



## Terms of Reference Board Working Group on Government Relations and Advocacy

### *Background*

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) is a member-based organization for planning professionals across Canada and beyond. Our members work in both the public and private sectors, across fields such as planning, environmental resource management, land development, heritage conservation, social planning, transportation planning, and economic development. CIP advocates for planners and the priorities of the planning profession and offers a wide range of member services and career development opportunities. We also work closely with Provincial and Territorial Institutes and Associations (PTIAs), which regulate the planning profession and govern the rights and responsibilities of their members.

Our Vision - Inclusive and vibrant communities, respectfully connected to the natural world, for the well-being of current and future generations.

Our Mission - To support our members, add value to the larger Canadian planning ecosystem, and advocate on priority issues for greater collective impact.

### *Purpose*

The Board Working Group on Government Relations and Advocacy (the “Working Group”) is established by the Canadian Association of Planners (CIP) Board of Directors to provide strategic, non-binding advice to support staff in the effective, ethical, and compliant engagement with governments and public institutions in Canada.

The Working Group supports CIP’s mandate to represent the interests of its members, advance the profession, and contribute constructively to public policy development at the federal, level, consistent with CIP’s mission, bylaws, and strategic plan.

### *Relationship with Other CIP Bodies*

The Working Group operates alongside other ad hoc National Policy Working Groups that may be constituted to support research, policy development, and advocacy strategy on specific topics or issues. Some of these ad hoc groups may be recommended by the CEO, the Board of Directors, or the Advisory Committee/Working Group on Government Relations and Advocacy.

CIP also coordinates a National Planning Directors Network that convenes quarterly roundtable meetings with municipal and regional planning directors across Canada to gather insights and share information about emerging issues, planning innovations and best practices.

These groups will have an independent mandate and no direct reporting relationship to the Working Group on Government Relations and Advocacy.

**cip-icu.ca**

CIP respectfully acknowledges it is located on the unceded territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation. CIP values the ongoing stewardship of all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

Le bureau de l'ICU est situé sur le territoire non cédé de la Nation algonquienne Anishinaabe. L'ICU accorde une grande importance à l'intendance continue de toutes les Premières Nations, des Inuits, et des Métis.

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CIP will support coordination across these groups to reduce duplication and ensure alignment with its overall advocacy and government relations priorities.

### **Mandate**

The mandate is to:

- Advise on government relations and public policy advocacy strategies relevant to the profession and CIP's members.
- Identify, assess, and prioritize public policy issues affecting the profession, industry, and public interest.
- Provide guidance on advocacy positions, policy statements, and submissions to governments, regulators, and public bodies.
- Ensure that CIP's government relations and advocacy efforts are informed by a diversity of regional and practice-based perspectives, including rural, remote, and Northern contexts.
- Support CIP's engagement with elected officials, public servants, regulatory agencies, and allied organizations.
- Monitor legislative, regulatory, and policy developments across Canada and assess their implications for members.

*Note: The Working Group operates strictly in an advisory capacity and does not have decision-making or governance authority.*

### **Scope of Work**

The Working Group may:

- Review and provide feedback on draft policy positions, advocacy strategies, briefing notes, consultation submissions, and position papers.
- Recommend priorities for government relations and advocacy activities, subject to organizational resources.
- Advise on stakeholder mapping, coalition-building, and strategic partnerships with other organizations.
- Provide insight on regional considerations, including differences across provinces and territories.
- Promote best practices in ethical advocacy, transparency, and evidence-based policy engagement.

It will not:

- Speak publicly or represent CIP in government relations or advocacy activities unless explicitly authorized.
- Engage in lobbying activities on behalf of CIP unless such activities are authorized, appropriately registered, and compliant with applicable laws.
- Direct staff, manage budgets, or oversee operational activities.



### ***Authority and Accountability***

- The Working Group reports to the CEO of the Association.
- All recommendations are non-binding and subject to approval by the Board or designated senior staff.
- The Committee operates in accordance with CIP's bylaws, policies, code of conduct, and Strategic Plan.

### ***Composition and Membership***

- The Committee shall consist of approximately 8-10 members.
- Members will include:
  - Members of CIP's Board of Directors; and
  - Up to four (4) Members-at-Large appointed to provide specific expertise or perspectives aligned with the Working Group's mandate and current priorities.
- The Working Group will seek to recruit Members-at-Large with experience and knowledge in the following areas:
  - Rural and remote planning contexts;
  - Northern and Arctic planning contexts;
  - Defence infrastructure and community sustainability; and
  - Housing supply policy and analysis.
- All members must be MCIP members in good standing, unless otherwise approved by the Board.
- The Association will strive to ensure diversity, equity, inclusion, and regional representation across Canada.

### ***Leadership***

- The working group may elect up to two Co-chairs which are approved by the CEO. The Working Group is currently chaired by the President of CIP
- The Chair(s) provide(s) leadership and facilitates meetings.
- CIP provides a Staff Liaison to support the Working Group. The CEO serves as an ex-officio member of the Working Group.

### ***Appointment and Term***

- Members are appointed by the Board of Directors or its delegate following an open call for expressions of interest or a targeted recruitment process.
- Members-at-Large will be appointed through a targeted recruitment process to address identified gaps in expertise or representation.
- Appointments are for a term of two (2) years and may be renewed once.



- Terms may be staggered to ensure continuity and institutional knowledge.

*Note: Application for this opportunity does not automatically guarantee a place on the Working Group. References may be requested for shortlisted applicants.*

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***Working Group Members***

- Attend and actively participate in meetings and Committee activities.
- Review materials in advance and provide informed, constructive advice.
- Act in the best interests of CIP and its membership as a whole.
- Adhere to CIP's bylaws, policies, code of conduct, and Strategic Plan.
- Declare and manage any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest

### ***Chair(s)***

- Set meeting agendas in collaboration with the CEO and staff liaison.
- Facilitate effective and inclusive discussions.
- Ensure the Committee/Working Group fulfills its mandate and annual work plan.
- Report key advice and recommendations to the Board and CEO.

### ***Staff Liaison(s)***

- Provide strategic context, administrative, and logistical support to the Working Group.
- Prepare and distribute agendas, materials, and meeting summaries.
- Ensure alignment between Working Group advice and organizational priorities.

## **Meetings**

### ***Meeting Structure***

- The Working Group shall meet bi-monthly or as required to fulfill its mandate.
- Meetings will mostly be held virtually or in person as budgets and opportunities permit.
- A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of appointed members.
- The Working Group will strive for consensus in its advice; where consensus is not possible, differing views may be noted.

### ***Compliance and Ethical Advocacy***

- The Working Group and its members shall comply with all applicable Canadian laws and regulations, including federal and provincial lobbying legislation, conflict-of-interest rules, and ethical standards.



- The Working Group shall support advocacy approaches that are transparent, factual, and aligned with the public interest.

### ***Compensation and Expenses***

- Working Group members serve in a voluntary capacity and receive no remuneration.
- Reasonable, pre-approved expenses may be reimbursed in accordance with CIP policy.

### ***Evaluation and Review***

- The Working Group's mandate, composition, and effectiveness shall be reviewed at least every three years.
- These Terms of Reference may be amended with the approval of the Board of Directors.

**Established March 2026**

**Last Revised April 2026**

