

# PLAN NORTH WEST

A journal for professional planners of Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Saskatchewan

Autumn 2018, Issue 4



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*PLAN North West* offers opportunity for publication of original works that are both community-based and research oriented, and relevant to Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Types of submissions include case studies, analysis of events and/or trends, profiles of notable planners, projects, or programs, overviews of best practices and guidelines, book reviews or excerpts, and opinion pieces.

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### Journal Submissions

We are always looking for articles for future issues of *PLAN North West*. Submit an article or idea at any time and a member of the Committee will help you through the process of getting it published. Potential subject areas we are interested in receiving article submissions on include:

- sustainability initiatives
- member accomplishments
- member research
- community development projects
- urban design
- student experiences
- innovative ideas
- planning successes

We are planning a special issue focused on active and sustainable transportation. Please submit articles relating to walkable neighbourhoods, biking infrastructure, accessibility, public transit, etc. For more information, please contact the Committee at [plannorthwest@gmail.com](mailto:plannorthwest@gmail.com) or 780 435 8716.



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### Feedback

The *PLAN North West* Committee welcomes your feedback. Please submit any comments you may have about this issue to [plannorthwest@gmail.com](mailto:plannorthwest@gmail.com). Your comments, suggestions and feedback are critical for *PLAN North West's* continued improvement and for us to provide the best possible publication that meets the expectations of our readers.

### Cover Photo

Commercial cannabis production facility  
SOURCE: *Canna Obscura*

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# MESSAGE FROM THE JOURNAL COMMITTEE

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Our first issue of 2018 brings something new to our readers—The Volunteer Spotlight—a recognition of some key institute volunteers from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, who have donated their time to building the profession in western Canada. Aside from the interesting stories about the people behind planning in western Canada, this new feature will provide some insights on the personal and professional rewards of volunteering with your local institute.

This is the year that the Canadian government has stated that marijuana will become legalized, and so we bring our readers an article outlining the planning challenges of this revolutionary federal initiative.

We also bring you an interesting discussion of growth management policies and intensification in the context of Saskatchewan's urban boom. Is the location of growth the most important aspect of growth? Also originating from Saskatchewan, we have an important article on the place of ethics and professionalism in planning.

Finally, our fourth issue includes a variety of discussions on the topic of creating both culturally and environmentally sustainable plans. *Beyond*

*the Policy* points out that writing planning policy is both art and science; *Are We Smart Enough?* outlines alternative community design methodology that could lower Canada's carbon footprint, and; *What it Means to be Rurban* gives an opinion of the planning challenges unique to 'rurban' communities in Western Canada.

A big thank you to all contributors to this issue of *Plan North West*. A big thank you also to our volunteers on *Plan North West* for bringing the ideas and discussions to our readers.

We ask all our members to continue sending your articles, opinion pieces, tips, and stories. If you have any questions or comments please contact us at [plannorthwest@gmail.com](mailto:plannorthwest@gmail.com).

## PLAN North West Paperless

### Environmentally Sound and Saving Money

APPI, MPPI and SPPI's official publication, *PLAN North West*, is issued by APPI in hard copy via mail to its 1,000+ members because we care about keeping you informed about your planning profession. This represents approximately 90,000 pages of paper a year. Going paperless reduces paper use, saves money and minimizes waste. APPI is encouraging all members to embrace the paperless delivery of *PLAN North West*.

Effective January 1, 2018 future issues will be delivered electronically via email. If you would prefer to continue receiving *PLAN North West* in hard copy, please email [admin@albertaplanners.com](mailto:admin@albertaplanners.com).

Electronic copies of all issues of *PLAN North West* are posted on the APPI website.

# MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENTS

## Alberta

Many publications have chosen a central theme and all the articles are focused on that theme. Rather than focusing on a specific theme, this edition of *Plan North West* is more general and provides a range of articles that include thought provoking questions on planning with varying perspectives.

With support from the Licensed Professional Planners Association of Nova Scotia (LPPANS), APPI has produced a video on "What Planners Do." While reading these articles, I was reminded of a clip from that video "[Planning] can seem like organized chaos at times, but that's the hard work that goes on behind the scenes to make sure that our communities are places that are enjoyable and worthwhile to live in."

A big thank you to everyone who submitted one of the articles in this edition of *Plan North West*. It really highlights planning, the varying perspectives and the reality that 'what planners do' is pretty great!

Check out the video on the Alberta Professional Planning Institute YouTube channel.



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# Saskatchewan

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Professional Planners Institute, I would like to welcome you to the fourth edition of *PLAN North West*. This edition features articles on a variety of topics relevant to the planning profession. Thank you to the journal committee members and the contributing authors for drawing attention to these important planning topics.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all *PLAN North West* readers to SPPI's annual conference, which is occurring on September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in Saskatoon. This year's conference theme is 'Partners in Planning.' The conference will highlight the contributions and collaborations of planners with industry partners, such as developers, engineers, and surveyors, across Saskatchewan and beyond. Delegates will have the opportunity to attend sessions on community revitalization, regulatory updates, rural planning, and more.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following conference committee members for their hard work in preparing what will be an excellent conference: Abby Besharah, Michael Ruus, Lee Smith,

Christine Gutmann, Paula Kotasek-Toth, Yvonne Prusak, Sarah King, Catherine Kambeitz, Carolyn Dunn, Vickey Reaney, Elizabeth Miller, Janna Morgan, Todd Mitchell and Kenneth Weddige.

This year's conference will also include a celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University of Saskatchewan's Regional and Urban Planning program. SPPI is proud to work with the RUP program to prepare students for the opportunities and challenges associated with the planning profession. I encourage all current students and alumni to attend the conference banquet on September 17<sup>th</sup> to take part in this special occasion.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Saskatoon this September!



# Manitoba

Thanks to all the dedicated volunteers, authors and supporters who help pull this journal together, provide the content, and sponsor the edition to make it a great success! I am pleased to provide some remarks on behalf of MPPI for the first electronic (paperless) version of the journal.

It was good to see you all at the 2018 CIP Conference in Winnipeg July 9-22, entitled "Soul". Local planners and CIP staff worked hard at the logistics for the vents, sessions, workshops, and mobile workshops. A big thank you to everyone for making the conference a resounding success. We hope you fell in love with our dynamic and enticing City in the middle of summer!

My term as MPPI President will lapse shortly and our new President Elect, Mr. Michal Kubasiewicz will take the helm. I wish him all the best in his new position and I am certain the institute is in great hands. Also, a special thanks goes out to all MPPI Council and our Executive Director for all the support, dedication and efforts they provided to me and our members.

Reflecting back over the last few years on Council, our profession has seen many changes both provincially and nationally. CIP was "reinvented," PSB/PSC has evolved in terms of its responsibilities and is transitioning as needed, the Planning Alliance Forum was created, and MPPI was able to facilitate the *Registered Professional Planners Act* through to fruition. 2015 was a year of influential change, 2016 a year of transition, and 2017 a year of stability.

In 2018, MPPI will be preparing a strategic plan to identify its priorities and roles over the next couple of years. MPPI members please watch for some upcoming engagement sessions and get involved in the process as we work together to become a stronger institute that serves the needs of our membership.



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# Beyond the Policy

## Tips for Writing Official Community Plans

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In Saskatchewan, all new official community plans (OCPs) must be prepared in consultation with a licensed professional planner. By preparing plans with appropriate policies and decision-making processes, planners help municipalities manage their many challenges. OCPs that do not meet the needs of the community risk being left on the shelf or ignored by decision makers. In addition to containing sound policy, the most effective plans are well-informed, simple, and provide accountability to residents.

The Ministry of Government Relations is the approving authority for all new planning bylaws in the province. This provides the Ministry with a unique perspective on the opportunities and challenges facing municipal planning. This article identifies several areas professional planning consultants should consider when preparing new planning bylaws for municipalities.

### **Informed Policy**

Sufficient analysis is an important component of all new OCPs. It is vital for a municipality to properly examine its current and anticipated infrastructure, industrial, commercial, recreation, and housing needs. It should identify the condition of the infrastructure, demographic trends, and how the community might deal with unexpected happenings, such as extreme weather or other environmental events.

This analysis can reveal the municipality's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It should also reveal the municipality's position relative to neighbouring municipalities, the competitive advantage it has, and the challenges it expects to face. For example, undertaking an asset management plan can be beneficial to a council as it contemplates its future direction.

### **Simple, Concise, and Relevant Planning Bylaws**

Planners must consider their audience when writing planning bylaws. The majority of municipal officials do not have any formal training in land use planning. Some even view planning as 'red tape' or a financial burden. Frequently, municipalities are provided with plans and policies that are too complex or difficult





SOURCE: Government of Saskatchewan

to administer. Occasionally municipalities are given plans that are not applicable to their community. These things frustrate elected officials, residents, and investors. When this occurs, the planning process can be cumbersome and time consuming with the result being planning apathy.

Planning bylaws also need to be relevant to the community they affect. While they are written by planners, they are used to guide day to day land use decisions by elected officials and municipal staff in their regular dealings with residents and developers. When people understand the connection between the community's vision and planning policy, they are more likely support them. The best bylaws inspire local decisions, are concise, and simple to understand.

### Consultation and Accountability

Planning policies need to be preceded by appropriate public consultation. To this end, private planners do an excellent job at facilitating consultation. Planners also understand that the importance of community engagement does not end once the bylaws are adopted. In some cases, however, implementation plans are absent and there are no plans for further public involvement in the planning process to ensure long-term effectiveness of the plan.

OCPs need to include an implementation plan and a commitment to ongoing public reporting on the success of the planning bylaws. This accountability leads to:

## *Planners can help municipalities address their challenges and realize their full potential.*

1. Residents and developers becoming motivated to follow the policies within the plan, and;
2. A municipality which is more responsive to the changing needs of the community.

### Conclusion

The challenges facing municipalities are vast. These pressures can include aging infrastructure, stagnant or even negative growth rates, a lack of municipal resources, and declining citizen engagement. So what's the good news? Professional planners can help! If planners can adhere to the items outlined in this article, they can help municipalities address their challenges and realize their full potential. ■

**Beatrice Regnier MBA, RPP, MCIP** is a Senior Planning Consultant with the Ministry of Government Relations. Beatrice has over 20 years of combined experience as a planner with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry. In her current role, Beatrice reviews municipal planning bylaws, subdivisions of land, and annexations.

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About the Authors



# When Planning, Politics, Public Interest and Ethics Collide

SOURCE: iStock

The Government of Saskatchewan removed the Reeve of the Rural Municipality (RM) of Sherwood. The Reeve's conduct in advancing a development from which he might receive millions of dollars was found to be highly unethical, did not withstand public scrutiny, and violated the public trust. While it takes place in the RM—a rural community of less than 1,000 residents surrounding the City of Regina—it has a multi-disciplinary cast including planners from every province west of Quebec. The case involves the collision of planning, politics, public interest and ethics (or the lack thereof).

## The Proposal and Council's Consideration

Wascana Village, a 736-acre urban development (of which a majority was owned by the Reeve or his relatives) was proposed despite objections from the City of Regina and other stakeholders. An Ontario developer had a purchase agreement, conditional upon favourable rezoning.

The Inquiry Report (Barclay 2014) commented on the proposal's unanimous approval with:

*The RM had never in its history considered a proposal for a high density residential development of this magnitude but, in a matter of hours, without any study or professional reports from their staff, they were behind the proposal...the elapsed time*

*between the motion being tabled and then voted on was roughly one minute.*

The province rejected the concept plan because it was deficient in many ways—no confirmed water source or sewage treatment, environmental impacts such as burrowing owl nesting, etc.

## The Inspection and Inquiry

Pursuant to *The Municipalities Act*, in June 2014, the Minister of Government Relations appointed Judge Barclay to conduct an "inspection," covering what led to Council's approval and the appropriateness of actions of any employee, agent of the municipality, or member of Council relating to Wascana Village. Judge Barclay discovered the Reeve, while having made a declaration

of pecuniary interest, had inappropriate involvement. Subsequently, the Minister escalated the matter to a broader “inquiry.”

Hearings included 14 witnesses over 18 days with 377 exhibits. Witnesses included the Province’s Executive Director of Community Planning (who was examined and cross-examined over four days), former and current RM CAOs, Reeve and members of Council, RM staff, and the developer, with the findings published by the Government of Saskatchewan in the “Final Report of the Inspection and Inquiry into the R.M. of Sherwood No. 159” (Barclay 2014).

### Conflict of Interest

The Judge quotes relevant jurisprudence: an oft-quoted moral principle that *no man can serve two masters*. The report discusses the nuances of pecuniary interest, extent of influence, official oath, disclosure, code of ethics, and intricacies of common law relative to legislated requirements. Mascarin (2015) notes common law obligations are far broader and much less permissive than provincial statutes.

The Inquiry found the Reeve owned a significant part of the proposed development land, was to be compensated on profits from the overall development, was going to be paid more per acre than other owners, and would accrue benefits to other land owned by the Reeve.

While the Judge noted the Reeve had declared a pecuniary interest to Council and recused himself from voting on Council decisions, good conscience required something more. There was evidence the Reeve may have had other inappropriate involvement—“I am left to wonder what part the Reeve played with other Councillors during this period of time” (Barclay 2014).

Potential conflicts of interest often arise in planning. The planner’s role is as an independent advisor to client, employers, or tribunals. Planners must avoid conflicts of interest that make their judgment appear unreliable when it is this reliability that is specifically needed. Therefore, improper behaviour is a threat to the good that the profession seeks to achieve and to the profession’s reputation.

### The Public Interest

The RM, in the Judge’s words, “... has never taken the basic step of determining whether the proposed development will ultimately be economically beneficially to the citizens of the RM” (Barclay 2014). Council failed to “recognize that Community Planning and the Ministry had an obligation to protect the public by ensuring all proper conditions were met before approval was given.”

The Judge reported Council’s decision to submit what was conceded as a clearly deficient plan demonstrated a failure to consider the public interest. Further, “Council’s assimilation with the developer’s intention to make the matter political was a luxury not afforded to the RM by virtue of its wider mandate. Unlike the developer, the Council owes a duty to keep the best interest of the RM in mind” (Barclay 2014).

### Relationship with Planners

First, it’s clear Council viewed the process as political and didn’t seek guidance from staff planners or consultants. The Judge reported “certain allegations by former employees of poor treatment that they received while in the employ of the RM which related in one way or another to Wascana Village”—concluding there was demanding work, was understaffing, but positions on Wascana Village were a contributing factor. The former CAO’s states:

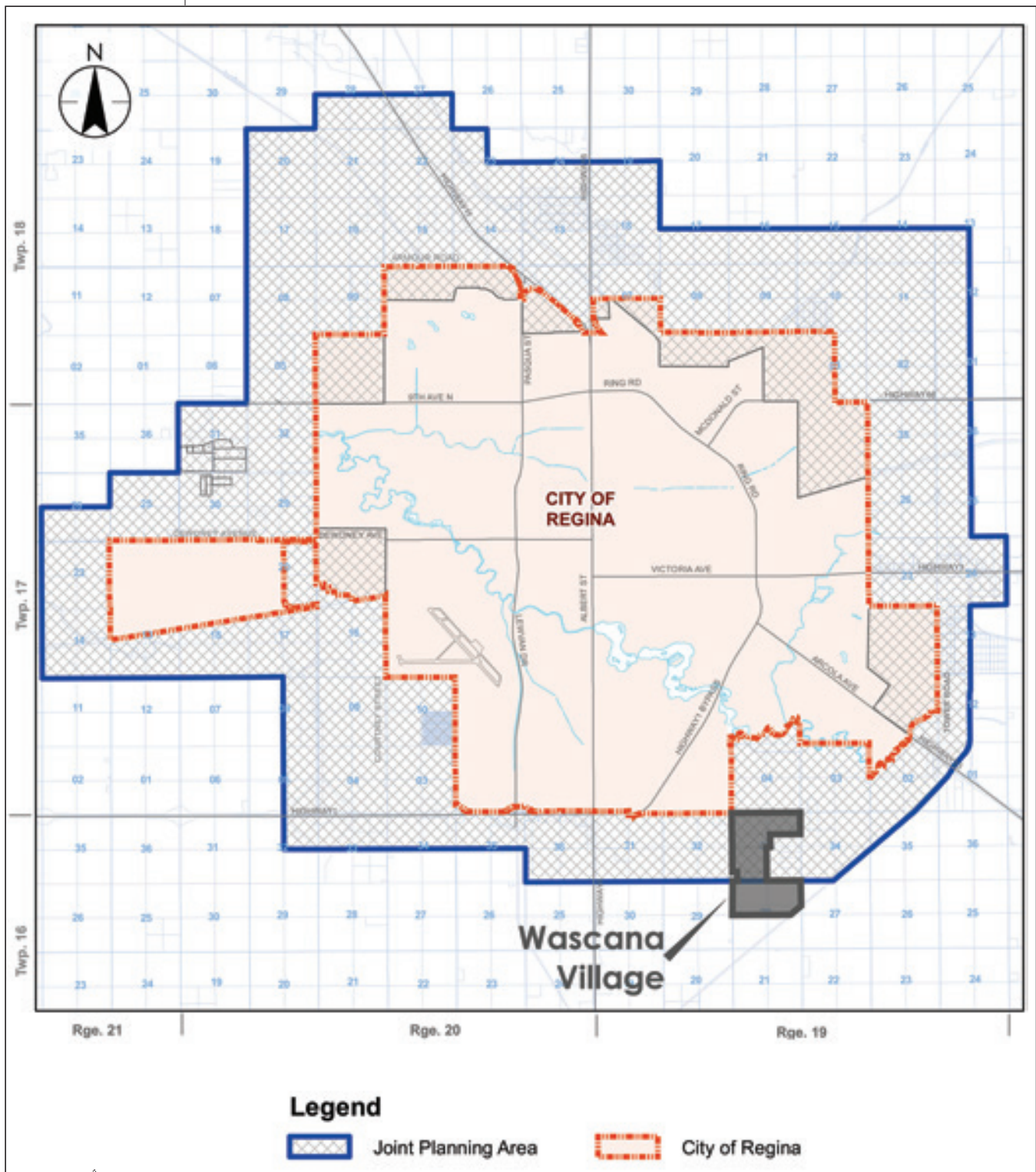
*When told that staff may write a report that recommends not approving the Concept Plan Bylaw but that it would be Council’s decision to make a political decision and go against the recommendations and accept the Concept Plan, the Reeve completely lost it. I was told that all reports from staff are to be positive and are to recommend approving the concept plan* (Barclay 2014).

There are precedents in some provinces that conflict of interest is not only defined by statute, but also broader common law provisions apply. The Reeve’s lawyer provided an opinion:

*The result is that you ought not to vote or otherwise participate as a member of Council in discussing your lands nor direct planners or other administrative personnel in relation to your lands* [Emphasis added](Barclay 2014).

As the CAO stated, “I constantly had direction from him to facilitate the rezoning, so, you know, find him water, find him sewer, talk about access from highways, that kind of direction” (Barclay 2014). The Judge stated that the Reeve’s “conduct in this respect was inappropriate and took advantage of the trust reposed in him by the RM staff” (Barclay 2014). The CAO testified that the Reeve gave her instruction to destroy documents, including emails, which made reference to his involvement. Minutes were amended to remove the Reeve from the list of attendees—“... a decision to alter minutes was a deceptive act and is consistent with Ms. Kunz’s assertion that Reeve Eberle wanted no documented record of his involvement in Wascana Village” (Barclay 2014).





Map showing the City of Regina and surrounding lands including the location of the proposed Wascana Village

SOURCE: Stantec, 2015



Second, the Judge found that the Councillors "... wrongly chose to personify and target their frustration ..." (Barclay 2014) on the provincial planner providing oversight. The Judge characterized their position of one to "demonize" the provincial planner, whom he described as protecting the public interest.

## Outcomes

The Reeve was removed from office. The Province adopted new legislation to tighten conflict of interest regulations. Analysis determined continuing deficiencies in the concept plan. The developer didn't pursue a revised concept plan, so the Province's conditional approval lapsed. The RM has a new draft official community plan that includes a collaborative planning area with the City and new development is to be evaluated based on a life-cycle assessment and cost benefit analysis.

## Lessons for Planners

First, planners must always be cognizant of their obligation to be independent professionals providing objective comprehensive analysis.

Second, be aware of issues arising from conflicts of interest—regardless of where they arise.

Third, planners are often confronted with situations where they are pulled in several directions, but there is a requirement to protect the public interest even in the face of broader administrative or political pressure. This occurs more than planners are generally comfortable acknowledging. In this case, the administrators and planners were under significant pressure from political masters.

I'm a Case Officer for PIBC's Professional Practice Review Committee. I've been asked to advise planners instructed by planning directors, CAOs, or politicians to "change their reports" from what their professional opinion directs them. Of course, every situation is unique, but my advice has centered on considering alternatives.

One option is to do as directed—clearly in conflict with the notion of professionalism and potentially challengeable as misconduct. There are gray areas but, as Karen Smith (2012) writes, "It is not enough to just close your eyes and say 'my employer told me to do it.' One's obligation to the public and the profession supersedes." Another choice is to resign—a tough choice. I'm aware of another situation where the planner wrote the report as directed, but refused to sign it—other administrators did.

*There is a requirement to protect the public interest even in the face of broader administrative or political pressure.*

Planners under unreasonable pressure to author professional recommendations should be supported when confronted with this challenge. In a discussion of the "my boss told me to do it" scenario, the American Institute of Certified Planners (2012) states that "'Following orders' is not an acceptable rationalization if the orders violate the Code of Professional Ethics. When one feels orders are at difference with the standards of our Code, the first step is to advise the supervisor of the conflict and discuss the consequences of such an action. In a non-threatening manner, discuss alternatives and resources available at APA/AICP, with both the supervisor and other professionals."

Support can come from a knowledgeable peer or leader in the profession. Or, I suggest contacting a Fellow. The College of Fellows have a network that 'has seen it all.' Advice can be about 'navigating the system' or, in extreme cases, the College of Fellows could take a public stance in defence of planners threatened with intimidation. Since the profession puts the burden on the individual planner to protect the profession, the profession should, likewise, protect the planner. I'd like to see a structure support to planners that are confronting the "my boss told me to do it" scenario. ■

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**John Steil RPP, FCIP** is a Principal in Stantec Consulting's Vancouver office, a former CIP President, past Chair of the CIP College of Fellows, and a long-standing member of PIBC's Professional Practice Review Committee. He was engaged by the RM of Sherwood near the end of the process to provide an independent evaluation of concept plan conformance with Provincial requirements.

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About the Author



# Are We Smart Enough?

## Community Design to Lower Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Lake and accessible playground  
at Nicholas Sheran Regional Park  
SOURCE: City of Lethbridge

Canada is among the top ten global emitters of greenhouse gas (GHG) and currently contributes to approximately 1.6% of the world's total amount of GHGs. In addition, Canada, as a developed country, is one of the largest per capita emitters of greenhouse gas emissions (Boothe & Boudreault, 2016). According to 2015 Environment Canada statistics, the most significant contributors of carbon pollution in Canada (722 megatonnes) in 2015 are the oil and gas industries (189 megatonnes), transportation (173 megatonnes) and buildings (85 megatonnes) (Government of Canada, 2015).

These statistics are astounding, and make it seem as though the mitigation of Canada's GHGs could be an impossible feat. The dilemma is not if we, as individuals, are smart enough to find a solution for this issue, but if we can collectively—through all levels of government, the business community, developers, planners, designers and engineers—work together to reshape how we live, work, and play and decrease our country's carbon footprint.

### **Traditional Approaches to Community Design**

In order to understand where we need to go, we need to look at our current and past practices. Today many communities are designed to focus on the

needs of single-occupancy vehicles. In numerous Canadian suburbs, residential density is lowered to accommodate the market for single family homes, and focuses on maximizing traffic volumes to get single-occupancy vehicles to their destinations.

This development model does not use land use capacities efficiently. Common amenities, such as grocery stores, hardware stores or medical and dental services, are not typically built within walking distance of suburban neighbourhoods and as a result it is more convenient to drive a car than to walk, bike, or bus to these destinations.

Having fewer people spaced over a greater area leads to transportation and fuel waste, which adds more carbon to the environment because of the low-

density design of their community. Urban sprawl also creates longer routes for the transportation of goods and services.

### Shifting Gears: Community Design Alternatives

The answer to urban sprawl and a reduced carbon footprint may lie in resilient community design. Although this idea has become very popular and is one step away from becoming 'planning jargon', the essence is about creating 'smart' efficiencies in the design of communities. Think of smart energy, smart buildings, smart mobility, smart infrastructure, smart governance, etc. The term 'smart' refers to a system or set of guidelines that are cost-effective, sustainable, diverse and coordinated.

Instead of focusing neighbourhood form around vehicles, design can be focused on complete streets that accommodate multimodal transportation, including biking and walking which may reduce carbon emissions.

Rethinking the transportation network means re-thinking land use, including the placement of residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational areas. Compact development and mixed land use—which combines residential housing, commercial job centers, schools, and social services—will ultimately affect how the infrastructure such as roads, underground water systems, and parks, are designed.

According to the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, energy use and carbon emissions were halved using principles of efficient land use planning and community design. This suggests that a person's carbon footprint is relative to where they live (Jaccard, 1997).

### Moving Away from Perfect-looking Parks

Resilient community design also includes rethinking how we design parks in our communities, which are often considered a 'soft' or 'green' infrastructure. Although traditional parks offer manicured spaces, which have aesthetic value, they do very little to offset carbon emissions. Parks designed with an ecological focus, including a variety of trees, wet ponds, grasses and vegetation, can actually reduce CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations.

According to Mark Hostetler and Francisco Escobedo, members of the Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department at the University of Florida, highly maintained lawns and trees isolate much less carbon than more natural areas with little maintenance. With more lawn cover than tree canopy cover, the balance can actually shift to emitting carbon (Hostetler & Escobedo, 2016). Parks can be more than just a place that provides amenities, a habitat for wildlife, or a place for kids to play. If designed right, they can have a huge



City of Lethbridge bus bike rack  
SOURCE: City of Lethbridge

impact on our ability to deal with carbon while still providing all the amenities and benefits of traditional parks. Naturally designed wetlands, community gardens, food forests and bee conservation areas can all be designed strategically to combat carbon.

### No One Can Do This Alone

Wouter van Heeswijk, a member of the Industrial Engineering and Business Information Systems research group at the University of Twente, hypothesized that by using his mathematical model, he could cut urban emissions by 70% (van Heeswijk, 2017). He states that by focusing on several factors, including local regulations, transportation schedules, information sharing and optimal conditions for sustainable urban distribution, the pressure in cities can be reduced by creating 'consolidation centers' that enable goods to be distributed in a far more efficient manner, ultimately lowering congestion, wait times and fuel consumption.



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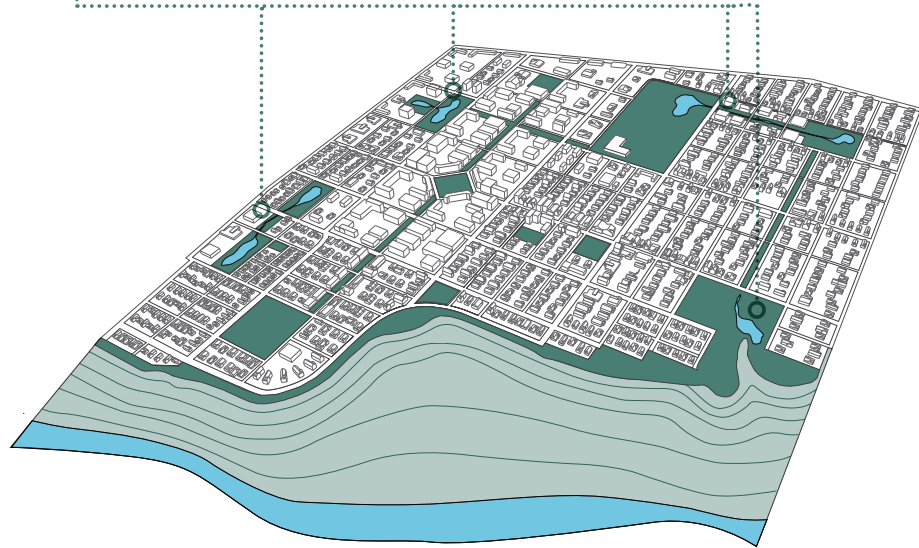
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### 13 Stormwater Management

Employs LID techniques, such as bioswales, porous pavement, and grey water irrigation. It also naturalizes and integrates stormwater ponds to improve the overall aesthetic and functionality of the space.



### 12 Fiscally Sustainable Maintenance

Incorporates low maintenance design, such as native vegetation, and maximizes function and use with central locations, community-valued programming, and amenities.

### 14 Minimal Footprint

Makes use of energy efficient and water conservation initiatives, such as solar-powered lighting. Additionally, it uses natural, repurposed, recycled, and/or locally sourced materials when possible.



#### About the Author

**Ryan Carriere RPP, MCIP** is Lethbridge's Parks Planning Manager in the Infrastructure Services Department where he leads all new park development and enhances the community by engaging the public, leading cross functional teams and delivering great public service. Thanks to Kim Schaaf, Communications Consultant with the City of Lethbridge for helping edit this article.

If van Heeswijk is correct in his assumption about carbon reduction on a large scale, then we have to start looking at the problem holistically. The three levels of government need to coordinate and collaborate to create and support policies that allow for and encourage the planning, design and development of resilient communities while still meeting the needs of the public at large. A federal incentive or overarching policy that encourages or outlines the benefits of resilient community design would enable the provincial governments to work with municipalities to develop strategies on how to meet those goals. It would take a coordinated effort but could profoundly change how we live, work and play.

### Designing for the Future

By starting to re-think how and where we live, work, and play, we can create more sustainable, resilient cities. At a planning level we can start to purposefully change how we design and build our communities. Through building residential areas with strategically placed amenities, accessible by multimodal transportation, we can help communities collectively reduce their carbon footprint with less effort. By shifting the focus from aesthetic parks to ecological parks, we can improve our ability to deal with carbon while still providing all the amenities and benefits of traditional parks. By taking this integrated approach, the very fabric of our cities will can a great impact on our collective ability to deal with carbon. ■

Concept for park planning guidelines

SOURCE: City of Lethbridge



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# What it Means to be Rurban

Some property owners pave their entire front yards to accommodate all of their vehicles.

SOURCE: Reed Des Roches

The built environment can be broken down into three categories: rural, urban, and suburban. These typologies can provide an understanding of the general characteristics of an area, such as density, land use, and built form. These categories can be useful for comparing different regions and creating general theories. However, they often rely on assumptions that do not hold true everywhere. This is important because in planning and policy in general, we apply the same tools to very different regions based on these categories.

In Canada, there are some urban areas that do not meet the typical expectations for an urban area. The cities referred to in this article as 'rurban' are places where an urban center has emerged to service a rapidly growing population with a culture that is more typically rural. This article addresses the differences between a rural culture and typical urban design context and how it can create problems for city planners and residents. Addressing these challenges will require a more creative and place-based approach to design.

## What Is Rurban?

In this article, rurban refers to areas that are neither rural or urban. Rurban occurs when an urban centre develops rapidly in a mostly rural area due to economic growth. This is often caused by a boom in a resource extraction industry. While the increase in population

requires an urban commercial centre, the businesses attract residents with a more rural lifestyle. This lifestyle is reflected in pastimes and related possessions that would be more commonly associated with someone living in a rural area, than an urban one. This includes owning a truck rather than a car, and having outdoor hobbies such as fishing, hunting, and riding all-terrain vehicles. Further, a large number of people from the surrounding rural areas visit these centres regularly for services. But problems arise when planners attempt to use standard urban practices to create communities for people with rural lifestyles.

The term rurban was coined based on the author's experiences as a planner in Alberta and observations of similarities in other cities. It is intended to reflect the unique character and problems of smaller cities with a strong rural culture. It should not be confused with

the use of the term 'rurban' which is used in Indian infrastructure projects to connote the provision of an urban level of infrastructure in rural areas.

## Planning Challenges

Cities like Grande Prairie, Wood Buffalo, Red Deer, Fort St. John, and Prince Albert, for example, act as the urban centres for large service areas of smaller rural communities. These centres differ greatly from typical cities because more of their population works in rural industries such as oil and gas, or agriculture. Though these centres are urban compared to their rural surroundings, their populations exhibit a more rural lifestyle. This contradiction becomes problematic when planners and designers try to apply urban design principles imported from larger cities. The challenge of finding place specific planning solutions is exacerbated by the fact that projects in these areas often require hiring consultants from larger urban centres like Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto, or Vancouver, who are used to working in a more typical large urban context.

## Rural Culture and Lifestyle

The first thing people tend to notice when arriving in a rurban city is the prevalence of trucks. There are more people who drive trucks in these cities than in larger centres. This is likely due to a combination of factors. One is that many people work in remote areas that require traveling on dirt roads that are often rutted and under-maintained. They may also need to bring equipment or haul a trailer. Many people who live in these cities do not work in a resource industry also drive trucks, because the harsh winters in northern communities make driving a truck feel safer, because trucks are used for recreation to access remote areas and they are used to haul camper trailers or boats.

There are often more vehicles per household in a rurban centre due to multiple working adults living in a single household, and sometimes because people have a business vehicle to store in addition to their personal vehicle. A lot of people also have RVs, quads, and/or trailers. This is especially true in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba where approximately a quarter of all people own an RV (Edgar, 2014). The need for space, combined with other factors, such as high average household incomes (Young, 2017), means that many residents prefer low density housing to apartments. The lack of demand for multi-family sites led the Urban Developers Institute to request that the City of Grande Prairie reduce the requirement for multi-family housing in new subdivisions (Mlinarevic, 2016). Anecdotally, my neighbours who live in a basement suite have two jeeps, two trailers, a quad, and a company truck. The

huge demand for storage creates a major challenge when attempting to increase density and create attractive neighbourhoods.

In times of rapid growth the parking and storage problem is worsened, as many people rent out rooms or build secondary suites. The result is a lot of vehicles per household. Some streets become clogged with vehicles, some are even left for long periods by people working away in work site camps.

## Density

Urban design often relies on efficiency through density. Municipal services such as transit are more effective and cost efficient with higher densities. However, encouraging intensification can cause problems in a city where a large proportion of households have at least two vehicles and likely a recreational vehicle too. In some cases, people pave as much of their front yard as they can, or park vehicles on their lawns. Things that do not fit on the property are parked on the street. This leads to cluttered, unattractive neighbourhoods and a lot of parking enforcement.

Pushing for higher density is difficult when there is so much developable land. If rurban cities try to restrict low density development, they may just push it into an even lower density adjacent rural municipality. Urban and rural municipalities often compete for development, and as rural municipalities usually have lower tax rates they can be more attractive places to develop from a cost perspective.

Rurban density may take many forms. For instance, a multi-unit building was constructed in downtown Grande Prairie that included bachelor suites with garages. This particular building is not necessarily representative of the appearance that the municipality is trying to encourage; however, it is an interesting approach to the city's housing demands. While achieving density is more challenging within a rural culture, creative design and new housing models could achieve increased densities while meeting the needs of residents.

## Design

Problems similar to those that occur with density also occur in infrastructure design. For instance, there are some parking garages that large pickup trucks cannot fit, such as the one at the public library in Grande Prairie. Harsh winters in northern resource-based cities make indoor parking attractive, but designers sometimes neglect the size of the typical vehicle. Even at-grade parking lots have challenges with stall sizes. Larger vehicles take up more space and are harder to park. As a result, stall lines are often meaningless,



Apartment building containing bachelor units with garages on the ground floor.

SOURCE: Reed Des Roches





Many households have recreational vehicles in rural areas.

SOURCE: Reed Des Roches

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except in parking lots where there are large stalls and double lines.

Similarly, because many people drive large vehicles designed for difficult terrain, curbs alone are ineffective for setting boundaries. In many urban centres you can observe the 'sneekdown phenomenon'. Sneekdowns are curb extensions caused by snow building up in areas of intersections where vehicles don't travel. Sneekdowns are often cited to show how sidewalks could be extended to create safer street crossings. However, in rural centres, the snow shows where people are driving over sidewalks and medians. Many people drive over curbs and medians for convenience, such as turning around when a train is stopping traffic. This oversight can be dangerous as the curbs and medians are intended to control the flow of traffic and separate pedestrian areas.

While some designs work well in larger urban centres, they may be less effective under the conditions of a rural area. Design standards need to reflect the unique character of a place taking into account factors such as the types of vehicles people use.

### Alternative Transportation

Rural centres struggle to accommodate alternative transportation. Road design often defaults to prioritizing large trucks, with which it can be intimidating to share the road. Sprawled cities and difficult winters make walking or cycling a tough sell. On the positive side, the growing popularity of fat tire bikes is creating more and more winter cyclists.

Transit is not feasible for a lot of residents in rural cities because they work in rural areas outside the city, or require vehicles to haul tools. The cold winters also make waiting at bus stops uncomfortable and potentially unsafe at times for young children and the

elderly. Low ridership also means that there are less funds to provide better amenities such as heated bus shelters.

Off-highway vehicles, such as quads and snowmobiles are popular in rural areas and riding them is usually not allowed within city boundaries. Residents who want to ride their vehicles to nearby trails in adjacent rural areas violate bylaws by doing so. On the other hand, some northern cities, such as Yellowknife allow snowmobiles on certain city streets. Off-highway vehicles such as snowmobiles and quads use less fuel and take up less space than cars and trucks. As such, they have potential as alternative transportation that is more reflective of the local culture.

Common planning solutions for alternative transportation are often driven by examples from larger cities that have milder climates. Encouraging active transportation requires looking at what people are already doing and finding ways to enhance that. If it is something they are already doing for fun such as snowmobiling or cross-country skiing, they may be more likely to adopt it as a way to get around.

### Potential Solutions

Addressing these many rural issues requires going beyond copying design concepts from larger urban centres. Designers need to give more consideration to details like parking stall size and curb height that reflect regional conditions, and policy needs to be more creative with regulating activities such as the use of off-highway vehicles.

Dealing with some of these problems may require rethinking how we design neighbourhoods and housing. The example of the bachelor suites with garages illustrates how some developers are tailoring their designs to the rural context.

In one of my first planning courses, I learned to 'design for how people live, not for how you want them to live.' The statement often influences how I think about my work. We as planners want to bring the latest exciting ideas from big cities to our own communities, but we need to acknowledge what is unique about the places we are planning for. In order to create cities that are more reflective of these rural areas, designers and political leaders need to be willing to take risks on new ideas and challenge current standard practice. ■

**Reed Des Roches RPP, MCIP** studied urban design in Halifax then headed west for opportunity and adventure. Over his 3 years in the northwest he has played a role in several award winning projects and has learned a great deal about mid-sized cities.

About the Author





# Municipalities & Marijuana:

## What to expect and how to prepare for the legalization of recreational marijuana, from a municipal regulatory perspective

Commercial Production  
SOURCE: *Canna Obscura*

On April 13th of 2017, the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-45 (the *Cannabis Act*) to legalize marijuana for recreational use. Not surprisingly, municipalities will play a critical role regulating marijuana-related land uses (i.e. storefront retailers and production facilities), in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments. However, a number of specific authorities expected to be granted to municipalities remain unclear and questions remain surrounding certain topics such as tax distribution or venues for consumption.







































In November 2017, Alberta and Manitoba's provincial governments announced they would each implement a hybrid model consisting of private retail storefronts and government-run supply and distribution systems. Much still has to be determined for private retailers in those provinces regarding supporting regulations around the sale of marijuana and the specific licensing criteria they will be subject to (i.e. hours of operation, age of staff, and lounge facilities). Alberta's provincial government is in the midst of preparing legislation that will soon provide these details. In early 2018, Saskatchewan—being the last province to decide on a retail model or overall regulatory regime—announced that private retailers would be responsible for the sale of marijuana, and the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Association would be in charge of distribution.


In anticipation of these historic regulatory changes, this article aims to provide a general overview of current and proposed federal marijuana legislation, their implications for municipalities, and how planners and municipal decision-makers can prepare, from a land-use regulatory perspective.

### Understanding Canada's Current Regulatory Framework

The recreational use of marijuana is illegal in Canada at present; however, access to marijuana for medical purposes has been legal to varying degrees since 1999. In 2013, a major shift in medical marijuana production and distribution regulations occurred with the federal government's announcement of *The Marihuana for Medical Purposes Regulations* (MMPR), which allowed

**Table 1: Licensed Medical Marijuana Producers in Canada**

Province / Territory	Number of Licensed Medical Producers
Nova Scotia	
New Brunswick	
Prince Edward Island	
Newfoundland and Labrador	
Quebec	
Ontario	                      
Manitoba	
Saskatchewan	 
Alberta	
British Columbia	       
Yukon	
Northwest Territories	
Nunavut	
<b>Canada (total)</b>	<b>38</b>

 = one license

SOURCE: Health Canada

<sup>1</sup> The Cities of Vancouver and Victoria have already begun to adopt policy and regulations to control recreational marijuana uses such as storefront retailers despite their illegality, due to a recent flurry of such operations establishing themselves throughout the cities. These shops continue to operate outside the current scope of federal law.

production and distribution of marijuana to be conducted by federally licensed commercial producers, by mail-order only. The MMPR was replaced in 2016 with the *Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations* (ACMPR), which sought to address the Canadian Charter of rights and Freedoms issue of “reasonable access” to medicine by allowing individuals to cultivate a limited amount of marijuana for their own medical purposes. Currently, this model of production and distribution persists. As of August, 2017, there are 56 federally licensed medical marijuana producers throughout the country (Table 1), each of which are required to meet strict federal safety and security requirements as part of the licensing application process for medical marijuana production facilities (MMPFs). A new production facility currently under construction outside Edmonton is set to be the largest cannabis production facility in the world.

Although municipalities are not the decision-makers in the application process for MMPFs, they do have the opportunity to influence where these facilities locate within their communities. Several

municipalities across the country have already begun to adopt land use policies and regulations in anticipation of medical and non-medical marijuana retail, production and distribution facilities establishing within their boundaries.<sup>1</sup> For instance, the City of Edmonton has taken the proactive step of introducing and clarifying a number of definitions within its zoning bylaw regarding the sale and consumption of marijuana as if it were legal, while deferring listing these new use-classifications in any zoning districts until the federal law is passed. After a review of the regulations, as well as those adopted by some American municipalities in response to recreational legalization, they can be broken down into the following categories:

### 1. Business Licensing

Business licensing has the capacity to create revenue streams for municipalities through application fees, and to impose further regulations as conditions of approval. Despite recreational marijuana being illegal in Canada, there has been a surge in storefront retailers popping up in major centres like Toronto, Vancouver and

Victoria. As a direct response, Vancouver and Victoria have adopted licensing bylaws to attempt to regulate these uses. In addition to high licensing fees (\$5,000 for storefront retailers in the Victoria and \$30,000 in Vancouver), these bylaws enable municipalities to impose operational restrictions on retailers concerning hours of operation, signage and display requirements, and nuisance prevention.

## 2. Community Standards

As alluded to in the licensing section above, operational restrictions can be incorporated into licensing bylaws, or stand alone as general municipal bylaws. Regardless of the legislative vehicle used, regulations on business operations can be important tools for mitigating local impacts. Across several municipalities in the U.S., operational restrictions can govern detailed security measures (lighting, guards, signage, cameras, alarm systems, storage requirements), as well as limiting on-site consumption, hours of operation, and the size of the operation. In general, municipal standards can be set to control nuisances including noise, odours, and property appearance (Németh and Ross 2014).

## 3. Land Use Controls

Establishing land use controls through land use or zoning bylaws can be another important tool for mitigating impacts of marijuana-related uses on local communities. Typically, these controls can take the following forms:

1. Zone restrictions on specified use classes;
2. Separation distances from sensitive districts/uses;
3. Additional requirements relating to screening/fencing, storage, signage, odour, and other nuisance regulations.

Canadian municipalities that have incorporated provisions into their land use bylaws to control marijuana-related uses (with the exception of Victoria, Edmonton and Vancouver), have only done so in relation to MMPFs, as opposed to storefront retailers. These types of facilities are typically fully-enclosed warehouse-style buildings, complete with perimeter fencing and other security measures, in accordance with federal licensing requirements, although the recent task force recommendations identified outdoor grow facilities as another form of production for consideration. Typically MMPFs are considered discretionary uses within light industrial land use districts. In contrast, storefront retail uses, by nature of their size and purpose (for face-to-face distribution rather than production), seem better-suited to commercial zones in areas of higher density. However,

*By having well thought-out regulatory frameworks prepared prior to legalization, communities can quickly and easily implement these strategies once legalization comes into effect.*

land use regulations related to separation distances from residential areas and other sensitive uses should be a consideration for both forms of marijuana-related uses.

## What Impact Will Legalization Have On Everyday Life?

While municipalities should expect to play a role in the regulation of marijuana from a land-use planning perspective, what impact can they expect marijuana legalization to have on society? Looking at the experiences of several U.S. States that have legalized recreational marijuana, the short answer is: It's too early to tell. A recent study by the CATO institute that analyzed legalization impacts in Colorado, Alaska, Washington and Oregon concluded there have been minimal effects on a long list of social outcomes, including: marijuana use rates among adults and youth; marijuana prices; marijuana abuse/related suicide rates; monthly crime rates for violent and property crimes; fatal traffic accidents; standardized high school test scores and drug-related suspensions; housing prices; population growth; and GDP per capita. However, Colorado, Washington and Oregon have seen large increases in state tax revenue related to recreational marijuana; in 2015, Colorado collected \$135 million from licensing fees and levies (Dills, Goffard and Miron 2016). Another report conducted by the Colorado Department of Public Safety that compiled metrics on the potential effects of marijuana legalization on public safety, health, and youth outcomes, indicated caution is necessary when interpreting the initial data. While some data does indicate small changes (both positive and negative) in marijuana-related social outcomes, it is still too early draw conclusions (Colorado 2016).

## Conclusions

In summary, municipalities can take several steps to prepare themselves for the legalization of recreational marijuana from a regulatory perspective. By having well thought-out regulatory frameworks prepared prior to legalization, communities can quickly and easily implement these strategies once legalization comes into effect. Key recommendations moving forward include:





Street Front Retail Store

SOURCE: Adam Melnyk

### 1. Know your community

An important first step in understanding how best to move forward with regulating marijuana-related uses is to understand your community's perspective on the matter. How informed are your residents? What are their concerns? A robust, transparent and collaborative engagement process with the public can help inform a municipality's approach to future regulation of marijuana-related facilities, and manage expectations.

### 2. Establish pre-emptive regulations for marijuana retail & production facilities

Selling marijuana through storefront retail is still illegal in Canada. However, there are a number of steps municipalities can initiate in order to prepare for legalization and alleviate the burden of updating relevant bylaws simultaneously when Bill C-45 is passed by the federal government. Municipalities can begin by defining marijuana retail and production in their land use bylaws and specifying what specific uses do not include marijuana retail or production. For

instance, the definition for "Retail" could be amended to include the statement "this use does not include the sale of medical or non-medical marijuana." Eventually land use bylaws will need to specify where these new uses can locate and lay out certain regulations such as separation distances and other performance standards, but by taking these proactive steps, municipalities can situate themselves in a better position to do so. While it may be premature at this stage to introduce specific land use regulations until more information is provided from provincial and federal governments, it would be prudent to pre-emptively undertake those amendments that have little to no ambiguity over jurisdiction such as excluding marijuana from incompatible use-class definitions. Legal advice and review of bylaws when establishing these controls is highly recommended.

### 3. Prepare a general framework for regulating recreational marijuana-related uses

Marijuana for recreational purposes will be legal in Canada. Municipalities will not have the authority



to prohibit the consumption of marijuana or the establishment of marijuana-related uses. Instead, municipalities should develop the general principles of a regulatory framework, keeping in mind further details influencing municipal responsibilities have yet to be revealed by the province. Those municipal roles that have been identified as having responsibility (business licensing, bylaw enforcement, police, planners or development officers) should be involved in the development of a regulatory framework as early as possible. Similar to regulations for medical marijuana production facilities, this would require the drafting of specific use-class definitions within the land use bylaw (i.e. marijuana storefront retailers, cannabis lounges, production facilities, etc.), and a consideration of additional controls such as zoning restrictions, separation distances and performance standards. Consideration should also be given to the regulation of home-cultivation, including the location of outdoor grow areas.

#### 4. Wait for further provincial direction

Once created, provincial cannabis legislation and regulations will directly influence how municipalities proceed with their own regulations. While it is important for communities to be informed and prepared, it is equally important not to move too quickly with establishing regulations for recreational marijuana-related uses prior to legalization. With the specifics of provincial legislation unknown at the moment, it is impossible to anticipate exactly what role municipalities will and can play in regulation. Because of this, it is recommended that municipalities closely monitor the status of the enabling legislation, and

adhere to direction from the provincial government.

Questions remain on how retail sellers will be regulated in municipalities and on the merits of the different approaches. The two approaches which have been explored and implemented throughout Canada are the government-run model of marijuana retailers and privately-run independent stores. The former would mean that municipalities would not license or have jurisdiction over where sales or production could be located, while the latter would allow them to regulate the location of retail storefronts through zoning. Critics of the government-run model cite that it would stifle investment and fail to capitalize on the anticipated job creation and increased tax base that would likely result from independent stores entering the market. The provincial government could expect significant costs associated with the creation, implementation and management of government-owned marijuana retail network, which is partly the reason that Alberta's largest municipalities (Calgary & Edmonton) have forgone this model in support of the private retail model. Likewise, supporters of the private retail model claim this approach would best accomplish the goals to protect minors, protect the safety of communities, protect public health and limit the illegal market (Alberta Cannabis Stakeholder Group, 2017). Despite which model is imposed by provincial governments, municipalities will have to react quickly and be adaptive in their response if they are to minimize the social costs and overcome the expected regulatory burden of marijuana legalization.

The diagram below summarizes the recommended process for managing recreational marijuana-related uses. ■



This article was developed by the planning team at **V3 Companies of Canada Ltd.** in a collaborative effort to address the emerging issues surrounding the legalization of cannabis in both Alberta and Saskatchewan and its potential effects on municipalities. V3Co has extensive experience in the area of regulatory processes to address the challenges of cannabis legalization. For further information contact Nick Pryce, Director of Planning, V3 Companies of Canada Ltd., [npryce@v3co.ca](mailto:npryce@v3co.ca).

About the Authors

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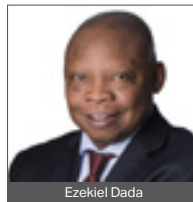
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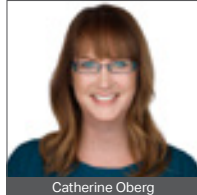
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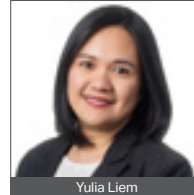
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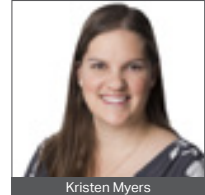
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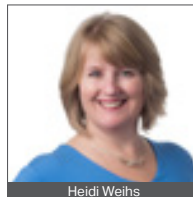
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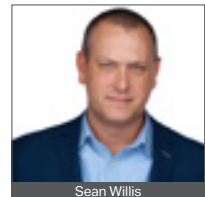
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# Saskatchewan's Urban Boom: Growth on the Periphery

SOURCE: Rylan Graham

The Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of Saskatoon and Regina experienced rapid population growth from 2011 to 2016. The majority of growth in both CMA's occurred at the periphery, while more central areas experienced stagnant growth or population decline. Such patterns of growth are often associated with many negative consequences. As such, it is important that adopted growth management policies, which emphasize intensification, be followed with strategies to ensure successful implementation in order to facilitate more sustainable patterns of development.

## Growth of Saskatchewan's CMAs

The release of Statistics Canada's census program in February of 2017 was received with much anticipation from planners across Canada. For planning professionals this data provides critical insight regarding population changes experienced over the previous five-year period.

If population growth is a key objective for municipalities, few had more cause for celebration than Saskatchewan's two Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), Saskatoon and Regina. Of the 35 Canadian CMAs, only Calgary and Edmonton experienced faster growth between 2011 and 2016 than the 12.5% and 11.8% witnessed in Saskatoon and Regina respectively. The strong population growth across Saskatchewan's two

CMAs has spurred additional residential, commercial, and industrial development.

Of interest to this discussion is how this census data can inform planners as to 'where' growth occurred. Both Figures 1.0 and 1.1 provide valuable insight with respect to this inquiry.

Both figures show the rural municipalities in the Saskatoon and Regina CMAs experienced significant population growth over this five-year period, with most seeing increases greater than 10% (and none less than 5%). Even more significant, is the growth experienced within the outlying bedroom communities of Warman (55.1% growth) and Martensville (25% growth) located north of Saskatoon; and White City (63.2% growth) and Pilot Butte (16% growth) to the east of Regina.



Figure 1.0: Population Growth of Saskatoon CMA, 2011–2016  
SOURCE: Statistics Canada 2017

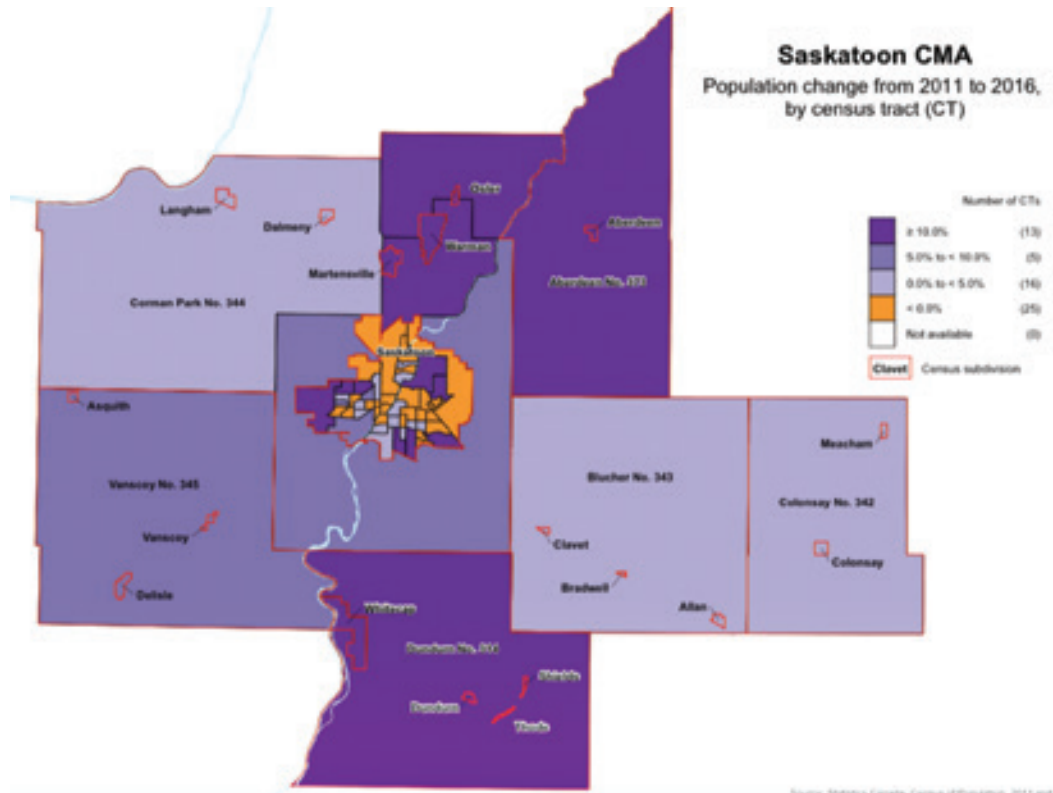
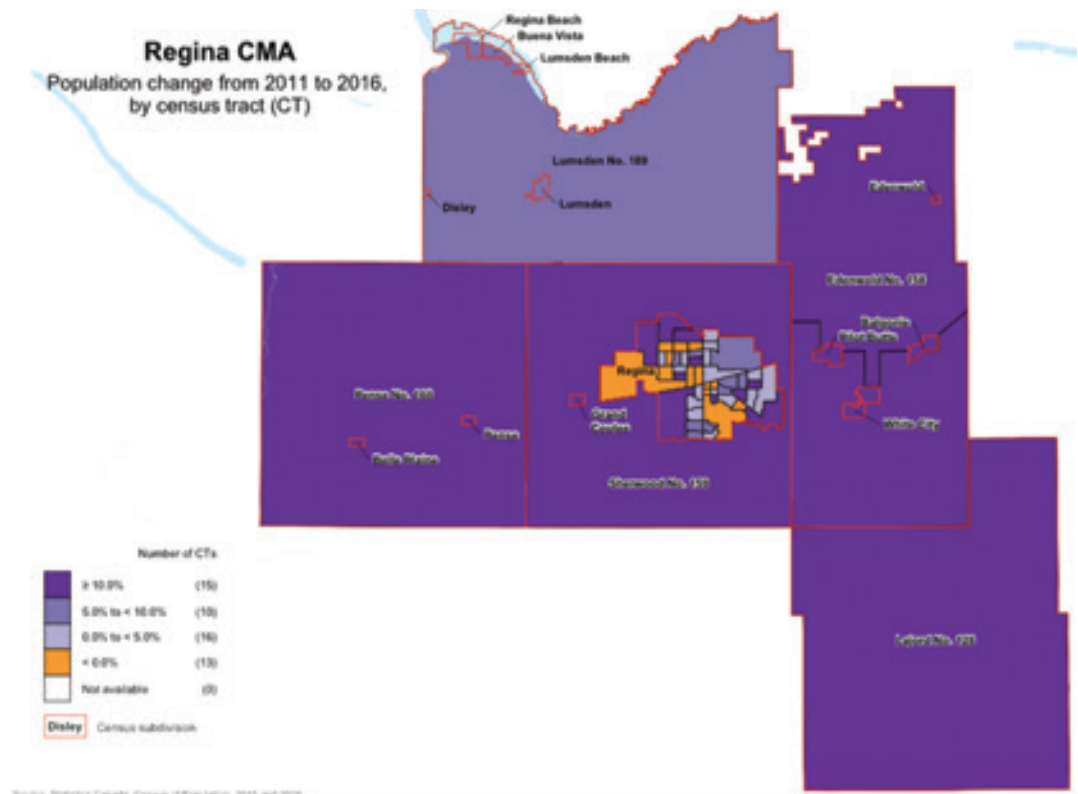


Figure 1.1: Population Growth of Regina CMA, 2011–2016  
SOURCE: Statistics Canada 2017



Within the city proper of both Saskatoon and Regina, only a limited number of Census Tracts (CTs), generally located towards the periphery, experienced comparable population growth. Instead across both municipalities, the majority of CTs experienced limited growth (less than 5%) or more concerning, population decline.

Therefore, as the data indicates, from 2011 to 2016 the growth of Saskatchewan's two CMAs occurred largely at the periphery, both at the regional and municipal scale.

### Challenges of Growth on the Periphery

While communities can benefit immensely from population growth (i.e. an expanded tax base, increase in services and amenities) it is also important to recognize the potential for negative repercussions.

Decades of comparable growth in cities throughout North America (including Saskatoon and Regina) indicates that growth focused at the periphery of cities is commonly associated with:

- The loss and conversion of productive agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Expenditure of limited fiscal resources on the expansion of infrastructure (i.e. roads and utilities) and provision of community services (emergency

and protective services, public transit, schools, libraries, snow clearance, recreational centres and parks) to service the peripheral growth.

- Dependency on the private automobile resulting in increased traffic congestion and commuting times, degradation of both environmental and human health through increased water, soil, noise, and air pollution, and an increased likelihood of critical injury or fatality through automobile collisions.
- A limitation of viable transportation options (transit, walking, cycling), which fosters a more sedentary lifestyle and is linked to higher rates of obesity, heart disease as well as other chronic health conditions.
- Disinvestment in mature neighbourhoods leading to decline.

Thus not all growth should be considered equal; instead *where* growth occurs is an important consideration if planners are trying to achieve economic, environmental, and social sustainability at the local level.

In order to achieve these goals, the role of growth management has emerged as a common strategy. Growth management policies typically reduce development pressures on land at the periphery and



Figure 2.0: Former Canadian Pacific Rail intermodal facility awaiting redevelopment through the Railyard Renewal Project

SOURCE: Rylan Graham



Figure 3.0: Rendering of Saskatoon's River Landing project

SOURCE: Triovest Realty Advisors Inc 2018

instead emphasize growth through intensification (i.e. residential development/redevelopment at higher densities within existing neighbourhoods).

### Prairie Winds of Change

Recent changes in the growth management policies of both Saskatoon and Regina indicate a growing commitment towards intensification. Respectively, Regina and Saskatoon have established annual intensification targets of 30% and 25% (City of Regina 2017; City of Saskatoon 2017). Projects underway in both cities offer some reflection of these policies at work.

In Regina, the City is spearheading the redevelopment of a 17.5-acre brownfield site in the heart of the city. The *Railyard Renewal Project* envisions a transformation of the now vacant Canadian Pacific Rail intermodal facility into a vibrant, high-density, mixed-use community; designed to better connect the urban fabric between the neighbouring central business district and Warehouse District (City of Regina 2016).

In Saskatoon, the long beleaguered *River Landing* project is poised to emerge as an iconic development adjacent to the South Saskatchewan River. Planned as a mixed-use development that includes 105 residential units, a boutique hotel, retail, and office space, it compliments previous public realm improvements. Demand for this type of project is high as the residential component sold out by the end of its launch weekend (City of Saskatoon 2015).

However, if intensification is to play a greater role in accommodating future growth, municipal efforts need to address the area of implementation.

To date, neither Saskatoon nor Regina has successfully achieved their intended intensification targets. From 2014 to 2016, Regina experienced intensification at a rate of 17%, while Saskatoon's five-year average from 2010 to 2015 was 15.3% (City of Regina 2017; City of Saskatoon 2017). Peripheral growth is likely to continue as the predominant form unless new strategies are adopted to ensure intensification targets are implemented and coordinated across the entire region.

Intensification is not a panacea for the negative consequences related to population growth, and in reality often presents unique challenges for planners including community opposition and increased development costs. In spite of this, intensification is necessary if planners hope to reduce peripheral growth in order to facilitate more sustainable development across Saskatoon, Regina and their surrounding regions. ■

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# Volunteer Spotlight



## APPI

The APPI would like to recognize **Ken Melanson** for his long-time efforts volunteering for the APPI, and particularly for advancing local member events and the annual conference.

After participating in his first APPI lunch and learn event in Calgary after moving from Fort McMurray, Ken decided to volunteer with APPI and get involved with the local events committee. "It was my first direct experience with APPI and it was exciting to see so many planners gather together." Ken's involvement led to developing activities for World Town Planning Day and eventually 'Baconfest,' an urban planning film festival held in Calgary in celebration of planner Ed Bacon.

Later, Ken was elected to the APPI Council for 6 years, eventually taking responsibility for the APPI's conferences and events, where he decided to "... take some risks and do different things." This involved successful annual conferences in K-country and in Edmonton. Ken strongly believes in making APPI more visible to the membership.

The things Ken enjoyed the most volunteering with APPI was building new personal relationships, meeting

new people and participating in the building and advancement of the APPI. Seeing the members enjoying APPI events and connecting with other members brought Ken a lot of satisfaction, as did sharing good times with other Council members. Reflecting on his volunteering activities with APPI, Ken felt that the rewards of volunteering included good memories of travel and fun he had with other planners, particularly one road trip to Yellowknife where he established a love of the North West Territories.

Ken advises other APPI members not to be afraid to reach out and volunteer, as he found the experience very rewarding and thinks that volunteers have the ability to shape the future of the profession.

When Ken is not volunteering with APPI or presenting reports to the City of Calgary Council, he spends spare time travelling, taking photos and learning how to play the guitar.



What surprised **Jim Walters** of Saskatoon's Crosby Hanna & Associates about volunteering with SPPI is the number of enduring long-term personal and professional relationships he developed.

Among Jim's many accomplishments was being president of SPPI when Continuous Professional Development was implemented. But, without a doubt, it was meeting new people that brought Jim the most satisfaction through his involvement with SPPI, being able to travel throughout Saskatchewan and across Canada, meeting new people and getting involved in the profession, notwithstanding the challenges of having young children at home.

Jim notes that much change has occurred in both SPPI and Saskatchewan over the past 20 years—SPPI members are getting younger, there are more jobs, and more people, especially the general public, are interested and care about planning. When Jim first began his career in the late 1990's he observed that maybe one or two articles about planning issues would be published in the local newspapers per year, whereas now there seems to be one or two each week.

Jim began volunteering at the same time as he started his career, eventually joining SPPI council in 2000 and accepting posts as treasurer, president elect and then president. At the beginning SPPI was a small organization and it was easy to get to know most of the planners in Saskatchewan. It was a close group, where everyone knew each other and he is still good friends

with them today. He appreciated the mentoring and help he received from the experienced planners at SPPI when he began his career.

Jim thinks that planners interested in volunteering should know that it brings many rewards, including building a peer group that can last your entire career, as well as being able to influence change in the organization, the planning profession and people in general. But for Jim, it is the life-long friendships he developed through SPPI that are 'front and centre'. Jim advises planners thinking about volunteering that it will enhance your career and allow you to make life-long friendships.

Jim's friends would describe him as being easy-going, someone who is genuinely interested in people. This is a personal quality needed in planning, where communication and personal relationships are important to creating successful plans and projects. His people skills must also come in handy 'after hours' as Jim also contributes to the community as a volunteer hockey coach and board member for the Saskatoon Minor Hockey Association and the Saskatoon Redwings.

The SPPI would like to recognize Jim for his many years of dedication to and involvement with the institute and planning in Saskatchewan.





## MPPI

**Donovan Toews** has learned through volunteering with MPPI that even though the affiliate is among the smallest in the country, it has the advantage of feeling more like an extended family than a large organization. He also thinks that one of MPPI's unique strengths is that it has built strong ties between the academic world and those who practice planning in government or private industry, resulting in benefits for both students and practitioners. He says that MPPI 'punches above its weight' on the national front because of its deeply connected base.

Donovan began volunteering with MPPI in 1997 and has been volunteering ever since. He originally got involved to learn from other planners and get exposure to the planning industry, which has now evolved to giving back and paying it forward to recognize people who have helped him and contributed their time to the profession.

Over the years he has served as MPPI President, CIP Vice President, chaired several committees, and has an open door whenever students ask for time. Donovan still volunteers at the MPPI events and volunteered as co-chair of the CIP national conference SOUL 2018, in July in Winnipeg.

One thing that Donovan has appreciated about volunteering is working alongside other planners from all areas of the profession and helping to break down barriers that can sometimes exist between private practice and public planning.

Although potential volunteers might be concerned about how much time and energy it might take, Donovan notes that there are many volunteering opportunities that can fit nicely with a balanced work and home life. Volunteering, he says, might actually spark some more energy into your life rather than deplete it!

Donovan has found volunteering rewarding—and the energy created by a group of volunteers, contagious. Like many other volunteers, Donovan cites meeting new people and making friends as one of the benefits of volunteering, as well as opportunities to travel and learn about people and the planning profession. Donovan suggests that prospective volunteers shouldn't worry about their planning knowledge or limited network prior to volunteering—as volunteering can serve as pathway to both gaining knowledge and meeting new people.

For anyone that is thinking of volunteering, Donovan says "go for it!" It will help you get to know planners from all over, help to build the planning profession, and help to make a difference to others.

When he isn't planning, Donovan loves to be outdoors with his family, hiking, canoeing, camping and exploring new places, sometimes collecting old maps along the way, and taking time to do the Saturday crossword when at home. MPPI would like to express their appreciation to Donovan for his contributions to building the profession in Manitoba. ■


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2017-0906

# Internships for Success: The Alberta Municipal Internship Program

Under the *Canadian Constitution Act* 1982, the regulation of 'professions' is deemed to be a provincial jurisdiction, and therefore provincial planning institutes are responsible for the self-regulation of the planning profession. During the "Planning for the Future" initiative of 2008 to 2012, a legislative task force proposed that all provincial and territorial affiliates adopt the RPP designation. With the exception of Quebec, which uses OUQ, Nova Scotia, which uses Licensed Professional Planner (LPP), and Newfoundland and Labrador, which still uses MCIP, all other provinces have adopted RPP. In those Provinces where there is regulation specific to the planning profession, those corresponding PTIA's are legislatively authorized to self-regulate the profession in the public interest. This includes responsibility for granting the right to the RPP protected title, and in most cases a defined process for filing a complaint against a member, as well as a disciplinary process.

The Planning profession thrives through strong partnerships, innovation, and mentoring. For the past 10 years, the Alberta Municipal Internship Program has successfully partnered energetic and skilled new planning professionals with host Alberta municipalities and planning services agencies with the objective to "assist in the training and development of competent, well-rounded municipal land-use planners."<sup>1</sup>

Administered by Alberta Municipal Affairs, the Municipal Internship Program consists of three program streams—Administration, Finance Officer, and Land Use Planner. The Land Use Planner stream, as part of its competitive selection process, requires interns to have completed "a post-secondary degree program in a planning related discipline or related degree."<sup>2</sup> Qualified candidates are shortlisted by the Ministry and then interviewed by potential host municipalities; successful interns are hired by their host municipality in a 2 year paid position. Interns are then fully embedded into the day-to-day planning & development operations of their host organizations, receiving a broad exposure to the profession.<sup>3</sup> Coaching and relationship building are key components to the program with interns regularly meeting at coaching sessions held throughout their term by Alberta Municipal Affairs.

## Benefits to Interns

Interns learn invaluable on the job planning skills that cover the diversity of the profession. "As Parkland County's current intern, I work on a variety of really interesting projects," says Jasmine Hall. "This includes helping the County prepare for cannabis legalization by researching changes to our Land Use Bylaw, assisting staff with preparation of a new Municipal Development Plan, and creating educational videos for our residents to be placed on our website to help them navigate the County's different planning processes." Exposure to different elements of the profession (built into the program) also supports the development of well-rounded planning professionals. "In the coming year I will get the opportunity to work on other aspects of planning including long-range and current planning, with an increased exposure to site development and building codes."

The benefits of the Municipal Internship Program are far reaching with recent and 'older' alumni staying in the profession. "This unique program provides a broad overview of municipal planning," says Mary McInnes, a 2017 intern alumni and a planner at Parkland County. "I had the chance to explore different areas of planning while gaining my confidence and skill set as a planner."

<sup>1</sup> Alberta Municipal Affairs, *Municipal Internship Program for Land Use Planners 2017-2019 Workplan* (Government of Alberta: 2017) <http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship/documents/Land%20Use%20Planner%20Workplan%202017-19.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Alberta Municipal Affairs, "Requirements to Apply", *Government of Alberta*, accessed November 19, 2017. [www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship/for-interns](http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship/for-interns).

<sup>3</sup> Alberta Municipal Affairs, "Requirements to Apply", *Government of Alberta*, accessed November 19, 2017. [www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship/for-interns](http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship/for-interns).





Interns (from left to right) Karen Oxley, Jasmine Hall (our current intern), Mary McInnes

SOURCE: Parkland County

Karen Oxley, another former alumni (2009–2011) who works with Parkland County also gained valuable experience from the program, saying, “The internship provided me with a very valuable knowledge and skill base as a planner. I also had access to networking opportunities through the internship that otherwise wouldn’t be available to a new graduate. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to build my career on the foundation that the internship program provides.”

### Benefits to host organizations

The benefits go both ways. “Our municipal interns play a critical role in the day-to-day operations of our Department and the Corporation,” says Carol Bergum, Director of the Planning & Development Services with Parkland County. The County has hosted five planning interns since the program’s inception, and four of those interns are still in the planning profession in Alberta. “Under our staff, our interns get a robust education in development, subdivision planning, and long range

planning. This prepares them for their careers. The internship benefits staff by building their mentoring skills, and interns by exposing them to planning’s variety of disciplines.”

Planning interns also bring in fresh ideas to their host organizations. “Having worked with our interns since 2008, I have seen new and exciting ideas incorporated into our department’s processes and projects, including the area structure plans and our new Municipal Development Plan,” says Stephen Fegyverneki, Manager, Current Planning.

“The Municipal Internship program helps build planning capacity in Alberta,” says Wendy Peters, Manager, Internships & Education, Ministry of Municipal Affairs. “We have seen positive contributions to the planning profession and look forward to continuing our partnership with municipalities and planning agencies on this program.”

More information on the Alberta Municipal Internship Program can be obtained at [www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship](http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship). ■

#### About the Author

**Martin Frigo RPP, MCIP** is the Manager, Long Range Policy Planning with Parkland County and currently serves as a councillor with the Alberta Professional Planners Institute (APPI). The author wishes to acknowledge contributions provided by Jasmine Hall, Mary McInnes, Karen Oxley, Wendy Peter, Carol Bergum and Stephen Fegyverneki in the preparation of the article.

Parkland County is a rural County located just west of the City of Edmonton. The County is home to 32,097 residents and includes 6 unincorporated hamlets including Carvel, Duffield, Fallis, Gainford, Entwistle, and Tomahawk. The large county encompasses approximately 242,595 hectares with a mixture of agricultural, industrial and county residential lands.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Parkland County, *Municipal Development Plan One Parkland: Powerfully Connected* (Parkland County: 2017) <https://www.parklandcounty.com/en/county-office/resources/Documents/MDP/Bylaw-2017-14---Municipal-Development-Plan.pdf>



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