



CANADIAN INSTITUTE
OF PLANNERS

INSTITUT CANADIEN
DES URBANISTES

THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF PLANNERS' DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT ON

PLANNING PRACTICE AND RECONCILIATION

ABOUT THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF PLANNERS

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) is a professional body that works on behalf of over 6,900 members nationally and has served as the voice of Canada's planning community since 1919. Planners work to enhance the health and well-being of urban and rural communities, by addressing the use of land, resources, facilities, and services to optimize environmental, economic, and social outcomes. Our members work in the public service, voluntary, and private sectors and are engaged in general planning, land use planning, environmental planning, natural resource management, land development, heritage planning, conservation, housing and social planning, health and human service planning, transportation planning, urban design, and community and economic development.

ABOUT THIS POLICY STATEMENT

This policy statement was developed by the Canadian Institute of Planners, in partnership with its consulting team. The statement is based on input gathered from Indigenous planning practitioners and community leaders and CIP members using interviews, surveys, and focus groups. CIP acknowledges and appreciates the invaluable contributions provided by its Indigenous Community Planning Committee in developing this policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The national effort towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is a pressing issue for the planning profession. Planners have an opportunity and responsibility to contribute to reconciliation, as their work connects land, people, and governance. As planners across Canada seek to understand what reconciliation means in their diverse practices, CIP has a role to play both in guiding and supporting planners in this challenging and important journey. This policy statement presents a vision for the future of planning practice in reconciliation, lays out the roles and responsibilities of planners in realizing that vision, and outlines key action areas for the Canadian Institute of Planners.

The planning profession must consider reconciliation in several contexts. First, the profession must uphold Indigenous ways of planning and understand the rights of Indigenous people and how they relate to planning and governance. The profession must also respond to the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which are framing the reconciliation conversation nationally. Finally, the profession must acknowledge the role of historic planning practices in the mistreatment of Indigenous peoples, in order to build and strengthen relationships based on respect and understanding.

Planners have a responsibility to incorporate reconciliation into their planning practice. They should recognize and uphold Indigenous planning, law, and governance systems that have sustained Indigenous peoples since time immemorial and have important knowledge of sustainability and community development embedded in them. Planning practices involving Indigenous peoples in Canada must be built on relationships of mutual respect, trust, dialogue, and meaningful engagement. Recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples is essential to reconciliation, and planners should champion collaborative approaches that respect those rights. Reconciliation in planning practice is an opportunity for mutual learning and capacity-building – as planners learn from Indigenous ways of planning, they can find means in which their skills can complement the strengths of Indigenous communities.

CIP will pursue key action areas to strive for reconciliation in planning practice. The Institute will provide planners with the education and awareness necessary to participate in the challenging conversations and process of reconciliation. Additionally, CIP will support Indigenous planners, both those that practice with professional accreditation and those without accreditation, who nonetheless practice planning in their communities and territories. As governments, planning institutes, and other organizations work to embed reconciliation at various regional scales, CIP will collaborate with them to encourage good planning practice. Finally, CIP will ensure this policy is implemented through sustained action toward meaningful reconciliation.

INTRODUCTION

Across Canada, a national discussion is occurring concerning the injustices Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) have been – and continue to be – subjected to. Building and rebuilding relationships with Indigenous peoples that honour their rights, values, ways, and cultures has been at the forefront of this discussion, often referred to as reconciliation. Planners have a key role in reconciliation, as practitioners that connect land, people, and governance. The planning profession must fulfill its role in reconciliation by honouring Indigenous ways of planning, responding to the national context of reconciliation, recognizing the legal underpinnings impacting planning today, and acknowledging the historic role of planning in the mistreatment of Indigenous people.

What could reconciliation look like in a professional planning context? The essence of reconciliation is a sustained process of engagement, mutual respect, acceptance, and dialogue with Indigenous peoples; a long-term relationship building and healing process, as opposed to an outcome to be achieved. Reconciliation will look different in every planning context, as it is shaped by the Indigenous partners involved, but in every case, it will demonstrate a focus on meaningful engagement, not tokenistic consultations. Reconciliation requires discussing historical injustices and colonial dominance to work towards a future where partners make decisions together.

The nature of planning casts the profession in a unique role in the reconciliation process. Good planning holds trust, respect, engagement, transparency, and fairness as first principles. Additionally, planning relates to the ownership and use of land: across the diversity of Indigenous peoples, a deep connection to land and stewardship is a common, sacred principle. Thus, discussions of how the land is used, developed, and respected are a foundation upon which healthier relationships can grow. Furthermore, planning brings various perspectives in a community together to formulate a coherent vision and set of values. Planners can therefore play an important role in integrating a vision of reconciliation into all jurisdictions and by supporting Indigenous communities' processes of reclaiming their own planning visions. Finally, planners have a key role to play in educating the public and communicating innovative, mutually beneficial solutions, to decision-makers.

INDIGENOUS PLANNING

While there is a breadth of Indigenous peoples and Nations with diverse cultures and planning approaches across Canada, certain elements often run throughout. Indigenous planning methods:

- ◆ are community-driven, inclusive, and representative of the diversity of community voices across age and gender;
- ◆ empower community members to share reflections and concerns and identify appropriate solutions using their individual and community strengths;
- ◆ reflect emotional experiences embodied in stories of people and traditional knowledge of their culture; and,
- ◆ prioritize land stewardship, striving for responsible development.





Planning has been happening in the land currently known as Canada since time immemorial. Indigenous planning has sustained Indigenous peoples, and strong communities and cultures thrived in sustainable relationships with the land. These Indigenous planning practices have not historically been understood, honoured, or upheld by the planning profession. As the planning profession seeks to advance concepts of sustainability and community development, planners must respect and embrace these Indigenous planning ways.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) explored the colonial history of Canada and put forward 94 Calls to Action that are framing national processes of reconciliation. The Calls to Action do not explicitly address the planning profession, but they have tremendous implications for all aspects of planning practice in Canada including land, governance, economy, culture, health, and education. Many of the TRC Calls to Action address the various bodies that planners work for in Canada, such as governments, institutions, and businesses. Planners must understand clearly how to be champions of the principles embedded in the TRC through their work in these organizations.

Another important driver for reconciliation in planning practice is the growing recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples and the implications of these rights on planning and development in Canada. While the planners working directly with Indigenous peoples are most directly involved, all planning in Canada happens on land connected to Indigenous peoples through treaties, agreements, and/or inherent rights. Canadian court rulings consistently illustrate that failing to recognize this context can compromise planning processes. The legal landscapes are complex, regionally diverse, and rapidly evolving, but all planners must understand how their practice is impacted and strive for collaborative planning that honours the rights of Indigenous peoples and improves outcomes for all.

While working towards a future of reconciliation, the planning profession must also come to terms with its past, as reconciliation cannot happen without truth. The TRC concluded that the colonial truth of Canada includes instances where treaty relationships were forgotten, or inherent rights were ignored. This tended to marginalise Indigenous peoples, leading to acts of cultural genocide and intergenerational impacts. Bureaucratic planning practice has

THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION


The TRC was established by the Government of Canada in 2008, with the purpose of documenting the history and impacts of the Indian Residential School system. After years of engagement and thousands of testimonies, the TRC published 94 Calls to Action for Canadians to rebuild relationships with Indigenous people.¹

A specific, but far-reaching TRC Call to Action, is for all levels of government to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), which the Government of Canada ratified in 2016. UNDRIP lays out internationally recognized rights that have implications for all aspects of planning, but particularly pertains to land and its use.²

¹ Truth and Reconciliation Canada. (2015). *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

² UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Adopted by the General Assembly, 2 October 2007, A/RES/61/295.





contributed to this history. Examples of this include the taking of land for resource development in the ‘public interest’, with the justification that Indigenous uses were inappropriate; or the placement of undesirable facilities, such as dumps and industry, next to Indigenous communities. We also see colonial domination in the assumption that modernist city building is the most appropriate planning model and the subsequent exclusion of Indigenous knowledge in urban development. These are only a few examples of how planning has been used as a colonial tool in Canada, historically and presently. The planning profession is compelled to acknowledge these truths, if it is to begin to build respectful relationships with Indigenous people in honesty and humility.

This *Policy Statement on Planning Practice and Reconciliation* is CIP’s

response to the challenge the planning profession faces, as it attempts to play a constructive role in the national process of reconciliation. The policy statement speaks to all planners, by highlighting principles and actions to support reconciliation in planning practice. For members of CIP, the policy statement can be seen as a declaration of their professional commitment and responsibility to reconciliation in their field of planning practice. For individuals working in planning, but not affiliated with CIP, the policy statement can be used as a resource to guide planning in the context of reconciliation. The policy statement also outlines priorities for CIP to support planners, as they learn from Indigenous approaches to planning and work to understand and incorporate reconciliation in their own practice.

LAW AND THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The rights that Indigenous peoples (typically referred to as *Aboriginal rights and title*, as this is the language by which they are codified in the *Canadian Constitution Act, 1982*) flow from various sources. *Inherent rights* are the collective rights, which flow from continued use and occupation of certain areas. Inherent rights do not need to be granted by the Crown and exist regardless of affirmation by colonial structures. The right to *self-determination* flows from inherent rights. *Treaty rights* flow from specific treaties between Indigenous Nations and the Crown.

Aboriginal law specifically refers to the body of Canadian law concerning the variety of issues related to Indigenous people in Canada. There are numerous sources for this law, including treaties and *Aboriginal rights and title* from s.35 of the *Canadian Constitution Act, 1982*. *Indigenous law* is the legal traditions and customs of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF PLANNING PRACTICE AND RECONCILIATION

CIP is committed to working towards a vision where reconciliation is embedded in planning practice. In that vision:

- ◆ Planning practice in Canada is built on relationships of mutual respect, trust, and dialogue with Indigenous peoples.
- ◆ Planning is based on a respect for the well-being of all people and the natural environment that they are intricately linked to.

- ◆ CIP members support the realization of TRC Calls to Action and the implementation of UNDRIP in their work.
- ◆ Planners understand the jurisdictional and legal context of planning practice, as it relates to treaties and the rights of Indigenous peoples.
- ◆ Planners advocate for and work to co-create meaningful planning processes among Indigenous communities and other jurisdictions.
- ◆ Planners recognize and uphold Indigenous planning, law, and governance systems, as they relate to planning.
- ◆ Planners advocate for legislated planning processes that ensure the rights, values, knowledge, protocols, and methods of Indigenous planning are respected.
- ◆ Indigenous planners are respected for bringing the strength and knowledge of Indigenous planning to the profession.
- ◆ Planners respect the diversity of Indigenous peoples across Canada and their self-determining planning processes and outcomes.
- ◆ CIP supports the work of individuals practicing planning – both accredited and not – in their own communities.
- ◆ The integration of reconciliation into planning practice dovetails with actions on climate change adaptation and mitigation and initiatives to build healthier communities (see policy statements on climate change and healthy communities).

CIP'S CALL TO ACTION

CIP recognizes that reconciliation is more than a conversation; rather, it entails careful and sustained action toward relationship building, based on mutual respect, trust, and dialogue. CIP recognizes the 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the impact they have on planning. CIP will support and provide resources to individual planners, as they seek to understand the complex political and legal landscape around reconciliation and actively engage in the discussions and actions required. CIP respects the wisdom of Indigenous planning systems and practices, and aims to help strengthen Indigenous planning capacities, where appropriate, as the profession as a whole progresses in the context of reconciliation.

THE ROLE OF PLANNERS IN REALIZING THE VISION

Planners have a unique role to play in reconciliation, as their profession connects people, land, and governance. To fully realise this role, planners must understand how reconciliation can be embedded in their practice and act accordingly.





PRINCIPLES OF RECONCILIATION IN PLANNING PRACTICE

To practice planning in a way that honours reconciliation, planners must:

- ◆ Demonstrate awareness and respect for Indigenous community values, cultural practices, local decision-making systems, and principles of self-determination;
- ◆ Seek to understand, value, and support Indigenous planning systems and processes;
- ◆ Appreciate how their own knowledge of planning can complement Indigenous decision making processes, without imposing inappropriate planning conventions;
- ◆ Understand that the harmful legacy of colonialism has continuing, intergenerational impacts on Indigenous peoples and communities;
- ◆ Practice with cultural safety and cultural humility through active listening, learning, and understanding to confront and eliminate biases in their own practice and in the planning profession.


CAPACITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PLANNERS

Planners play unique public roles that can nurture reconciliation.

Accordingly, they have the professional responsibility to:

- ◆ Acknowledge that Indigenous communities and Nations across Canada are diverse;
- ◆ Seek to understand the Indigenous context and history of the region they work in, including the communities, Nations, and cultures present;
- ◆ Understand the rights that Indigenous peoples have and be champions of recognizing these rights;
- ◆ Understand their duty to consult and keep informed of the legal rulings that could impact how the practice of planning is undertaken;
- ◆ Respect Indigenous planning processes, some of which have been reaffirmed through modern day treaty, land claim agreements, or court rulings;
- ◆ Champion changes in legal planning frameworks to be more respectful of the rights, values, and knowledge of Indigenous peoples;
- ◆ Understand the implications and expectations arising from TRC and UNDRIP for their areas of practice and integrate them into their professional practice;



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- ◆ Understand how to work respectfully with existing governance systems in Indigenous communities and Nations, including the difference between elected leadership and hereditary/traditional governance, where it exists;
 - ◆ Develop an understanding of the circumstances of urban Indigenous populations in cities and regions, and work with those populations to develop planning processes that reflect their interests.

ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING


Respectful and meaningful engagement with Indigenous peoples is a crucial component of reconciliation in planning. To meaningfully engage with Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations, planners must:

- ◆ Strive for respectful relationships as a foundation for improving planning outcomes for all;
- ◆ Seek to create and maintain relationships with local Indigenous communities and commit sufficient time and resources to support these ongoing relationships;
- ◆ Adopt a “nothing about us without us” or “don’t start without” approach, meaning that any planning decisions that will impact Indigenous communities, should include Indigenous perspectives from the start, and not consider Indigenous consultation as an afterthought or a step within a preconceived process;
- ◆ Take direction from Indigenous community leaders and partners on how, and with whom, engagement should be carried out;
- ◆ Engage urban Indigenous populations to understand specific situations and needs;
- ◆ Understand that at times, a community healing process may take priority over a long-term planning process. Planners must respect the role community-driven planning processes can play in community healing, as community members tell their stories.

MUTUAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Planners working in, and with Indigenous communities, should understand differences in planning capacity and, where appropriate, participate in efforts to strengthen long-term planning capacities. Planners must:



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- ◆ Understand that Indigenous communities can be administratively overburdened and under-resourced, which can restrict a community's ability to carry out their planning processes and respond to consultation requests in predetermined time frames;
 - ◆ Must be flexible to ensure that sufficient space and time is created for respectful planning relationships to be built;
 - ◆ Approach capacity-building from a perspective of self-determination, i.e., by working with the community to define its own planning processes and identifying where planning skills could supplement and reinforce community strengths;
 - ◆ Approach capacity building as a mutual benefit, i.e., see it is an opportunity to learn how one's own knowledge of good planning can be enhanced by a community's planning practices.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Planners must observe how they are adapting their own practice in response to this policy statement. Accordingly, planners must:

- ◆ Work together with Indigenous partners to clearly identify the expected and intended outcomes of planning processes;
- ◆ Seek evaluation from Indigenous partners based on the principles and actions laid out in this policy statement;
- ◆ Identify challenges and opportunities for relationship building and reconciliation in their planning practice and adapt their methods and tools accordingly;
- ◆ Document successes and challenges in implementing this policy statement, to both grow in their individual practice and share these with CIP and peers, where appropriate.

THE ROLE OF CIP IN REALIZING THE VISION

CIP is committed to undertaking actions to integrate reconciliation into its own work and the work of practicing planners, to support Indigenous planning, and to participate in broader processes of reconciliation. Working toward this goal will be slow, challenging, and generational. Nevertheless, CIP is committed to this goal.





EDUCATING AND BUILDING AWARENESS

CIP is committed to providing planners with the education and awareness necessary to participate in conversations related to reconciliation and fulfill the intent of this policy statement. To challenge and encourage professional planners to reflect on and adapt their own practices, CIP will:

Developing Tools & Resources

- ◆ Provide information, tools, and resources that planners need to implement the policy statement;
- ◆ Share information on how planning has been complicit in Canada's colonial past, to equip planners to approach reconciliation processes with honesty and humility;
- ◆ Share resources to keep planners abreast of the evolving legal and political contexts that underpin planning with Indigenous peoples;
- ◆ Develop tools and resources to assist all planners in understanding the implications that TRC and UNDRIP have on their practice.

Education, Accreditation, and Professional Development


- ◆ Support the integration of Indigenous history, rights, issues, and culture in the curriculum of accredited planning schools;
- ◆ Support reconciliation in planning practice as a core competency for the accreditation of professional planners;
- ◆ Review and revise its Code of Professional Conduct to reflect this policy statement;
- ◆ Build awareness of Indigenous history, rights, issues, and culture among practicing planners through its Continuous Professional Learning program;
- ◆ Engage with Indigenous partners to identify knowledge gaps among planning practitioners and adjust training programs, as needed.

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS PLANNING

To recognize and support Indigenous people engaged in planning, CIP will:

- ◆ Explore ways in which more Indigenous people can bring their knowledge to the profession;



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- ◆ Work with Indigenous individuals doing planning in their communities – whether accredited planners or not – to develop the resources, training, and knowledge-sharing programs they need to be effective;
 - ◆ Encourage professional planners to support Indigenous planning and planners through their work, which may include mutual capacity building where appropriate.

WORKING WITH REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATES AND GOVERNMENTS

CIP acknowledges the diversity of Indigenous contexts across the country.

While this policy statement can provide a backdrop of planning principles and actions that foster reconciliation, the work of reconciliation must be approached in ways that are relevant to local contexts. Accordingly, CIP will:

- ◆ Encourage Provincial or Territorial Institutes and Associations (PTIAs) to develop planning policies that explore reconciliation in the context of their regions;
- ◆ Support PTIAs' engagement in effecting change in planning legislation that respects Indigenous rights and fosters reconciliation;
- ◆ Advocate for Indigenous participation in discussions around planning policy and legislation.

CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION

CIP recognizes that other professions and organizations have roles to play, if CIP's vision of planning practice in reconciliation is to be achieved. To collaborate effectively with those sectors, CIP will:

- ◆ Work with key Indigenous organizations to participate in the implementation of the policy statement;
- ◆ Share best-practices and identify opportunities for mutual development with other professional organizations.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION

To ensure that the terms of this policy are meaningfully translated into effective action, CIP will:

- ◆ Develop an Implementation Plan – including a monitoring and evaluation plan – to translate this policy statement into specific and timely action points;

- ◆ Update the Implementation Plan regularly, based on the monitoring and evaluation findings;
- ◆ Continue work with its membership and with Indigenous peoples to implement the policy statement and assess its impacts and shortcomings, as well as to share policy-related successes and challenges;
- ◆ Maintain the capacity and expertise necessary to implement this policy.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional resources on produced by CIP, including past special Indigenous issues of *Plan Canada*, bibliographies, links to model plans, and a range of case studies and resources, please see the [CIP Indigenous Planning webpage](#). An Implementation Plan and supporting documents, which aim to outline specific components of the policy in greater detail, provide examples of best practices and guidelines, and list key stakeholders or partners relevant to reconciliation and planning practice in Canada, will be developed following this policy statement.

APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Cultural Safety: an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in planning systems. It means all people feel respected and safe when they participate in planning processes.

Cultural Humility: a practice of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience.

Duty to Consult: (or, the Duty to Consult and Accommodate with Aboriginal Peoples) a duty that the Crown has when it acts in a manner that may adversely affect aboriginal or treaty rights guaranteed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Indigenous Planning: a generic term to capture the diversity of planning across the country, it is meant to include all scales and types of planning, and all Indigenous peoples, whether as communities, Nations, or individuals.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: a document that describes both the individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. It offers guidance on cooperative relationships with Indigenous peoples to states, the United Nations, and other international organizations based on the principles of equality, partnership, good faith, and mutual respect.





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