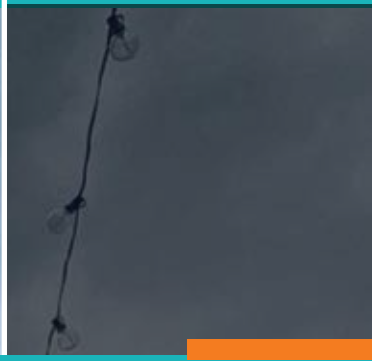
PLAN NORTH WEST

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

Summer 2022 Issue 10



CONTENTS

You are invited to join us for the 2022 SPPI Conference: People, Planning & Placemaking.

Our Annual Conference seeks to bring together planning practitioners, policy makers, community leaders, and other professionals to delve into modern issues impacting the planning profession. This year's conference theme will explore topics such as: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; Truth & Reconciliation; Healthy Communities; Climate Change; and other matters relating to planning and the human experience.

For more information and to register visit the SPPI website:
https://sppi.ca/events-services/annual-conference/

SPPI

PEOPLE, PLANNING & PLACEMAKING

2022 SEPTEMBER 26 & 27

DELTA HOTEL REGINA

The Editorial Board

We are excited to share Issue 10 of *PLAN North West*. Thank you to all the authors and editorial board members who ensure that planners in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories have a quality outlet to share their expertise and perspectives.

The next issue of *PLAN North West* is scheduled to be released in early 2023 and the editorial board is already busy preparing the next set of submissions. Please submit your completed article or idea for upcoming issues in 2023. Please contact office@albertaplanners.com for more information. Thank you once again to all our readers, authors, and supporters of *PLAN North West.*

PLAN North West offers opportunity for publication of original works that are both community-based and research orientated, and relevant to Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Types of subscriptions 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.

APPI MESSAGE

PRESIDENT
Jeff Chase RPP, MCIP

780.435.8716

admin@albertaplanners.com

www.albertaplanners.com

P.O. Box 3099
Sherwood Park, AB T8H 2T1

APPI - Alberta Professional Planners Institute

Alberta Professional Planners Institute

@ _APPI_

Summer is here. I feel a little extra optimistic this year, as we hopefully turn the corner on the Covid-19-19-19 pandemic and look forward to a smoother 2022. The last two years have given many of us the opportunity to reflect on our profession, and the role that planners have and continue to play in building and supporting safe and resilient communities. The pandemic, especially in the last while, has forced us to confront many uncomfortable realities – division in our cities, towns, and communities – inequities and disproportionate impacts for those most vulnerable and disadvantaged – and new levels of isolation and mental health impacts – to name just a few. I, like many of you, continue to hold the firm belief that planners have a strong role to play in building bridges, finding common ground, and fostering hope, trust and inclusion – all in the spirit of community building. As we emerge from this time and lead towards recovery, I look forward to the role that planners can and will play in all of this. Sending you all best wishes for a happy, healthy, and productive remaining 2022.

A big thank you to the *Plan North West* Committee for another thoughtful edition.

APPI
Alberta Professional Planners Institute

MPPI MESSAGE

PRESIDENT
Janis Pochailo RPP, MCIP

info@mppi.mb.ca

www.mppi.mb.ca

1.888.626.3036

Suite 503-386 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 3R6

MPPI proudly hosted on May 31, June 1 and 2, 2022, the Manitoba Planning Conference which was a hybrid event. An in-person banquet coupled with the MPPI Annual General Meeting will follow two days of on-line sessions. The conference concluded with a mobile tour on the final day. Until registration opened, we had no way to gauge our members comfort in attending a face-to-face social event. We were hopeful that the allure of seeing colleagues and friends will draw people in. I believe that, like myself, many people have missed the breakfast seminars, student mentorship events and annual in-person conference that was the norm for MPPI prior to the spring of 2020.

Following two years on MPPI Council, 2020 was the year I became president. After hastily amending our by-laws to allow for virtual meetings, I was welcomed at MPPI's first on-line AGM. A thunderstorm interrupted my internet service and I missed a substantial part of the meeting. It was a rough start, but we adapted, became proficient at Zoom, and managed to keep the institute going, if not thriving. My two-year term as president will end this year. In a way, it is fitting that my last meeting will be MPPI's first in-person event. It is a hopeful sign that the Manitoba planning community will soon be seeing more of each other.

I have enjoyed my time on Council. It has been a wonderful opportunity to meet and work with dedicated individuals, both within our organization and in our national planning community. I will continue to be involved in MPPI activities, but in a less formal capacity. My best wishes go out to now president Andrew Mok and MPPI Council as they ably continue to support and promote the interests of our profession.

*Janis' term as president ended June 2022

On behalf of all of MPPI, thank you Janis for your time and dedication.

MPPI
Manitoba Professional
Planners Institute

SPPI MESSAGE

PRESIDENT
Ian Goeres RPP, MCIP

Welcome to the latest issue of *Plan North West*. If the last two years have shown us anything, it is that publications such as this are necessary to stay updated on projects and issues in other provinces.

With the loosening of restrictions, in-person events seem more likely and the time spent talking on a screen may reduce. Like many of you, I have become "zoomed out" over the course of the past two years and hope for a safe and enjoyable summer.

At SPPI, we are focusing on revising our strategic plan to better respond to the new normal in a post-pandemic world. It has been a difficult two years but I am proud of the way our members and our profession have adjusted to change.

Please enjoy this issue.

info@sppi.ca
www.sppi.ca
306.535.0993
PO Box 24044
Broad St RPO
Regina, SK S4P 4J8
SaskPlanning
@SaskPlanning

SPPI
SASKATCHEWAN
PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS INSTITUTE

Volunteer Highlights

Glinis Buffalo RPP, MCIP

Glinis' passion for volunteering and connecting people within and outside the planning profession, started in 2014, as co-chair for the APPI annual conference in Kananaskis, and continued on to participate as an APPI Council member, from 2017 to end of 2021. Volunteering has taught Glinis new skills, such as Project Management, and developing meaningful and educational programming content for attendees at conferences and other information sharing forums. Her programming has included, coordinating and organizing First Nation speakers at different events, and training in Indigenous awareness that aims to share knowledge, and teach planners about various important aspects such as, Indigenous cultures, treaties, and relationship building. Glinis has also participated in developing APPI's strategic plan on Indigenous Knowledge.

Particularly memorable for Glinis, was the APPI Council journey to Yellowknife to meet and support planners in northern Canada. As part of the journey, Glinis found the cultural immersion at a remote Indigenous camp, a most satisfying way to connect and reconnect with knowledge about livelihood perspectives including, resource sharing and use, fishing and hunting, and medicinal plants.

In terms of volunteering, Glinis firmly believes in building networks, and that "people need to understand the value and power of relationship building. It's not a soft skill, because successful outcomes are based on relationships you build, and not just about education achieved and degrees." Further, relationship building has been a learning experience, where she has leveraged the skills gained through organizing planning conferences and other associated activities, which APPI has supported in relating and incorporating her values towards planning. To Glinis, volunteering is about taking interest in content, taking charge of important outcomes learned during her career and opportunities, and relating with the central question in her mind of "how does this align with my values?"

Glinis values mentorship of young planners, having supported their journey towards achieving RPP certification. This stems from the meaningful support she has received from others in her life, and is rooted in values of sharing, compassion, and support. "I am grateful for those who have been there for me, and for my opportunity to share with the profession."

As stated at the beginning of this feature, Glinis has a passion for volunteering and connecting people, which is based on her philosophy that "passion is planning." This helps her to guide and work with diverse views, towards successful outcomes. When not working, she enjoys being immersed in land activities, and hiking with friends.

APPI
Alberta Professional Planners Institute

Volunteer Highlights

Tanis Knowles Yarnell RPP, MCIP

Tanis worked as a planner at the City of Vancouver on a wide range of assignments, before moving to the prairies, where she works for the City of Winnipeg on social policy and equity related initiatives. Volunteering in both places, has introduced her to interesting people involved in diverse and important planning work. By coincidence, two of Tanis' new neighbours in Winnipeg turned out to be MPPI members, who encouraged her to get involved with the institute. Her most memorable volunteer moment (so far) was participating on the SOUL CIP Conference Program Committee, in 2018. "I felt immediately welcomed to the group and it was great to be part of that process. Meeting other planners and contributing in a meaningful way to the national conference helped me feel connected when I was so new to Winnipeg."

Tanis currently volunteers on the MPPI Awards Program committee, with her interest in renewing the program to better "elevate and promote the excellent work of planners in Manitoba." Tanis has also found that taking part in events, such as the virtual MPPI/University of Manitoba Wine & Cheese, while volunteers hand delivered a selection of cheeses and beverage of choice directly to the participants taking part in the online event, showed creativity in connecting planners and students.

Tanis enjoys talking to future planners about their ideas, and recently chatted with a 10-year-old, who's interest in the Minecraft video game became an interest in planning and placemaking. Tanis likes to think she was able to "guide some of his planning decisions, such as not building his city on top of a river or putting bike paths underground!"

Tanis firmly believes that volunteering with MPPI, enriches both the personal and professional life, and strongly encourages people to get involved at any level. Further, she believes that "a professional institute should reflect its diversity of members, but relies on volunteers to do that well. Find something in the institute's work that sparks your interest or where you don't see yourself reflected, and then just get involved!"

She is described as "collaborative, detail-oriented, reliable and hard-working," which is not a surprise given her enthusiasm for volunteering with MPPI and other initiatives. Outside of work and volunteering, Tanis loves gardening, and is very involved in volunteering on her children's school and highland dance committees. She has also found more time for reading during the pandemic, and really likes crime fiction – "my analytical brain never stops!"

MPPI
Manitoba Professional Planners Institute

Volunteer Highlights

Karen Bolton RPP, MCIP

Karen first began volunteering in 2005 with SPPI (which was then called the Association of Professional Community Planners, Saskatchewan-APCPS) at a time when she was seconded to the Saskatchewan Government Relations, Community Planning Branch to lead stakeholder consultation for input on updating the Planning and Development Act. After the annual conference in 2005, she joined the provincial Association, holding many council positions such as, treasurer, program lead, Vice President and President, over an eight-year period. In addition, Karen spent five years on the CIP Board of Directors.

Karen has a couple of strong memories in her volunteer roles with the provincial Association namely, program development for the annual conferences and being involved with the transformation of APCPS into SPPI, as a mature and independent affiliate of CIP. The annual conference, and in particular, the 2013 conference, which celebrated 50 years as a long-standing provincial planning institute, was especially important in Karen's volunteer experience. The experience encompassed many important aspects of planning such as, engagement, networking, and knowledge sharing amongst the professional and student planning talent in Saskatchewan. As Karen stated, "it was always rewarding." Further, the experience of helping to grow SPPI into an influential planning organization at the national level, "despite its small membership, has been quite rewarding."

Karen's interdisciplinary background has taught her that planning is a highly diverse profession, and participating in the professional association has provided opportunities to interact with new graduates and experienced planners, all of which "has enhanced my professional and personal life." These opportunities have also been a foundation of giving back to the profession by mentoring and guiding young planners through their candidacy requirements of membership in CIP and SPPI. "I greatly valued the opportunity to share knowledge with these folks and perhaps more importantly, help them understand how to recognize their skill sets, apply them and realize their goals."

Through her years as volunteer, Karen advised practicing and student planners to take advantage of the amazing opportunity to learn and grow by volunteering, and most importantly "contribute to a professional body that is committed to advancing the value of planning as an essential service" and "serve the public good - in short, sign up, you will not regret it."

Colleagues and friends would describe Karen as having many of the qualities for successful volunteering and navigating the planning profession, such as being confident, enthusiastic, diplomatic, accountable, a supportive teacher, and strong communicator. Outside of work and volunteering, her diverse interests include, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, pickleball, fitness, travelling, music, theatre, and DIYing.

SPPI
SASKATCHEWAN

Exploring the status of street vending in Edmonton: Implications for planning and place

Maria Suarez MSc. and Dr. Kyle Whitfield RPP, MCIP

The concept of street vending is as old as cities themselves. Until recently, street vending has been linked to the informal sector, but only in developed countries where numerous policies are in place to regulate this activity. This commercial activity plays a critical role in forming the urban fabric and creates personal connections to a particular location through social practices. However, despite the benefits of street vending, most of the information available in the literature focuses on the more negative physical aspects and the challenges people face while practicing this type of work due to the inadequate, or lack of, regulations in most cities around the world (Graaff & Ha, 2015). Moreover, the role that street vending plays in creating vibrant urban spaces suggests that it would be worthwhile to work on overcoming the obstacles vendors experience in cities where street vending is not currently well understood and regulated. Thus, due to street vending complexity and the limited information about it in Canada, right now, there is a need for research to determine how street vending unfolds in the context of a medium-sized Canadian city and the potential benefits that it brings to its citizens. Consequently, our research project explored the status of street vending in the City of Edmonton and its implications for urban planning in particular sense of place.

Methods of Data Collection

We used Grounded Theory methodology in this study. In investigation, we conducted six semi-structured, individual interviews with key informants. The participants were three street vendors, two City Planners, and an Executive Director of a Business Association in Edmonton. Following the Grounded Theory data analysis steps, information gathered from the literature, key documents and interviews were analyzed and categorized into major themes and associated subthemes.

Results

The information gathered from the six interviews with key participants revealed that street vending is an activity that adds vibrancy to public spaces by bringing people together and making public places safer, which enhances people's sense of place and livability. The study results also showed a need to facilitate the planning process for the current regulations around street vending in Edmonton because they

@elsantotacotruck

are complex to navigate and lengthy to resolve. Additionally, contrary to the perception that street vendors are unfair competition to brick-and-mortar businesses, participants in our study said that there is little evidence of that. On the contrary, unlike ghost kitchens (also known as a delivery-only restaurant), street vendors bring more people to the area, making all businesses more prosperous. Moreover, although Edmonton is a winter city, street vending is practiced chiefly during the summer months and winter is viewed by most vendors as a season to prepare for the next active summer season. Finally, participants agreed that street vending offers an opportunity for entrepreneurs to test their concept with a relatively low level of investment and move from mobile to permanent if their idea becomes successful.

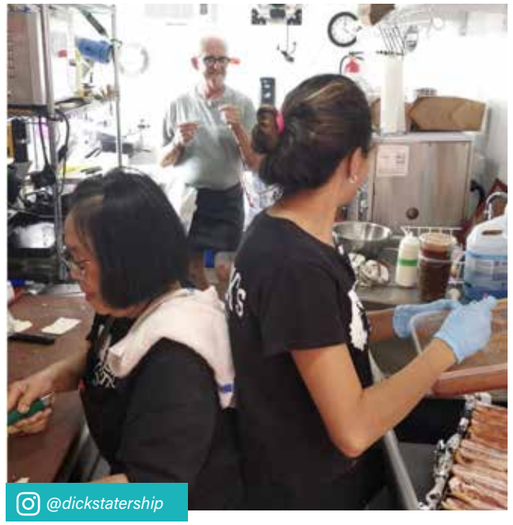
(P1) @yegdtmarket

From the perspective of key informants, the value of street vending to society is evident, street vending attracts people for purposes other than commerce, one of them said that "[street vending] is a really awesome trend where people come together, take pictures with their food, their friends, and they are also able to enjoy the outdoors" (P1). Moreover,

(P2) @yegdtmarket

(P3) @yegdtmarket

@dickstatership



@dickstatership

another participant highlighted that "[street vending] offers a welcoming environment to develop community connections" (P5) because it adds to the street's character and range of uses. Overall, as this participant mentioned, "street vending offers a whole view of what the city is about because it is more colloquial and community-oriented than restaurants; it offers more unity and more vibrancy to public places" (P4). Additionally, another participant argued

@dickstatership

that "food trucks are really important, especially for place-making activities, especially around parks and big events. They draw a lot of people, and they essentially become an attraction which helps animate the public space" (P2). Finally, another participant stated that "street vendors are great at helping activate the street; they bring in people, they bring in customers, they create some livelihood along the area. Vendors offer a product that people can grab and go while walking and enjoying the scenery and the outdoors, which creates a sense of community in a place. Having vendors on public spaces to draw people, especially during lunch hour or on the weekends, is a great opportunity that the City can use to activate the space and attract people to places that need activation" (P3).

@elsantotacotruck

About the Authors

Maria Suarez MSc

I'm passionate about creating age-friendly cities that work for everyone. I'm an enthusiastic lifelong learner committed to making communities more equitable, inclusive, and connected. In my masters program, I emphasized my desire to bring together the disciplines of Human Ecology, which I hold a BSc in from the University of Alberta, and Urban Planning, to create more inclusive and diverse spaces within communities. I acknowledged the interactions that exist between an individual and their various environments and applied them as I explored the status of street vending in Edmonton and its implications.

Kyle Whitfield RPP, MCIP

I hold a PhD in Planning as well I am a RPP and MCIP. I am an Associate Professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Alberta. My areas of scholarship are in community development, citizen engagement, community health planning and I explore ways to build a just and civil society.

Courses that I teach are "Community Planning and Engagement" in the Planning Program, and also teach in the Masters of Community Engagement Program, in particular, "Health, Community Engagement and Development" and a "Community Practicum Placement" course.

Municipal Tools for Affordable Housing

Dianne Himbeault RPP, MCIP

The Federal Government launched the National Housing Strategy (NHS) five years ago and the Provinces and Territories have signed on with their own agreements to support affordable housing for vulnerable groups across the country. How can municipalities leverage this funding to create affordable housing in their communities?

The NHS recognizes the importance of municipalities in the housing sector. One of its programs, the National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF), encourages local government to act as a partner or *Co-Investor* in affordable housing projects, and the recent Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) partnered directly with cities in the provision of funding and the selection of projects.

Municipalities are in the best position to determine their local housing needs and have many tools at their disposal to encourage, enable and protect housing affordability. These tools fall generally into three buckets: **Policy Tools, Financial Tools and Regulatory Tools.** (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Municipal tools are more effective when they work together under a strong policy framework

First and foremost, there are **Policy Tools**. It all begins with a plan; your Official Community Plan, developed through consultation, sets the vision and future course for your Municipality. Strong policies with clear goals and direction with respect to affordable housing will cascade down to all other plans and policies. Your Municipal Housing Strategy will further refine the goals of the community plan. By bringing together stakeholders and data, you can determine your community's housing need, set realistic targets and define actions that will be taken not just by the municipality, but also by stakeholders involved in the process. (CMHC has a guide to assist municipalities in developing their own plans[1]). It is important that the policies and actions identified in the Housing Strategy align with other programs and policies from other levels of government to maximize the potential for leveraging. CMHC has many examples where we have worked closely with municipalities to align program delivery and simplify processes for affordable housing project proponents.

With policies and targets from your Housing Strategy, other secondary plans can work towards the same affordable housing goals. Supporting densification through neighbourhood secondary plans, or transit-oriented development can set the stage for housing programs from all levels of government to work more effectively. Municipalities can also influence policy beyond their community by sharing local knowledge and expertise, you can contribute to policy changes at other levels of government when backed by evidence-based plans.

Next, there are **Financial Tools**. Some municipalities support affordable housing directly through a municipal housing authority or through the provision of grants or loans, but there are other financial contributions that may seem less obvious. Land-based contributions can have a significant impact on the financial viability of an affordable housing project. Cities can donate surplus land to affordable housing providers, or they can sell or lease the land at a discount. If municipal land is being held for future use and cannot be disposed of or built on, temporary uses are possible. In Vancouver, surplus city land was leased on a temporary basis to the Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency (VAHA) for the installation of modular housing units. When the land is needed in the future, the modular units can be moved to another location[2]. Another consideration is the co-location of housing with other community owned amenities; for example, development of the air space above transit stations or on a smaller scale, a library may be co-located within a mixed-use project, providing a stable income for the viability of the affordable housing provider.

Another significant financial contribution can be through exemptions or waivers where the municipality can forego revenue in return for affordable housing. In the form of tax credits or exemptions, or by waiving or reducing development permit fees and charges.

Finally, there are the **Regulatory Tools** where municipalities can use development plans, regulations and zoning to influence housing affordability. The NHS targets the increase in supply of affordable rental housing. The form of this housing is generally medium to higher density multiple family buildings. Higher densities and infill can make better use of existing infrastructure; therefore, policies that remove barriers to this form of development will in turn facilitate affordable housing. Flexible zoning by-laws that minimize the number of steps and time involved in bringing a project to construction, lower costs to the developer and in turn to the consumer.

Guidelines for infill development that have been developed with and accepted by the community, can provide certainty to both the developer and the neighbourhood, while reducing opposition. As an example: Ottawa has recently revised its R4 zoning district regulations to enable a wider range of low-rise multi-unit infill housing as of right. Permissive development standards can also reduce costs for developers. Edmonton has enacted *Open Option Parking*, where parking is no longer required and the developer chooses the number of spaces they will provide based on market need. With standards that are more permissive, many existing affordable housing developments who have land set aside for parking could also potentially develop additional housing.

The rezoning process can be long and costly for a developer. Up-zoning or pre-zoning land can accelerate this process and set the stage for higher density development, particularly where a community process and adopted secondary plan has already determined this as a desirable future use. Cities are also exploring the elimination of single-family zoning altogether to allow for small-scale infill densification.

In addition to removing barriers, there are regulatory tools that can provide incentives and make certain benefits available to those developing affordable housing. Municipalities may streamline the application process or provide preferential treatment in navigating the process where a developer is providing affordable housing. For example: an application manager or concierge can help applications wind through the different municipal approvals and departments and ensure that the proponent avails themselves of all municipal incentives such as fee waivers, tax credits as well as connects with the programs of other levels of government. Inclusionary zoning (where a percentage of the units in a development are affordable) may be mandatory or negotiated in exchange for higher densities or other benefits.

One significant barrier to the development of affordable or community housing is neighbourhood opposition. Ensuring discussions about affordable housing are part of the planning process early on when developing infill or redevelopment plans with the community can create a more welcoming environment. Using public education tools and strategies to foster community buy-in will help to achieve the vision of a municipality's affordable housing strategy[3].

It is also important to use regulations to protect the affordable housing you already have, especially older housing stock that includes Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH). This can include the regular enforcement of maintenance and occupancy by-laws to ensure properties remain in good repair and safe for tenants. The City of Montreal also has the *Right of First Refusal*, where it can choose to intervene in the sale of NOAHs. In areas of the city where affordable rental housing is scarce, they may purchase and preserve existing rental buildings or purchase them for redevelopment into additional housing.

All three levels of government are partners in the delivery of the NHS and municipalities have a number of tools at their disposal to encourage the development of affordable housing and become *Co-Investors*. These tools are best when used together under a strong policy framework developed with stakeholders and adopted by decision makers. CMHC is interested in working with municipalities on innovative ways to remove barriers to the development of affordable housing through the *Housing Supply Challenge*.

References

[1] *Guide for Canadian Municipalities for the Development of a Housing Action Plan:* https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/industry-innovation-and-leadership/industry-expertise/affordable-housing/develop-affordable-housing/housing-action-plans-a-guide-for-municipalities

[2] *Evaluation of a Movable, Modular Affordable Housing Project in Canada* https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/housing-markets-data-and-research/housing-research/research-reports/housing-needs/research-insight-evaluation-modular-affordable-housing-project

[3] *Understanding Social Inclusion and NIMBYism in Providing Affordable Housing* https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/archive/research_5/69697_w.pdf

About the Author

Dianne Himbeault is an Outreach Specialist for CMHC in the Prairie region focused on building partnerships and seeking solutions for increasing the availability of affordable housing. She has been with CMHC for more than 10 years in a variety of roles, as a Senior Market Analyst, a First Nation Housing Consultant and as a Senior Specialist, Policy Analysis in Housing Needs. Dianne also spent more than fifteen years with the City of Winnipeg where she held a number of positions including Manager of the Planning and Land Use Division of the Planning Property and Development Department. Dianne is now recently retired, and all of us at PLAN North West wish her all the best in her next planning adventures.

DEAR DILEMMA

Dear Dilemma,

I am writing to get some advice regarding a planner with the City of Curmudgeon. Our older neighbourhood has a lot of inexpensive housing, but a developer has come in and bought up two full city blocks with the intent of converting it to a commercial shopping centre. The City Planner is recommending approval for the proposed rezoning, an amendment to our local area structure plan and to amend the Municipal Development Plan, which will completely destabilize our neighbourhood.

The City and developer held "engagement" sessions with us but did not take into account any of our concerns, while the planner made fun of us as being too NIMBY, too resistant to change. He seemed to be advocating for the developer and appeared to view this process as an unneeded step that is wasting his time. The public hearing is coming up soon and we think the planner is not meeting his obligations about public interest. What can we do?

Concerned about the public interest

Dear Concerned,

Our Alberta Professional Planners Institute (APPI) and our members are governed by the Professional and Occupational Associations Act and its Professional Planner Regulations. APPI's primary role is to protect the public interest. APPI ensures that regulated members of the Institute (RPP and candidate members) uphold ethical standards and maintain a Professional Code of Practice, to which all practicing professional members must adhere.

The Act, in summary, prohibits conduct that is:

a. Detrimental to the public interest
b. Harms the standing of the profession
c. Displays a lack of knowledge, skill or judgement

The APPI discipline process can be a fairly simple process, where first you would want to contact the Executive Director of APPI to discuss the issue and the process. If you are still unsure, the Executive Director may put you in contact with one of the members of the Discipline Committee to discuss further. Our Regulations set out a number of requirements that need to be addressed based on your concerns. They may include by way of example:

a. Is the planner displaying integrity, objectivity and independence?
b. Is the efforts of the planner addressing the public interest?
c. Is the planner's behaviour detracting from the professional image of the Institute?

Once you are prepared to make a complaint, you are required to submit a written complaint. The individual who had a complaint lodged against them will be given the opportunity to provide a written response. While you suggested the concern should be investigated, APPI's discipline process does not allow an investigation to occur. A review of the complaint is completed by a member of the Discipline Committee, based on the complaint and the response from the member to determine if the complaint warrants a hearing. If the individual who reviews the complaint, feels that the complaint is frivolous and vexatious; the complaint will be dismissed. Should a complaint be dismissed and the complainant not agree, they would have the option to appeal to APPI Council and should APPI Council feel that the complaint is not frivolous and vexatious, it would proceed to a full discipline hearing.

For more details on APPI's discipline process, please contact the APPI Executive Director or visit www.albertaplanners.com.

For more details on APPI's discipline process, please contact the APPI Executive Director or visit www.albertaplanners.com

Dear Dilemma is a regular feature of *PLAN North West* and of this publication. In Dear Dilemma, the Discipline Committee and/or Professional Practice Review Committee of APPI, SPPI or MPPI explores a professional quandary. While the letters to Dilemma are composed by the committee members, the scenarios are based on true life experiences. If you have any comments regarding this issue of Dear Dilemma, or if you have a question that you would like answered in Dear Dilemma, please contact MaryJane Alanko at execdir@albertaplanners.com.

In this particular issue of Dear Dilemma, the APPI Discipline Committee explored a professional dilemma with an answer based on APPI's regulatory and legislative context including the APPI Professional Code of Practice, the Alberta Professional Planner Regulation and the Professional and Occupational Associations Registration Act (POARA). In future issues, *PLAN North West* will explore dilemmas in MPPI and SPPI's regulatory and legislative context.

SPPI: Personal and Professional Reflections and Observations on Planning through Covid-19-19-19

Maggie Schwab RPP, MCIP

It is well known that the Covid-19-19-19 pandemic has affected us all in ways we never could have imagined. According to Statistics Canada, the Covid-19-19-19 pandemic substantially increased working from home in our country. By April 2020, 42.6% of Canadian employees aged 15 to 69 worked most of their hours from home, compared with 4% in 2016 (Mehdi and Morissette 2021).

As an institute, SPPI adapted to the pandemic by providing learning opportunities through Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Covid-19-19-19 brought about a discussion on the assessment of liveability and public spaces. SPPI produced a paper on the benefits of Active Transportation. Learning opportunities were offered on racial inequality, truth and reconciliation, and professional ethics. Our AGM was held online, in conjunction with our 2021 virtual conference (Building Resilience), featuring Keynote Speaker Dr. Mark Seasons from the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo.

Similar to other working families, my husband and I tried to share all the household responsibilities of working from home once the pandemic hit Saskatchewan. We attempted to care for our two children (at the time, 4 and 8), maintain our respective workloads, be educators, and limit screen time. It was difficult. I cried a lot. I felt like I was falling behind in all aspects of my family and work life. Countless hours were spent allowing my children to participate in age-inappropriate Nintendo games (thank you, Fortnite and Among Us), and countless hours of Minecraft so my husband and I could each attend the next Teams call or Zoom meeting.

And while the slow return to work and school did offer some respite for our family, other challenges regarding access to childcare surfaced. Ultimately, as a family unit, we made the difficult but necessary decision to have me step away from the workforce in Spring of 2021.

It turns out that we were not the only family to make that decision. According to an analysis by RBC, nearly 100,000 working-age Canadian women completely left the workforce since the pandemic started. The figure for men is more than 10 times smaller.

In 2021, Forbes reported that the pandemic saw a confluence of events for many women—namely an increase in their workloads at work and at home (Deloitte Global). Many women felt that they were at a breaking point, leaving the workforce in record numbers. But there is a ray of light amid the gloom. Employers that give women the culture and support to enable them to succeed have a more productive and motivated workforce and are likely to report greater retention. I would think the same would be true for working parents, in general.

In the field of planning, there is a wage-gap that exists between men and women (CIP National Compensation and Benefits Survey, 2019). The gap commences after 6 years of employment in the profession. It begs the question as to whether the pandemic will result in an increase in said gap? The data denoted earlier in this piece suggests this is likely to have happened. If another similar event (pandemic or otherwise) occurs, will more women be leaving the workforce? As an institute, are there ways in which we can help close this gap and better support the work-life balance?

Aside from the wage gap, the pandemic has resulted in impacts on planning that are yet to be fully understood. If working from home becomes a new normal, how will our transportation networks be affected? How will this affect property taxes if large employers are no longer working at the office, specifically in the downtowns? Lastly, will we see more flexible employment opportunities for working parents?

I, myself, returned to the profession in the fall, working reduced hours, for my own start-up. I can say for certain that my work/life balance is much improved. In a way, I am lucky that we made the decision to have me temporarily step away from a full-time job. I am not sure if other families have been so fortunate.

As an institute, we will continue to participate in the CIP National Compensation Survey and will monitor the after-effects of the pandemic on the profession. It is my hope that by continuing this dialogue, employers, employees, and our institutes will continue to work towards closing this gap.

About the Author

Maggie Schwab is a Planner and Professional Archaeologist and sole proprietor of Schwab Community Planning. Maggie has worked in the field of planning for 13 years, including a year and a half with the Community Planning Branch at the Ministry of Government Relations and nine years at Crosby Hanna & Associates. Maggie also worked as a Professional Archaeologist in the Province of Saskatchewan for a number of local firms. Maggie obtained her Master's degree in Archaeology from the University of Saskatchewan in 2007. She is a full member of the Canadian Institute of Planners (MCIP), a registered professional planner (RPP) with the Saskatchewan Professional Planners Institute, as well as a member of the Saskatchewan Association of Professional Archaeologists.

Manitoba Planning Conference 2022 — Recovery and Resilience

MPPI would like to extend sincere gratitude to all the 2022 MPPI Conference Sponsors.

The 2022 conference "Recovery and Resilience," was held on May 31st thru June 2nd 2022 and welcomed 171 delegates.

SPONSORS

Platinum Plus

Landmark Planning & Design Inc.

Platinum

Association of Manitoba Municipalities · WSP · Manitoba Pork · URBAN SYSTEMS

Online Session

EdgeEffects Environmental Planning Inc Planning for Diversity www.edgeffectsplanning.com · TDS Thompson Dorfman Sweatman · Strategic Systems Engineering Inc. · HTFC Planning & Design

“You’re On Mute”: Field Notes from the New World of Virtual Meetings

Donovan Toews RPP, MCIP

The recent arrival of the two-year ‘anniversary’ of the Covid-19-19-19 global pandemic bears witness to the dramatic rise in global use of virtual meetings. Until recently, the vast majority of the world’s citizens had not used virtual meetings as a means of communications – either for business or personal events. In the realms of planning and public engagement, virtual meetings have become a critical tool enabling at least some modicum of connection with stakeholders through periods of relative social isolation. With virtual communication now commonplace, it seems like an appropriate time to pause and reflect on how things are going in this new ‘cyber-social’ world – a world where relatively new technology is layered atop existing social expectations of what constitutes ‘acceptable’ social behavior. This confluence presents an opportunity to observe virtual interactions more closely, which can lead to better understanding of how we feel people ‘should’ behave in these new cyber-social settings.

Virtual Meetings are Here to Stay

It appears that virtual meetings are not going to be a temporary communication measure, focussed on dealing with pandemic conditions. It’s more likely this interactive format is here to stay[1], yet the social terms that go along with these meetings are still only emerging. Entrepreneur magazine notes: “[Virtual] meetings are now a staple in our day-to-day lives and show no signs of going away, even as many employers welcome workers back to their offices. The challenges and benefits of video conferencing can be much different than in-person meetings, meaning that the rules we need to follow during [virtual] meetings are often different as well.” (https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/383772)

While the field of cyber-security has grown by leaps and bounds through the information age[2], the discussion around cyber-social interactions – by which I mean how groups interact with each other in virtual settings – appears limited. Similarly, the guidance offered to cyber-social participants through emerging literature is also still quite basic. For example, participants are often reminded of the simple task of using the mute function to avoid disturbing a meeting[3], or to stare straight at the camera in order to best simulate eye contact (Harvard Magazine: (https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-elevate-your-presence-in-a-virtual-meeting)

While these basic reminders are needed during this period of societal transition, it may be useful to take a closer look at our cyber-social interactions to examine the advantages and disadvantages of some of the more basic ‘social rules’ currently in their infancy. Perhaps there is more going on than meets the eye (or ear) when people interact in virtual meetings. For example, is it in fact, always best to use the mute function when not speaking? Are there times when not using mute is actually better, even when not speaking? If so, when? And perhaps more importantly, why or why not? By increasing the dialogue around these kinds of cyber-social questions, we can increase our collective ability to avoid conflicts, misperceptions or confusion, and to generally create more successful, productive and rewarding interactions in a virtual setting.

“You’re On Mute”

It’s likely that most who have participated in a virtual meeting have heard the phrase “you’re on mute” spoken at least once, typically with a collective chuckle at this awkward but harmless ‘virtual moment.’ The regularity with which this event occurs points to the obvious conclusion that there is at least one disadvantage to using the mute function in meetings – a relatively minor disturbance to the flow of a meeting. But are there other disadvantages? And with a closer look might there actually be advantages to not using the mute function? What is being lost or gained by subscribing to the default recommendation from experts to “mute your line unless speaking”?

One advantage of using the mute function is that it will help eliminate unintended disruptions. If a participant’s microphone is creating feedback or there is consistent, disruptive background noise, use of the mute function presents an obvious solution. However, one disadvantage of using the mute function has already been noted: participants may forget the mute function is on, which can result in individual or collective embarrassment (however minor), and disruption to the flow of the meeting when they have to be reminded “you’re on mute”. But what about more subtle losses? These may include:

- The loss of ‘smooth’ interactions
- The creation of more ‘compartmentalized’ communications
- Increased opportunity for miscommunication due to silence; and
- Stiffening of the natural social richness when compared to the same interactions taking place in person.

Another consideration is the potential inequity or ‘unequalness’ created when some participants are muted and some are not. What does this situation suggest about the relative participation interest of the respective individuals? Could such differences create subtle queues about ‘who’s in and who’s out’, for example? And what about motivations – does the reason a participant is using the mute function matter? Consider some of the reasons people may use the mute function that have nothing to do with potential disruptions to the meeting:

- Participant may be unprepared or unmotivated
- Participant is creating a ‘social-shield to reduce perceived social risk
- As a passive means of excluding oneself from the conversation
- General introversion

Each of these reasons suggest that there is a need to be mindful of the implications of what might otherwise seem like a simple recommendation and therefore a simple (and individual) decision. As much as use of the mute function may come with certain advantages and risks to the individual – it may be that refraining from using the mute function offers potential advantages to both the individual and the group.

Planning and Stakeholder Meetings

Over the last two years I’ve had hundreds of opportunities to facilitate and participate in virtual meetings related to planning and academia. It’s become evident that some meetings are more suited to the use of the mute function than others.

A principle that I’ve found helpful relies on the simple premise of re-creating the conditions evident in ‘real’ meetings (i.e., in person). For example, if a student were attending a large theatre style classroom, the student could expect to ‘disappear’ in this relatively large crowd – leaving the meeting would be less noticeable, not paying attention would likely be overlooked, and interaction with the presenter would also be unlikely and unexpected. Similarly, in a virtual meeting where many are attending, interaction is less likely to be expected, while unexpected disruptions as a result of background noise would have the effect of disturbing many others in the meeting. These factors would suggest use of the mute function would be entirely appropriate.

By contrast, envision a relatively small team meeting, say 6-8 individuals sitting around a table discussing and interacting verbally. Using the principle of 're-creating reality', it would seem that having one or more individuals using the mute function might unnecessarily limit the free flow of discussion and could create a degree of separation from those participants 'on mute' from those not, while the disadvantages associated with potential disruption would likely be minimal. In this setting it would seem more appropriate to have all lines unmuted, rather than asking individuals to constantly muting and unmuting their line, and simply accept the possibility of a disturbance occurring during the interaction.

Summary

As we move into a period of an increasing frequency of cyber-social interactions, our ability to navigate these settings successfully together is likely to increase. We should be asking ourselves key questions about these interactions: what advantages or disadvantages does the tool offer? Can we use the tool differently to have better interactions? What is motivating my selected method of interacting virtually? Pausing to reflect on the evolution of the normative questions around these interactions can be helpful in advancing our abilities to adapt to these new social settings more effectively.

References

[1] *Patrick Mullane, executive director of Harvard Business School Online offers: "Now, as we're preparing to get back to 'business as usual,' it seems professionals don't want 'business as usual.' Instead, they want flexibility from their employers to allow them to maintain the new work/home balance and productivity they have come to enjoy." (https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/03/survey-reveals-what-worked-about-online-work/)*

[2] *"Social-Cybersecurity is an emerging scientific area focused on the science to characterize, understand, and forecast changes in human behavior, social, cultural and political outcomes, and to build the cyber-infrastructure needed for society to persist in its essential character in a cyber mediated information environment under changing conditions and actual or imminent cyber threats." (http://www.casos.cs.cmu.edu/projects/projects/social_cyber_security.php)*

[3] *Harvard Business School offers: "One of the most disruptive (and embarrassing) Zoom faux pas is when you forget to mute yourself in a Zoom meeting. Needless to say, barking dogs, noisy children and other background noise is very distracting to other participants. Luckily, there's a simple fix for this. Pay attention to your meeting settings and the mute function. When you're not talking, make sure to mute yourself....[on] the other hand, when it is time for you to speak, take an extra second to check your mute button. (https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/03/survey-reveals-what-worked-about-online-work/)*

About the Author

Donovan Toews is the managing partner at Landmark Planning & Design in Winnipeg, MB. Donovan is a public engagement specialist, and applies those skills to complex, multi-stakeholder, often controversial infrastructure and land development projects. Donovan has spent his career collaborating with engineers and his public sector peers to bring projects successfully to fruition. He is a Past President of MPPI and former Vice President of CIP.

APPI Students Essays
Indigenous, Remote, Rural and Northern Planning

This Student Essay Contest was established in 2020, in honour of David Klippenstein (1944-2020), in acknowledgment of his outstanding contribution to planning in northern, Indigenous and rural communities across Canada, and in appreciation of David's passion for sharing his knowledge in this planning realm. The award is intended to cultivate students' interest and further study in the realm of "Indigenous, Remote, Rural, and Northern Planning", which is of paramount relevance within APPI's jurisdiction.

In celebration of all the essays submitted and the students' hard work, APPI is honoured to share all the essay submissions in *PLAN North West.*

Grappling with intersecting sovereignties in rural communities

Emily Proskiw

Conversations regarding planning for rural and northern communities seem to be divided into two mutually exclusive categories: Indigenous communities and settler communities. This divide entrenches itself in discussions of governance capacity in these communities, with a strict division between issues concerning Indigenous governance over Indigenous communities, and settler governance over settler communities. However, the reality is that many northern and rural communities exist as both Indigenous and settler spaces, and have overlapping and intersecting governance sovereignty and planning authority.

In order to discuss the ways Indigenous and settler planning conflict, one must first understand what Indigenous planning is. As Matunga (2013) reminds us, as an activity, planning is not owned by "the West, its theorists, or practitioners, 'planning' is just an English language descriptor for a universal human function with an abiding and justifiable concern for the future" (Matunga, 2013, 4). Pre-contact Indigenous communities had their own practices of planning, based on entirely different philosophies and systems of governance (Porter and Barry, 2016), which consolidated the "notion of place and kinship based planning, interconnections between humans and their environment, and the importance of planning within and for the natural world" (Matunga, 2013, 10). Indigenous communities still exercise their own planning theory and practice, in order to "[create] good lives and living environments for Indigenous communities over generations" (Bouvier and Walker, 2018, 130).

The colonial project has left a legacy of marginalisation of Indigenous peoples and dispossession from their lands and the responsibilities to govern such lands according to Customary Law. The existence of the nation state itself is built on Indigenous marginalisation, and state-based planning acts as the "conceptual and practical apparatus" (Matunga, 2017, 543) to institutionalize such marginalisation. Indigenous communities face a situation in which, while they may have control over internal planning processes and be able to use customary and contemporary practices in their decision-making processes, such decisions must be navigated through the appropriate channels in a parallel and convoluted planning system that operates as the final arbitrator on questions of land-use and public good (Porter and Barry, 2016).

Urban spaces serve as a contact zone in which unequal power relations between Indigenous and settler authorities play out. Indigenous communities do take actions to achieve their planning aspirations, but the problem is that there is no mutual space in which they can bring this agency into conversation with mainstream planning. The result is that we have two independent planning authorities operating in a parallel fashion, that are unable to engage with each other in a mutual space. To remedy this, Matunga (2013, 2017) posits the creation of a 'third space' in planning, where Indigenous planning can connect with settler planning in a collaborative, hybrid space.

Northern and resource communities have a unique positionality within this issue of intersecting and contesting forms of planning authority, and governance sovereignty more generally. Approximately 60% of Indigenous folks in Canada live in predominantly rural regions, compared to only 33% of settlers (OECD, n.d.). Further, particularly in British Columbia where treaties were never signed, Indigenous communities significantly overlap and exist in shared space with settler communities. This pattern continues in the rest of Canada where Indigenous communities were pushed by Treaty into predominately rural regions rich in natural resources, which then later became home to settler communities as settlement in the West was pushed and Canada's resource extraction economy expanded. This is a particularly problematic combination, given that Indigenous worldviews include a strong relationality to place and a responsibility to steward the land for generations into the future, while western environmental planning and natural resource management operates from a very different understandings of relation to the land – namely ownership (Porter and Barry, 2016).

Despite the magnified conflicts between these two parallel forms of planning and governance authorities, the northern or resource community is actually a site where transformative change could be most effectively brought about. The lack of settler governance capacity in rural regions, often discussed as one of the most significant challenges facing northern and resource communities, is in fact the very factor that could facilitate the creation of a third space in which Indigenous planning authority can engage with settler planning authority on equal terms as sovereign governance bodies. By lacking capacity, settler governance bodies have the need to increase capacity through other forms, priming them to be receptive to a revolutionary pedagogy for Indigenous planning. This is not to say that the only time settler planning can or should equally engage Indigenous planning to coproduce action is in times when it is favourable for the settler bodies, but rather that when engaging in a specific revolutionary praxis for the first time, timing and context are key to its success.

References

Barry, J., & Thompson-Fawcett, M. (2020). Decolonizing the boundaries between the "planner" and the "planned": Implications of Indigenous property development. Planning Theory & Practice, 21(3), 410–425. Bouvier, N., & Walker, R. (2018). Indigenous planning and municipal governance: Lessons from the transformative frontier. Canadian Public Administration, 61(1), 130–134. Matunga, H. (2013). Theorizing Indigenous planning. In Jojola, T and Natcher, D (Eds.), Reclaiming Indigenous planning (pp. 3-32). McGill-Queens University Press. Matunga, H. (2017). A revolutionary pedagogy of/for Indigenous planning, in Porter, L. et al. Interface: Indigenous planning from principles to practice. Planning Theory & Practice, 18(4), 640–644. OECD. (n.d.). Profile of Indigenous Canada: Trends and Data Needs. In Linking Indigenous Communities with Regional Development in Canada, OECD Rural Policy Reviews. Paris: OECD Publishing. Porter, L., & Barry, J. (2016). Planning for coexistence?: Recognizing Indigenous rights through land-use planning in Canada and Australia. Routledge.

Unsplash - Photographer: Unknown

Internet and Community Impact

Oliver Prcic MPlan

Unsplash - Photographer: Craig Garnham

Throughout the Covid-19-19-19 pandemic one thing has become especially clear, high speed internet is an essential service. For those who can work from home having a stable and reliable internet connection is necessary to ensure their work can continue. Unfortunately for many rural communities throughout Canada affordable high speed internet is not available to them, creating a digital gap. With students completing online schooling, adults working from home and the mass of products that need internet to function properly, rural, Indigenous, and remote communities need high speed internet. Slow internet speeds are creating barriers and leaving rural, remote, and Indigenous communities behind in the internet revolution. With slow internet speeds, communities are limited to the work and education opportunities provided within the community. The lack of stable and reliable internet is part of the reason residents must leave to pursue further education or employment opportunities. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) currently states that only 45% of rural communities have access to high speed internet at 50Mbps.1 Canada is at a crossroads in communication and connection. Communities with reliable high speed internet will be the ones who continue to prosper and communities without will struggle to retain residents, business, and services.

Municipal planners should be aware of high speed internet issues as it can be a limiting factor to tourism opportunities, existing businesses, and new residents moving to a remote community. Remote communities are in some of the more pristine areas of Canada and provide amazing views and outdoor recreation. For some residents, the lack of internet access might be seen as a bonus to encourage outdoor activities, but to attract new residents to small communities', internet is crucial. Working remotely will become more common in the next decade, with an estimated one quarter of businesses expecting 10% of employees working remotely from home.[2] If working from home is an option, many smaller remote communities are now a real possibility to work from. This topic was explored by Chris Hughes of BC Hughes in his presentation on tourism at the Community Planning Association of Alberta's annual conference.[3] Hughes spoke to the need of creating a destination that tourists would be interested in coming to and the need for associated city branding around that topic.[2] In addition to tourism he promoted the idea of many city dwellers looking to live where they vacation.[2] Remote, rural and Indigenous communities are scenic, can be affordable, and foster a sense of place and pride within the community. Planners need to understand and promote the rural areas of Alberta and the Northwest Territories as complete communities with strong internet connections.

With the current and upcoming demand for highspeed internet in remote communities, it is important to understand what the role of public and private entities are. The Canadian federal government has committed to providing affordable high speed internet with download speeds of 50 Mbps to every Canadian by 2030.[4] This promise will revolutionize the need to be in major urban centres as work could then be completed remotely from anywhere in Canada. The CRTC has identified that 50 Mbps is the critical speed needed to ensure that cloud based software can properly work as intended. The federal government is committed to investing into rural, remote, and Indigenous highspeed internet connections in partnership with provincial governments and private companies.[5]

Recently, many private telecommunication companies have pledged to increase internet service into rural areas of Canada. Telus is one of the major internet providers to rural and Indigenous communities in western Canada and has recently connected every community in British Columbia over 1000 inhabitants to 4G LTE[6]. In the same report the cost of building new rural networks is currently 2.5 times that of urban communities and remains as one of the major detriments of private investment.[6] Starlink is another company currently trying to break into the rural internet market. Currently, the company is striving to provide stable high speed internet to remote communities through low orbit satellites, which is in the beta testing phase.[7]

Remote, rural, and Indigenous communities all want stable high speed internet. With federal, provincial, and private funding, communities will soon get to experience the true value of internet access. The communities who get access will attract more temporary visitors, businesses and urban dwellers fleeing the city for a change of scenery.

References

[1] CRTC. 2021. Broadband Fund Closing the digital divide in Canada. https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/internet/internet.htm

[2] Brooklyn Neustaeter. 2020. More Canadians will be working from home post-pandemic, StatCan data suggests. CTV. https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/more-canadians-will-be-working-from-home-post-pandemic-statcan-data-suggests-1.5023822

[3] Chris Hughes. Rural Destinations Do It Differently: 10 Steps to Becoming a Place People Want to Visit. (Presentation, Community Planning Association of Alberta Annual Conference, Virtual, May 3, 2021)

[4] Government of Canada. 2019. High-speed Access for All: Canada's Connectivity Strategy. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. Iu173-9/2019E-PDF978-0-660-31570-6

[5] Government of Canada. 2019. High-speed Access for All: Canada's Connectivity Strategy. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. Iu173-9/2019E-PDF978-0-660-31570-6

[6] Telus. 2020. Cracking the rural broadband challenge. https://habitat.cdn.avp.telus.com/Documents/TELUS_Rural_Connectivity_Paper_-_Cracking_the_rural_broadband_challenge.pdf

[7] Starlink. 2021. https://www.starlink.com/


NORTH
WEST