

APPI Featured Volunteer



Ann Peters has lived and worked in Yellowknife, the capital of the Northwest Territories (NWT) and home to over 20,000 people, for over 30 years. How communities look, function and change always interested Ann, even before she knew that planning as a profession existed. Ann's formal education in planning came after first obtaining degrees in fine arts and architecture, working in architectural project management in the NWT and Nunavut, and being actively involved in community planning issues, including heritage, culture, the natural environment and sustainable growth.

The Alberta Professional Planners Institute (APPI) includes the regulation of professional planners in Alberta, the NWT and Nunavut. Although there are a small number of members of APPI in the north, the NWT has a land mass about 75 per cent larger than Alberta's, and over 30 communities. Ann feels that the profile of the APPI in NWT has been raised over the past ten years, with Council meeting in Yellowknife in 2012 and 2019, Planners from Yellowknife serving on Council, and improved use of on-line communication – these efforts have made planners in the NWT and Nunavut feel much more a part of APPI.

Ann joined APPI in 2007, and became a full member in 2009. Volunteering with the journal committee in 2011, she becoming chair in 2012 and until 2015 worked with a team of volunteers to produce a total of 11 issues in what she describes as a “rewarding and energizing” experience.

Currently working as a consultant to smaller communities on projects including community planning, infrastructure planning, and housing, Ann notes that planners in the north are more often ‘generalists’ than planners in more populated areas of Canada. In addition to the size of the communities and the type of work, planners working in the NWT and Nunavut also work in a different political and regulatory than Alberta planners, and are accustomed to remote communication and engagement.

Just as planning is a field without distinct borders, and Ann believes that membership and volunteering in APPI helps planners to learn about aspects of planning beyond our own areas of expertise, and to build relationships and learn from others. As an example, Ann noted how APPI has encouraged mentoring and through the Professional Standards Board program, and participating in continuous professional learning activities. Because the number of planners working in the NWT and Nunavut is small, with planners often being separated by large

APPI Featured Volunteer

physical distances and differences in practice, mentoring and being mentored takes on a heightened level of importance, and APPI helps that happen by providing opportunities for personal connections.

Although much change has occurred in APPI since 2007, what has not changed is the respectful and welcoming atmosphere that Ann feels demonstrates its core values. Ann has strong memories of the great people she has had the honour of meeting through APPI, such as Jamal Ramjohn, Gary Wilson, Beth Sanders, and many more.

Outside of consulting work Ann volunteers with several community organizations, works in her pottery studio and spends time in the outdoors with friends and dogs.