada.

Through CPL, OPPI has provided an extensive list of introductory and foundational resources, including courses, online sessions, videos, podcasts, and reading materials, to support planners in identifying and meeting their learning goals. Furthermore, planners can identify their CPL as relating in whole or in part to Indigenous histories, cultures, or perspectives, a new feature of the CPL reporting system.

Knowledge of the truth of our collective history and the injustices experienced by Indigenous Peoples is an essential step in the reconciliation process. CPL is just one of the many ways OPPI supports the planning profession on the journey from truth to reconciliation. Recently, OPPI created the Indigenous Planning Advisory Committee, chaired by Stephanie Burnham and Calvin Brook, RPP, to guide implementation of the recommendations in the *Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force Report*. A complete list of Advisory Committee members, as well as other information about the Advisory Committee, is available on OPPI's website.



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Cover photo: Stan Williams Photography: www.stanwilliams.ca

As an Indigenous photographer from Garden River, this image has been with me since childhood. We would fish under the bridge in the summertime and walk over it in the winter to avoid the busy highway. Beyond the colonial notions, it has been a marker of our relationship and responsibility to our lands. I hope the image sparks new understanding and critical thought. stanwilliams.ca

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INSPIRE



A CALL TO ACTION FOR PLANNERS

During the development of OPPI's June 2019 *Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force Report*, comments and information were gathered from a long list of participants who contributed to discussions and focus groups and in surveys and interviews. Many of the comments were published in the final report. Here are just a few to inspire planners.

“Would your ancestors seven generations in the past approve of this decision? Coming face to face with those seven generations in the future, would they approve of your decision as well? If yes, then you know you’ve made a good decision.”

“Indigenous people have always had to step out of our comfort zones, since contact. Grow a thick skin and understand that the anger, disappointment, resentment is justifiable and righteous. This doesn’t mean you need to bear the weight of centuries of colonial shame. It does mean you form an understanding and accept that you are part of a doctrine that has robbed many Nations of their basic human dignity.”

“We are constantly asking Indigenous communities to give energy to colonial processes. To me, unless you are working to give the land back, any work that is being done is the continuation of colonization.”

“Indigenous Peoples don’t need to be guided into a process; they already have a process. Integrate into that.”

Read more from the *Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force Report* at ontarioplanners.ca

“Reconciliation can only be possible through a fair restitution of the land rights and the livelihoods it supports.”

My family is largely made up of immigrants, who came here seeking refuge and a better life for their kids, and for the most part, they found that. Sure they faced their challenges along the way, but within a generation or two, they were fully adapted, were able to seek higher education, had access to good jobs, owned property, and felt like they belonged.

It has been very hard for me to accept that my understanding of Canada and what it represents has left out some very ugly truths. Among those truths, it has been especially difficult for me – a person who tries to be a good mother, wife, daughter, and friend – to come to grips with the realization that the colonial system that we exist in, elevated me at the cost of others. I think what makes this topic so difficult is that it hits everyone in the heart of their identity.

I believe that the stories we tell ourselves about who we are have a profound impact on how we see the world and how we react to it. It is extremely uncomfortable to think of myself as a beneficiary of a colonial system that has tried to eliminate the identity of Indigenous Peoples and has broken covenants. But I believe this discomfort is necessary to create genuine change.

Because the planning profession's focus is primarily on the rational and fair disposition of land, we, as planners, should be at the epicentre of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. However, reconciliation can only be possible through a fair restitution of the land rights and the livelihoods it supports. And how can we determine what is fair, if we do not understand the value of what has been lost? How can we provide meaningful opportunities for dialogue, if we do not understand the true history of Canada and Ontario? How can we reconcile, if we do not understand the truth we are reconciling?

OPPI is committed to supporting members in their journey to reconciliation and continues to develop resources and opportunities for education. I urge you as planners and as human beings to recommit to your own learning around this difficult history and think about how your practice can contribute to reconciliation and healing the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Giancola'.

Justine Giancola, RPP
President
Ontario Professional Planners Institute

Our Home on Native Land

BY CALVIN BROOK, RPP

This issue of *Y Magazine* signifies what I hope will be a new era for the planning profession in Ontario. Awakening to the past injustices that have, and continue to be, experienced by Indigenous Peoples and Nations – and the planning profession's unfortunate contribution to this deeply disturbing history – requires a path of advocacy on the part of non-Indigenous planners.

Since the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls To Action in 2015, many of us have struggled with a sense of paralysis, wanting to do something but not knowing how to start or where to begin. Canada's parliament is in first reading of Bill C-15, an Act respecting the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which, if enacted, will have dramatic implications for matters of land use and land rights. Adding to this, the directive of the 2020 Ontario Provincial Policy Statement, which states: "Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters," is most welcome. But many planners and planning departments don't know where to begin or who to reach out to.

Approximately 70 per cent of Indigenous Peoples in Ontario live in urban areas, and most of these communities don't have a representative entity that planners can easily call upon. Complicating matters, many Indigenous Nations who hold rights within the Treaty areas and must be engaged do not have the resources or funding to support ongoing coordination on the overwhelming scale that "planning matters" implies.

Which brings us back to advocacy.

As an outcome of adopting the recommendations of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force in 2019, OPPI Staff and Council have undertaken Cultural Competency Training provided by the Indigenous Justice Division of the Ontario Attorney-General. OPPI has joined the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business's Progressive Aboriginal Relations certification program, which will provide a path for supporting Indigenous Peoples in all matters pertaining to planning and land rights. The recently established Indigenous Planning Advisory Committee will have its first meeting in early 2021. The committee has 14 members, eight of

"None of this will be easy, but we are way behind as a profession, and we cannot assume our national and provincial governments will lead any meaningful change."

whom are Indigenous, who will provide an ongoing resource to OPPI Council as it identifies the specific, concrete actions planners can take to address truth and reconciliation. I'm honoured to be committee co-chair with Stephanie Burnham, a member of Six Nations, who is deeply involved in planning with Indigenous communities.



So how, as an individual, can you embrace a role as an advocate? On October 4, 2016, I attended a Sisters in Spirit event held in downtown Toronto in remembrance of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

“It is not our job as Indigenous Peoples to tell dominant society how to reconcile with us – we have enough to deal with.”

At that event, a piece of advice was given to non-Indigenous people by an Indigenous Elder for which I have been immensely grateful and which has helped me along the way. The speaker, who herself had lost a daughter, was recounting the overwhelming burden of having to address the endless questions by non-Indigenous policy makers: what can we do? What do you need? How do we reconcile? Her response:

“It is not our job as Indigenous Peoples to tell dominant society how to reconcile with us – we have enough to deal with.”

In other words, we non-Indigenous advocates need to figure it out. We need to be educated and informed, but we also need to come forward to our Indigenous partners and colleagues with specific strategies – not just land acknowledgments – that address the needs of our treaty partners, then we need to work through these actions together.

That single piece of wisdom from 2016 has helped me to get over the paralysis and the fear of making missteps on the path of reconciliation. As a result, restoring Indigenous presence in our communities and restoring Indigenous land rights has become a core mandate of my role as a planner. Clearly, missteps have been made and will be made. None of this will be easy, but we are way behind as a profession, and we cannot assume our national and provincial governments will lead any meaningful change. On the other hand, much progress is being made in the planning schools and is evident in the passion of many young planners. It is my hope that the urgency of advocacy will be recognized by all of OPPI’s membership.

“It is my hope that the urgency of advocacy will be recognized by all of OPPI’s membership.”

The following contributions by Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors will help you to find your own path as a planner advocate, to understand and acknowledge the truth, and to push forward with meaningful actions that can address reconciliation. (Y)



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Exploring the truths about planning

BY MITCHELL AVIS, RPP

At 1492 Land Back Lane, we observe the intersection between development and Indigenous rights, between treaties and broken promises, and between Indigenous and settler worldviews. As a profession, it serves as a wake-up call that our role in meaningful reconciliation requires us to have uncomfortable conversations about Indigenous rights, treaties, and land use planning.

“Our role in meaningful reconciliation requires us to have uncomfortable conversations about Indigenous rights, treaties, and land use planning.”

Since July 19, 2020, Six Nations of the Grand River Land Defenders have been asserting their rights and jurisdiction by blockading the McKenzie Meadows housing development on unceded Haudenosaunee land within the Haldimand Tract, now present-day Caledonia, Ontario. The Land Defenders call it 1492 Land Back Lane. But 1492 Land Back Lane did not begin in July 2020; it is the result of centuries of oppression, systemic racism, and land dispossession.

It is important that the planning profession come to terms with our past and present, because it is only when we seek to understand the truth that we can move towards reconciliation.

TRUTH: LAND USE PLANNING IS AN INHERENTLY COLONIAL PRACTICE AND PROFESSION

We must first seek to understand the role of planning practices in the mistreatment of Indigenous Peoples.¹ The historic and continued dispossession of Indigenous Peoples from the land – forcing them onto reserves – has resulted in the loss of culture and access to areas for hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering.² Settlers did not “give” Indigenous Peoples reserves – settlers confined them to reserves.

TRUTH: INDIGENOUS NATIONS HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED A SOVEREIGN STATUS

Since time immemorial, Indigenous Peoples have been organized sovereign nations with their own governance structures and laws. Upon contact with European nations, Indigenous Peoples had been planning and

“The chief and band council system reflects European governance structures, not Indigenous traditions of governance.”

building communities for millennia using Indigenous planning and architectural practices rooted in the belief that the land and water are sacred and to be cared for communally, not a commodity that can be privately owned.³ The Haudenosaunee Confederacy, for example, is the world’s oldest representative democracy.⁴ They continue to assert sovereignty, governance, and jurisdiction over their lands.⁵ The Haudenosaunee Confederacy opposes the McKenzie Meadows development⁶ while the Six Nations Elected Council agreed to support the project.⁷ This complex conflict over jurisdiction is a direct result of colonization and the *Indian Act*.

TRUTH: THE INDIAN ACT IS A RACIST LAW THAT CONTROLS INDIGENOUS LIVES

The *Indian Act* imposed many rules on Indigenous Peoples, including the elected chief and band council system enacted in 1869 and still in effect today.⁸ The chief and band council system reflects European governance structures, not Indigenous traditions of governance. As a result, communities like Six Nations continue to acknowledge the role of the traditional governance system of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy while also complying with the requirement of the *Indian Act* to have an elected chief and band council. Systemic racism and ignorance within many Canadian laws, legislations, and governance processes continue to suppress traditional governance systems today.

TRUTH: NATION-TO-NATION TREATY PROMISES HAVE BEEN BROKEN AND NOT UPHELD BY THE CROWN

The Haldimand Treaty of 1784 allotted Six Nations six miles of land on either side of the Grand River (955,000 acres), “which them and their posterity are to enjoy for ever.”⁹ However, over the ensuing centuries, Six Nations lost 95 per cent of their allotted lands through the Crown’s negligence, illegal sales, squatting, and disputed

land surrenders.¹⁰ Six Nations monies for this land were mismanaged by the Crown and, ultimately, used to help build this country, including, for example, to cover government debts, payoff war debts, build the Welland Canal, and save McGill College from bankruptcy.¹¹ Canada has failed to account for the sale, lease, and monies owed to Six Nations within the Haldimand Treaty, including the McKenzie Meadows land, which remains unresolved today. Six Nations filed a Statement of Claim against Canada and Ontario in 1995 after originally launching 29 land claims between 1980-95.¹² A trial date has been set for 2022.¹³

“Settlers did not “give” Indigenous Peoples reserves – settlers confined them to reserves.”

TRUTH: THE PLANNING ACT PERPETUATES THE DISPOSSESSION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FROM THE LAND

The *Planning Act* usurps treaty and Aboriginal rights to land and fails to recognize and uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). The cumulative impact of development increasingly infringes on Indigenous rights to access and use land.¹⁴ Indigenous communities continue to be dispossessed of their land for agriculture, settlement, and resource extraction without free, prior and informed consent. Six Nations is the largest populated reserve in Canada and its land needs are growing.¹⁵ Every development built on unceded or disputed lands before a land claim settlement results in less land remaining available for their community to use and grow.

WHERE NEXT?

It is okay if you feel uncomfortable reading this. Your discomfort means that you realize “we can do better.” And we can. We all have a role to play in reconciliation. For our profession, doing better begins with an understanding of the relationship between planning and Indigenous Peoples’ use, access, and rights to the land. It is time we begin to travel “side by side down the river of life” like we agreed to in the Two Row Wampum of 1613.¹⁶ 🍷

¹Porter, L. (2010). *Unlearning the colonial cultures of planning*. Ashgate Publishing Limited.

²Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). What we have learned: Principles of truth and reconciliation. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Final%20Reports/Principles_English_Web.pdf

³Brook, C., Millette, D., & Robertson, S. (2019). Appendix B: establishing context. *Indigenous Perspectives in Planning: Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force*. <https://ontarioplanners.ca/OPPIAssets/Documents/OPPI/Indigenous-Planning-Perspectives-Task-Force-Report-FINAL.pdf>

⁴Haudenosaunee Confederacy. (2020). Who we are. Haudenosaunee Confederacy. <https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/who-we-are/>
⁵Ibid.

⁶Six Nations “Iroquois” Confederacy. (2020, August 15). Statement Regarding Unlawful McKenzie Meadows Development. Haudenosaunee Confederacy. <https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/2020/08/statement-regarding-unlawful-mckenzie-meadows-development/>

⁷Forester, B. (2020, August 11). Six Nations Elected Council agreed to ‘publicly support’ McKenzie Meadows development, help stop protests as part of accommodation deal: court docs. APTN News. <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/six-nations-elected-council-agreed-to-publicly-support-mckenzie-meadows-development-help-stop-protests-as-part-of-accommodation-deal-court-docs/>

⁸Joseph, B. (2018). *21 things you may not know about the Indian Act: Helping Canadians make reconciliation with Indigenous peoples a reality*. Indigenous Relations Press.

⁹Six Nations Council. (2008). The Haldimand Treaty of 1784. Six Nations Lands and Resources. <http://www.sixnations.ca/LandsResources/HaldProc.htm>

¹⁰Six Nations Lands & Resources Department. (n.d). Land Rights: A global solution for the Six Nations of the Grand River. Impact Assessment Agency of Canada. <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/documents/p80100/130877E.pdf>

¹¹Ibid.

¹²P. Monture, personal communication, November 5, 2020

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴McIvor, B. (2015, August 18). The Piecemeal Infringement of Treaty Rights. First Peoples Law. <https://www.firstpeopleslaw.com/public-education/blog/the-piecemeal-infringement-of-treaty-rights>

¹⁵Six Nations Elected Council. (2013). Community Profile. Six Nations Elected Council. <http://www.sixnations.ca/CommunityProfile.htm>

¹⁶Onondaga Nation. (2020). Two Row Wampum – Gä•sweñta’. Onondaga Nation. <https://www.onondaganation.org/culture/wampum/two-row-wampum-belt-guswenta/>



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➔ LEARNING ABOUT TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION



OPPI has a dedicated area of its website for Indigenous Planning Perspectives. In addition to the full *Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force*, you’ll find a growing list of resources to help planners and others who want to expand their knowledge and understanding of Indigenous topics. **Find more information at ontarioplanners.ca**

Planning with an open heart

BY JOHN MEEK, RPP, WITH JANNA CHEGAHNO,
SUZANNE LAMBERT, AND BRIAN MCHATTIE, RPP

Depending on the nature of a particular planning issue and the extent of different perspectives involved, it can be challenging to facilitate a process that is comfortable for all participants to learn and openly contribute ideas.

Framing discussions with multiple participants often begins by identifying guiding principles that support productive group work. A common refrain among planners and facilitators is to “keep an open mind” to what others have to say. Listening to diverse perspectives and ideas helps to broaden our understanding of issues as we work through a planning process. But in the context of truth and reconciliation and working with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, an open mind may be best guided by an open heart. As a senior planner with the Parks Canada Agency (PCA), I am learning the importance of this statement and how it can influence my role.

LEARNING THE HEART-MIND CONCEPT

PCA and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) are working together to develop a 10-year management plan for Bruce Peninsula National Park and Fathom Five National Marine Park. The planning process is in the early stages and has a strong focus on the importance of the relationship between SON and PCA. This new approach to protected-area planning on the Saugeen (Bruce) Peninsula is being developed and coordinated in the spirit of shared responsibility.

A core working group is coordinating the process between PCA and SON to ensure respective mandates and priorities are observed and that multiple partners, communities, stakeholders, and the general public are engaged in the process. Members of the core working group are learning together about SON concepts, values, and principles. We are learning the importance of the heart-mind concept, which encourages us to open our hearts so that our minds can begin to understand the connection of Anishinaabe people to the lands and waters of their traditional territory. It is through this learning process that a deeper understanding of the truth will be realized, and a planning process based on mutual respect will be strengthened.

“It is through this learning process that a deeper understanding of the truth will be realized, and a planning process based on mutual respect will be strengthened.”

PLANNING CONTEXT

Despite ongoing litigation related to the interpretation of Treaty 45 ½ (1836) and Treaty 72 (1854), PCA and the SON have developed a strong, collaborative relationship in many areas. Both the national park and national marine park lie within the area identified by SON as their traditional territory, known as Anishinaabekiing. Both parks have strong cultural significance with many archaeological sites showing evidence of human occupation dating to the Archaic period – 8000-2000 Before Common Era (BCE) – and through the Woodland period – 1000 BCE-1000 Common Era (CE). Some landscapes in the park also have European cultural significance for their representation of early settler, maritime heritage, fishing, lumber, and agricultural history.

Bruce Peninsula National Park contains the most expansive remaining contiguous forest in southwestern Ontario. It also protects an exceptionally diverse assemblage of ecosystems,

including globally rare limestone barrens (alvars), ancient cliff-edge forest ecosystems, Great Lakes endemic species (e.g., lakeside daisy, dwarf lake iris), 43 orchid species, 41 species at risk (e.g., Hill’s thistle, Massassauga rattlesnake), and a genetically distinct black bear population. The park is a destination for bird watchers, botanists, and nature enthusiasts. The area surrounding the park continues to hold high conservation value to regional, provincial, and national conservation organizations, including international recognition as a core area within the UNESCO Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve.

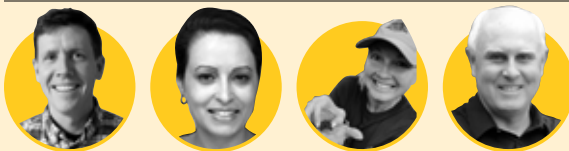
Fathom Five National Marine Park includes a portion of Georgian Bay with deep, cold waters year-round, while the Lake Huron side, with its shallower bays, provides warmer waters during the summer. The marine park contains an archipelago of uninhabited islands, including Flowerpot Island, one of the most popular and highly visited attractions in the area.

“...the Seven Grandfather Teachings that guide Anishinaabe people – honesty, respect, truth, love, humility, bravery, and wisdom.”

ROLE OF THE PLANNER

As I listen to an Anishinaabe colleague describe the Seven Grandfather Teachings that guide Anishinaabe people – honesty, respect, truth, love, humility, bravery, and wisdom – I am reminded of why there is a relationship between PCA and SON. Hard work, trust, humility, and respect have brought the relationship through many contentious issues and challenges to a place where we are able to walk together on a path towards shared goals and shared responsibility.

As I work in collaboration with the core working group, I am reminded that standard planning approaches and concepts may be perceived differently by First Nation partners. In the process of bringing together two different worldviews, part of my role is to ensure that SON history, culture, and spirituality are represented in an appropriate and respectful manner. By learning to open my heart to understand SON’s deeply rooted connection to their homelands, I am gaining new perspectives and skills as a planner. I look forward to the planning process ahead and encourage others to experience what can be learned and shared simply by opening your heart. ☺



Members of the Core Working Group: **John Meek, RPP**, a Member of OPPI and Senior Planner, Strategic Policy and Investment Directorate, Parks Canada; **Janna Chegahno**, Indigenous Liaison, Georgian Bay and Ontario East Field Unit, Parks Canada; **Suzanne Lambert**, Management Planning Coordinator, Georgian Bay and Ontario East Field Unit, Parks Canada; **Brian McHattie, RPP**, a Member of OPPI and Acting Partnering and Engagement Officer Georgian Bay and Ontario East Field Unit, Parks Canada.



Building trust and respectful relationships: The City of Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy

BY SHELLY HILL

In the spring of 2015, Hamilton City Council committed to developing an Urban Indigenous Strategy that would identify actions and strengthen the City's relationship with the Indigenous community. City staff began by reaching out to community partners to co-develop this strategy. Staff then worked with Indigenous community partners and agreed to learn and follow principles that honour traditional knowledge, teachings, and reciprocity.

Commitment, accountability, consultation, reciprocity, and inclusion are some of the guiding principles utilized as the foundation of the City of Hamilton's future projects and engagements as an important step towards building trust and respectful relationships with the Indigenous community and the local Nations.

My role with the City of Hamilton is to implement its first Urban Indigenous Strategy by focusing on building relationships with community Indigenous leaders, community members, and individuals. I work to promote Indigenous cultures and programs, engage the broader Hamilton community, collaborate with various Indigenous organizations, and advance public education initiatives. I also facilitate city-wide community dialogue and advance the recommendations of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation

Commission's Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls to Justice at the local level.

IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

In December 2016, the City of Hamilton began work on developing the Urban Indigenous Strategy by focusing on strengthening the City's relationship with the Indigenous community. The development of the Urban Indigenous Strategy was a collaboration involving City staff, elected officials, traditional knowledge keepers and Elders, and members of the Indigenous community and partners. The strategy is the result of three years of working together on a process that went through five phases:

- **Phase One:** Plant the Strategy
- **Phase Two:** Cultivate the Strategy
- **Phase Three:** Harvest the Strategy
- **Phase Four:** Initiate the Strategy
- **Phase Five:** Implement the Strategy

In June 2019, the City of Hamilton released the first Hamilton Urban Indigenous Strategy (UIS), which was fully endorsed by City Council. The UIS identifies actions and charts out a path to reconciliation that aims to strengthen the City's relationship with the Indigenous community. The strategy is intended to demonstrate respect for Indigenous knowledge and cultures and promote a better understanding among all residents about Indigenous histories, cultures, experiences, and contributions. Key accomplishments to date include:

- Development of a revised traditional land acknowledgement statement
- Indigenous flags permanently installed at City Hall
- Roll out of the Indigenous Cultural Competency Training pilot for 50 staff
- Development of the Use of Indigenous Medicines Policy
- Development of a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls exhibit at Dundurn Castle
- A variety of staff and public education events (e.g. documentary series, celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day at City Hall, Drag the Red guest speaker event, movie screenings at the Hamilton Public Library, etc.)
- Development of an interim Indigenous Archaeological Monitoring Policy
- Signing of a Declaration of Mutual Commitment and Friendship between the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre

HOW TO BUILD ON STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

Making a commitment and acknowledging the territory is an important first step in focusing on understanding the rights of Indigenous Peoples and how to apply it in everyday life. Understanding the creation of all living things and its purpose with honour and gratitude. This is best done through understanding the history and the treaty territories which you work, live, and play on. Focus on the teachings of the treaties which redefine the meaning of relationships. As those relationships connect people to the land, they create a physical and spiritual responsibility of peace, friendship, and respect.

For planners, understanding land and treaties is about acknowledging and respecting the spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional connections that Indigenous Peoples have to the land. This connection extends into Indigenous knowledge, governance, language, and relationships with non-Indigenous organizations. It recognizes that the first relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada were focused on the sharing and use of land and the stewardship of land recognized in the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Treaty.

Understanding the traditional knowledge and the Indigenous rights and relationships with the land and natural heritage has to be considered when planning. Partnering with the Nations through



HAMILTON URBAN INDIGENOUS STRATEGY AND THE TRC

The key objectives of the Hamilton Urban Indigenous Strategy are to identify actions within municipal jurisdiction and capacity arising from the 2015 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Final Report*. It also aims to celebrate and honour Indigenous People, cultures, and traditions and promote a greater understanding among all Hamiltonians through public education of the histories and contributions of Indigenous Peoples.

collaborative efforts is instrumental through the development process and to maintain inclusive relationships with Indigenous Elders and knowledge keepers.

An example of this can be seen with archaeology work to date.

The City of Hamilton acknowledges Indigenous Peoples as the original peoples of this land. Indigenous Peoples have an inherent and rights-based interest in the archaeology and heritage of their ancestors and assert Indigenous and treaty rights over lands, waters, and resources within their traditional territories.

To align with the actions of the Council-endorsed Urban Indigenous Strategy, finding ways to improve how the City works with Indigenous communities when conducting archaeology was a priority to maintain important factors, such as respect; to incorporate Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge in municipal practices; and to improve meaningful consultation on municipal projects, plans, and approvals. This provided a process for facilitating Indigenous monitoring of City-initiated archaeological assessments, allowing Indigenous communities to participate meaningfully in the work taking place on their traditional territories.

Ongoing engagement with the Indigenous communities in developing a corporate-wide approach is necessary to improve upon how the City engages and involves Indigenous communities in City-initiated archaeological and natural heritage assessment work.

Local First Nation and Métis communities want to participate in archaeological and natural heritage assessments on their traditional territories in order to continue to steward their cultural and natural resources. Preliminary discussions with the Haudenosaunee, the Mississaugas, and the Huron-Wendat indicate a desire from each Indigenous community to improve existing Municipal-Indigenous relationships. 



Shelly Hill, MA, Mohawk/Cayuga, Six Nations, is the Senior Project Manager for the City of Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy. She has been a key advocate working for Indigenous Peoples with guidance from Elders, knowledge keepers, and community members in the non-profit industry for more than 30 years, working mainly in the urban Indigenous sectors.

“‘Truth and Reconciliation’ is out there but people don’t know what it is. People must ‘reconcile’ but they don’t know what they’re reconciling. People have to know the ‘Truth’ part in order to reconcile.”

Focus group and survey participant, *Indigenous Perspectives in Planning*,
Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force, June 2019, page 6.

“Land use – we need to term it differently. It’s not there for our use. It should be ‘land relationship planning.’ Building a relationship with the land around us. Take into consideration what the land is telling us. Everything alive is our brothers and sisters.”

Focus group and survey participant, *Indigenous Perspectives in Planning*,
Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force, June 2019, page 12.

“Be aware that Indigenous Nations in Canada are as different as various cultures in Europe. The French and the Germans don’t want to be lumped together. They don’t want their differences ignored.”

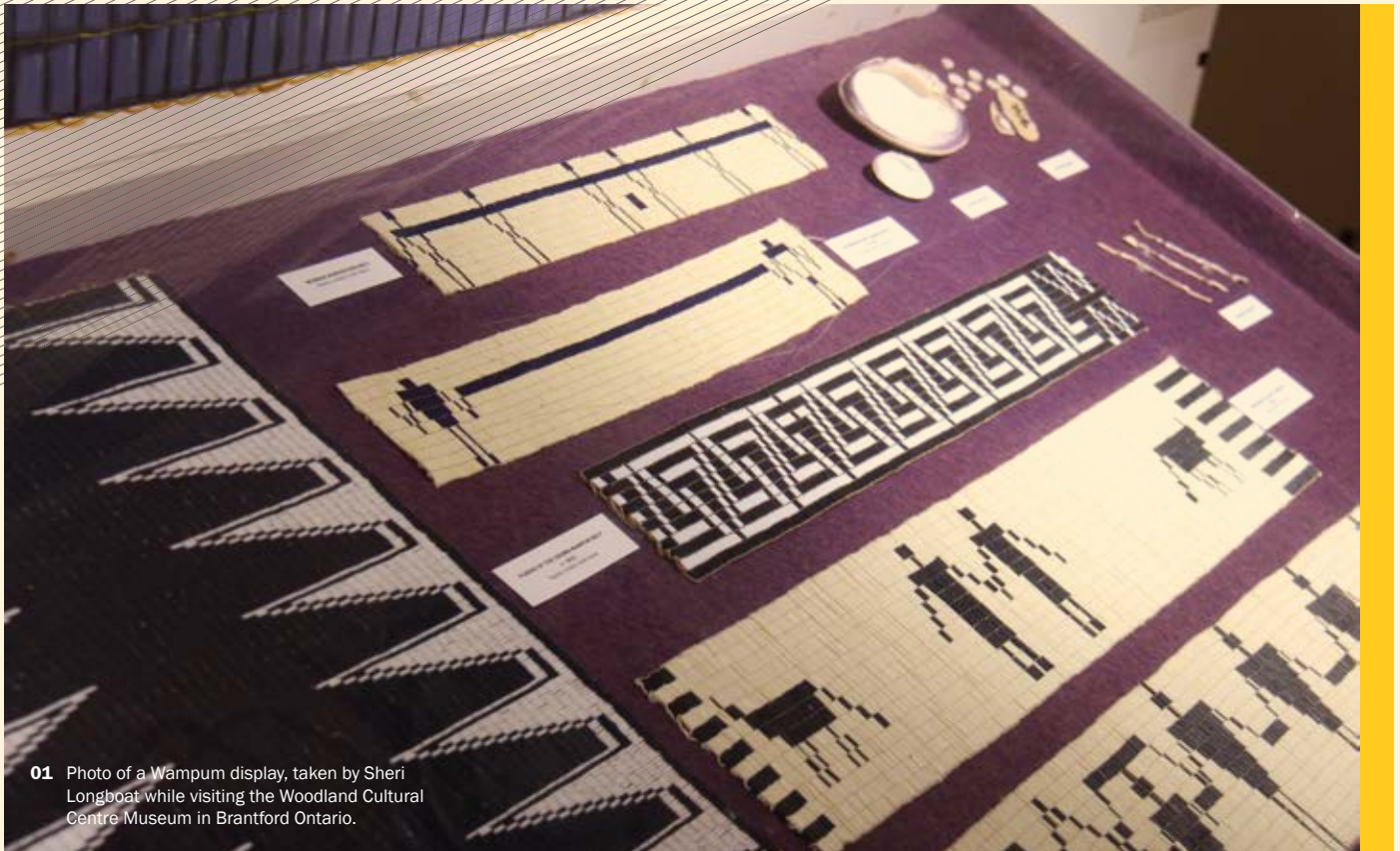
Focus group and survey participant, *Indigenous Perspectives in Planning*,
Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force, June 2019, page 7.

“The word that stood out to me was ‘stakeholder’ in reference to Indigenous Peoples. That is like a box that needs to be checked during project management. It’s derogatory to Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples hold the rights to the land that we are planning.”

Focus group and survey participant, *Indigenous Perspectives in Planning*,
Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force, June 2019, page 10.

“Truth is acknowledging that the profession itself needs to change its mindset. This is not just about bringing in Indigenous People and making them planners. It’s a path we should be walking together.”

Focus group and survey participant, *Indigenous Perspectives in Planning*,
Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force, June 2019, page 12.



01 Photo of a Wampum display, taken by Sheri Longboat while visiting the Woodland Cultural Centre Museum in Brantford Ontario.



Shared responsibilities: Land, treaties, and the planning profession

AN INTERVIEW WITH SHERI LONGBOAT, PHD

Sheri Longboat is a Haudenosaunee Mohawk and band member of the Six Nations of the Grand River and an Associate Professor at the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development at University of Guelph.

Ask Sheri Longboat what planners need to understand about the importance of land from an Indigenous perspective, and she may well turn that question around: What does land mean to you? What is your relationship with land and with Indigenous Peoples? She does this for two reasons.

“For First Nations, water is a sacred gift, the life blood of Mother Earth, and all water, not just water for human use, needs protection. First Nations have exercised inherent responsibilities to fulfill obligations to the Creator to ensure clean water for all living things since time immemorial.”

Sheri Longboat, First Nations Water Security: Security for Mother Earth. *Canadian Woman Studies / Les Cahiers de la Femme*, 2015-2016, 30, 2-3: Women and Water.

“It’s wonderful to have people trying to understand, but often the onus is on Indigenous Peoples to educate others,” she says. “Having to always explain or fit methodologies or thoughts or justify reconciliation can feel one directional – Indigenous Peoples have to defend the treaty, defend the knowledge. So while I think understanding is so invaluable, and I’m inspired by the willingness of planners to do this, it’s also a goal for planners to reflect on their own relationships with land.”

It also reminds her of what she has been taught about responsibility, harmony, and balance with all of our relations – to ensure the continuation of all life, not just human life.

“That’s where we get into connection with land, and this relationship with land is not just an Indigenous responsibility,” she says. “It should be all of ours because, at one time, we were all intimately and deeply connected to land for basic needs and survival. The Indigenous philosophy of relationship to land really reminds us of that sacred relationship, and that the gift creation has given us – land – provides everything we need to ensure the continuation of life. We need to honour that and fulfill that responsibility to creation.”

To help explain the deeper meaning of the relationship with land, she quotes Haudenosaunee scholar Susan M. Hill from her book, *The Clay We are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River*:

“Yethi’nihstenha Onhwentsya is the Kanyen’keha (Mohawk) name for the earth. ‘She-to-us-mother provides-[for our]-needs’ describes the relationship between Onkwehonwe (humans) and the earth. The name for the earth, along with the history of how that name came into being, explains Haudenosaunee land philosophy. Everything a person could possibly need to know is there.”¹

From this view, land also holds all knowledge, including the relationships within Indigenous languages and land philosophy, familial relations, and Indigenous law.

“Land is kinship and identity – it is from where we come,” she says. “The earth mother that provides for all of our needs. This defines our relationship with the rest of the world.”

For the Haudenosaunee, identity is related to maternal bloodlines – the 49 clan mothers – creating a familial relationship with the land. The connection between clan mothers is a critical part of the Haudenosaunee hereditary governance system.

“That’s why the *Indian Act* and colonial governance are so destructive,” she says. “Because it attempted to sever those relationships, it sought to erode identity and traditional governance systems.”

While there are variations of the meaning of the relationship with land across Indigenous Nations, Longboat believes this is a common perspective among Indigenous Peoples.

“To honour the land, to care for the land, to ensure she can fulfill her responsibilities,” she says. “She sustains all of us, and at one time, all people were intimately connected to the land. And for many, this has been lost.”

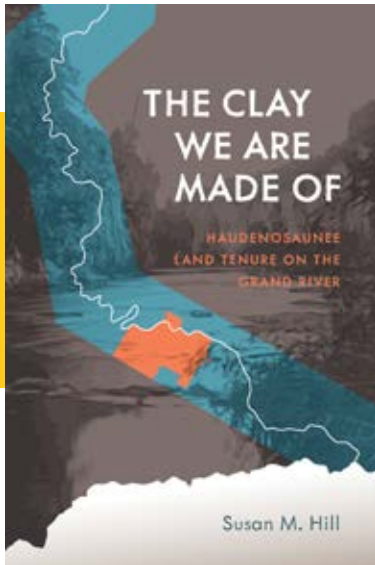
TRUTHS ABOUT TREATIES

Treaties are tremendously important and form the basis for the nation-to-nation relations between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous people and their governments.

“Treaties are formal negotiated agreements,” says Longboat, adding that there are 46 treaties and other agreements in Ontario, which were made between 1781 and 1930. “Speaking of historic treaties in particular, treaties are solemn, deeply sincere agreements between two nations. This is significant, because treaties recognize the signatories as independent nations – not nations as wards of the Crown. This is an ambiguity that persists today.”

Treaties are diverse, unique, and framed in both Canadian law and Indigenous law

“The Constitution upholds Indigenous rights and treaty rights, and UNDRIP further affirms those rights,” she says. “Canada has committed to UNDRIP, and now action is required to implement the recognition of those rights.”



“Yethi’nihstenha Onhwentsya is the Kanyen’keha (Mohawk) name for the earth. ‘She-to-us-mother provides-[for our]-needs’ describes the relationship between Onkwehonwe (humans) and the earth.”

Although the Royal Proclamation of 1763 recognized Indigenous title, it also set the stage for treaties through which the Crown gained access to land. In time, the promise of peaceful co-existence was replaced by the *Indian Act* and other colonial policies designed to erode, assimilate, and annihilate Indigenous Nations, including the culture, language, and way of life.

Despite this attempt, treaties continue to be valid, living documents that define relationships.

“Treaties are not just static terms and conditions,” she says. “The treaties were signed as a means of ensuring Indigenous prosperity for future generations in the spirit of peaceful coexistence. While the colonial mindset or the nation-state’s spirit and intent changed to sovereignty of Turtle Island, Indigenous law persists; hence, Indigenous Peoples did not through treaty give up Indigenous nationhood and sovereignty and self-determination.”

This leads to another critical truth about treaties. While treaties are written in Canadian law, the fact that people often think of treaties *only* as written documents is Westernizing and represents just one side of the agreement.

“Treaties are also codified in Indigenous law, ceremony, and protocols,” she says, naming the Two Row Wampum, Dish with One Spoon, and Covenant Chain as living treaties. “Generally speaking – context specific – each treaty may be different but still defines the ongoing rights, responsibilities, and obligations.”

To ensure a rich understanding, treaties require interpretation, including the spirit and intent of Indigenous signatories.

“Remember oral tradition,” says Longboat. “Signatories were unable to read the documents they signed. Early treaty relationships, such as the Peace and Friendship treaties, were about peaceful coexistence, as was the Two Row Wampum, and the Indigenous view continued in this spirit and intent. As the historic treaties were established across Turtle Island, or what is now Canada, they became more oppressive, more purposeful in land alienation.”

Therefore, you can’t just read the written Western version – you also need the Indigenous interpretation. That means talking to the Indigenous communities.


“What does this mean to them? How do they interpret it? You need to come to that ‘one mind’ to know that you’re on the same playing field and to talk about your understandings, because they will likely differ,” says Longboat.

She references the Provincial Policy Statement and the guidelines planners have to follow and acknowledges that it can be overwhelming. “But if there’s a way to engage, develop relations in times of good. Friendship can be rekindled so that you’re not waiting for conflict to establish a relationship.”

Tying it back the land, Longboat believes there was a disconnect with the land and the relationships started to change.

“As the Haudenosaunee describe it, we were going to share the land, share the resources, and not interfere with one another’s affairs,” says Longboat. “The interference really came when the spirit and intent of the treaties was no longer held.”

Understanding treaties is a critical part of understanding the truth.

“The TRC has concluded that on an individual level, we all need to learn the truth of the shared history and what it means to be treaty people. Remember, we are all treaty people as descendants of the signatories of these nation-to-nation agreements; we all carry responsibilities.” 

The interview with Sheri Longboat continues on OPPI’s Planning Exchange. Look for *Understanding the truth: Practical lessons for planners*, which includes a discussion of the Anishinaabe Seven Fires Prophecies.

¹Hill, S. M. (2017). *The Clay We are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (part of the University of Manitoba’s Critical Studies in Native History Series). Univ. of Manitoba Press, p. 3.

Learn the truth so you can plan for a better future

BY KERRY-ANN CHARLES-NORRIS


Aaniin, boozhoo, Kerry-Ann Charles nindizhinikaaz, Georgina Island nindoonjibaa, Ma'iingan Dodem, Anishnabe Kwe. (Hello, greetings, my name is Kerry-Ann Charles and I come from Georgina Island First Nation. I am of the Wolf Clan and I am an Indigenous woman.)

I do not know much of my language even though my dad was a fluent speaker, as we – my four siblings and I – were never taught due to the reasons that the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action have been created.

I currently reside in my Community and had the privilege of working there for several years in many different capacities, including by-law development, implementation and enforcement, waste management, housing, and as a Council Member. I also created and sustained what is now the Environment Department for over eight years. Although I no longer work for my Community, I am very grateful to my Community for entrusting me to take on these roles as it has taught me so much and has provided me opportunities to not only learn about the processes involved in supporting a Community but also led me down the path of pursuing an understanding of what it means to be an Indigenous person, as I had very little knowledge of that at the time. A very important part of this journey has been understanding my history and sharing what I learn with others, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, so that I can do my part to champion a better future. This has become my passion and purpose and has led me to sharing these words.

It is unfortunate that many have not been educated or informed of the true history of Canada as it has not been voluntarily disclosed in the past or even in our very present. Although the disclosure is a priority for some, it is not for most in our society. I am not here to tell you our shared history, but I can tell you that knowing this truth is integral in a time of reconciliation and a time of environmental crisis, especially as planners, as you cannot plan for a better future without first reconciling with the First Peoples of this land and the land itself.

I am not a planner, but my understanding of this current profession and the people that work within it is that you strive to meet human needs through the design and alteration of the natural landscapes that assist the public in living a good life or what Anishinaabe term Mino Bimaadiziwin. Indigenous Peoples must be included in this vision.

As a planner, not only is there opportunity to take a lead in reconciling with the First People of Turtle Island, but you are also in a unique place to collaborate with so many others inside and outside your profession, such as with the health field, where you can bring Indigenous knowledge to the table and ensure it is being meaningfully incorporated. You can reflect not only the history but the wisdom that the Indigenous Peoples hold in your work which is visible to others and will promote reconciliation and help restore the balance that has been lost within our world and will ensure a better tomorrow for our next seven generations. 



Kerry-Ann Charles-Norris is the Environment Partnership Co-ordinator at Cambium Indigenous Professional Services (CIPS).

Special Feature:

We Are All Treaty People

Land and the disposition and management of land are central to the planning profession. Land is also central to understanding the truth – the real history of this land we call Canada – and to begin walking the pathway towards reconciliation.

To illustrate and visually emphasize the fact that Indigenous Peoples are constitutional rights holders of the land Ontario planners work, live, and play on, OPPI commissioned Danny Roy, MCIP, RPP, MRAIC, from the Indigenous Design Studio at Brook McIlroy Inc. to create the treaty map and wampum belt on the following four pages. Wherever you are on your journey of learning about Indigenous Peoples and planning perspectives, OPPI encourages you to use this as a resource to aid in your learning and as a reminder that we are all treaty people.



WE ARE ALL TREATY PEOPLE

Indigenous Peoples have been present on the lands we know as Canada for 15,000 years. When European settlers arrived about 400 years ago, Indigenous Peoples had been governing the land with planning, architecture, and environmental design tenets that had been established for millennia.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 confirmed the original occupancy of Indigenous Peoples and proclaimed that settlers could not live on the land until the Crown had signed treaties with the original Indigenous People occupying that land. Ontario is entirely covered by 46 treaties and other agreements signed since the Royal Proclamation. Despite colonial policies that exploited and attempted to eradicate Indigenous Peoples, treaties are legally binding and are as valid today as they were when they were signed. This means Indigenous Peoples are rights holders, not stakeholders, and we are all treaty people.

Source: www.ontario.ca

Our Relationships with Land

Treaties play a large role in our lives, the water we use, and the land we live on. The Wampum Belt is one of the symbols that symbolize an agreement of mutual respect. This piece above intends to show a visual representation of the meaning to relationships to land. Because of treaties, we are able to live on our environment and a reminder of our history.

Further Insights

“Land and its disposition is a key element for us as Planners, and land is a central theme in our work. This means for reconciliation and a profoundly meaningful process of the restructuring of Canada’s planning frameworks in relation to land. We urge Planners to focus on this as a period of learning and growth.”

Calvin Brook, RPP, Land Use Planning Exchange Blog
<https://ontarioplanner.ca/2017/12/december-2017/land->





Land and Water

relationship with the land we
 everything that occupies it.
 earliest forms of treaty. It can
 mutual respect and peace. The
 wampum belt and the further
 land, water and living beings.
 to have this relationship with
 that we must take care of it.

Focus group and survey participant,
 Indigenous Perspectives in Planning,
*Report of the Indigenous Planning
 Perspectives Task Force*, June 2019,
 page 12.

*“Truth is
 acknowledging that the
 profession itself needs to
 change its mindset. This is not
 just about bringing in Indigenous
 People and making them
 planners. It’s a path we should
 be walking together.”*

*are at the core of what we do
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 ul role to play in tandem with
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 o Indigenous Nations. I would
 a long and sometimes difficult
 prior to work in this sector.”*

*“Through lessons
 learned, meaningful
 discussion and collaboration,
 and mutual respect and
 understanding, we can carve a
 path of endless opportunities
 and create formative change
 within the planning
 profession.”*

James Roach, RPP, Land Use
 Planning Coordinator at the
 National Aboriginal Lands Mangers
 Association. RPP Profile, OPPI’s Y
Magazine, Winter 2021.

and Truth/Land and Reconciliation.
 og. Posted on December 1, 2017:
 s.ca/blog/planning-exchange/
 and-truth-land-and-reconciliation

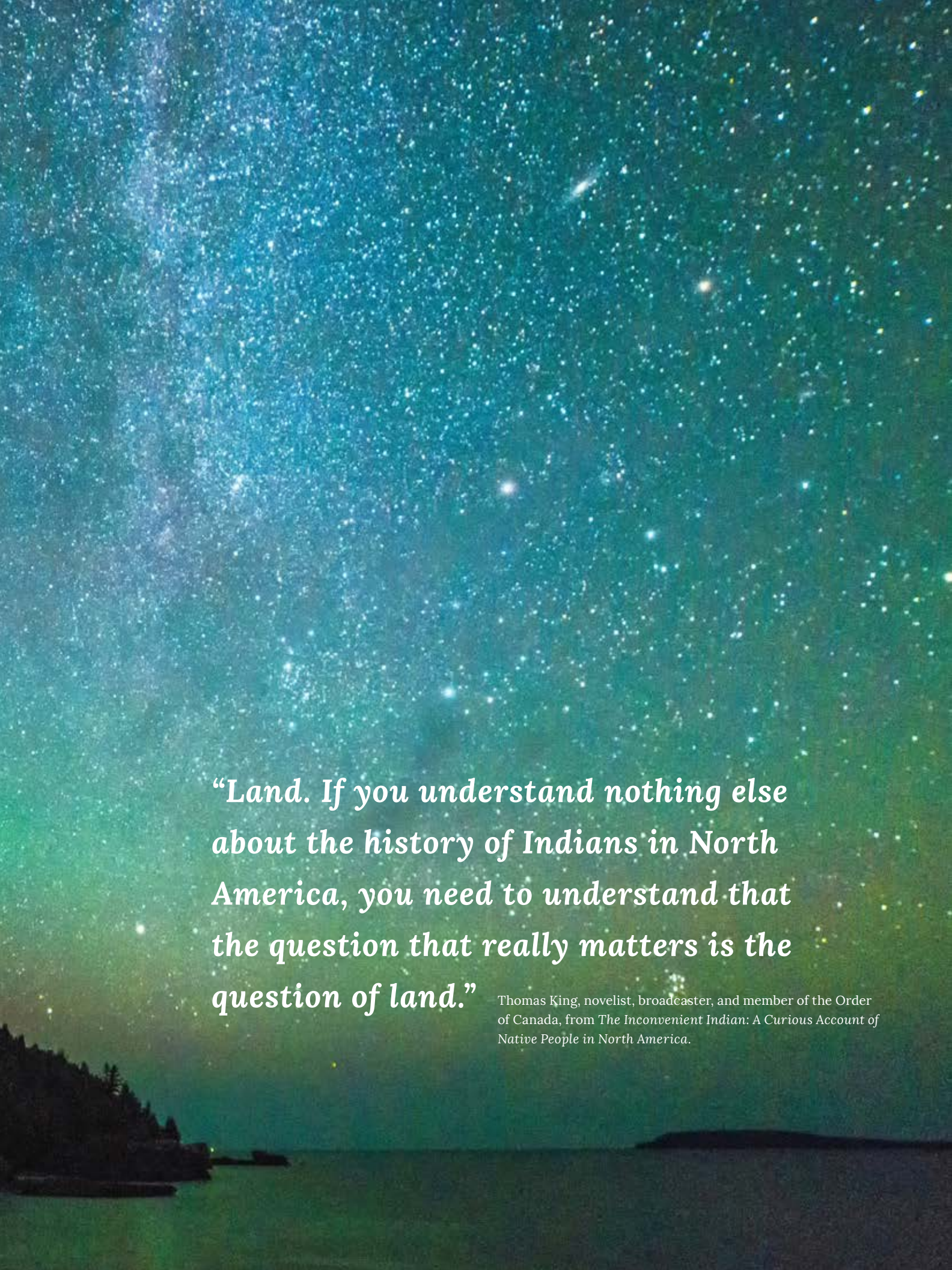




Map limitations: This map does not purport to reflect true accurate boundaries and is provided for illustrative/ educational/interest purposes. Research and illustration of this map was completed to the best ability and may have resulted in unintentional deviations.

Treaties and the treaty relationships are more than what is recorded in maps.

Illustrations by Danny Roy, MCIP, RPP, MRAIC, Indigenous Design Studio at Brook McIlroy Inc. Danny is Cree-Métis from Sakitawak (Île-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan) and a member of English River Dene Nation in Treaty 10 territory. He is a professional planner and intern architect practicing and living in Tkaronto.



“Land. If you understand nothing else about the history of Indians in North America, you need to understand that the question that really matters is the question of land.”

Thomas King, novelist, broadcaster, and member of the Order of Canada, from *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America*.

Notes on treaties and treaty rights

Excerpts from Shared Path Consultation Initiative, A Backgrounder on Treaties and Treaty Rights, 2020.

“Aboriginal rights are the inherent collective rights of all Aboriginal peoples in Canada – First Nations, Métis and Inuit – that arise from their continued use and occupation of the land. Some specific Aboriginal rights are recognized and were promised to be protected in historical treaties... Treaty rights derive from treaties made between First Nations and the British Crown from the 1700s to 1929. Such treaties cover all of Ontario and most of Canada.”

“The Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) has stated that treaties between First Nations and the Crown are sui generis – which means they are unique and of their own kind. Significantly, treaties affirm inherent Aboriginal rights, rather than granting them, that is to say, the SCC acknowledges that these rights exist regardless of the SCC’s decisions.”

“Aboriginal and treaty rights stretch over all of Canada and are constitutionally protected.... Municipal-Indigenous relations can be strengthened and conflict minimized or avoided when there are open channels of communication between municipalities and First Nations and Métis communities, and where municipal planners take the time to understand treaty rights from local Indigenous community perspectives.”

Shared Path Consultation Initiative, A Backgrounder on Treaties and Treaty Rights, 2020 is available online along with numerous additional resources, including webinars, at sharedpath.ca.

© Shared Path



Chief Dave Mowat of Alderville First Nation, now a sitting member of the Shared Path Consultation Initiative, speaks at the charity organization's 2019 AGM along with John Cutfeet of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation (far left), Andrée Boisselle, an assistant professor at Osgoode Law School, and Dean Jacobs, consultation manager with Walpole Island First Nation and a former Shared Path board member.

"I think the entire process could be re-examined and re-designed so that instead of merely incorporating Indigenous perspective, it would be built around Indigenous perspectives..."

Education as mediation: Shared Path Consultation Initiative

BY DALI CARMICHAEL

As reconciliation advances throughout Canada, it is time to move on from strictly adversarial processes of mediation and conflict resolution to more proactive approaches that start with early and ongoing relationship development.

Indigenous nations are faced with many obstacles when exercising their unique Aboriginal rights to make land use planning decisions on their own treaty and traditional lands. This might be through prohibitively expensive court cases and land claim filings, court injunctions, or – as in more recent instances – negotiations with proponents who may be armed with enough resources to make the dialogues rather one sided.

Planning is a political process that involves constant

negotiation and mediation. For this reason, our organization, the Shared Path Consultation Initiative, runs on the philosophy that this field has the potential to positively impact Indigenous political and territorial claims. In practice, we seek to provide opportunities and resources that enhance, inform, and facilitate relationship building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, particularly within the realm of land planning.

Our board consists of a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous members, including chiefs, planners, archaeologists, lawyers, academics, and entrepreneurs. What follows is advice from these experts on how to integrate reconciliation into planning practices.

01 Carolyn King, C.M., a founder of Shared Path and its current chair, and former Chief of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

“Our role in meaningful reconciliation requires us to have uncomfortable conversations about Indigenous rights, treaties, and land use planning.”



WHAT ARE THE TRUTHS THAT PLANNERS NEED TO KNOW AND HOW CAN THEY LEARN THEM?

Heather Dorries is Anishinaabe from Treaty 1, a director with Shared Path, and an assistant professor in the University of Toronto’s Department of Geography and Planning. She describes planning as a profession that is intimately involved with environmental decision making, a fundamental element of reconciliation and decolonization.

“Planners need to realize that planning is a part of the process of reconciliation,” she says. “I think there is often a tendency for planners to regard themselves as being more

concerned with less political aspects of land use and development and not concerned with big political questions that are part of broader public discourse.”

David Stinson, a Registered Professional Planner and fellow Shared Path director, says planners need to be aware of the unique rights Indigenous Peoples hold. These rights stem from relations Indigenous Peoples have with the land dating back to pre-colonial contact and have been recognized by colonial governance through treaties with the state and under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Concepts like the duty to consult and accommodate stem from caselaw and require that the Crown and its delegates – sometimes proponents of various levels of government – meaningfully consult with Indigenous Peoples about developments that may affect their treaty and traditional rights and accommodate nations where possible.

“It’s very easy to slip into that mode and treat First Nations and Métis as stakeholders,” Stinson says. “I think that’s a mistake – they are rights holders, not stakeholders. Their interests are not one more on a long list of things you are trying to work through as a planner – they are a priority.”

Planners commonly express confusion around municipalities’ obligations to consult Indigenous nations because of a lack of legislation giving such direction.

“When there’s conflict, it’s usually about land claim issues or whose jurisdiction is being impacted,” says Carolyn King, C.M., one of the founders of Shared Path and its sitting chair and former Chief of the Mississaugas of

the Credit First Nation. “The municipality [is] under the provincial land [while] the reserve is under federal law... planners don’t know enough about what to do with that.”

King is just one among a network of planners, academics, and community members who have pushed the province to tackle this issue using a policy-led approach. As a result, recent iterations of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) state that planning authorities shall engage and coordinate with Indigenous communities on planning matters, language that was strengthened in the 2020 PPS.

Each First Nation has their own history, says Dean Jacobs, Shared Path director emeritus, current consultation manager and former Chief of Walpole Island First Nation. He added that part of the engagement process should include learning this history along with the nation’s governance and legal protocols, which may differ from their colonial counterparts.

“There’s a prevailing attitude in planning to see environmental relations as a relationship of domination, where the environment is something that can be managed and controlled by humans through planning action,” says Dorries. “Indigenous perspectives invite us to think of that relationship as inverted.”

“ [Planning] has the potential to positively impact Indigenous political and territorial claims.”

WHAT CAN PLANNERS DO TO COMMUNICATE WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN MEANINGFUL AND EFFECTIVE WAYS?

Ron Williamson, vice chair of Shared Path and founder of Archaeological Services Inc., identifies ignorance and fear about how to proceed with negotiations as two of the main barriers blocking meaningful consultation between First Nations and planners. To avoid these pitfalls, he suggests developing ongoing relationships between municipalities and Indigenous communities before conflicts arise. In his experience, this could be as simple as leadership coming together over a hot meal once a month.

“Planners need to realize that planning is a part of the process of reconciliation.”


“Go to their events, go talk to them other than just sending a letter,” King adds. “First Nations just can’t deal with hundreds of letters. What the First Nations are doing now, they’re developing their own protocols. Mississaugas of the Credit have our own protocol document. Here’s who we are, here’s what we are, here’s how you talk to us.”

Another method planners can use to foster more Indigenous involvement in the planning process is the development of frameworks or agreements that centre Indigenous protocols. Both King and Williamson identify the Grand River Notification Agreement as one of the better examples of such a device. The voluntary

agreement is between the Six Nations of the Grand River elected Council, Mississaugas of the Credit, City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County, Grand River Conservation Authority, and the Canadian and Ontario governments. It defines notification processes and is renewed in five-year intervals to allow all parties a chance to review and improve the process.

Dorries would also like to see major shifts in the planning realm that centre, rather than simply incorporate, Indigenous governance and decision making.

“I think the entire process could be re-examined and re-designed so that instead of merely incorporating Indigenous perspective, it would be built around Indigenous perspectives, which would be something really different,” she says. “Ultimately, when we’re talking about incorporating or elevating Indigenous concerns in planning processes, we’re talking about varying degrees of stakeholder participation which is not what First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities across the country are asking for. That is not the demand. The demand is not to be a better stakeholder because that does not respect the unique constitutional position that Indigenous Peoples have in Canada.”

Indigenous Peoples in Canada are rights holders not stakeholders, and planning that centres that constitutional position is planning on a path towards reconciliation. 



Dali Carmichael is the Program Coordinator at Shared Path. To learn more about the Shared Path Consultation Initiative, please visit sharedpath.ca

Keep reading:

The Planning Exchange

OPPI's Planning Exchange Blog is a source for relevant articles on topics that matter to planners and to others interested in seeing the world from a planner's point of view. Here are excerpts from two Planning Exchange articles on topics related to the truth and reconciliation theme.

“Planners are challenged with the need to develop more context around their understanding of true inclusion, engagement, and the context in which Indigenous communities assert their rights and responsibilities. It has become clear that Indigenous communities are not ‘stakeholders’ in the common language of planners. They are Nations, governments and Treaty holders with distinct rights and autonomy. Planning needs to truly consider this as part of our processes and as a profession.”

Excerpt from *Planning's Relationship with Indigenous Communities: Planning Policy and Slow Progress in Changing Times* by Heather Swan, RPP, and Stephanie Burnham. Posted June 1, 2020: <https://ontarioplanners.ca/blog/planning-exchange/june-2020/planning-s-relationship-with-indigenous-communities-planning-policy-and-slow-progress-in-changing-t>

“The impacts of this dispossession of Indigenous lands has been, and remains, at the core of the devastation that has been experienced by Canada's Indigenous peoples. The following statistics begin to tell the story:

- The Community Well-Being Index for First Nations Communities reveals the stunning disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities across indicators of income, education and housing. The state of housing alone is a national disgrace.
- Life expectancy for Indigenous people is nine years less than for non-Indigenous Canadians.
- Young Indigenous people are six times more likely to die from suicide than non-Indigenous youth. At the same time roughly one third of Canada's 1.5 million Indigenous people is under the age of 14.
- Ontario has the highest Indigenous population of any province and an on-reserve child poverty rate of 48 per cent.
- More than 23 per cent of the inmate population federal institutions are Aboriginal people – an incarceration rate 10 times higher than among non-Aboriginal people and two-thirds of the inmates in Western Canada are Aboriginal people.”

Excerpt from *Land and Truth / Land and Reconciliation* by Calvin Brook, RPP. Posted on December 1, 2017: <https://ontarioplanners.ca/blog/planning-exchange/december-2017/land-and-truth-land-and-reconciliation>

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Brightwater: Port Credit West Village

Mississauga, Ontario

The revitalization of the former Imperial Oil Site on Mississauga's waterfront seeks to transform the industrial site into a vibrant, mixed-use, sustainable urban community and an important and animated addition to the Port Credit experience. Urban Strategies has played a key role in this ambitious plan, leading the master plan and approvals process.

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James Roach, RPP, is an Ojibway of Batchewana First Nation in Northern Ontario and the Land Use Planning Coordinator at the National Aboriginal Lands Mangers Association (NALMA). Over the last 10 years, he has worked with the private sector, First Nation governments, and not-for profit organizations. His areas of expertise include community land use planning and engagement, economic and sustainable development, lands management, and strategic partnership development.

Registered Professional Planner

PROFILE

NAME:

James Roach, RPP

LOCATION:

Curve Lake, Ontario

POSITION:

Land Use Planning Coordinator at the National Aboriginal Lands Mangers Association (NALMA)

Tell us about NALMA.

NALMA officially incorporated in 2000 as a non-profit, non-political, technical organization committed to raising professional standards in lands management. Membership consists of eight Regional Lands Associations, with a membership at large of 217 Land Management professionals across Canada. NALMA is governed by a Board of eight Directors who represent our eight Regional Lands Associations.

As stewards of the land, we are committed to empowering Land Managers to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism. We are responsible for the sustainable management of our ancestral lands for future generations.

To raise professional standards in Land Management, NALMA's mandate focuses on three areas:

- Professional Development: NALMA provides training and capacity-building opportunities for First Nation Lands Managers. Since 2004, we have certified 176 Lands Managers through the Professional Lands Management Certification Program (PLMCP).

- Networking and Communication: NALMA provides a channel for successfully networking through open lines of communication, knowledge sharing, and the establishment of partnerships and strategic alliances across Canada.
- Technical Support: NALMA provides technical expertise in the area of land management to First Nation Lands Managers, First Nation organizations, and government agencies. NALMA has established units specifically in surveys, environment, and land use planning. NALMA also hosts the Centre of Excellence for Matrimonial Real Property (COEMRP)

It is important to note that our Regional Lands Associations mirror the same mandate and provide opportunities from a regional perspective.

The NALMA Land Use Planning (LUP) Unit was developed to address the need for LUP support among First Nation communities in Canada.

Tell us something about your own involvement with NALMA and what brings you the greatest satisfaction?

In my role at NALMA, I coordinate the Land Use Planning Unit, working directly with First Nation Lands Managers across the country to support planning needs. I provide outreach, direct technical training, support services, funding, and capacity-building opportunities to assist First Nations in Community Land Use Planning.

The greatest satisfaction comes from engaging in discussions, providing the tools, resources, and knowledge to build capacity and support Lands Managers in making informed planning decisions that reflect the unique cultural, traditional, economic, and ecological goals of the community. It is also satisfying to see Land Use Plans developed and implemented to improve community quality of life, respecting community input and values throughout the process.

Tell us a bit about the relationship between Indigenous and Western Planners? How do Indigenous and Western perspectives differ with respect to credentials?

Indigenous Land Managers have an intimate knowledge of their lands and traditional territories. They understand and value social, cultural, and ecological aspects of their lands, resources, and communities. This knowledge is often gained through community, culture, and oral history teachings. Western perspectives often identify a Planner as someone with a specific university degree and do not always value or validate the critical importance of traditional Indigenous knowledge of land management. Both perspectives can provide invaluable input when making informed planning or land management decisions that reflect the needs of a community.

It is important that Indigenous Land Managers and Western Planners work in collaboration on all planning projects, both on and off reserve lands. Western Planners should strive to understand the culture and values of the community in which they are working or that their work may impact. Consultation needs to be meaningful and ongoing, not just checking a box. It must be a continuous process focused on the importance of relationship building.

How has planning policy challenged relationships between Indigenous communities and the planning profession?

Often Western Planning policies have excluded Indigenous Peoples from the planning and consultation processes, resulting in disregard to Indigenous values. In addition, a history of irresponsible land management by governments and Planners have discriminated against Indigenous Peoples by ignoring existing treaties and nation-to-nation relationships. The lack of follow through and action on policies and promises made.

Some progress has been made recently within the planning profession, recognizing the importance of Indigenous land management and striving for truth and reconciliation. Policies, reports, and recommendations have been developed. Now these

policies need to be implemented and actioned to ensure they achieve the desired objectives.

Planners should be proactive in research and inclusion, especially when Indigenous consent is required. This can be accomplished when Planners work with a First Nation, engaging in discussion and providing tools, resources, and information at the onset of a project.

The terms “Indigenous” and “Aboriginal” group a diversity of people into one convenient category. What is the danger with this? How can Planners do better?

“Indigenous,” “Aboriginal,” “Native,” “Indian,” and more are not terms we have selected for ourselves. These terms have been used throughout history by government and policy makers to conveniently categorize a diverse group of peoples. In Ontario alone, there are 133 First Nations belonging to many distinctive groups of Indigenous Peoples, each with their own unique languages, traditions, beliefs, and cultures.

It is important for Western Planners to understand and acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous Peoples and cultures. Planners should do their homework and learn, research, and reach out to Indigenous Peoples and First Nations in their local area or the area in which they are working. They should also engage in discussions and make meaningful efforts to understand and appreciate specific values and perspectives of the communities the plans are meant to serve. As a first step, Planners should know which Indigenous territory or treaty area they are located in and learn about the history of that area.

What can individual Planners can do right now to introduce more of the truth into their work and help build better relationships with the Indigenous People in their areas?

Undertake some self-learning: read important documents that outline steps for truth and reconciliation, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and planning-specific Indigenous policies and guidelines developed by OPPI and CIP, and incorporate the calls to action into your work.

Reach out to organizations like NALMA, First Nations Land Management Resource Centre, or local Indigenous organizations to engage in discussion.

Talk to Land Managers in your neighbouring First Nation communities, identify common interests, goals, and objectives and build relationships – and include them in discussions when making planning and policy decisions.

Participate in community events, attend a powwow, and celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21.

Do you have a message for RPPs and future RPPs?

Current Planners: Indigenous Peoples have successfully and sustainably managed the lands and territories of our region for thousands of years. Our traditional knowledge and practices have

enabled us to thrive and develop vibrant, healthy communities pre-dating European colonization. In this land we now share, partnerships, collaboration, and consultation with Indigenous Peoples are key to cultural understanding and will only strengthen the planning profession. This can often be started by a simple conversation and can be a stepping-stone on one's personal path to listen, learn, and understand the First Peoples perspectives and the inherent role we have held throughout history as caretakers of the land. Western Planners and Indigenous Land Mangers can form an important alliance and work together to address current and future land use issues.

Future Planners: Get involved, ask challenging questions, and apply new methods and ways of thinking – this will continue to add value and diversity to the profession. It is important to understand our true history in order to progress with new and innovative methods of planning.

As a final note, I would like to reiterate that this interview is only one Ojibway Planner's perspective and in no way is meant to characterize the views of all Indigenous perspectives. I encourage all Indigenous and non-Indigenous Planners to actively listen and learn from one another. Through lessons learned, meaningful discussion and collaboration, and mutual respect and understanding, we can carve a path of endless opportunities and create formative change within the planning profession. (Y)



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OPPI NEWS

JOIN THE OPPI COUNCIL

As a non-profit organization, OPPI's activities and progress are overseen by a group of volunteers who are accountable for all its activities and accomplishments: OPPI Council.

OPPI's Governance and Nominating Committee is calling for nominations from Full Members who wish to join Council as Directors for two-year terms. Directors may be re-elected for a second two-year term. Elected Members assume office at the adjournment of the 2021 Annual General Meeting.

The call for nominations opens February 1 and closes April 1, 2021. Find more information at ontarioplanners.ca.

OPPI STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

OPPI recognizes today's planning students are the Registered Professional Planners of tomorrow and provides Student Members with scholarship opportunities, awarding excellence and community contributions.

The **Ronald M. Keeble Undergraduate Scholarship** assists in furthering planning education and recognizes Student Members who are making a contribution to their communities. Applicants must be Student Members of OPPI at the time of application and the recipient must be enrolled full-time in an accredited undergraduate planning program in Ontario.

The **Gerald Carothers Graduate Scholarship** assists in furthering planning education and recognizes Student Members who are making a contribution to their communities. Applicants must be members of OPPI at the time of application and the recipient must be enrolled full-time in an accredited graduate planning program in Ontario.

The application deadline for scholarships is March 1, 2021. Details are available at ontarioplanners.ca.

OPPI20: RECAP ON A RECORD-BREAKING CONFERENCE

OPPI20, *Finding a Place in Evolving Communities*, was not only OPPI's first ever fully virtual conference, but it also broke an attendance record. Almost 1,200 people attended OPPPI20, Ontario's largest annual conference for planning professionals, which was held over four days in late September and early October.

More than 50 sessions focusing on the topics of housing and demographics were offered, as well as virtual networking and social activities and the OPPI Annual General Meeting. The keynote speakers were fantastic: Jay Pitter, Nova Nicole, and David Wachsmuth, as well as a keynote panel on GTA affordable housing, featuring Curt Benson, RPP, Sarah Cameroon, RPP, Naheeda Jamal, RPP, and Nick Michael, RPP.

Our first ever online conference was a big step into the unknown for OPPI, but one that paid off in terms of how many members could attend, learn, and grow, thanks to the flexible nature of digital. We want to thank our members who attended this year and our partners for their generosity and support of this year's virtual conference. Thank you for trusting us.



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ACADEMIC

Engaging and coordinating with Indigenous Peoples: Examining Section 1.2.2 of the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement

BY ALEX PYSKLYWEC AND LEELA VISWANATHAN, RPP

In 2020, the government of Ontario updated the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS).¹ The update included new and revised language pertaining to planning and Indigenous Peoples. As members of the Planning With Indigenous Peoples Research Group at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, the authors conducted a content analysis of changes to Indigenous-related language of the 2020 PPS. Our findings suggest that the new and revised language generally strengthened Indigenous-related policy directives (e.g., from "should" to "shall"), as well as amplified (i.e., increased policy directives scope) or specified their scope (i.e., provided instruction or tied a directive to another PPS section/other legislation).

“Municipal engagement efforts, such as advisory committees, rely disproportionately on only a few Indigenous actors, placing a burden on these people to represent a diversity of opinions from a wide array of Indigenous Peoples.”

The most significant change was revised language in section 1.2.2, mandating that “Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters.”² This is an important shift in language that requires greater municipal effort to engage and coordinate with Indigenous Peoples who reside within municipal boundaries, and with Indigenous communities whose traditional territories municipalities occupy.

Yet, when we reviewed academic literature from 2015 to 2020 that examined Canadian municipal Indigenous engagement and

“There was general consensus amongst authors that current engagement and consultation practices are not helpful and do not affirm building nation-to-nation relations.”

coordination practices,²⁻⁸ we found that current approaches were generally considered ineffective.^{4-6,8} In terms of engagement, the most frequent municipal engagement/consultation strategy was Indigenous advisory committees.^{5-7,9} It was noted, however, that municipal engagement efforts, such as advisory committees, rely disproportionately on only a few Indigenous actors, placing a burden on these people to represent a diversity of opinions from a wide array of Indigenous Peoples.⁷

Another finding was that the use of conventional public engagement techniques, such as open houses and town halls, unsuccessfully attracted Indigenous Peoples.^{4,8} The City of Saskatoon, however, used a gathering-style event after several attempts at more conventional engagement techniques had failed.⁴ The gathering-style event was deemed to be a more culturally appropriate approach and gained greater Indigenous participation. Despite this, there was general consensus amongst authors that current engagement and consultation practices are not helpful and do not affirm building nation-to-nation relations,^{4-6,8} something that several Indigenous scholars, activists, and allies have been calling for.⁹⁻¹¹

Two articles examined municipal-First Nation inter-governmental coordination.^{2,3} One study briefly discussed municipal-Indigenous coordination in British Columbia and noted that differences in jurisdiction made relationships difficult to navigate.³ Another study examined the joint management of port lands between the City of Cornwall and the Akwesasne Mohawk, concluding that mutually beneficial components of the management agreement were successfully implemented but aspects of the agreement with no clear mutual benefit remained unimplemented.² This suggests that identifying benefits for all parties could assist with coordination efforts.

Finally, one article analyzed municipal (Crown) duty to consult.⁷ The Crown duty to consult is a constitutional obligation, flowing from section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, which requires the Crown (federal/provincial governments and some crown corporations) to consult with Aboriginal Peoples about proposed Crown activities that may negatively affect existing or potential Aboriginal rights.⁷ The Supreme Court of British Columbia ruled that municipal governments are not the Crown and, therefore, have no constitutional obligation to duty to consult.⁸ The expanding scope of municipal powers leaves the door open for constitutional limits, such as duty to consult.⁷

“Municipalities do not need to wait for a mandated duty to consult; they are free to do this practice at any time.”


We believe that policy documents, like the PPS and section 1.2.2, demonstrate – and tacitly acknowledge – that municipal governments have broad powers to make decisions on matters that may interface with existing or potentially existing Aboriginal and treaty rights and that it is likely only a matter of time before the courts rule in favour of constitutional limits to that power.

Furthermore, the new language in section 1.2.2 could be slowly inching towards a policy-based duty to consult, if not a constitutionally mandated one.

In closing, we make the following policy recommendations for provincial-level planners and decision makers to consider.

Provide increased funding and appropriate resourcing for engagement and relationship-building between municipalities, First Nation, Inuit, and Métis governments. With enough resources, new, innovative, and culturally appropriate forms of engagement and coordination can be forged.

Mandate a municipal duty to consult which will provide greater clarity for municipalities, First Nations governments/communities, and development proponents. In any case, municipalities do not need to wait for a mandated duty to consult; they are free to do this practice at any time.

Heed the calls of Indigenous Peoples for a nation-to-nation relationship and invite Indigenous communities to directly partake as equal co-creators in future PPS updates. 

¹Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (2020). Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, Under the *Planning Act*. Queen's Printer for Ontario. Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020#section-1>

²Alcantara, C., & Kalman, I. (2019). Diversifying Methodologies: A Haudenosaunee/Settler Approach for Measuring Indigenous-Local Intergovernmental Success. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 52(1), 21-38. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0008423918000409>

³Curry, D. (2018). Multi-Level Governance in British Columbia: Local Perspectives on Shifting Relations and Structures. *BC Studies*, 198, 10-128.

⁴Fawcett, R. B., Walker, R., & Greene, J. (2015). Indigenizing city planning processes in Saskatoon, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 24(2), 158-175.

⁵Heritz, J. (2016). Municipal-Aboriginal advisory committees in four Canadian cities: 1999-2014. *Canadian Public Administration*, 59(1), 134-152. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/capa.12158>

⁶Heritz, J. (2018). From self-determination to service delivery: Assessing Indigenous inclusion in municipal governance in Canada. *Canadian Public Administration-Administration Publique Du Canada*, 61(4), 596-615. doi:10.1111/capa.12277

⁷Hoehn, F., & Stevens, M. (2018). Local Governments and the Crown's Duty to Consult. *Alberta Law Review*, 55(4), 971-1008. doi:10.29173/alr2483

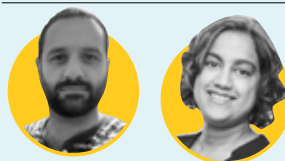
⁸Nejad, S., Walker, R., Macdougall, B., Belanger, Y., & Newhouse, D. (2019). “This is an Indigenous city; why don't we see it?” Indigenous urbanism and spatial production in Winnipeg. *Canadian Geographer-Geographe Canadien*, 63(3), 413-424. doi:10.1111/cag.12

⁹King, H., & Pasternak, S. (2018). Canada's Emerging Indigenous Rights Framework: A Critical Analysis. Yellowhead Institute. Retrieved from <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/yi-rights-report-june-2018-final-5.4.pdf>

¹⁰Palmater, P. (2018). Restoring the Place of Indigenous Peoples in the GTHA. Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance. Retrieved from <https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/imfg/research/bold-ideas/restoring-the-place-of-indigenous-peoples-in-the-gtha/>

¹¹Viswanathan, L. (2019). All our Relations: A Future for Planning. *Plan Canada*, 59(1), 215-219.

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ACADEMIC

Seeking meaningful opportunities for interactions with Indigenous communities

BY JEFFREY REN

Melissa, pictured here with her two children, is the new owner of a net-zero energy house on the Neyaashiinigmiing Reserve.

© Jeffrey Ren, December 2019, taken at the Neyaashiinigmiing Reserve.



According to the Statistics Canada's 2016 Census, there are 374,395 people who identify as Indigenous in Ontario. Approximately a third of people with registered Indian status in Ontario live on reserves and settlements. Although we may hear about problems, such as how 44 per cent of dwellings on reserves are in need of major repairs,¹ it can be difficult for an individual to personally interact with a community to be solution focused.

For many planning students, exposure to Indigenous planning and Indigenous housing issues seldom goes beyond the classroom. At the University of Waterloo, the Warrior Home student design team has dedicated the past two years to understanding and addressing the unique housing needs of the Chippewas of Nawash (Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation) on the Neyaashiinigmiing Reserve.

CASE STUDY: WARRIOR HOME AND THE CHIPPEWAS OF NAWASH

Beginning in 2018, the University of Waterloo's Warrior Home student design team entered into a partnership with the Chippewas of Nawash Neyaashinigmiing First Nation and Habitat for Humanity Grey Bruce to construct a net-zero energy house on the Neyaashiinigmiing Reserve on Bruce Peninsula. This was the first net-zero energy home built by Habitat for Humanity on a reserve in Canada. It is powered entirely by solar panels and features additional sustainability upgrades funded in part by a donation from the team.

Warrior Home's multidisciplinary team of engineering and planning students worked closely with the Chippewas of Nawash throughout the design and construction process. Students on the team learned about the intricacies of the reserve's matrimonial property law and band housing programs. The team also developed an understanding of Indigenous planning and governance practices by attending Band Council meetings and by meeting community leaders.

The planning and building of houses in the community is unique. Strong familial relationships to the land and a more discretionary planning process present a different planning framework compared with the official plans and zoning bylaws you might find in an urban or rural setting. The team conducted research and held discussions with the Chippewas of Nawash Housing Manager to better understand the unique housing needs of the community. With the interaction and feedback from the community, Warrior Home's final design was able to accommodate the preferences, values, and customs of the community.

Special attention was paid to the community's preference for single-family detached housing, as well as for homes able to accommodate extended and multigenerational families. Warrior Home's team members also had the opportunity to interact with the community by volunteering on the build site and attending the dedication ceremony for the newly built house.

These opportunities for meaningful interaction allowed team members to appreciate the cultural differences of a community they might not ordinarily come into contact with.

By actively seeking real-world opportunities to engage with Indigenous communities, students have been able to develop cultural competency, build their understanding of issues, such as multicultural housing needs, and foster a better understanding of how to build more meaningful relationships with the diverse Indigenous communities across Ontario.

WORKING TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

Exploring Indigenous planning and housing issues from an academic perspective, then applying that knowledge in an actual Indigenous community has been an unparalleled learning experience. Real-world interaction between planning students and Indigenous communities is an opportunity for the planners of tomorrow to work towards a more equitable and inclusive future. I encourage my fellow planning students to actively seek out opportunities to interact with Indigenous communities, and I hope that the planning programs across the province enable more of their students to do so. (V)

¹Statistics Canada. (2018, July 18). Aboriginal population profile, 2016 census - Ontario [Province]. Statistics Canada: Canada's national statistical agency / Statistique Canada: Organisme statistique national du Canada. Retrieved July 5, 2020, from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/abpopprof/details/page>



Jeffrey Ren is a Student Member of OPPI, the Senior Project Manager at Warrior Home, and a BES planning candidate at the University of Waterloo.

ACADEMIC

The role of cultural heritage in reconciliation: Opportunities for action

BY ELISE GESCHIERE, SARA EPP, AND SHERI LONGBOAT

01 Eagle feather teaching;

In recent months, protests over the death of George Floyd have ignited widespread social action, marked by protests against racism, colonial institutions, and government policy and practices. In Canada, the movement has taken aim at the legacy of historical and ongoing injustice against Indigenous Peoples. Throughout history, the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the government has been marked by exploitation, oppression, and systemic devaluation of Indigenous life and cultural practices. Current conflicts remind us that we all have a responsibility to acknowledge and take action against injustice.

When it comes to heritage conservation practices, often embedded in the land use planning portfolio, the persistence of a colonial orientation is evident through what and how cultural heritage is conserved as well as through the language we use to discuss this topic. While there is considerable nuance to the term “cultural heritage,” this language may also perpetuate a colonial perspective and individual Indigenous communities may have varying perspectives on what language is the most appropriate and authentic to their understandings of culture and heritage. As practitioners and policy influencers, we need to ask ourselves, what we can do to respect and honour Indigenous cultural heritage within our existing institutions, processes, and structures.

First, we need to recognize the reality. Provincial, and by extension municipal, heritage conservation practices are material focused, where built resources, such as buildings and structures, are prioritized. In Ontario more than 7,000 buildings have been designated in the province since 2015.¹ However, this focus on built resources often supports an “official” narrative, exclusionary of Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous cultural heritage adds a focus on the immaterial elements, spiritual and spatial manifestations of culture and life; one that is living and dynamic, and expressed through distinct communities’⁰² “governance structures, legal traditions, important protocols and ceremonies, social structures and specialized knowledge systems.”² The view that Indigenous cultural heritage is living and dynamic represents a distinct contrast to colonial perceptions of cultural heritage as remnants of the past and artifacts for preservation.


How Indigenous cultural heritage can be supported, protected, and enhanced is not always clear, though the imperative to act has never been stronger. A starting point is to make visible Indigenous cultural heritage so that commemorative landscapes and community identity begin to reflect the existence and experiences of all people.

For planners, confronting colonial roots of professional practice is an important individual and collective action towards reconciliation. Historically, heritage has been

harnessed to serve colonial nation-building practices most often at the expense of Indigenous heritage. In this vein, heritage has been used for destructive aims, used against communities to reinforce harmful ideals.

However, heritage also presents “opportunities for conciliation, understanding, and the building of new relationships.”³ Actions by provincial and municipal governments to honour, preserve, and protect Indigenous-defined cultural heritage can be an achievable step on the pathway to reconciliation:

- **Municipal adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).** The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s action #43 calls on all levels of government to adopt and implement UNDRIP. The principles within UNDRIP, such as Indigenous rights to ownership and management of cultural heritage, create a framework for reorientation of power dynamics between municipal government and Indigenous communities.
- **Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in existing and future interpretive programming.** The Ontario Heritage Trust has acknowledged that many existing plaques under the provincial plaque program “are exclusionary in their interpretation.”⁴ These plaques become sites of public memory that express a simplified and incomplete depiction of history.⁵ Provincial and municipal programs should engage Indigenous Peoples on interpretive monuments and commemorative sites and revisit existing plaque text with a mind toward elevating Indigenous heritage.
- **Explicit incorporation of Indigenous Peoples in the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA).** Beyond Section 6 regarding conservation of resources of archaeological value, the OHA is limited in how it addresses Indigenous cultural heritage.⁶ The conservation of archaeological resources touches upon a legitimate aspect; however, Indigenous cultural heritage is

significantly more than remnants of the past. Revising the OHA to include Indigenous cultural heritage creates opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to identify places of significant meaning, which will enrich the lived experiences of all community members. This involves reforming heritage policy and legislation to incorporate Indigenous cultural heritage. And models exist. First Nations across Canada are creating their own heritage laws to manage cultural landscapes and resources within their traditional territories, such as the Tr’ondek Hwech’in Yukon First Nations. 

¹ Communications MRD. (2016). Environmental Scan of the Culture Sector: Ontario Cultural Strategy Background Document. Prepared for the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

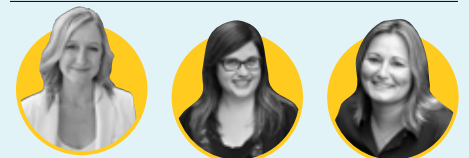
² Aird, K., Fox, G., & Bain, A. (2019). Policy Paper: Recognizing and Including Indigenous Cultural Heritage in B.C. First Peoples’ Cultural Council. <https://fpcc.ca/resource/heritage-policy-paper/>

³ Stevens, J. (2017). Indigenous Intangible Cultural Heritage: Towards an Indigenous Approach to Canadian Heritage Management and Planning. [Master’s thesis, University of Waterloo, Degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning]

⁴ Ontario Heritage Trust. (n.a) Provincial Plaque Program. Heritage Trust. <https://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/index.php/pages/programs/provincial-plaque-program>

⁵ Anderson, S. (2017). The Stories Nations Tell: Sites of Pedagogy, Historical Consciousness, and National Narratives. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 40 (1).

⁶ Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 0.18



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ACADEMIC

Indigenous-led conservation: Removal, recovery, resurgence

BY RYAN MATHESON

In the spirit of truth before reconciliation, the purpose of this article is to provide a base-level history of conservation planning in Canada and its evolving relationship with Indigenous Peoples. It is important to preface this piece with both the attached land acknowledgement, and the disclaimer that I am of settler descent, do not speak on behalf of Indigenous Peoples, and do not claim to know the lived experience of being an Indigenous person in this country.

“The truth is, the Canadian conservation regime, like many of our country’s institutions, was founded on a strategy of active disenfranchisement and dispossession of Indigenous peoples and their lands.”

REMOVAL

For the first several decades of this country’s existence, National Parks in Canada were established under a command-and-control mentality. This means they were created for very specific purposes centred on enhancing economic and recreational opportunities for settler communities. They were also strictly the jurisdiction of the federal government, and they were a statement, of sorts, that this country was

committed to its wild spaces, and that all Canadians would have the right to enjoy the natural wonders synonymous with the young country’s national identity for generations to come.

However, the problem with drawing a box around a swathe of Edenic Canadian wilderness and calling it “protected” is that Edenic wilderness did not exist on this continent at the time of colonization. The North American wilderness was in fact the homelands of hundreds of distinct Indigenous Nations with their own cultures, languages, worldviews, knowledge systems, and beliefs. These Nations had been here since time immemorial, exercising their intrinsic rights to fish, hunt, raise families, practise culture, and subsist. The truth is, the Canadian conservation regime, like many of our country’s institutions, was founded on a strategy of active disenfranchisement and dispossession of Indigenous peoples and their lands.

Riding Mountain National Park, Banff National Park, Stanley Park, Algonquin Provincial Park, Parc des Laurentides – these are just a few celebrated Canadian conservation areas whose collective histories illustrate the story of active suppression of Indigenous land rights and violent evictions of Indigenous peoples from traditional territories. Add to this list any protected area on treaty-ceded land – land taken forcefully by settlers – that restricts Indigenous Peoples from practising cultural activities on traditional lands or is actively

being worked to extend settler influence and control of land, and it becomes apparent that virtually every protected area in Canada has benefitted, and continues to benefit, from the era of Indigenous dispossession and exclusion.

“Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, established in 1993, is internationally acclaimed as being one of the most successful conservation-centric collaborations between an Indigenous group (the Haida Nation) and a western governmental agency (Parks Canada).”

RECOVERY

Section 35 of the *Constitution Act of 1982*, along with subsequent legal decisions, entrenched constitutional credence and protection to Indigenous treaty rights, including land rights, marking a new era of Indigenous rights in Canada. It was also during this period that biodiversity was becoming a litmus test for the success of conservation efforts – a shift from the historical focus on economy and recreation. With social and ecological conservation paradigms shifting concurrently, it was

quickly understood that Indigenous Peoples, worldviews, and knowledge systems had a great deal to offer western conservationists in their quest to enhance and protect biodiversity. The cumulative effect of these events in the conservation world was that new and existing protected areas, out of moral, legal, and practical obligations, began to collaborate with, consult, or otherwise involve Indigenous Peoples in their planning processes and operations.

The co-governance model gave rise to novel ideas on how Indigenous Peoples and western conservationists could collaborate and allowed Indigenous groups to begin recovering rights denied by colonization. For example, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, established in 1993, is internationally acclaimed as being one of the most successful conservation-centric collaborations between an Indigenous group (the Haida Nation) and a western governmental agency (Parks Canada).

However, many other applications of the co-management model have been criticized for being an iteration of command-and-control policies that result in the assimilation of Indigenous knowledges into the western conservation regime. There is a sentiment among critics that although co-management may have led to increased Indigenous engagement, it did not lead to meaningful Indigenous influence over conservation policies or practices.

“Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) are modern iterations of traditional Indigenous governance systems practised since time immemorial.”

RESURGENCE

Stepping forward to the present day, many important pages have been added to this story. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, UNDRIP, the UN Convention of Biological Diversity, and especially the report titled *We Rise Together*, prepared by the Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE), are all testaments to the increasing attention given to Indigenous rights, conservation, and



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge that I live on the traditional territory of Attawandaron, Anishinabek, and Haudenosaunee peoples, the Treaty territory of the Mississauga's of the Credit, and that this land is still home to many Inuit, Métis, and First Nation peoples. I live a privileged lifestyle made possible in part by generations of hostility, racism, and inequity towards the original people of this land, and I understand that many of yesterday's wrongs still manifest in myriad ways today. This is the truth, and, in the spirit of reconciliation, I pledge to do my part in amplifying Indigenous voices and stories, working towards Indigenous-determined goals, and celebrating Indigenous contributions to society. I encourage you to reflect on your relationship to the land you call home and to educate yourself about the peoples who have lived there for thousands of years.

the need for reconciliation in post-settler and settler states. It is becoming apparent that the success of modern protected areas is contingent on the involvement and leadership of Indigenous Peoples as a legal, socio-ecological, and ethical imperative – as such, a new era of Indigenous-led conservation is beginning to (re)emerge.

Defined by ICE as, “lands and waters where Indigenous governments have the primary role in protecting and conserving ecosystems through Indigenous laws, governance and knowledge systems,” Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) are modern iterations of traditional Indigenous governance systems practised since time immemorial. Aside from a few case examples, the development of IPCAs in Canada is a relatively new phenomenon.


This year, stemming from recommendations in the ICE report, the Canadian government announced the Canada Nature Fund – \$175 million available to conservation projects that will contribute to Canada's international conservation commitments. IPCAs were included as eligible for the fund and so far, 27 Indigenous communities have been identified as potential partners.

THE ROLE OF PLANNING

Planners stand to play an important supporting role in the resurgence of Indigenous-led governance and the decolonization of conservation in Canada. It is unclear how IPCA governance and development will fit within the Canadian planning regime, but I believe planners are well positioned to develop policies that aid

in the smooth transition of decision-making powers over protected land, to interpret how Indigenous-led governance can exist alongside Canadian planning laws, and to ensure a decolonized space is made available for Indigenous-led conservation practices.

It is important to note that a key difference between western and Indigenous conservation mentality hinges on divergent worldviews on humans' place in the environment. On one hand, western practices tend to demonstrate a hierarchical understanding of our relationship to nature, which underplays how reliant we really are on the healthy functioning of ecosystems and processes. Contrarily, Indigenous worldviews, speaking broadly, tend to celebrate and centralize the fact that humans are a part of the natural world, and that we should treat it as a relation rather than a possession.

Planners have an ethical obligation to leverage their positions of power within the colonial structure to ensure Indigenous Peoples occupy leadership roles in developing novel approaches to protecting land and water, and that Indigenous perspectives are valued and reflected in emergent and evolving conservation paradigms. 



Ryan Matheson is a Student Member of OPPI and in his final year of the rural planning and development program at the University of Guelph.

PREVIEW



NEXT ISSUE PREVIEW:
SPRING / SUMMER 2021 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

One of the most important aspects of planning is the role it has in economic development. As the province and country continue to grapple with the effects of the pandemic, planners have a role in guiding decisions on a broad range of issues that influence the economic sustainability of our communities.

Safe care homes for our most vulnerable residents. Quality education and employment for young people. High-speed internet in rural and remote areas. Support for sectors badly damaged by the pandemic: retail, tourism, restaurants, arts and entertainment. Spaces for safe human interactions and recreation.

Planners also pay attention to trends influencing our economy: quiet downtown cores as more people work from home, population growth in smaller communities as people seek homes closer to outdoor spaces and can work virtually from faraway places, and shifts in demand for public transit.

The list goes on and on.

At the same time, planners never lose sight of the big issues that predate COVID-19: climate change, uneven population growth, equity and inclusion, affordable housing, food security.

Whether a community is urban or rural, high growth or low growth, its planners are vital participants in economic development and work to make their communities sustainable for future generations. But is it enough? How can planning policy pivot to meet always-changing market demands and economic trends, while still maintaining focus on the public interest and sustainability?

The spring/summer issue of *Y Magazine* will look at ways planners are influencing and guiding decision makers to build sustainable communities with stronger economies.



Finding a place in evolving communities

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Major issues such as climate change, aging populations, and the implementation of artificial intelligence show no signs of stopping — and they affect every sector. The only way to be ready for inevitable change is with sound planning. Hiring a Registered Professional Planner (RPP) is a pivotal step in building actionable plans in preparation for the future.

Ontario's RPPs gather and analyze information from every side of an issue and provide the critical unbiased perspective and expertise necessary to help guide the crucial decision making that will shape the future of our communities. The more than 4,000 members of OPPI work in government, private practice, universities, and not-for-profit agencies in the fields of urban and rural development, community design, environmental

planning, transportation, health, social services, heritage conservation, housing, and economic development.

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