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President’s Note

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) released its Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Roadmap in August 2020, providing a structured, measurable, and systematic approach to embed EDI into the Institute and across the planning profession. While we are still in the initial phases of the Roadmap, CIP has made strides to build awareness and understanding, providing training for the Board, staff, and with senior leadership of planning organizations across Canada. CIP also delivered a free, public webinar on the foundations of EDI in planning last December. In May, CIP will launch an Diversity & Inclusion Insight Survey to gain insights and statistical information about the profession, in which I sincerely hope you will take part.

This is challenging work, which will put to the test our own personal beliefs, values, and biases. Yet we believe that applying an EDI lens to our work and organization is essential for our development as a profession and in the fulfillment of our ethical responsibility to work for the public good. It is also important to understand that each of us brings a unique perspective and experience, so I would encourage you to keep an open mind, and recognize that we can all learn from one another. Like our Professional Code of Conduct states, let’s “act toward other Members and colleagues in a spirit of fairness and consideration”.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for being a part of this journey,

Dan Huang RPP, MCIP

Note du Président


Il s’agit d’un travail difficile, qui mettra à l’épreuve nos croyances, nos valeurs et nos préjugés personnels. Pourtant, nous croyons que l’application d’une lentille EDI à notre travail et à notre organisation est essentielle à notre développement en tant que profession et à l’accomplissement de notre responsabilité déontologique de travailler pour le bien public. Il est également important de comprendre que chacun et chacune d’entre nous apporte une perspective et une expérience uniques. Je vous encourage donc à garder l’esprit ouvert et à reconnaître que nous pouvons tous enseigner et apprendre les uns des autres. Comme le stipule notre code de conduite professionnelle, « agissons envers les autres membres et collègues dans un esprit d’équité et de considération ».

Au nom du conseil d’administration, je vous remercie de faire partie de ce voyage,

Dan Huang UPC, MICU

About this Issue

This is a unique issue, which forms part of our EDI journey towards greater understanding and organizational evolution. It started more than 18 months ago with the work of CIP’s Social Equity Committee, when the committee’s co-chairs, Amina Yasin and Daniella Fergusson, submitted a proposal to dedicate an entire Plan Canada edition to delve deeper into issues of social and racial equity. The proposal was approved by the Plan Canada Editorial Committee. To provide adequate editorial flexibility and discretion, the Committee handed over the reins to the guest editors, giving them the opportunity and space to facilitate this important dialogue. Although this approach falls outside the traditional editorial process and procedures, this issue is presented in the spirit of an honest but critical conversation on a subject that may challenge many systemic biases. While reflecting on this issue, it is hoped that you find it to be a testament to CIP’s adaptability, vulnerability, openness, and questioning of today’s assumptions and norms within the planning profession.

À propos de ce numéro

Il s’agit d’un numéro unique, qui s’inscrit dans notre cheminement de l’ICU vers une meilleure compréhension et une évolution organisationnelle. Tout a commencé il y a plus de dix-huit mois avec le travail du Comité d’équité sociale de l’ICU, lorsque les coprésidentes du comité, Amina Yasin et Daniella Fergusson, ont soumis une proposition visant à consacrer une édition entière de Plan Canada à l’approfondissement des questions d’équité sociale et raciale. La proposition a été approuvée par le comité de rédaction de Plan Canada. Afin d’assurer une flexibilité et une discrétion éditoriales adéquates, le comité a confié les rênes au rédactrices, leur donnant l’opportunité et l’espace nécessaires pour faciliter cet important dialogue. Bien que cette approche ne fasse pas partie des procédures et processus éditoriaux traditionnels, ce numéro est présenté dans l’esprit d’une conversation honnête mais critique sur un sujet qui peut remettre en question bon nombre de préjugés systémiques. En réfléchissant à ce numéro, on espère qu’il vous semblera constituer un témoignage de l’adaptabilité, de la vulnérabilité et de l’ouverture de l’ICU, ainsi que de sa volonté de remettre en question les hypothèses et les normes actuelles de la profession d’urbaniste.
Towards Social and Racial Equity in Planning

Amina Yasin, MSc (Planning) and Daniella Ferguson RPP, MCIP

“Herein lies the tragedy of the age: not that [people] are poor, — all [people] know something of poverty; not that [people] are wicked, — who is good? not that [people] are ignorant, — what is Truth? Nay, but that [people] know so little of other [people].”

W. E. B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk

Historian, civil rights activist, and city builder W.E.B DuBois pioneered data visualizations and infographics showing systemic racism in rural and city populations. Yet, in this unceded land that is Canada many planners, engineers, architects, and builders are unaware of DuBois, but can easily name countless white male planning figures who have changed the very fabric of city life – historically in many cases for the worst. Planning’s failure begins with these mapped divisions between neighbourhoods, both visible on plans, like redlining, and the measured socio-economic outcomes, resulting in – as DuBois points out – the physical, social segregation and ordering of people. The concepts of separation and segregation run through our neighbourhoods, are nurtured in our education system and flourish through forced assimilation into the singular vision of “white urbanism,” a power, legal, and social order structure implemented through restrictive covenants, segregation, land theft, planning euphemisms, architecture, development and servicing bylaws and their enforcement, and aesthetic choices that smooth over structural issues in favour of aesthetic improvements to the status quo.

It remains utterly unethical for the codes of professional conduct to tell us to ‘respect the diversity, needs, values, and aspirations of the public interest,’ while not substantially addressing the question of ‘whose public interests’ the profession has been upholding for over a century in Canada.

This issue germinated on this planning tragedy, with the question, for whom have we been planning? The question exposes a traditional planning narrative of a homogenous public that perseveres even as planning concepts are recycled and renamed. This question was discussed vigorously and unpacked between the editors and with CIP’s short-lived Social Equity Committee. Between February and November 2019 the Committee was tasked with developing an internally-facing gender equity strategy for the Board. The Committee determined that CIP needs not only a gender equity strategy but also to confront and address systemic racism, white supremacy, ableism, class, and discrimination in the governance systems, practices, and policies that planners influence, create, test, and implement. The Committee’s relentless work inspired the development of CIP’s new Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Roadmap, which the Board approved in June 2020 to provide a structured, measurable, and systematic approach to embed EDI into the Institute and across the planning profession. This issue of Plan Canada and CIP’s involvement in OPPI’s Anti-Black Racism in Planning Task Force are other outcomes of the Committee’s work. As co-chairs, we want to express a big thank you to the Committee members: Angele Clarke, Erika Ivanc, Jenna Davidson, Jennifer Fix, Linda Tam, Lisa Moffatt, and Nabil Malik. We also want to express a heartfelt thank you to Alan Howell and Shalaka Jadhav, whose insightful review and support were crucial from the Plan Canada Editorial Committee, as well as Sheena Jardine-Olade, Christine Hanlon, and Beth McMahon whose support and guidance were critical during the development of this issue. Think of this issue as an introduction. As editors, we wanted to touch on as many topics as possible across the wide expanse of planning work from human rights issues in planning, long-range planning, transportation planning, park planning,
NEW National Survey:
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Vers l’équité sociale et raciale dans la planification

Amina Yasin, MSc Planning et Daniella Fergusson UPC, MICU

« C’est là la véritable tragédie de notre époque : non pas que [les gens] soient pauvres, - tous [les gens] savent quelque chose de la pauvreté ; non pas que [les gens] soient méchants, - qui est bon ? non pas que [les gens] soient ignorants, - qu’est-ce que la Vérité ? Non, mais c’est le fait que les gens se connaissent si peu entre eux ».


H istorien, militant des droits civils et bâtisseur de villes, W.E.B DuBois a été le premier à réaliser des visualisations de données et des infographies montrant le racisme systémique dans les populations rurales et urbaines. Pourtant, dans cette terre non cédée qu’est le Canada, de nombreux urbanistes, ingénieurs, architectes et constructeurs ne connaissent pas DuBois, mais peuvent facilement nommer d’innombrables urbanistes, des hommes de race blanche, qui ont modifié le tissu même de la vie urbaine - historiquement, dans de nombreux cas, pour le pire. L’échec de la planification commence par ces divisions cartographiées entre les quartiers, à la fois visibles sur les plans, comme la discrimination de type « redlining », et les résultats socio-économiques mesurés, ce qui entraîne - comme le souligne DuBois - la ségrégation et le classement physiques et sociaux des personnes. Les concepts de séparation et de ségrégation traversent nos quartiers, sont nourris dans notre système éducatif et s’épanouissent par l’assimilation forcée à la vision singulière de l’« urbanisme blanc », une structure de pouvoir, d’ordre juridique et social mise en œuvre par le biais de clauses restrictives, de la ségrégation, du vol de terres, d’euphémismes en matière d’urbanisme, de l’architecture, des règlements d’aménagement et de viabilisation et de leur application, et de choix esthétiques qui aplanissent les problèmes structurels en faveur d’améliorations esthétiques apportées au statu quo. Il est tout à fait contraire à l’éthique que les codes de conduite professionnelle nous enjoignent de « respecter la diversité, les besoins, les valeurs et les aspirations de l’intérêt public », tout en n’abordant pas de manière substantielle la question de savoir « quels intérêts publics » la profession défend depuis plus d’un siècle au Canada.

Ce numéro est né de cette tragédie de la planification, en posant la question suivante : pour qui avons-nous planifié ? Cette question met en lumière le récit traditionnel de l’urbanisme, celui d’un public homogène qui persévère alors même que les concepts d’urbanisme sont recyclés et renommés. Cette question a fait l’objet d’une discussion vigoureuse et débâillée entre les rédacteurs et avec l’éphémère Comité d’équité sociale de l’ICU. Entre mars et juillet 2019, ce comité a été chargé d’élaborer une stratégie d’équité sociale en interne pour le conseil d’administration. Le Comité a déterminé que l’ICU a besoin non seulement d’une stratégie d’équité entre les sexes, mais aussi de confronter et de traiter le racisme systémique, la suprématie blanche, le capacitisme, la classe et la discrimination dans les systèmes de gouvernance, les pratiques et les politiques que les urbanistes influencent, créent, testent et mettent en œuvre. Le travail acharné du Comité a inspiré l’élaboration de la nouvelle Feuille de route de l’OPPI sur la lutte contre le racisme envers les Noirs dans le domaine de l’urbanisme, qu’il s’agisse des questions relatives aux droits de la personne dans la planification, de la planification à long terme, de la planification des transports, de la planification des parcs, des autorisations de développement, de la planification sociale, du développement économique et de la planification environnementale dans les secteurs public, privé et universitaire, dans des environnements ruraux, régionaux et urbains au Canada et à l’étranger. Nous voulons également présenter des auteurs à différents stades de leur carrière, en mettant l’accent sur des personnes et des sujets qui sont souvent en marge de la société. Il ne s’agit, bien sûr, que d’un seul numéro de Plan Canada – nous ne pouvons pas couvrir tout ce qui concerne les inégalités en matière d’urbanisme, sans
parler de toutes les soumissions que nous avons reçues. Nous espérons que les lecteurs qui se posent des questions sur les iniquités historiques et structurelles conçues pour nous diviser utiliseront ce numéro et les références citées comme point de départ de leur apprentissage.

Pour les besoins de ce numéro, nous avons défini l’équité comme étant la représentation proportionnelle (par race, classe, handicap, âge et sexe, etc.) des opportunités à travers les préoccupations liées à l’utilisation des terrains, y compris le logement et tous les autres indicateurs socio-économiques d’une vie saine. L’équité se distingue de l’égalité, qui est fondée sur la « similitude » ou l’assimilation et qui consiste essentiellement à traiter tout le monde exactement de la même manière, sans tenir compte des obstacles auxquels se heurtent certains groupes. L’équité reconnaît que les populations marginalisées, en raison de la discrimination historique et actuelle, peuvent avoir besoin de soutiens supplémentaires – y compris de placement en ordre prioritaire – pour obtenir des résultats justes en matière de logement, de licenciements, d’équipements communautaires, de décisions relatives aux zones d’emploi et d’autres services. En d’autres termes, l’équité est la condition qui serait atteinte si le statut racial et socio-économique d’une personne ne prédisait plus, au sens statistique, ses résultats en matière de logement, de mobilité économique et physique, de santé et d’environnement, autant de questions interdépendantes et imbriquées. Il faut pour cela s’attaquer aux causes profondes des inégalités systémiques, et pas seulement à leurs résultats ou à leurs manifestations, et exiger l’élimination des politiques, des réglementations, des pratiques, des attitudes et des messages culturels qui renforcent les différences de résultats en fonction de la race, de la capacité, du sexe et d’autres caractéristiques démographiques, sans pour autant y remédier. L’équité raciale est également un processus. Cela signifie que les personnes les plus négativement touchées par la création du concept de « race » et, par conséquent, par la pratique du racisme, du classisme, de la discrimination fondée sur la capacité physique et du colonialisme - en particulier l’oppression systémique - doivent faire partie du processus décisionnel concernant la planification des programmes d’études, le financement, les politiques, les règlements, les développements et les programmes.

Avant d’examiner les soumissions, nous - les rédacteurs – avons veillé à ce que les soumissions sélectionnées pour ce numéro soient rémunérées par une allocation pour ceux qui ont contribué et qui ne sont pas membres de l’ICU. Nous avons également plaidé pour qu’un numéro plus accessible soit élaboré, avec des plans pour rendre les numéros futurs encore plus accessibles aux personnes handicapées. Enfin, nous avons établi des principes pour guider notre évaluation, que les prochains numéros de Plan Canada pourront utiliser lors de l’évaluation et de la révision des soumissions :

1. Nous tenons responsables de la sélection des soumissions qui font progresser l’équité.
2. Cette soumission traite-t-elle des liens et des décisions historiques, structurels et actuels qui contribuent à la question et aux conditions abordées ?
3. Si une « solution » est proposée, les conséquences involontaires (réduction des risques) sur les populations marginalisées ont-elles été discutées, analysées ou prises en compte dans le document ?
4. La « solution » proposée a-t-elle été ou prise en compte les facteurs systémiques sous-jacents de l’iniquité ?
5. L’auteur explore-t-il et analyse-t-il un sujet en phase avec son expérience vécue et professionnelle ?

Nous espérons que ce numéro sera positif pour les urbanistes et les communautés qui travaillent pour l’équité, la réparation et les droits de la personne dans l’urbanisme et qui ne se voient pas souvent représentés sur le terrain ou dans les quartiers et les villes que nous planifions. Ceci est destiné à vous tous.
City of land remembering

By Kamala Todd

Who gets to be the author of the city?
Dreaming the city, upholding the charter, inscribing the stories.
Who claims to be the founder, builder, caretaker?

Empowered to
think about, decide for, extract, name, document, divide, open up,
graph, discover, uncover, archive, police, chart, map, plot, dig up,
restrict, renew, animate, charette, engage, determine, approve,
shape, plant, timeline, narrate, by-law, manage, vision, plan
the city.

Remember: these are lands.

Whose territory is this? What are the languages?
Who are the citizens?
Who has been ousted, displaced, written out of the story?

These lands were never empty or free for the taking.
They have been loved and tended for millennia.
Ancestors born and dying for generations, generations
before incorporation.

Urban archives and heritage accounts leave out the truth
that every North American city is an Indigenous City, built on lands
rich with planning traditions, legal orders, knowledge systems,
governance systems, food systems, economies, epistemologies.

Before queens and pioneers and Main streets and Broadways.
Before zoning and regulations and scoping and action plans.
Before world class city and green infrastructure and smart growth.
Before stream daylighting and edible landscapes and biodiversity strategies.

We have responsibilities,
kinship ties
to our lands and waters,
which always fed and nurtured us.

Language flowing from the lands, informing laws, shaping knowledge
from specific geographies.
Even in the densifying
city/homelands.

Consider:
Does your city charter reflect the laws and languages of the land?
Relationships with stars, mountains, water, other-than-human citizens?
Accountability to all our relations – past, present, and future?
What assumptions inform how we shape the city and live on the land?

These places give life.
We are obligated to care for them
as they have always cared for us.
With humility, reciprocity, ceremony, and love.

Kamala Todd is a Métis-Cree mother, community planner,
filmmaker, and educator with a Master’s degree in Urban
Geography from UBC. Kamala was the City of Vancouver’s first
Indigenous Arts and Culture Planner and was also the City’s
Aboriginal Social Planner for several years. She is currently an
adjunct professor at UBC SCARP and SFU Urban Studies.
Racial inequities in rural, remote, and northern Canadian planning

By Jonathan Boron, Katherine Levett, and Myfannwy Pope

Summary
This reflection outlines the ways in which planning has and continues to fail Indigenous and Black rural communities across Canada. In this article we briefly document the legacies and impacts of systemic racism within the planning of major infrastructure and resource exploitation sectors on rural, northern, and remote communities in Canada. Specifically, we discuss environmental impact assessment and consultation processes, drawing from examples to reflect on resultant disparities in health, economic outcomes, and climate change impacts between urban and rural communities. We provide recommendations that may help to foster truly equity-based planning in environmentally-sensitive and resource-rich rural regions within Canada.

Sommaire

Structures of anti-Indigenous and anti-Black Racism in Canada
The year 2020 brought systemic racism and inequity into mainstream planning discourse. As researchers in resource and environmental planning, we see this as an opportunity to reflect on and examine the procedural inequities and racism within the fields of rural resource planning. Canada is founded on an ongoing structure of settler colonialism, which aims to erase Indigenous identities to secure access to territory on which Indigenous nations have sovereign claims.1 This process is evidenced by a series of assimilation and genocide efforts, including residential schools and the outlawing of Potlatches and other political and spiritual practices.

Slavery was practiced in Canada from the 1600s into the early 1800s.2 The social, political, and economic oppression from slavery embedded anti-Black racism into Canadian institutions and society, which works to disempower and bring violence on Black communities and individuals.

Slavery and settler colonialism particularly underpin ongoing inequities among Indigenous and Black communities in rural areas. Black and Indigenous peoples have historically and presently defied the notion that rural Canada is white, along with numerous racialized communities often considered solely urban, including Japanese, Chinese, and Sikh communities.

In this article we briefly document the legacies and impacts of systemic racism within the planning of major infrastructure and resource exploitation sectors on
rural, northern, and remote communities in Canada. We then turn our attention to recommendations that may help to foster truly equity-based planning in environmentally-sensitive and resource-rich rural regions within Canada. Throughout this article we provide references to case examples of racism in resource planning. While our examples primarily focus on Indigenous and Black communities, we emphasize that the processes described in this article and other rural planning practices impact a diversity of rural and remote racialized communities.

Path dependence and institutional memory of white supremacy and settler colonialism in our political and social systems is at the root of procedural injustice in the environmental assessment process, including infrastructure siting and resource exploitation that undermine socially just and equity-based planning in rural and remote communities. Procedural injustice includes a lack of treaty-right recognition in major project development and colour-blind processes of impact assessment. Impact assessment rarely recognizes cumulative effects of development and fails to capture the full holistic impact on the lands, water, and communities affected. Such exclusionary engagement processes maintain disregard for Indigenous and Black communities’ abilities to consent to harmful development in their communities (Figures 1 and 4).

Dispossession of land represents the key mechanism of settler colonialism and a fundamental legacy of slavery. Land is necessary for survival through spiritual, economic, and social means. Canada’s founding, including the myth of Terra Nullius (empty land) and the development of the Indian Act and reserve system underlie ongoing dispossession through regional infrastructure and resource development that increasingly contribute to settler-created climate change impacts. The inability of enslaved people to own land, renegotiated promises of decent land to Black loyalists, and discriminatory zoning and ownership laws against Black individuals fed the segregation of Black and white communities. Segregation has allowed the development of white communities at the expense of Black ones, including the siting of a mega waste treatment plant in Lincolnville, Nova Scotia (Figure 1).

Undeniably, we see racism in planning and policies in urban spaces, as evidenced by exclusionary zoning, land use, law enforcement, surveillance, and data collection processes. Insidious acts of structural racism in rural planning appear in the historic and ongoing disparities, and social and environmental impacts associated with land use for resource extraction and development in rural regions (Figures 1, 3 and 4). This results in the suppression of rights of Indigenous peoples defending their land and the history of Black and other communities of colour advocating for the right to land.

Rural-Urban Disparity
Urban centres in Canada benefit from the displacement, as a tactic of exploitation, of Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities in rural areas. Natural resources account for 16.9% of Canada’s GDP and generate $21.4 billion a year in government revenues. In 2019, natural resources including energy, minerals and metals, and forestry accounted directly and indirectly for 1.9 million jobs. Much of the benefit of these jobs and the revenues generated flow directly to urban communities in the form of the resulting goods and services along with the management, investment, and logistics jobs related to these industries. At the same time, urban communities benefit from hydropower, oil and gas, mining, and waste disposal taking place outside of their communities. These decisions about land use and resource management create an illusion for urban communities that hides the impacts on rural communities. By design, the Site C Dam in British Columbia, the Lincolnville Landfill in Nova Scotia, the Giant Mine site in the Northwest Territories, housing development in Six

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1 According to the American Planning Association, “Planning for equity is intended to challenge those planning practices that result in policies, programs, and regulations that disproportionately impact and stymie the progress of certain segments of the population more than others.”
Consultations are inadequate even if they required to consult with Indigenous who in many cases are planners, are Environmental Assessment (EA) proponents, 4

Figures 3). While Canada’s economy (and land uses and infrastructure for the good of communities have been exposed to noxious Indigenous, Black, and other racialized results in increasing health disparities. Indigenous, Black, and other racialized communities across Canada which has resulted in increasing health disparities. Many rural, northern, remote, and Indigenous communities are also on the frontlines of climate change and are experiencing increased vulnerability due to climate change’s associated impacts. Coastal communities are vulnerable to the impacts of sea level rise, while all Indigenous communities are affected by the rapid decline in biodiversity and species abundance which threatens food security, subsistence living, cultural practices, and livelihoods. Further, rural and northern communities are often under-resourced in their ability to address these challenges due to provincial and federal economic priorities, as discussed under the urban-rural disparities section of this article.12

Recommendations
Current environmental and resource planning processes in Canada maintain systems of oppression and inequality that planners can address. We provide several recommendations on how planning professionals can personally, and within their organizations, practice equity-based environmental and resource planning in rural communities:

1. Commit to reconciliatory action and recognize Indigenous consent
Land acknowledgements that are not attached to action hold no meaning. Advocate for ‘colonial audits’ within your organisation and commit to truth recognition. This requires meaningful consultation that is consent-based, even if there are competing or non-existent jurisdictional requirements. Indigenous

Nations territory in Ontario, and fracking in British Columbia have or will benefit urban communities across the country, while protestors and land defenders have been and continue to be criminalized.

Health Disparities
Land use policy has and continues to fail Indigenous, Black, and other racialized communities across Canada which has resulted in increasing health disparities. Indigenous, Black, and other racialized communities have been exposed to noxious land uses and infrastructure for the good of Canada’s economy (Figures 3 and 4). While Environmental Assessment (EA) proponents, who in many cases are planners, are required to consult with Indigenous communities, often we see that these consultations are inadequate even if they meet legislative requirements (Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4). Further, as in the case of natural gas development within Treaty 8 (Figure 4), environmental impact assessment processes do not address cumulative impacts or impacts resulting from hundreds of small-scale developments that are outside EA triggering thresholds. Further, the absence of any landscape-scale planning and management to monitor and mitigate overall cumulative impacts from resource development results in widespread habitat fragmentation, ecological degradation, and unknown impacts on hydrological systems – all of which impact ecological and social resilience of rural and Indigenous communities.

Decisions on land use, lack of adequate or any consultation with those affected, and extraction and exploitation of resources have created systemic inequities that includes the slow violence of environmental contamination, evidenced by arsenic poisoning in Giant Mine site (Figure 3). Indigenous communities across Canada have had boil water advisories in place for generations, while health experts have documented cancer clusters in many Indigenous communities.10 Importantly, the social impacts of land and resource decisions have had and continue to have detrimental effects, as evidenced by the loss of sacred and cultural sites with historic significance, a decline in population, and increasing violence against Indigenous people, especially women and girls, which have been exacerbated by proximity to remote work camps.11

Many rural, northern, remote, and Indigenous communities are also on the frontlines of climate change and are experiencing increased vulnerability due to climate change’s associated impacts. Coastal communities are vulnerable to the impacts of sea level rise, while all Indigenous communities are affected by the rapid decline in biodiversity and species abundance which threatens food security, subsistence living, cultural practices, and livelihoods. Further, rural and northern communities are often under-resourced in their ability to address these challenges due to provincial and federal economic priorities, as discussed under the urban-rural disparities section of this article.12

Figures 2. Six Nations of the Grand River territory, Ontario – 1492 Landback Lane
Land reclamation by the Haudenosaunee of Six Nations to stop housing developments on land that has been a part of a specific land claim since 1989. The Haldimand Accord sets aside the title of land on six miles of either side of the Grand River for the Kanienkehá:’ka and other Haudenosaunee. The federal government refuses to settle these specific claims, and developers continue to try to build on this territory without proper consultation of the Six Nations community.

Figures 3. Dene First Nation Traditional Territory; Yellowknife, Northwest Territories – Giant Mine Site- Arsenic Deposit
During the operation of the Giant Mine from 1948 to 2004, arsenic poisoning as a result of gold extraction methods caused First Nation members of the Wiliideh Yellowknife Dene First Nation to get sick, impeded on their ability to exercise treaty rights to hunt and fish, and caused the death of a Dene toddler from eating snow in 1951. Today, the soil around the Giant Mine site has tested at nearly three times the arsenic safe exposure limit. As a result of gold extraction methods caused First Nation members of the Wiliideh Yellowknives Dene First Nation to get sick, impeded on their ability to exercise treaty rights to hunt and fish, and caused the death of a Dene toddler from eating snow in 1951. Today, the soil around the Giant Mine site has tested at nearly three times the arsenic safe exposure limit. Currently, the arsenic contamination includes the slow violence of environmental degradation, evidenced by arsenic poisoning in Giant Mine site (Figure 3). Indigenous communities across Canada have had boil water advisories in place for generations, while health experts have documented cancer clusters in many Indigenous communities.10 Importantly, the social impacts of land and resource decisions have had and continue to have detrimental effects, as evidenced by the loss of sacred and cultural sites with historic significance, a decline in population, and increasing violence against Indigenous people, especially women and girls, which have been exacerbated by proximity to remote work camps.11

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Current environmental and resource planning processes in Canada maintain systems of oppression and inequality that planners can address. We provide several recommendations on how planning professionals can personally, and within their organizations, practice equity-based environmental and resource planning in rural communities:

1. Commit to reconciliatory action and recognize Indigenous consent
Land acknowledgements that are not attached to action hold no meaning. Advocate for ‘colonial audits’ within your organisation and commit to truth recognition. This requires meaningful consultation that is consent-based, even if there are competing or non-existent jurisdictional requirements. Indigenous
We must bring increased awareness and attention to environmental racism in Canada. We have to talk about it, acknowledge its existence, and understand that inaction maintains these structures of oppression.

peoples must be consulted early on and throughout these processes, provided space to voice their concerns and most importantly, be a part of the decision-making process. This also requires recognition of Indigenous jurisdiction and decision-making processes. In many cases a lack of senior government action on land and resource policy has created much conflict for municipalities. Develop strategies for de-escalation, negotiation, and solidarity to push senior governments to honour their responsibilities.

2. Plan for cumulative effects, climate impacts, and community resilience
Across many jurisdictions, cumulative effects assessments are under-utilized and lack climate impact consideration. Social diversity is an important aspect of socio-ecological resilience, however state-based impact assessments inadequately consider or recognize alternative and specifically Indigenous values and views within decision-making frameworks that may consider more holistic interrelation of the impact of development decisions. Further, consideration of both intra- and inter-generational equity factors improve the long-term resilience of planning decisions for rural communities. Are the decisions we make today good decisions for our community generations into the future? Climate change impact forecasting should be an important factor in project decisions.

Figure 4. Treaty 8 Territory, British Columbia – Natural gas drilling and fracking operations
Increased fracking for liquefied natural gas in northeast BC has resulted in unauthorized dams, substantial increases in water use, and dangerous contamination in water supply as First Nations have no control over industry activity, despite their inherent and treaty rights.

Figure 5. Site C Dam
A 1,100-megawatt hydro dam currently under construction on the Peace River in northeastern British Columbia. Proposed in the 1970s, the project has faced many court challenges from First Nations who oppose flooding 128 km of the Peace River, putting burial grounds, traditional hunting and fishing areas and habitat for vulnerable species under 50 m of water.
3. Ensure that policies, plans, and programs represent the community you’re planning for. Review your organization’s current policies with a critical lens. Are marginalized perspectives centred or erased? How have you prioritized marginalized voices in your consultation process? Do your decisions incorporate an analysis of intergenerational inequities? How are you ensuring the maintenance or improvement of the environmental health of communities while addressing climate concerns?

4. Integrate an equity dimension into policy decisions. Linked to the second recommendation, we need to interrogate the impacts of our future policy and planning decisions. Your evaluation and assessment frameworks should consider equity questions such as: Who benefits from this? Who is disadvantaged by it? How does this impact specific communities or community members? Incorporating an equity dimension in your decision-making processes should include the use of race-based statistics that can inform how various institutional policies impact Indigenous, Black, and other racialized communities. It also requires a meaningful sharing of wealth derived from development through revenue-sharing or community benefit agreements. Further, community employment provisions are already commonplace in benefit agreements, but this often equates to lower skill, lower wage positions. These provisions should promote Indigenous or community employment at higher levels of project management and decision-making.

5. Personal learning, self-reflection, and change through praxis. The planning profession is faced with an opportunity to centre racial and environmental justice in planning and while we advocate for this change on an institutional and legislative level, it must also be embodied by practitioners within these institutions. In order to make informed planning decisions we need to learn about the historical relationships to the land, resources and people we’re planning for. We need to ask ourselves how we came to be in this place? Who was here before us and how did they relate to this place? Who else is here and how do we relate to them? By recognizing your own positionality in relation to others, you can begin to decentre settler-colonial knowledge and create space for multi-perspective decision-making. Finally, we must bring increased awareness and attention to environmental racism in Canada. We have to talk about it, acknowledge its existence, and understand that inaction maintains these structures of oppression.

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We would like to acknowledge and thank the Community Planning and Development Lab in the School of Resource and Environmental Management for their feedback and input on this article.

Endnotes
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The case of Nigeria’s Sungbo Eredo
On the absence of African planning and architectural excellence in Canadian planning

By Francis Kodjo Kwashie

Summary
The absence of Black African planning and architectural excellence in Canadian planning discourse is situated in the Canadian context of anti-Black racism. The absence of Sungbo Eredo – one of Africa’s greatest planning and architectural masterpieces – in planning discourse is connected to the lack of input/works of African civilization in Canadian academia and in planning practice, despite its relevance. This article also examines why Black history and work has not been taught in planning and architectural schools, and why the profession has not embraced this extraordinary planning and architectural excellence. Finally, this article examines the role of academia, practising planners and other key stakeholders in addressing the absence of Black African planning excellence.

While past European, Asian, South American, and to an extent Egyptian design is well known and taught in Canadian schools, Black African contributions to planning and architecture, notably The Great Mosque in Djenne (Mali), and the conical tower in Great Zimbabwe (modern day Zimbabwe) have yet to be acknowledged.1,2 The importance of these pre-colonial African cities lie in the existence of well-planned urban centres that demonstrate modern day land use principles regarding compatibility and/or the spatial separation of uses organized with transportation networks. In addition, these cities demonstrate excellent buildings and structures that display architectural, religious, and cultural elements,3 many having resisted the test of time.

A wealth of information can be learned from studying pre-colonial African cities. One example is ancient Sunbgo Eredo, once a vast walled city of the Yoruba Kingdoms, located an hour away from Lagos, Nigeria’s former capital. According to the oral tradition of the Oke-Eri people, the ijebu word “Eredo” means an embankment or rampart. Sungbo is said to be the name of a powerful and influential woman, Oloye Bilikisu Sungbo, who initiated and supervised the building of the city.

The ruins of Sungbo Eredo tell us of an impressive city, surrounded by walls that stretch approximately 160 kilometres. and once connected 500 communal enclosures over an area of 1,025 square kilometres, serving to provide protection and unify diverse communities into a single city.
Approximately 3.5 million cubic tonnes of earth was moved to build this monumental structure. Some scholars have indicated that the function of the wall varied from simple residential usage to formal military defense of the city.

Designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1995, Sungbo Eredo, the largest single monument in Africa, was built progressively over 600 years from AD 800 until the late 15th century. The spatial organization of the city encompasses a densely built-up area in the centre, including a palace and main market as a focal point, with roads radiating beyond the city gates to the subordinate towns of the kingdoms.

It is important to note that Sungbo Eredo, one of the most monumental masterpieces of planning and architecture, was established before European colonialism or the Arab invasions of West Africa. The walls reach 21 metres high in places. This monumental earthwork highlights the brilliance of Black Africans and their sophisticated approaches to urban challenges, construction techniques and land use compatibility with their natural environment during that time. According to Black historian Robin Walker, Sungbo Eredo’s construction may have been accomplished by approximately one million more hours than were necessary to build the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt.

Contributions of Sungbo Eredo – Visioning and master planning

It is widely accepted that the planning and architecture of towns is one of the visible manifestations of the political economy, vision, and prosperity of human settlements throughout history. While written records have not yet been discovered from this ancient city, the physical manifestation of its planning, architectural and engineering feat bears the hallmark of planning tools that we currently use. It is undeniable that there was an overarching plan organising the orderly division of land based on compatibility of uses (the application of what we could consider today as zoning metrics and building standards) and articulating an architectural and design framework all underpinned by a singular vision that sought to unite the Yoruba people. While more research is certainly needed, an overview of the city suggests integration of land use and transportation as shown in the delineation of various land uses and sectors connected by a road network that allowed a circulation system in which its inhabitants were able to traverse the city from all areas.

Lasisi has suggested the presence of concentric circles akin to concentric zone model land use, where the central organizing feature was a palace and a commercial centre, surrounded by residential uses and other heavy commercial uses such as metal works, with agricultural lands located further away from the centre. This spatial organization reminds us of the spatial organization of London, UK, but is different from the Canadian system of rectangular grids. Lasisi maintains that the system of city building is indigenous to Africa long before the concept of the central business district emerged in Europe.

Lasisi’s archaeological work on Sungbo Eredo and laser scans technology were used to recreate the tri-dimensional topography of the earthwork landscape and to reveal the organization around communal lifestyles serving as play areas, cultural hubs, and public spaces. The residential areas speak to the concept of various housing types from a single dwelling to multiple/shared spaces. Lasisi also mapped out a residential layout, which in his opinion is consistent with modern layout of residential dwellings having separate living rooms, amenity and proper sanitation areas, and fire prevention.

If the vestiges of Sungbo Eredo could speak, many questions would arise.

Has this monumental work been buried only in the forests of West Africa?

Known for more than two decades, Sungbo Eredo’s relevance and importance have not received attention on the world stage despite archaeological works undertaken by a number of teams in the area. The ‘discovery’ of the city of Sungbo Eredo in the southwestern forests of Nigeria is attributed to Dr. Patrick Darling, a British archaeologist (hired by the Nigerian government) who brought it to European awareness in 1999. Of course, the city was long known (rather than ‘discovered’) by Yoruba people whose ancestors came from and knew of that place. For centuries, colonial authorities have been perpetuating the false Eurocentric narrative that Africans are ‘incapable’ of thinking or building on their own and this continues to manifest itself in academic and non-academic professional spaces.

Figure 1. The Great Mosque in Djenne, Mali.
Is the omission of Black planning and architecture a consequence of racism?

Planning and architecture literature makes very little to no mention of the history, contributions, or evolution of planning and architecture in sub-Saharan Africa before European and Arab invasions, thus signaling whose knowledge is prioritized and perceived as valid. The historical evolution of planning and architecture as largely controlled by Eurocentric and White-dominated institutions is consistent with how the Canadian political economy has been shaped. A 2017 report by the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent found that “Canada’s history of enslavement, racial segregation and marginalization of African Canadians has left a legacy of anti-Black racism.” The omission of Black planning and architectural excellence is in general a reflection of anti-Black racism. As Abdi Bileh writes: “Beyond political partisanship, teaching the history of people of African descent in schools is a legitimate necessity… it is inconceivable that in the twenty-first century we are still debating the relevance of teaching their history and culture in our schools… Ignoring the history and culture of a segment of Canadian society only perpetuates the marginalization of a group of citizens.”

Why is Black history not taught in planning and architectural schools?

Planning and architectural schools have not touched on the fact that there were political economies with well-planned towns underpinned by indigenous Black engineering, planning, and architecture. Research clearly shows that in Africa, the Ghana, Asante, Dahomey and Benin empires or the Yoruba Kingdoms were prosperous economies between the 16th and 19th centuries. This widespread trend of erasing Black history is detrimental to planning and architectural professions. As Abdi Bileh writes: “Beyond political partisanship, teaching the history of people of African descent in schools is a legitimate necessity… it is inconceivable that in the twenty-first century we are still debating the relevance of teaching their history and culture in our schools… Ignoring the history and culture of a segment of Canadian society only perpetuates the marginalization of a group of citizens.”

While some planning schools broadly teach about the colonial underpinnings of planning, the imperial expansion of planning, and historical monuments and towns, none go deep into or particularly highlight the Black African context in a way that fairly represents or demonstrates the continent’s historical contributions to planning and architecture. This omission is unnecessary as there is much documentation on Black African practices. Various African and non-African scholars have made contributions in the areas of land claims, rural-urban migration, environment and public health, food security, informal economy, ecology, and sustainability. Others have specifically researched and written about the formation of African cities and urban regions. The foundational works of Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Chancellor Williams, Supreme Understanding, Cheikh Anta Diop, A. Adu Boahene, and AbdouMalik Simone encompass the political economy, architecture and built environments in ancient and modern cities such as Great Zimbabwe, Timbuktu in Mali, Axum in Ethiopia, Mbanza-Kongo in Angola, Kilwa in Tanzania, and other states in Mali, Ghana and Nigeria.

Think of how such planning, architectural and engineering excellence would challenge the absence of Black African people in the discourse and practice of planning and architecture. Imagine the pride and psychological elevation that the recognition of this body of work and Black excellence would invoke among Black students and planners? There is a correlation between the absence or lack of Black content in

Figure 2. Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe.
planning curricula and inequitable planning outcomes, and the bias against and expectations of ‘performance’ from Black faculty members. Research suggests that higher education can actually be inhospitable to Black faculty members.¹²

Why has the planning and architectural profession been silent on African planning and architectural brilliance?

Many Black voices in the field are not heard due to the preference for White-led institutions and media to choose non-Black voices to produce and share knowledge. In other instances, even when Black African stories are being told by Black people, their stories become appropriated by non-Black people who have the resources to capitalize on them. Amanda Parris of CBC’s Marvin’s Room writes about how Canadian cultural institutions have silenced, downplayed, erased, or appropriated the works and activism of Black people in the arts and culture, sports and academia. Parris draws on examples such as the People vs. the Royal Ontario Museum, the Sir George Williams Affair, the case of the ‘disappeared’ writer, and Desmond Cole’s public choice to quit the Toronto Star to highlight this issue. For Parris, “Black folks are being asked to speak, to teach, to share and to instruct non-Black people on “how they can help... It’s exhausting, exploitative and derivative.”¹³

Despite these challenges, it is encouraging to see the gradual shift by the works of some academics, notably Jacob Songsore, Thembela Kepe, Isaac Luginaah, Godwin Arku and AbdouMaliq Simone, who are advocating for the recognition of Black histories and contributions.¹⁴

These academics are also building new theoretical insights into African city-building, which improves and comprehensively rounds out approaches to urban studies. Their works within African context range from environment, health and sustainability, housing and economic development, urban development, policy analysis, and structural inequalities in city building.

What does it mean for Academia and Practising Planners?

According to Parris, “Canadian institutions and companies do not welcome the truth when it comes to the realities of systemic racism. They often do one of two things in response: 1) they systematically shut down those who disrupt the status quo, or 2) they symbolically acquiesce, but make only surface-level changes. This ultimately enables systems of power to change in appearance, but stay the same in function.”¹⁵

Academics, practicing planners, and land use professionals involved in the distribution and validation of knowledge should participate in the deliberate and systematic effort of learning about and supporting old and new ways of city-making in Africa. Abdi Bileh opines that “teaching the history of Afro-descendants in schools would have a positive impact on both students of European and African descent. Both can learn more about the history and culture of people of African descent, develop intercultural dialogue among students, and bring together the different cultures present in schools and in the community.”¹⁶ As argued by Jamilla Mohamud, the state of the planning profession is described as “a race-neutral, colour blind, objective and technocratic framework for planning that, in and of itself, is grounded in White supremacy and seeks the outcome of racialized disparities and anti-black racist planning resolutions.”¹⁷

Jay Pitter has called for the shift from platitudes to taking tangible steps in addressing the inequities that planning and urban design have created and continue to exacerbate.¹⁸ Some of the negative impacts of the so-called race-neutral way of planning is manifested in a continuum, from the lack of representation in academic planning departments (either in the form of curriculum and Black content), an under-representation in the practising planning profession, and inequitable and ineffective community engagement processes, to inequitable placemaking such as public housing revitalization projects.

It is high time that all people start listening to and accepting the historicity, uniqueness and authenticity of Black history and contributions without cloaking it in the garb of Eurocentrism. In sharing and receiving this knowledge, it is critical to consider the political context and to ensure that the legitimacy and value of Black knowledge is not dependent on a White saviour industrial complex. I therefore agree with West and Lwanga who state, “There is a need for on-going critical reflection and reflexivity, naming and questioning, and resistance... there is a need to deconstruct myths and reclaim voice to write a new narrative and claim back power.”¹⁹

Planning departments and practising planners can learn from the recent shift in academic and some professional organisations to create and enable environments for Black representation and Black Studies. As stated by Angelyn Francis, “After decades of grassroots work by Black scholars, a few universities have started offering Black Canadian studies programs. The field of Black studies is slowly getting its due recognition at Canadian universities, thanks to the tireless work of Black scholars and student activists.”²⁰ We are all responsible for gaps in knowledge and practice. But what are the concrete steps private and public institutions taken to address such gaps in the lack of representation in planning practice?

Conclusion

Perhaps it is time for Black planning and architecture students and practitioners to demand curriculum be reshaped and restructured to account for Black contributions while holding school officials accountable. However, there is a role for non-Black students and professionals: novelist Esi Edugyan cautions in Maclean’s that “the weight of change shouldn’t rest on the shoulders of Black people.”²¹ As Andah opines, “our African ecological, social and political realities demand that we reject European-Arab historical vocabulary, and that, at best Africans should be passive to these. And only when we have completed the ascent of literacy, identity, spiritual, political, and economic freedom, should we welcome them back, but on our terms, and absolutely on one’s own land.”²²
I am pleased to know that many Black students have begun taking action individually and collectively. Now is time for professors and university administration to employ Black academics, provide the resources necessary to consolidate and distribute knowledge and spaces for sharing, and unlock opportunities for Black students to access employment and leadership of their expertise. Planning and architectural organizations also have their role to play in highlighting Black excellence in their respective fields.

To undo decades of excluding Black people from academic spaces, planning and architectural schools requires an audit: a conscious process understanding how they systemically undervalue Black students and Black knowledge. This is a sustained effort that includes the evaluation of student enrollment, curricula, access to internship and job outcomes, reorganization of planning frameworks that govern practices, and the engagement of Black and African voices and expertise in place-making and city building, just to name a few.

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Endnotes
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Urban planning education after Black Lives Matter

By Cecile de Laurentis

Summary
If North American planning institutions are to fulfill their stated commitment to racial justice in the wake of 2020's Black Lives Matter protests, transformative educational change is necessary. In most professional planning programs, students may learn theories of systemic oppression and racial capitalism but are not given the tools to address these concepts in practice. Practice and theory should instead inform one another, and students should learn to plan alongside constituents in an education that transcends the classroom. For models of how to do this, I look to grassroots popular education initiatives such as those linked to the Black cooperative tradition.

Amidst the 2020 uprising for Black lives lost to police brutality across North American cities along with headlines declaring that racial and economic factors increase vulnerability to COVID-19, many urban planning programs in the US and Canada have joined the institutional rush to announce that they are committed to racial equity. Some claim they are reaffirming the commitment their programs made during the American Civil Rights movement a half century ago. However, they have been met with skepticism by those who have asked for this commitment before and watched planning education treat racial justice as one of many theoretical questions with no particular urgency, divorced from practice and oblivious to institutionalized racism.

There is some optimism that this time might be different. But how would planning education have to change to fulfill this commitment? Though some planning educators might consider this a stretch, academic programs would need to produce planners who are critical of capitalism, top-down planning, and their own positionality. These critiques are not absent from today's planning programs. However, they are largely confined to theoretical discussions in the classroom.

During my Master’s program, many of my classmates wondered why they should study theory, believing it didn’t connect to their future careers. Others, however, valued theory courses as the only places where we might be asked to consider systemic oppression and how our chosen profession perpetuated it. Methods courses
taught us the practical limitations of traditional analysis but rarely politicized those limitations or grappled with how data and design, too, have operated in service of oppression. While some studies provided an experimental space for students to work out the relationship between theory and practice and confront tough questions, others served as a set of decontextualized professional tasks that we vied to claim for our resumes.

Theory separated from practice
As Paulo Freire writes in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, “Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action.” Yet theory often feels irrelevant to practice in Master’s programs designed to produce professional planners. Many core courses train students for certification, as such, the material learned is bound by American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) or Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) requirements, and therefore only as radical as the students and professor themselves. In my experience, outside the classroom, students are encouraged to network with professionals, other members of the expert class, rather than to get to know the communities they will serve.

Master’s students are not encouraged to learn for learning’s sake, but rather to achieve the “right” qualifications for the “right” job with the “right” pay grade. This stifles not only their educational experience, but the possibility that they will plan for radical social change.

For example, planning students may encounter concepts like participatory planning and community control in their theory courses, but likely not their application. Participatory methods taught without a sufficiently critical lens that urges students to carefully consider their positionality can also result in harm and an extractive dynamic with local communities.

As professional planners, most will learn to treat public participation as a box to be checked in order to move forward with their already-finished plan. But Freire writes that oppressed people must free themselves – members of the oppressor class cannot liberate them from above. If planners are serious about pursuing equity and racial justice, they must commit to breaking both the barriers between theory and practice and those between planners and their constituents. A planning education that does this meaningfully will have transformative potential.

If planners are serious about pursuing equity and racial justice, they must commit to breaking both the barriers between theory and practice and those between planners and their constituents.

Historically, planning education hasn’t been confined to the classroom. Through Jessica Gordon Nembhard’s documentation of the Black cooperative movement in her book Collective Courage (2014), we learn that Black cooperative enterprises were frequently born through learning circles. Even when individual cooperatives failed, many gave rise to conferences, workshops, and ongoing educational projects that inspired other Black leaders to create co-ops. Gordon Nembhard notes that Black cooperatives also made their way into some university curricula, bridging popular efforts and the formal education system.

All of this is also planning education: laying the groundwork for a type of economic development driven by Black self-determination that diverges from the standard planner- and developer-led framework. Similarly, the New York City Community Land Initiative (NYCCLI) carries out popular education programming about collective ownership and governance of land through community land trusts (CLTs) and provides technical assistance and advocacy support to local resident-led CLT projects around the city. NYCCLI was founded by a coalition of homeless organizers, planning-adjacent professionals, and academics who recognized that “expert” knowledge should be mobilized in support of bottom-up movements, and that education and action must happen in tandem.

CLTs also have roots in the American Civil Rights Movement: the first CLT, New Communities, Inc., was founded in Albany, Georgia in 1969 by members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee to advance self-determination for Black farmers. There are multiple Canadian examples of democratically governed CLTs that carry out popular education initiatives as well, such as Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust, which carries out neighbourhood tours that are conducted as mutual learning experiences, and the Black-led Hogan’s Alley Society Land Trust, which operates in a historically Black neighborhood of Vancouver and offers a bevy of anti-racist educational resources.

Furthermore, co-ops and community land trusts have the potential to be anti-capitalist by taking land out of the private real estate market and/or giving their members ownership of their labor and its products.

While not all shared ownership endeavors are inherently transformative, they are often left out of planning curricula entirely in favor of top-down market-based models. Meanwhile, popular education initiatives like those of NYCCLI, Hogan’s Alley, and the Black cooperatives studied by Gordon Nembhard have links to institutions but primarily serve as a foundation for marginalized people to plan their communities. The learning process is ongoing, a complement to organized action.

Planning programs should take a cue from such initiatives in order to produce graduates who will plan for systemic change, both through direct collaboration and curriculum correspondence.

Studios should work directly with community-led initiatives, providing technical assistance while participating in ongoing, two-way education. Both students and their community partners would be teachers and learners, in the spirit of a learning circle or Freire’s model of social movement education. These studios should be actively linked to theory courses, and students should be encouraged to engage in critical reflection – asking, for example, what it means to work in community development under a capitalist system that operates through the devaluation of the communities one works within.

Some universities are working with such models already. For example, the University of British Columbia offers an Indigenous Community Planning concentration, through which students work with/In First Nations communities on community planning projects in a
partnership of mutual learning that centres Indigenous ways of knowing. The American University of Beirut also offers a Planning and Design Workshop intended to introduce students to the “actual practice” of planning, working with them on problem and asset framing and intervention design in a way that takes into account real-life contexts. Of course, these models have the potential to be imperfect or cause harm, but done correctly they are a step in the right direction.

Curricula for planning courses across the board should be modeled on popular education curricula wherever possible. They should understand what marginalized communities have done to teach and learn while organizing to bring about change, challenging traditional deficit framing that positions planners as (white) savours through highlighting what these communities have built themselves. They should ask how planners can participate in existing bottom-up movements to empower people and transform cities, rather than recycling the same old interventions from above. They should encourage planners to keep questioning and reflecting on their practice, even when they move into the professional world.

None of this is to say that change will be easy. In the connection between theory and practice lies the potential for transformation, which institutions tend to resist. Revolutionary planners must insist on this connection. Otherwise, their commitment to end injustice will never leave the classroom.

Cecille de Laurentis received Master’s degrees in urban planning and public policy from Rutgers University and is a member of Planners Network, an association of planners who promote fundamental change in social and economic systems. She is interested in collective ownership models and how planning and research can play a role in social movements.

Endnote

Spatial marginality and Toronto’s priority neighbourhoods

By Rahma Siad-Togane

Summary
Marginalized ‘priority’ neighbourhoods have increasingly been part of the public discourse since the early 2000s along with increased media attention on public safety, community policing, and problems of ‘disengaged’ ‘at-risk’ youth. Although some have been disbanded, policing projects have impacted the lives of young men and women and overall quality of life in these communities, while shaping strongly-held attitudes about public housing communities. These events have shown a growing relationship between socio-economic marginality, known in academic literature as ‘advanced marginality,’ and development of surveillance policies, policing, and social control within Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) public housing communities. Different social policies within schooling (Safe Schools Act, School Resource Officer), housing (Community Safety Policy) and community policing (Community Contacts Policy, Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS), and School Resource Officer program), define, characterize, and regulate experiences of racialized individuals within public housing developments.

Sommaire
Les quartiers marginalisés « prioritaires » font de plus en plus partie du discours public depuis le début des années 2000, parallèlement à l’attention accrue portée par les médias à la sécurité publique, à la police communautaire et aux problèmes des jeunes « désengagés » et « à risque ». Bien que certains projets de maintien de l’ordre aient été démantelés, ils ont eu un impact sur la vie de jeunes hommes et femmes et sur la qualité de vie globale de ces communautés, tout en façonnant des attitudes bien ancrées à l’égard des communautés de logements sociaux. Ces événements ont mis en évidence une relation croissante entre la marginalité socio-économique, connue dans la littérature universitaire sous le nom de « marginalité avancée », et le développement de politiques de surveillance, de maintien de l’ordre et de contrôle social au sein des communautés de logements sociaux de la Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC). Différentes politiques sociales en matière de scolarisation (Loi sur la sécurité dans les écoles, visites de la police dans les écoles), de logement (politique sur la sécurité communautaire) et de police communautaire (politique sur les contacts communautaires, TAVIS [Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy] et programme de visites de la police dans les écoles) définissent, caractérisent et réglementent les expériences des personnes racialisées vivant dans des ensembles de logements publics.

Introduction
Neighbourhoods within Toronto are increasingly polarized based on class lines.¹ The history of the development and decades of neglect of post-war suburban communities have created economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods, with immigrants and racial minorities overrepresented in public housing such as Toronto Community Housing (TCH).² The experiences of the Black-Somali community provide an interesting demographic for understanding the intersections between race, class, and space. First, Black-Somali residents make up a large percentage of TCH communities. Second, based on the settlement patterns of the Somali diaspora within Toronto, specific neighbourhoods have a high population of people of Somali descent; “the neighbourhood of Rexdale in Toronto has one of the largest Somali populations in the country.”³ Often the two converge: a large Somali population within a public housing neighbourhood. Jamestown Crescent Housing (Rexdale) and Edgeley Village (Jane and Finch) are two great examples.

As a response to growing income inequalities in the City of Toronto and social spending cuts since the Harris Government, repressive policing practices have been used in lower-income inner-suburban communities as a response to poverty. Public housing communities in particular have become sites of increased community policing efforts, such as the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS). Further, the issue of carding has disproportionately impacted
Black Torontonians and has been felt more drastically by residents of particular Toronto neighbourhoods. As documented by Community Assessment of Policing Practices, “a large number of respondents believe that police regularly abuse their power. In addition, there is a view that police racially profile members of the community [Jane and Finch]. Compellingly, this belief was identified among both racialized and non-racialized groups.”

The intersectionalities of race, ethnicity, class, religion, anti-immigrant sentiments and space make the experiences of Somalis important to explore. The Black-Somali experience points to a failure of current planning and policy for housing, social services, education, and immigration to address the roots of urban poverty. Rather than address root causes like poor housing planning projects developed in the 1960s and the intensifying and polarizing poverty felt in Toronto neighbourhoods, both city and provincial governments responded with penal policies through policing and incarceration.

The construction of urban poverty: Toronto’s public housing communities

Urban poverty within Toronto has been a concern for all levels of government, policy makers, and academics. Research on post-war housing developments has existed since the 1970s, with city planners evaluating large shifts in economic viability and growing concentrations of poverty in the city’s inner suburbs. Understanding some of today’s community housing neighbourhoods involves examining four significant processes: 1) social housing construction projects of the 1960s and 1970s; 2) severe economic recession of the early 1990s, immigration during the 1990s and cuts to welfare by the 1995 conservative government; 3) steady increases in spatially concentrated poverty within post-war suburbs from 1980s onwards; and lastly, 4) the economic recovery of the mid-to-late 1990s and its facilitated growth in housing prices, which further pushed poor residents into “inner suburbs” now “inner cities.”

Public housing in Toronto was a response to two processes: 1) the large increase in immigration to the city, and 2) the economic recession and growing rate of poverty. Many people facing the impacts of the cold war and anti-colonial movements looked for a new place to call home. As a result of Prime Minister Trudeau’s more open immigration policies and the new Charter for Human Rights, Canada, particularly Ontario, became an attractive destination. Immigration into Toronto brought dual-benefits: immigrants received the opportunity for a relatively safe country with new possibilities, and the Canadian economy had a ‘revolving door’ of labourers and consumers to support the struggling economy. Post-war suburbs, especially in the city’s northwest housing communities of Edgeley Village and Jamestown Crescent, had more affordable housing and were appealing to new immigrants and those facing the impacts of poverty. In theory, affordable housing allows people facing poverty, or of low-income, the security of cheaper rent, therefore promoting socio-economic development. However, with the cutbacks to welfare and social services, this was not the case. The housing construction processes in the 1960s-1970s made these communities home to the largest concentration of high-rise apartment buildings and government property within the City of Toronto. What resulted, in a city already facing an economic recession, was a large concentration of people facing poverty in one region. The planning decisions to concentrate social housing geographically, combined with immigration policy and government cutbacks of social supports, resulted in possibilities for our country’s newest Canadians becoming, in many ways, ‘shot.’

Toronto’s priority neighbourhoods

Since the 1970s, poverty within Toronto has intensified and income inequalities have grown. Observed in many inner cities around the world, this is referenced in academic literature as urban poverty or ‘advanced marginality’, a term developed by French sociologist Loïc Wacquant. In his work, Wacquant examines advanced marginality as a condition exacerbated by neoliberal policies that facilitate a convergence between penal and social policy. Advanced marginality is increasingly localized and concentrated within stigmatized communities. This stigma is one which “discredits people trapped in neighbourhoods of relegation. In every advanced society, a number of urban districts or towns have become national symbols and namesakes for all the ills of the city.” This stigma or ‘spatial taint’ facilitates repressive policing policy that focuses on social control rather than addressing the root cause of marginality and insecurity.
The development of territorial stigma within the City of Toronto continues to be perpetuated with the development of the term “priority neighbourhoods.”

In 2004, the United Way of Greater Toronto produced the research document, *Poverty by Postal Code*, which examined localized harm within specific neighbourhoods. In 2006, the City of Toronto’s Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force identified 140 neighbourhoods within the city, with 13 named “priority neighbourhoods,” defined as those with high service need and high risk measured on several different indicators, including income, education, unemployment, shelter costs, immigration, mobility status, community safety plans, and experiences of neighbourhood violence. Since then, the term has been reproduced within school rhetoric, social services, housing, health centres, and community policing.

Priority neighbourhoods quickly became synonymous with violence, criminality, and public safety concerns in large part by the sensationalizations of popular media and news outlets. Wacquant’s documentation of a similar pattern in *Urban Outcasts* sheds light on why priority neighbourhoods became stigmatized in this way. Wacquant documents the construction of a moral panic over “banlieues,” public housing communities on the outskirts of Paris. He shows that a large part of fear and debate over banlieues stemmed from popular representations that conflated Parisian banlieues with “ghettos” in America, and all that term entailed, i.e., a concentration of what is considered socially and politically undesirable activities and persons. Similarly, Toronto experienced a moral panic over priority neighbourhoods. Different actors with varying political interests structured the “problem” of priority neighbourhoods with the aid of the media in shaping public debates on youth violence, neighbourhood development or redevelopment, and public safety. In both Toronto and Paris, representations of deprived communities are reproduced within different institutions, political campaigns, and institutional texts to justify efforts to socially manage and engineer the lives of the poor. As a result, city officials and planners assigned to work in the geographic areas with “priority neighbourhoods” may internalize the public narratives about these communities without ever having physically visited or worked in these neighbourhoods, thus reproducing these harmful representations in planning work.

**Policing projects as a response to intensifying urban poverty**

Urban centres are highly politicised spaces with increasingly contentious relationships between urban dwellers and institutions of power revealed through security and policing, as documented by Robin Maynard in *Policing Black Lives*. As seen in the last decade, austerity measures exacerbate urban poverty, straining these relationships further.

In recent years, both in Canada and the UK, Black-Somali youth have been disproportionately and systematically impacted by policies of social control, specifically within schools and the judicial system. In the Canadian context, Somali youth have also experienced targeted high profile media reporting, which have negatively impacted the Somali community and the City of Toronto. A critical analysis of newspaper and media reports uncovers dominant social discourses, such as anti-Black, anti-Somali, Islamophobic, and classist sentiments. Newspaper reports on “Summer of the Gun,” “Jane Finch Corridor,” the popular “Operation Traveller” raids at the intersection of Kipling and Dixon, and the Toronto Star’s investigation on carding carry popular representations of public housing communities, marginalized individuals, Black and marginalized communities, and public safety. In reporting on Rob Ford’s crack cocaine scandal, for example, the Toronto Star had to retract and apologize for the overuse of “Somali” in its reporting: “At every stop, they [Toronto Star] point out that the individuals involved are Somali. “Somali” appears 11 times in the article, exactly as many times as the word “crack,” and more than the accused’s name — that being former City of Toronto Mayor Rob Ford, a white, male, and wealthy politician.” The Star later responded to these accusations of class-oriented and racially and ethnically motivated reporting from the community by apologizing, editing, and retracting the number of references to the Somali community. However, the damage to the community was already done. Narratives have the power to form public perceptions of a “problematic individual and community,” which in turn result in social policies and programs to respond to the “at-risk” “problematic” and “criminal” individuals and neighbourhoods.

Low-income communities are often problematized as inherently criminal from the design phase of urban planning processes. We see this through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) mechanisms, “poor doors” and separate play areas masked as inclusionary planning, and the location and concentration of public housing. Examining growing relationships between police and “at-risk” communities, authors Chapman Nyaho, James, and Kwan-Lafond examine a police summer program for youth and how seemingly positive social programming for “at-risk” youth construct binaries of law-abiding youth and the “deficient families and communities they come from.” These projects socialize youth into a value system that pathologizes and criminalizes the “at-risk” label forced onto them because of where they live.

In their article entitled “We Expect Much of You: Enlisting Youth in the Policing of Marginalized Communities,” the authors find that the Youth In Policing Initiative (YIPI) constructs the identities and the communities youth come from as deficient and lacking in some way by using the term “at-risk.” Their study suggests these youth are subject to interventions that operate in subtle ways to regulate them into what are deemed appropriate values and beliefs” within the policing order. As one city councillor remarked a year earlier during the 2010 YIPI launch, the youth would be able to go back to their communities and tell people “what it means to be contributing members of society.”

**Conclusion**

We construct communities based on popular narratives and discourses surrounding them, which can in turn influence both policy and planning. With increased local and global insecurities, policymakers have been favouring interventions that directly and indirectly police the poor rather than address root causes: massive income inequalities and the economic, geographic, and racialized polarization and division of the rich and poor. For planners, this means evaluating how economic, social, and physical planning policies construct false identities of poor and marginalized communities and how planning policy continues to exclude and restrict specific individuals in public space as a result.

Having lived in public housing, I have witnessed how hardworking families, first conceptualized as contributing immigrants and labourers, have come to be known as gang-bangers, welfare fraudsters, and radicalized terrorists. At the same time, I have observed Black youth today form
linkages with communities far away to assess the differences between poverty in Canada versus that in Chicago or London. I listen to their lyrics, read their poetry, and hear their global and political consciousness that is critical of domestic and foreign policy while aware of the global processes that shape their daily lives. I also watch as, increasingly, the lives of the poor, Black, and racialized come under scrutiny and how even the small industry that keeps families alive, both in Canada and elsewhere, is monitored by new institutions and penal policies of the state. Understanding surveillance is important not only for protecting the lives of the vulnerable, but as more of our lives, and different parts of our identity come under both construction and scrutiny. In a time where the world is very small it is difficult for us to compartmentalize our identities. Our struggles transcend the local but are bound to global happenings. We must understand how the built environment predetermines the life chances, mobility, and possibilities of residents. In the case of Toronto Community Housing neighbourhoods in the city’s North West, without clear and coordinated planning that is inclusive of community residents we cannot begin to remedy the decades of systemic neglect that continue to disadvantage communities.

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Spatial inequalities and informal settlements in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa

By Sinovuyo Lehlohonolo Mnyanda

Summary
Despite many reforms in government structures, the 1994 South African constitution, and a variety of high level policies, the potential for equitable planning, land use decisions and mechanisms in South Africa remains largely unfulfilled, due to weak governance, implementation and urban management. The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act may not be a perfect toolbox, but it is a step in the right direction to address the history of apartheid and the inequitable application of land use laws that previously have disadvantaged predominantly Indigenous-Black South Africans and other historically marginalized communities.

Across South Africa, apartheid cities were legitimized by the 1950 Group Areas Act, legislation developed by the white National Party government, with the vision to racially segregate South Africa by resettling Black communities away from the inner city and prime land to squalor and less desirable lands. The Group Areas Act built on previous apartheid legislation in existence since the 1800s, like the 1913 Natives Land Act which codified race-based segregation and spatial inequality. The intention was to reserve prime land and areas for ‘Whites only.’ The Group Areas Act together with the Natives Resettlement Act, Act No 19 (1954) permitted the removal of Blacks from any area within and next to the magisterial district of Johannesburg by the South African government. Specifically, the 1950 Group Areas Act used race to determine one’s proximity to services, ability (or inability) to access those services, and what the standard of access would be. The rationed services didn’t just include water, shelter, social amenities, economic activity, and transportation, but also whether someone could participate in civic life, such as voting (e.g., Black people in South Africa were not allowed to vote before 1994). Shortly afterwards, forced removals caused major displacements for many Indigenous-Black South Africans. Eventually the white-settler government forced Black-Indigenous people to move from their ancestral lands to Bantustans to be closer to employment and resource extraction lands (mines). The apartheid government of the time simultaneously underinvested in the
Bantustans and redirected investment to lands given to white European settlers, which would later develop into the urban cores. In this way, apartheid in South Africa is comparable to the Jim Crow system in the United States or the Canadian Indian Act and residential school system’s impact on Indigenous peoples. Notably, the Indian Act influenced the various Bantustan Acts, which were adopted after a delegation of white South African government representatives visited Canada in the 1940s. This international sharing of policy to forcibly remove people from their lands, underinvest in their new settlement, and invest heavily in the newly vacant lands is just one example of white supremacist land use acts, laws, and policies that were adapted and adopted across cities as “best practices” between colonial, capitalist, and white supremacist-economic global powers.

A simple thing – a map – was used as a tool to drastically violate human rights and create the intergenerational misery that even today many Black South Africans are still forced to endure. The aforementioned legislation divested Black South Africans of land, as well as social facilities and amenities, such as recreation, libraries, schools, and access to piped services and transportation infrastructure. White settler populations were prioritized and given better facilities and infrastructure, while Black communities were left, in many cases, without basic infrastructure or services. Maps delineated the apartheid city both practically and rhetorically to imagine and impose a ‘scientific’ spatial segregation of peoples according to racial constructs. These maps manifested the white supremacist and capitalist power of government officials, professionals, and the apartheid system along spatial lines. Now the apartheid-era maps function as an artifact to communicate South Africa’s troubled past and the violence that city plans can enact, while shedding light on why certain communities look the way they do today. Apartheid ostensibly ended in 1994 with the election of Nelson Mandela. However, the legacy of segregation, spatial inequity, economic mobility divisions, and the long legacy of colonialism and genocide of the apartheid era continues in the form of informal settlements, unplanned settlements consisting mainly of informal dwellings (shacks) on land that has not been surveyed or proclaimed as residential and that lack access to clean water and sanitation.

The legacy of apartheid is visible in the stark differences within urban areas, such as the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality. Within the municipality, Summerstrand in Gqeberha, formerly known as Port Elizabeth, is a suburb that is generally dominated by white South Africans. This community has better facilities, amenities, clean water, and proper sanitation, and is designed as a low density, compact, and transit-oriented community with employment and other economic opportunities nearby. By contrast, Black communities, informally known as locations/eKasi such as Newbrighton (colloquially known as eBlawal), offer a much different reality. Infrastructure is extremely strained and no longer works properly. The majority of homes in Summerstrand are low rise, 1-2 storey with a standard suburban development style; whereas, parts of Newbrighton still have corrugated iron houses known as shacks, forming part of the area’s informal housing. These areas lack social amenities and facilities. In some cases, parks and children’s play areas are gated or even located in close proximity to informal landfills, such as those in Newbrighton, KwaFord.
Informal settlements and informal economies are the backbone and the means of survival in most Black communities across South African cities. There are more informal economies than there are formal economies and, typically, people in the informal economy live from hand to mouth. Informality has become a way of life in these communities, because people have lost hope in government due to ongoing disinvestment, neglect, and unfulfilled promises. Without the relative stability of informal settlements and their economies, many people and their families would not have any hope of upward economic mobility. One of the most treasured innovations from Black community informal economies is Stokvels, formally known as a Savings Club. Stokvels in most cases are operated by Black women who save their household income (whether gained formally or informally), with savings distributed via the Savings Club monthly to a specific member or at the end of each year to each member who has contributed. This way, members get back their contribution with interest, providing a way for unbanked people to raise and save money.

Spatial equality as a principle has been enshrined in post-apartheid South African policy since 1994. Notably, the rights to housing and clean water are part of the South African Constitution and enacted through the 1998 Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 (PIE Act), as well as through the 2013 Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 (SPLUMA). Local governments in South Africa have a constitutional obligation to ensure its citizens are sheltered in a dignified manner and provided with basic services. The PIE Act mainly addresses the prohibition of unlawful eviction and provides for procedures for the eviction of unlawful occupiers. Under the PIE Act an eviction notice must be served within 24 hours to a person or a group of people illegally occupying or invading land. If the land has been illegally occupied for more than 48 hours, the property owner is legally responsible for providing an alternative to the satisfaction of the illegal land occupier. SPLUMA provides a basic template to address a more administratively fair form of eviction where needed. The principles of spatial justice, spatial sustainability, efficiency, spatial resilience, and good administration need to be adhered to before any development takes place.

Despite constitutional and legislative support for spatial equity, little to no transformation to a post-apartheid city has occurred in many parts of South Africa, particularly in relation to housing. New informal settlements continue to be established every day. People continue to engage in squatting to live close to employment and other economic opportunities. One of the biggest contributors to the rise of informal settlements in South Africa is the rural-urban migration of people seeking better economic opportunities. This is a continued legacy of the forced removal of Black South Africans during apartheid. In cities where government-provided housing has been promised and where there is a housing backlog, migrants become desperate for shelter and build informal housing structures wherever they can. Other contributors to the rise of informal settlements in South Africa include unfulfilled promises, uncertainty in policy, and weak governance, particularly in policy, planning and urban management.

Introduction of former President Thabo Mbeki’s era [1999-2008], the Upgrading of Informal Settlement Programme (UISP) intended to upgrade informal settlements through land tenure regularization [programs to formalize and protect land rights] and the provision of infrastructure upgrades. Relocation was intended to be a last resort. The local and national governments still struggle to implement UISP, because it has not been well received across communities due to the anger, frustration, and poor communication regarding the program.

Several measures could address informal settlements. First, any response requires a proactive government and not a reactionary government to help dispel anger and frustration. Second, the national and local governments must initiate plans and put resources in place to provide basic standards of living, rather than addressing informal settlements as they occur. Third, a harm-reduction method must be employed that focuses on housing-first solutions to rectify centuries of inequities that persist due to land theft, subjugation, and racist and exclusionary land use methods. SPLUMA provides the framework for this. Third, policies and legislation must be implemented to produce tangible results with firm implementation plans. This would address unfulfilled promises experienced by communities. Fourth, there must be timely and effective communication with residents, as evidenced by the failings of UISP. Lastly, collaborative planning is very important at all levels of government. Communities, the private sector, NGOs, and all other stakeholders must be informed and empowered to work together towards improving the quality of life in informal settlements and ultimately removing the impetus for their creation.

The South African government has a constitutional responsibility to address these issues by pushing for interventions that are practical, effective and can easily be communicated to the affected communities. They also have a responsibility to ensure that local governments implement the requirements of SPLUMA for coordinated and sound development.

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Appreciating the natural heritage landscapes in low income ‘hoods’

By Shannon Holness

Summary
Conversations about heritage in low-income communities should include the natural environment. Overlooking these spaces makes us miss opportunities to preserve, educate, and be better stewards and advocates of our communities.

For the past three years, I have been involved in the revitalization process of my social housing community, part of the Jane and Finch area in North West Toronto. During this time, I have had the opportunity to consider the intangible heritage features of this community. Intangible heritage includes the impacts of relocation and displacement on residents as well as the implications for urban memory and the preservation of cultural heritage in under-appreciated sites. These concerns extended to the natural features of my community.

I grew up alongside the many trees that framed the community’s internal walking paths and the community garden that my neighbours developed on a parcel of land that once featured a playground until it was removed due to lack of safety and was not replaced. More intimately, to me the fir tree that lived in my backyard and used to hit my head when its branches were made heavy by rainfall appeared to rival skyscrapers by the time our housing was condemned in 2017 and we had to move. I did grieve for the fate of the tree that lived in my backyard and all of the mature trees in my community that would be razed during the revitalization.

The prominence of the fir tree in my neighbourhood is captured in its namesake – the name of the crescent road and the Toronto Community Housing neighbourhood – Firgrove. However, throughout the master planning process, the natural features of the community were neglected due to the focus on rapidly condemning the site, the relocation of residents, and the undertaking of the community master planning process. The condemnation of over a hundred units and the reality that the remaining buildings would no longer be habitable after five years created an urgency to prepare a conceptual plan, business case, and formal application to the City of Toronto. It wasn’t until a routine monthly neighbourhood revitalization advisory meeting in November 2020 that the development manager revealed that the City’s Urban Forestry Unit had made notable comments about the natural features of the community.

In order to mitigate the loss of a few dozen trees and maintain the environmental assets of the community, the Urban Forestry Unit indicated that the best course forward would be to re-create the master plan concept. The challenge with this feedback was that the master plan was co-developed and co-conceptualized with the community. The concerns of the Urban Forestry Unit competed with the trust created through the co-developed master plan process between the community and the developer. Residents met monthly to discuss issues of site circulation, locations of open space and parkland, and the matters of social cohesion as they related to the placement of private market units and social housing units in the community. Further to this, broader community conversations focused on understanding social and economic development opportunities as well as deepening the community’s understanding of the planning and development process. Ultimately, the Tree Preservation Plan identified 30 trees to be preserved in the neighborhood.
The establishment of Tree Protection Zones throughout the development is significant. While there is impetus from all levels of government to preserve the natural features of the environment, it is challenging to do so outside of a natural heritage system established in Ontario’s Provincial Policy Statement, in a context where there are competing urban issues, and a prevailing bias that there might not be any natural features worth preserving within low-income neighbourhoods. This common misconception has been perpetuated by research such as the 2012 Toronto Public Health report “Toward Healthier Apartment Neighbourhoods: A Healthy Toronto by Design Report,” which indicated that the existing green spaces within low-income communities in Toronto have poor usability. The report defined them as “sterile,” “inaccessible,” and “underutilized,” terms correlated to health inequities and more broadly, land use inequities. These definitions do not reflect the lived experience of residents of all ages who fill these green spaces as they play, gather, walk, take respite, and find other ways to animate these treasured neighbourhood spaces. In this regard, one has to wonder whether the narrative that the existing green spaces are underutilized exists because the existing green spaces were not purpose-built to current standards of what constitutes good green space.

Rather than place protections on existing green spaces and green infrastructure within some low-income communities, the master planning process often approaches revitalization through a deficit approach, which assumes incorrectly that green infrastructure would primarily be introduced to communities such as Firgrove as a benefit of redevelopment. This approach is reminiscent of the disregard for cultural heritage in low-income communities that have dense populations of racialized persons. The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and Ontario Heritage Act, 1990 state that cultural heritage value is determined by the attributes of buildings, structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. While not overly prescriptive, the notion of value presents a scenario where cultural artifacts in marginalized neighbourhoods can slip through policy gaps. This is because mechanisms to preserve sites and spaces that communities create out of resourcefulness and agile responses to systemic oppression do not easily fit the attributes noted above and are compounded by poor characterizations of these neighbourhoods. We have the examples of Africville and Hogan’s Alley, and contemporaneously, Little Jamaica, as reminders of this reality.

In this regard, the value of existing natural features in marginalized neighbourhoods is overlooked. In 2018 CanopyTO’s Tree Canopy Study found that the structural value of Toronto’s urban forest was $7.04 billion in 2018 while providing $55 million in annual ecosystem services such as avoided runoff, removal of pollution, and carbon sequestration. The loss of the tree ecosystem in the community is known to contribute to a loss of pervious cover and plantable space which has been decreasing across the city. The presence of trees in communities that have less tree cover contributes to these benefits and savings.

From a planning policy perspective, neighbourhood revitalizations create opportunities to achieve principles of ‘good’ urbanism that are tangible and measurable. These include the opportunity to build mixed-use and compact communities, address long standing capital repair issues, and provide a range of housing options within urban centres in communities/neighborhoods that are thought to have an overdetermined built form. However, siloed approaches in planning, particularly when a process is underway, can do great harm to trust-building when all the internal reviews and suggestions that may impact the community are not shared and presented to residents.

Conversations about heritage in low-income communities should include the natural environment. Starting with a deficit lens when it comes to redeveloping social housing in low-income communities can erase culturally specific heritage landscapes and natural features such as trees that are beloved and provide a sense of place for residents. Discussions of cultural heritage landscapes should involve intentional approaches to facilitating an asset-based lens to green space in low income neighbourhoods. There should be an emphasis on ways to support the preservation of green space with intangible heritage for the communities that value them. Overlooking these spaces causes us to miss opportunities to preserve intangible heritage features, to further education related to better planning policies in often overlooked communities, and to provide the possibility for residents and those facilitating revitalization projects to be better stewards of our communities.

Shannon Holness MES (Pl.) has a background and education in urban planning that includes experiences in community development, public engagement and municipal planning. Shannon has been privileged to facilitate dialogue, design charrettes and workshops with long-time residents, youth, newcomers, and vulnerable populations, encouraging their participation in community building as part of a neighbourhood development strategy. She has been a guest lecturer at the University of Toronto and her alma mater, York University.
Edmonton’s zoning makeover is an opportunity for equity

By Livia Balone, Felipe Canavera, and Jason Syvixay

Summary
For decades, Canadian municipalities have used legal tools, like zoning, to implement goals outlined in municipal plans. Recognizing that implicit and explicit ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic biases underpin zoning and can lead to negative impacts to marginalized and disadvantaged communities has motivated planners to advance equity in their practice. Equity issues have typically been addressed through advocacy, programs, and high-level policy rather than regulatory reform. In Edmonton, planners are undertaking an ambitious project to rewrite the City’s Zoning Bylaw through an equity lens. Advancing equity is a journey requiring constant research, reflection, sharing, and evaluation — a process often as important as outcome. The City of Edmonton’s GBA+ and Equity Toolkit demonstrates how development regulations contribute to inequities; why city builders of all backgrounds should reflect on their privilege in their work; what relationship-building with underrepresented and marginalized groups entails; and most importantly, what equity measures can be undertaken.

Since the early 20th century, communities have used zoning to organize land use and minimize conflicts between different activities to protect public health, safety, and welfare of citizens and the environment. Zoning has also been used to segregate people and disconnect them from places, cultural practices, and production. Intentionally or not, zoning rules have and can lead to disproportionate impacts for some segments of the population. For this reason, zoning has a dual legacy: promoting public good and exclusion.

Introduced in 1933, Zoning Bylaw 26 was Edmonton’s first set of land use regulations. Premised on a western view of land management, it impacted and resulted in displacement of many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people, including the Enoch and Papaschase. The most recognizable content from Zoning Bylaw 26 still present in today’s Zoning Bylaw is the ‘A’ Metropolitan Recreation Zone, applied to the North Saskatchewan River Valley and tributaries. Retaining the ‘A’ zone is symbolic of what was, and still is, important to the city and its identity and people. However, the 1933 bylaw also largely favoured low-density development of single-family homes, leading to spatial segregation of people based on wealth, race, and land ownership.1

Edmonton’s current Zoning Bylaw 12800 has not been updated in a comprehensive way since 2001, with the last significant rewrite in 1961. Edmontonians have called for an updated set of land use regulations that better reflects the city’s current size, future direction, and diversity.

As early as 2016, the City’s Zoning Bylaw team turned their attention to regulations
needs to be done. Renewing Edmonton’s Zoning Bylaw provides an opportunity to:

- Remove regulations that intend to regulate people and not development.
- Remove the distinction between different living arrangements to accommodate all housing needs and reflect housing as a human right.
- Create more flexible zones to provide attainable and affordable housing types.
- Provide more flexible regulations to accommodate informal gatherings, recreation, arts, culture, and spirituality throughout the city.
- Address any unjust regulatory requirements (e.g., only addressing the landowner rather than the occupant in mailed communications of proposed developments).
- Create a bylaw that is more accessible in its presentation and easy to understand.

GBA+ & Equity Toolkit

A GBA+ & Equity Toolkit was developed by the City to advance and promote equity objectives and explicitly remove barriers perpetuating inequity.

The Toolkit provides planners with guidance on how best to consider concepts of equity and diversity when drafting zoning rules throughout the process: acknowledging assumptions at the regulation writing stage; identifying social inequities and identity factors; listening to community perspectives; and exploring equity measures that have been or can be taken.

Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

GBA+ examines and addresses how policies, programs, and services can impact diverse individuals and groups. The plus (+) prompts us to consider multiple Identity Factors, including but not limited to age, race, ability, education, ethnicity, geography, health, language, class, sex, and gender.

Equity Measures are processes, systems, or actions that remove inequalities or barriers to inclusion and increase equality of outcomes. Examples may include affirmative actions, incentives, progressive taxes, and open and transparent policies, among others.

In the Zoning Bylaw context, we classified social inequities as either Communication Barriers or Historical Negative Externalities.

Generated by the way a zoning bylaw is presented and written, Communication Barriers can affect the way users of the bylaw access, find, and interpret the information presented, e.g., plain vs legal language, lack of illustrations/diagrams/tables, and cumbersome user interface.

Generated by the way regulations are used and implemented, Historical Negative Externalities can affect the access of vulnerable or marginalized populations to housing, transit, employment, commerce, and/or public and open space, e.g., gentrification, overvaluation of parcels, homelessness, climate change, lack of access to services, and classism.

Throughout 2020, conversations with community members were facilitated to explore and understand how zoning impacts Edmontonians’ daily lives, and unearth new perspectives. Explicit attention was given to ensuring people, specifically Black, Indigenous, and racialized, underrepresented, and marginalized communities, were invited to participate, i.e., those historically and currently left out of and/or impacted by zoning considerations. Planners routinely identify the need for empathy in their practice. To truly put themselves in others’ shoes, planners should amplify the lived experiences and voices often absent from planning landscapes. These perspectives have always been present – planners need to listen to a broader spectrum of voices to reach a more equitable future.

These community members identified the Zoning Bylaw’s format, lack of clarity, language, and technical jargon, as particularly cumbersome, and as significant barriers to engaging and interacting with the bylaw. The following were identified as impacting vulnerable or marginalized populations negatively: accessibility; affordable and diverse housing; community economic development; inclusion, public participation; reconciliation; safety; and transit, amenities, and services. Participants also acknowledged how these challenges, when overlapping, are acutely magnified, disproportionately impacting racialized people, youth, and those with disabilities and diverse gender and/or sexual identities.

Regulation writing process

Understanding how a regulation is drafted by a planner was important in illuminating the limitations of information and perspectives present, and in understanding how the GBA+ & Equity Toolkit could fill in those knowledge gaps (see Figure 1). Through the Compass (a worksheet), planners will be presented with the GBA+ & Equity Toolkit suite of tools and a series of questions and checkpoints to ensure they thoughtfully consider equity as they draft land use regulations. The worksheet will serve as a form of “muscle-
memory’ of their reflections, thoughts, and decisions, and helping strengthen the rationale for the regulation(s) they write, validate their work, and ensure public expectations and legal standards are addressed.

Equity is necessary work
If planners are to address equity appropriately, they need to be introspective, to acknowledge their unconscious biases, and consider their relationship and intersectionality with power and privilege in societal and organizational structures. This work will be challenging, uncomfortable, and ambiguous, making it all the more important for planners to be relentless in pursuing equity.

Community members helped to identify a variety of strategies and measures to advance equity in the Zoning Bylaw, from ensuring regulations are written in plain language to incorporating the use of visual aids or graphics to enabling mixed-use, mixed-income development to exploring incentives for developers in exchange for affordable/accessible housing, public and/or green space, and bicycle infrastructure. As the GBA+ & Equity Toolkit is used by the City’s Zoning Bylaw team, additional opportunities will emerge. Some examples that have begun to percolate include consolidation of uses, mixed-use zones, inclusive design features, and less restrictive zoning.

Recognizing that barriers and inequities connected to zoning are insidious and institutional, and that change takes time, the GBA+ & Equity Toolkit gives planning practitioners a place to start identifying how their individual actions can have an impact. As Agrawal (2020) notes, “humanely developing inclusive cities depends on these legal guarantees and on their judicial enforcement and planners’ commitment to incorporating them into their practice.” This work, which has begun to reshape their thinking and enhance their ability to write regulations that support more equitable outcomes, is being embraced throughout other areas within the City of Edmonton. We are excited for the opportunities. Learn more at edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal.

Jason Syvixay RPP, MCIP is completing his PhD in urban and regional planning at the University of Alberta. He has worked as managing director of the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ, a planner with HTFC Planning & Design, and at the City of Edmonton to lead and support the implementation of its Infill Roadmap.

Endnote

References

Livia Balone RPP, MCIP is Director of Edmonton’s Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative. With more than 17 years in the industry, Livia is excited to advance changes to Edmonton’s regulatory environment to achieve the City’s vision, support better development outcomes, and create a more inclusive and compassionate city.

Felipe Canavera, an urbanist/designer with the Zoning Bylaw Team at the City of Edmonton, has a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Alberta and a B. Architecture from UNAL, Bogotá, Colombia. He has worked on the boards of nonprofits pushing for better urban mobility, design, and development in Edmonton.
“In honour of the village we have today”
Co-creating a Housing Solutions Lab for Indigenous youth aging out of care in Winnipeg

By Darrien Morton, Zoë Mager, Michael Redhead Champagne, Nigaanii Wabiski Mikanak Ogichidaa

Summary
Youth involved in the child welfare system in Manitoba are aging out of foster care and into situations of precarious housing and homelessness at astonishing rates. A cross-cultural and intergenerational collective of planners, researchers, and urban Indigenous youth in Winnipeg joined together to lead a social innovation lab to address this issue through a systems-thinking approach. This article shares some key learnings and takeaways from the lab. It examines how this process has centred the strengths, aspirations, and needs of the community while examining barriers to housing that Indigenous youth in Winnipeg face as they age out of care.

Sommaire
Les jeunes pris en charge par le système de protection de l’enfance au Manitoba quittent les foyers d’accueil et se retrouvent à un rythme effarant dans des situations de logement précaire et d’itinérance. Un collectif interculturel et intergénérationnel d’urbanistes, de chercheurs et de jeunes autochtones urbains de Winnipeg s’est réuni pour diriger un laboratoire d’innovation sociale afin de s’attaquer à ce problème par une approche systémique. Cet article présente certains des principaux enseignements et points à retenir du laboratoire. Il examine comment ce processus s’est centré sur les forces, les aspirations et les besoins de la communauté tout en examinant les obstacles au logement auxquels sont confrontés les jeunes autochtones de Winnipeg lorsqu’ils cessent d’être pris en charge.

I. Rebuilding the village for Indigenous youth aging out of care in Winnipeg
Winnipeg, Manitoba has one of the highest proportions of urban Indigenous residents living in a major Canadian city (12%) including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, and almost half that population is under 24 years old. Although many individuals and families frequently travel between cities and rural ‘home communities’ or reserves, which are important when upholding kinship, ancestral, and cultural ties, neighborhoods such as Winnipeg’s North End (and by extension Winnipeg’s inner city) have become culturally recognized places of belonging with a historical and ongoing Indigenous presence.

Although Winnipeg is home to multi-generational Indigenous families, Indigenous youth (under the age of 18) are drastically overrepresented in the child welfare system in Manitoba, accounting for 90% of the approximately 11,000 children in care in the province. Involvement in child welfare often leads to homelessness, unemployment, contact with the criminal justice system, and poor health and educational outcomes upon aging out of foster care. The 2018 Winnipeg Street Census reported that 51.5% of people experiencing homelessness had been in the care of child welfare at some point, with the majority self-identifying as Indigenous. Among respondents, 62.4% reported experiencing homelessness within one year of leaving care, signaling inadequate transitional housing supports. These negative outcomes related to child welfare apprehension and homelessness are implicated in historical and ongoing legacies of colonization, racism, and land dispossession.
In the mid-1980s, the leadership of North End grandmothers and women established culturally-safe community spaces that evolved into Indigenous-led organizations, or ‘The Village.’ In the heart of Winnipeg, this community is made up of several Indigenous-led organizations, collectives, and gathering spaces that are (re)constructing a sense of cultural and political identity, giving Indigenous communities a means to assume local control and revitalize Indigenous lifeways in cities.

Such stories of grief and resilience demonstrate how major policy gaps, and the failure to meaningfully engage Indigenous communities in policy processes, continue to fail Indigenous youth aging out of care when accessing transitional housing supports.

The Village provides a promising opportunity for urban Indigenous communities to enact collective notions of self-determination, empowerment, and racial equity, especially among those pursuing cross-cultural and intergenerational collaborations with Indigenous youth to address housing insecurity, homelessness, and community wellness.

The recent and popular rhetoric of “Reconciliation” in Canada has so far resulted in minimal efforts to simply include and hear the voices of Indigenous communities without fundamentally changing Indigenous-settler relationships, healing from historical injustices together, and redistributing resources equitably. In contrast, the practice of village-building instructs us to actively engage in these processes by shifting power in tangible ways.

II. Engaging in cross-cultural and intergenerational collaborations in the village

During the fall of 2018, a collaboration of community planners from HTFC Planning & Design and youth leaders from Aboriginal Youth Opportunities Movement (AYO!) were granted National Housing Strategy funding to host and convene an 18-month Housing Solutions Lab (HSL) by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Solutions Labs (also called social innovation labs) bring together diverse stakeholders using systems and design thinking to address complex problems through research, experimentation, and prototyping. This work was based on the foundation of strong community relationships and the village-building work that AYO! has been committed to over the past decade.

Upon inviting the Nigaanii Wabiski Mikanak Ogichidaa (NWMO) collective (a group of community-based Indigenous youth researchers), Fearless R2W (an Indigenous-led organization dedicated to education and advocacy for families involved in the child welfare system), and a social innovation coach through SHIFT Collaborative to become part of the Lab Leadership Team, the group agreed to focus on the urgent need to support housing solutions for Indigenous youth aging out of care in Winnipeg. These partnerships have evolved through years of ongoing relationship-building and collaborative work. The partnership brought together capacity to navigate the process of accessing funding, following a social lab model, and providing administrative support that ensured that AYO! could bring the work to the community-level and create space for youth-leadership and direction.

Leveraging existing networks and gathering places within the Village, the Lab convened participants with lived experience (youth in care, aging out of care and those aged out of care), and those working ‘within the system’ (caregivers, case workers, administrators, policy makers) and ‘around the system’ (advocates, organizers, housing professionals, knowledge-keepers).

The Lab was guided by seven key principles developed by the Lab Leadership Team (see Figure 2) to ensure that the process was grounded in Indigenous worldviews and culturally-safe practices. The Housing Solutions Lab encompassed five distinct yet overlapping phases to ensure the applicability and uptake of solutions. These phases include: Definition, Discovery, Development, Prototyping/Testing, and Roadmapping.

Throughout every phase, multiple engagement methods were included, and learnings were tracked by the Lab Leadership Team through an iterative developmental evaluation process guided by the Social Innovation Coach. By remaining adaptive when responding to complex problems, the Solutions Lab methodology remained flexible and open to change. These methods and tools ranged from interviewing, meetings, systems-mapping, prototyping teams, talking circles, ceremonies, research training, and community engagement and consultation through existing gatherings in the Village.
III. ARROWS youth engagement strategy

“Committing to [absolute] integrity from the very beginning means we are showing the young people we work with respect. By starting the relationship with such an act of respect, we build the foundation of our relationship.” – Michael Champagne & Jenna Wirch, 2013.7

Stories that were heard and witnessed throughout the Lab point to an apparent absence of culture-based housing that prioritizes notions of “family” or “kinship.” Success in securing housing is predominantly based on a narrow interpretation of what it means to successfully transition to young adulthood, which youth may not achieve given systemic factors and life circumstances. It is more than just finding housing but about finding (re)connection with self, kin, community, culture, and land.8

As allies and relatives, it is our responsibility not only to improve housing access and options for Indigenous youth, but to ensure they are also active collaborators that envision, co-create, and mobilize shared solutions. Such perspectives are indispensable to enliven different visions of a world upholding mino-bimaadiziwin (Anishinaabe/mino-pimatisiwin (Ininew/Cree) – a concept applied through this collaborative work, meaning: ‘to live a good life’.

While the Solutions Lab employed many engagement frameworks and approaches, the Lab Leadership Team chose to amplify the ARROWS Youth Engagement Strategy, which was developed in 2010 by AYO! as a strategy promoting youth leadership and engagement during service-delivery decision-making, and can be adapted to various decision-making contexts. (See Figure 4.)

The Lab Leadership Team and broader Lab ecosystem were made up of participants – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – of many different ages, races, abilities, genders, sexual orientations, lived experiences and socio-economic backgrounds, including planners, researchers, community partners, storycatchers, helpers and the Village. By prioritizing rotational [shared] leadership through the cross-cultural and intergenerational Lab Leadership Team, ARROWS guided the team when navigating the complex, and sometimes uncertain, journeys that must be taken to address wicked problems requiring complex solutions.

IV. Outcomes

The Lab process cumulated in many key learnings including those shared above, as well as multiple prototypes of solutions that were tested throughout the second half of the process [and continue to be tested].

Prototypes chosen for testing include:

• An “Aging Out Party” rites of passage celebration.
• An empathy board game to help those working in the system to understand barriers faced by youth in care.
• An intergenerational kinship support initiative to provide community support and advocacy to youth aging out and dedicated transitional housing.
• A “one stop shop” website to provide all the information that youth may need before/after/during their process of aging out of the child welfare system.
• A social housing system-navigation guide.

At the time when this article is being written, many of the prototypes are still in the iterative process of testing and revision, with a roadmap to move forward on implementation being developed for suitable prototypes.

Other outcomes of the process include:

• Deeper analysis and increased awareness of youth homelessness and housing insecurity among Indigenous youth aging out of care.
Engaging urban Indigenous communities within Canadian housing contexts leads to an undeniable conclusion: there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to engagement.

insecurity as relatives and community members. However, as the Village reminds us, when engaging urban Indigenous communities in research, planning, and housing development: “There is nothing about us, without us.”

V. Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge and extend our gratitude towards all collaborators, including Aboriginal Youth Opportunities, HTFC Planning & Design, Stacy Barter – SHIFT Collaborative, NWMO [Quinton Delorme, Kakeka Thundersky, Charlaine Hudson, Ronald Gamblin]; Dr. Andrew Hatala – [University of Manitoba, Department of Community Health Sciences]; Fearless R2W [Mary Lund Burton, John Morrisey, Rafael Terrain, Quinn Conlon]; our supporters and funders [the National Housing Strategy and CMHC; Canadian Institutes of Health Research; and the McConnell Foundation’s Innovweave program]; Lab Participants; and of course, the Villages. The content expressed in this article reflects the views of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of any funders of this project.

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Nigaani Wabiski Mikanak Ogichidaa

are a Winnipeg-based collective of community-based Indigenous youth researchers and organizers (storycatchers).

Endnotes

Freedom of movement
A conversation on the mobility industry’s role in normalizing self-righteousness with At the Intersections

Summary
What does it look like to interrogate the planning fields’ most popular paradigms? The editorial team of At the Intersections sat down to discuss the transportation industry’s role in restricting mobility, why contextualization is critical, and hopes for a future in which Black and Brown people can move freely and safely. Transportation planning has long been wielded as a tool to dictate social and economic mobility of communities of colour. Urban spaces cultivated by Black and Brown communities thrived in spite of the lack of power and resources, wrested away by white suburbia. But a re-emerging interest by white dominant society in walkable, culturally-connected and dynamic spaces has forced communities of color who have cultivated these neighborhoods to bear the costs of their success.

Sommaire
À quoi cela ressemble-t-il de remettre en question les paradigmes les plus populaires dans le domaine de l’urbanisme ? L’équipe éditoriale de At the Intersections s’est réunie pour discuter du rôle de l’industrie des transports dans la restriction de la mobilité, des raisons pour lesquelles la contextualisation est essentielle et des espoirs d’un avenir dans lequel les personnes noires et de peau brune pourront se déplacer librement et en toute sécurité. La planification des transports a longtemps été utilisée comme un outil pour dicter la mobilité sociale et économique des communautés de couleur. Les espaces urbains habités par les communautés noires et brunes ont prospéré malgré le manque de pouvoir et de ressources qu’il a fallu arracher aux banlieues blanches. Mais le regain d’intérêt de la société blanche dominante pour les espaces accessibles à pied, culturellement connectés et dynamiques, a obligé les communautés de couleur qui ont fait épanouir ces quartiers à supporter le coût de leur succès.

The guest editors of this Plan Canada issue invited the editors of At the Intersections, an emerging publication centring the narratives, experiences, and expertise of Black, Brown, and Indigenous people in transportation and mobility, to reflect on the publication’s introductory series entitled “Mobility Over Modality.” This series highlights the mobility industry’s common use of cars as a scapegoat – allowing planners to reject the need for deeper reckoning with the legacies of redlining, policing, and discrimination which restrict mobility for Black and Brown people today.

For this piece, the editorial team, which consists of five Black and Brown women of colour, sat down to discuss the transportation industry’s role in restricting mobility, why contextualization is critical, and hopes for a future in which Black and Brown people can move freely and safely. This is a transcript of that discussion, edited for length and clarity.

You can find At the Intersections on Medium, at https://medium.com/at-the-intersections.

Brytanee Brown: I’m based in the Bay Area. I live in Oakland, California. I have a background in the nonprofit and government sector. I plan for people of colour, so that we may see ourselves in the built environment and be able to navigate and access it freely.

Nicole Payne: I’m an East Coast mobility planner, and the reason I plan is to reclaim what is rightfully ours – reclaim our resources, our power and make moves towards justice and liberation for communities of colour.
**Ariel Ward**: Transportation planner and engineer by day, all things creative by night, I am invested in the connection of people to place, people’s resources and people’s opportunity, regardless of the circumstances of their birth and background.

**Margo Dawes**: My work is advancing racial equity in transportation, and I am trying to be part of a great redistribution of power and resources from where they have accumulated over generations to where they really belong.

**MD** Welcome, everybody. This is the At the Intersections editors crew, and today we’re going to take some time to reflect on our work from 2020 – where the conversation has been and is going in the transportation space, and some of the things that have been on our mind recently.

For context, let’s start with what inspired At The Intersections.

**AW** At the Intersections is our Medium publication that we launched in early 2020. It’s an acknowledgment that all of these things that the industry usually tells us are outside of ourselves or experience, or not relevant to the work we do, are really front and centre.

**BB** We realized that we already had what we needed to say the things that we wanted to say, how we wanted to say them. We wanted to create a platform for other women of colour to say the things that they have to say, whether it be about transportation and the built environment or how we move and get around.

**AW** At the Intersections is, in the words of Toni Morrison, taking what is at the margins and bringing it back to the centre, because we know that is truly the focus.

**MD** One of the ways that we’ve used this platform, as you alluded to, Ariel, was as a place for us to say what we need to say, whenever we felt moved to do so. It’s been a platform for us to share our thoughts, and we intend for it to be a platform for others like us and our industry to share their thoughts and perspectives as well. In summer 2020, we published a piece called “Mobility Over Modality.” What was the inspiration behind this piece?

**BB** Our field tends to focus on very specific solutions to issues that touch more than just bike lanes or bus lanes. “Mobility Over Modality” was a rethinking of what our end goal is. Is our end goal to develop bike lanes or ensure that people who live in cities are able to move around the city as easily, efficiently, and safely as possible?

**NP** I think it was a reason to bring our thoughts, and hopefully, our field into the focus of people, rather than these very specific solutions. To be able to think about what this means for people rather than what this means for my interests is something that gets lost along the way within this work.

**MD** In Seattle, we have a bunch of different modal plans. We’ve got a pedestrian, bike, freight, and transit plan. And they get to these points where they disagree with each other about what to prioritize on a given street. What I fundamentally believe is that the only framework that doesn’t really break down is one that prioritizes people, one that prioritizes Black and Brown folks and people in communities that the government has historically disinvested in and have continued to disinvest in to this day. It makes it clear what kinds of decisions to make in all circumstances. Anything else with a modal plan, something that tells you to prioritize bikes here, transit here, driving here, walking here, it loses too much in this context. It will always come down to the question of who is it that we’re trying to move and why?

**NP** There’s a kind of dissonance in this field, around what has been created historically, and what’s being created right now that is actually causing harm to people of colour.

**BB** It’s something to be said about being a person of colour, being a Black woman who’s a planner. I plan for Black people. I’m not just here to take up space as someone who’s going to carry your ideas and try to make them more palatable for our people. I’m actually going to question why that plan even exists and why that framing even exists. Maybe we don’t need a bike lane. Maybe we just need a traffic circle. To Nicole’s point earlier, what is the goal here, and what makes people actually feel safe? It allows for us as practitioners to think about all the tools that are in our toolbox.

**NP** That’s important, right? Because we’re making big decisions and placing things in people’s communities that are going to be there beyond our five, ten years in these positions.

**AW** And this piece was instructive and I think cathartic for us because we also are trying to hold the people accountable.

**BB** Like your Vision Zero, and your “war on cars.”

**MD** Can you say more about those?

**BB** At its core, Vision Zero is a call to action, for transportation related agencies to eliminate or very seriously decrease traffic deaths and serious injuries. Vision Zero initiatives usually include a set of traffic safety policies, programs, and projects. One of the major critiques of Vision Zero is its overreliance on police participation and surveillance. Additionally, many Vision Zero advocates rely on the partnership of Black and Brown communities but fail to acknowledge the implications of increased police presence.

The “war on cars” is the belief by transportation planners and enthusiasts that cars alone are the issue and any attempt to make it harder for people to drive is acceptable and necessary. Whether it be taking photos of cars parked in the bike lane, pricing car travel into urban centres, or making parking scarcer and more expensive as a blanket policy. Similar to Vision Zero, there is no analysis of race and class by these transportation planners and enthusiasts, e.g., who can afford to not own a car? Who could get hurt when the police show up to ticket the car parked in the bike lane? Moreover, due to the history of racist infrastructure investments, lots of Black and Brown people have been pushed out of urban centres due to rising unaffordability and now rely on cars to get where they need to go.

You look at this 50 years from now and it’s going to look like a redlining map. Because of displacement, people are now required to move within larger spheres of mobility, so there’s a disconnect because we’re now holding compact cities as the ideal, like that 15-minute city concept, when in fact Black and Brown people’s lives are being pushed in the opposite direction. It feels like an intentional undermining of culture – the importance in
our communities of being connected to friends and family. I see it working with planners for whom the 15-minute city is a reality. And that is their way of being, which is fine. But you can’t impose your privileged way of being and make decisions using the city’s resources just to make your own life easier.

So, it’s like, are you actually interested in our movement and us being able to get places to get to the things that we need to get to, the people we need to get to, the resources that we need to get to? Or are you more interested in being able to get to where you need to go, how you want to get there? “Mobility Over Modality” takes out the modality piece and it makes planners and engineers and designers work a little bit harder, actually work a lot harder when you have to not just come up with a solution in the silo but instead understand the context of a community before you make a decision.

(AW) We actually put systems in place with very little resources, to move about and to continue to exist. And newcomers, white dominant culture, get to reap the benefits and get even more resources to make the city work for them. (BB) And it’s now that white people have decided that the city is a nice place to live again that it’s becoming more unaffordable, that our communities are being pushed out of the city and into the same suburbs that were designed to exclude us. And now is the time that planners and everybody else who is benefiting from this return to the city are really keen on making it difficult to drive into the city. And then to Nicole’s point, as if co-opting the city and our communities wasn’t enough, then any lucky Black and Brown folks who make it into anything approximating a decision-influencing role in city planning, who can live in the city, who can participate in the city government, end up being tokenized by decision-makers who try to use us to sell bad ideas and ideas that are really not for our communities. They’re really about making the city a continually nice place to live for the people who still have the privilege to live there.

(NP) Black and Brown folks have always been resourceful, having created these urban walkable communities following white flight. Building community is innate to us; we did it in the face of redlining, urban renewal, and slum clearance. The community-building work we did, which was derided and neglected by professionals who saw to the financial demise of our communities, is now being co-opted by the next generations of those same professionals.

(BB) I lost my job during the pandemic, but it was powerful because I literally didn’t have an institution defining my value in my work. I felt like I had to do it for myself. What does it mean to be a practitioner and to find one’s voice? Until I get back to why we’re doing this work – outside of a project or program or policy aside, why am I and why do I do what I do, and how do I do this work? How do I continue to do this work and show up for myself? I don’t want to do work how I was doing it previously. If I have to come back into this space, which I will, which I have, I’m going to do it and I’m going to own my time in a way that makes sense for me so I can model doing this work in a sustainable way.

(AW) The fact that we’ve done so much with so little really is a testament to our abilities and our purposefulness in this role. This is where we’re supposed to be and what we’re meant to do. This is the rebuttal to all the doubts that we’ve had about ourselves and our work.
Care-full planning
By Leslie Kern

Summary
City planning in Canada has not typically prioritized care work or explicitly pursued planning interventions that would facilitate equity in caregiving responsibilities. Indeed, gendered, racialized, and classed assumptions about the who, where, and how of caregiving underpin how cities are organized and how they function. This article suggests that planners can play a positive role in promoting equity by attending to three central areas: mobility, accessibility, and the design of multi-functional spaces. These areas are critical for re-imagining how we organize, compensate, and value care work in our cities.

Sommaire
Au Canada, l’urbanisme n’a généralement pas donné la priorité au travail relié aux soins ni poursuivi explicitement des interventions de planification qui faciliteraient l’équité dans les responsabilités de soins. En effet, les hypothèses spécifiques au sexe, à l’origine ethnique et à la classe sociale concernant le qui, le où et le comment de la prestation des soins sous-tendent l’organisation et le fonctionnement des villes. Cet article suggère que les urbanistes peuvent jouer un rôle positif dans la promotion de l’équité en mettant l’accent sur trois domaines centraux : la mobilité, l’accessibilité et la conception d’espaces multifonctionnels. Ces domaines sont essentiels pour réimaginer la façon dont nous organisons, rémunérons et valorisons le travail relié aux soins dans nos villes.

As I sat down to write this article, I decided to peek at the latest Official Plan from the City of Toronto. I made note of admirable goals like “people with special needs are supported to live in their communities” and “wellbeing is measured by how well we provide for our children.” What was missing, however, was any acknowledgement of who does this work, where it happens, how it’s supported, and how (or if) it’s compensated. In short, there’s a lot about care work that your typical city plan leaves unaddressed and unproblematicized.

I use care work as an umbrella for all of the unpaid and underpaid labour that keeps human beings clean, fed, rested, healthy, and supported. This work is captured in terms like domestic work, child care, elder care, emotional labour, and mental labour. While much of this work takes place in the home for no money at all, a great deal of it is done by a feminized, racialized low-wage workforce that, until the pandemic, was rarely seen as valued or essential. Whether they’re temporary migrants under Canada’s Live-In Caregiver Program, refugee claimants working in long-term care homes, grocery store workers, sanitation workers, or child care workers, the people whose labour is often invisible and who themselves are considered unskilled, disposable, or interchangeable are the ones who have kept society functioning not only during this crisis, but all along.

What does this have to do with planning? Not much, if you look at most city plans. However, what’s been left out of planning discourse tells us a great deal about our
This entails making visible the long-standing logics that linger, unnoticed, in the background of our ideals and practices. Like any good feminist, I have been trained to pay attention to binaries: dualistic and oppositional ways of thinking that structure how we make sense of the world. Home versus workplace. Care work versus productive work. Private versus public. Family versus community/friends/colleagues. You don’t need a degree in women’s studies to notice that an assumed gender binary can be mapped onto many of these examples. The persistent gendered division of labour is a norm that lies unquestioned at the heart of this organizational scheme. COVID-19, however, has both collapsed and exploded some of the boundaries between these categories, while also exposing the instability of a system that relies on keeping care work hidden.

As people who have some small sphere of influence within cities, how can planners address the care crisis? What new assumptions, values, needs, and priorities do we need to start from? I suggest a simple guiding question: What features of urban space make care work easier, more visible, and more collective? I’ll highlight three important areas for intervention: mobility, accessibility, and multi-functional spaces.

Typical mobility priorities in cities reflect the dualisms mentioned above: the need to transport people from home to paid workplaces at certain times of day dominates mobility planning. Unfortunately, the demands of care work do not conform to this model. Decades of research around the world show that women’s journeys are less linear than men’s and they involve multiple stops for caring functions, like domestic work. This invites any number of spatial interventions: safe, wide, barrier- and snow-free sidewalks; expansive and affordable public transportation networks with hop-on, hop-off privileges; and spatial integration of places of home, school, health care, shopping, and work, especially in poorly-serviced neighbourhoods where lower-income, minority communities live.

Accessibility is a necessary condition for equitable mobility and access to the public realm. Millions of Canadians have at least one disability and we have an aging population. History has shown that changes to the built environment can radically improve the lives of disabled people, but many of our cities are plagued by crumbling and outdated infrastructure, where even those early improvements are being lost to damage and decay. Over time, services like public toilets have been all but abandoned. “Hostile architecture” designed to dissuade homeless people, youth, drug users, and others deemed problematic means it can be difficult to find a place to sit, get water, or help another human being with their bodily needs. It’s impossible to bring care work into public space and public consciousness without designing environments that acknowledge the simple fact that we all have bodies and our bodies have varied needs. Accessibility has countless knock-on benefits, making life better for parents, children, elderly people, anyone with a cart of groceries or laundry, and anyone in a caretaker role.

Part of the crisis of care work is that so much of it is hidden in private spaces, such as the home. We have not imagined our urban public spaces as sites of care work. The pandemic has also made this clear, when instructions to be outside as much as possible come up against the hard reality that our cities are simply not set up to encourage this. What if we took this opportunity to reimagine urban spaces as multi-functional zones that could support not only leisure and consumption activities (like outdoor dining), but a wide variety of social functions? This might include facilities for feeding people collectively, outdoor classrooms and child care spaces, and comfortable spaces that allow people to socialize. Design interventions such as car-free zones, clustered seating, sheltered areas, warming or cooling stations, outdoor kitchens, and bathrooms would go a long way.

The care-full city is not simply an exercise in making gendered and racialized divisions of labour easier to manage for those who are already over-burdened. It’s much broader and more transformative than that. It’s about recognizing and valuing the care work that each and every one of us – and this thing we call the economy – is fully dependent upon for survival. Putting care at the start of the list of questions we ask about what and how to plan, rather than as an afterthought or no thought at all, is necessary for achieving equity across gender, race, class, age, and disability. It’s also crucial for the long-term sustainability and resiliency of cities as we attempt to meet the many challenges of the ongoing health, financial, and climate crises that will dominate our future.

Endnotes
Disability justice in the city

By Thea Kurdi and Anika Abdullah

Summary
Over 6.2 million Canadians self-report having a disability, a statistic not fully representative of the population requiring accessibility measures in daily life. Impacts of an inaccessible built environment are analyzed within a planning context, primarily addressing the 15-Minute and Walkable City frameworks. While sustainable urban planning efforts are needed, legislation regarding accessibility integration is essential. We pose a series of questions and design considerations to demonstrate the severity and how planners must think to overcome them.

Modern planners are pronouncing the benefits of active transportation, pedestrian-friendly communities, and energy efficiency under the spectre of climate change fears in medium and high-density cities. This wave of planning is resulting in wide sidewalks, bike lanes, minimum parking reduction removals, mobility pricing, building energy regulations, and multi-user paths intended to reduce vehicle traffic in urban areas. Planners must be wary that these grand ideas that purport to move us towards greater sustainability fail to acknowledge or include accessibility.

Historically, people with disabilities have been dismissed and under-represented in issues regarding the built environment and planning policies. This is primarily due to systemic ableism since disabled people are being left out of all conversations regarding city planning. A lot of this discrimination is caused by inaccessible venues for town halls, unreliable public transit systems, and lack of accommodations in education for people with disabilities to become industry professionals.

While people with disabilities often cannot join the conversation as stakeholders, educators, or as industry professionals, it is essential for the community’s voices to be heard and amplified in order to overcome the challenges of systemic ableism and ensure it is not being perpetuated in the built environment. This article will focus on a selection of the many areas in design that must be reimaged for better accessibility integration and consideration in urban planning.

Who are people with disabilities? How many of ‘them’ are there?
According to Statistics Canada’s 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, approximately 22% of Canadians aged 15 and above self-reported as having at least one long-term disability, representing at least 6.2 million people across the country. The problem with this data is the reliance on self-reporting, which will miss Canadians who need accessibility accommodations but do not identify with having a disability or will not admit on a census form that they do. This might include people living with diabetes, arthritis, dementia, or chronic pain from common injuries, as well as, people losing their sight and hearing with age or beginning to use a cane or walker.

When designing public space, it is also often helpful to consider who benefits from accessibility measures other than those with disabilities. None of our census data captures those with temporary or situational disabilities or those who also may find accommodations beneficial. From a universal design perspective, for example, many parents using strollers benefit from curb cuts, clear floor space at rest areas, elevators and accessible eating areas. Consider that children and people of short stature greatly benefit from lower height handrails and drinking water fountains. These are all impacts of the ‘curb cut effect’ where studies revealed curb cuts were beneficial to more than just the disability community.
A walkable community must provide accessible paths and space for people with disabilities to ensure that all members of the community can appreciate the benefits of a higher quality of life. At the same time, integrating necessary accessibility measures to improve safety is essential to encouraging holistic sustainability in cities.

Accessibility regulations
Despite the goal of the 2006 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to make Ontario accessible by 2025, today, in 2020, we still see significant accessibility barriers in all aspects of the built environment as demonstrated in numerous AODA Alliance YouTube videos.² There are many lessons, successes, and mistakes to be learned from the approach that Ontario took that will benefit provinces that have also adopted provincial legislation, like the Accessibility for Manitobans Act of 2013 and the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act of 2017. With the addition of the new federal Accessible Canada Act of 2019 with its 2040 deadlines, it would seem critical for success that these initiatives involve developing action plans and frameworks with measurable goals and five- to 10-year interim deadlines, instead of repeating Ontario’s mistake of hoping for the best.

In order to move towards a more equitable built environment, urban planning must rethink accessibility as a critical part of the built environment. Neglecting accessibility when building housing, roadways, transportation, parks, public squares, parking lots, and all other features of cities and towns contravenes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our Human Rights Codes. Integrating accessibility is critical to the principles of design. Furthermore, ensuring accessibility as a principle from the inception of all projects and developments in consultation with people with disabilities is the necessary first step of achieving disability justice. Establishing accessibility in transit networks, roadways, and pedestrian infrastructure creates environments where people with disabilities may benefit from being as independent as non-disabled neighbours, seamlessly able to get from housing to employment, healthcare, shopping, and entertainment.

Walkable Cities and 15-Minute Cities through a disability lens
Walkable Cities and 15-minute Cities have been a model for more sustainable cities, and are now getting a great deal of attention and generating a lot of excitement since lockdowns to protect against the spread of COVID-19 began across the globe. The 15-minute city was originated by Carlos Moreno who advocates for increasing the quality of life by providing a diverse range of active mobility options in a city. In 2020, the mayor of Paris embraced this concept and advocated for its integration in city planning measures during the pandemic to encourage a healthy outdoor lifestyle. The Walkable City is an older concept with many aspects of the 15-Minute City but it focuses on the location of amenities, housing, employment, and recreation within communities.

Both ideas focus on decentralized services within walking distance from residential areas and redeveloping infrastructure to support active and multi-modal transportation to reduce vehicle reliance. Multimodal transportation systems are interconnected networks of pedestrian, bike, bus, streetcar, subway, and other transport infrastructure that make leaving the car at home possible and preferable. In addition to access to essential services and employment, benefits also include exercise and opportunities for greater social interaction. This approach to city planning reduces traffic congestion and provides the impetus to evolve and fix old pedestrian infrastructure.

What these two frameworks are missing is a consideration of the needs of the disability community. They do not consider that many people with disabilities rely on vehicles because of limited mobility or require a companion for navigation and safety. Furthermore, people with disabilities cannot access housing, employment, or shops if the buildings and the routes leading up to the buildings themselves are not accessible. A walkable community must provide accessible paths and space for people with disabilities to ensure that all members of the community can appreciate the benefits of a higher quality of life. At the same time, integrating necessary accessibility measures to improve safety is essential to encouraging holistic sustainability in cities.

How do we move forward towards greater accessibility?
As planners develop walkable and 15-minute cities, the following questions must be considered in order to build in greater accessibility measures within the design of paths of travel and the interaction of these pathways with public spaces and buildings. For example, are pedestrian paths wide and protected from traffic? Are they safely connected by accessible ramps and curb cuts? To provide equitable access we must also consider: are the paths navigable for blind people or people living with dementia? Do bike lanes take into consideration intersection points with pedestrians such as bus stops and street corners? Have hazards like crosswalks, transit stops, and construction obstructions been made easy to navigate through the use of tactile walking surface indicators and tactile signage? How are grocery stores and shopping or community centres and spaces identified by accessible signage and maps?

Is a disability perspective being used? Who is traditional walkable design accommodating?
and not accommodating? Stamina and endurance vary wildly between gender, age, and health, let alone physical ability or disabilities. For example, if we determine the appropriate walkable distance carrying groceries is 1.5 kilometres, are we accounting for the abilities of older persons who may need rest areas en route? Are we considering whether or not that same route is navigable during snowy or icy conditions? What do our communities look like when we overlook these factors? When we talk about diversity and inclusion in the design of our communities, is accessibility inclusion part of those decisions?

Addressing common accessibility integration issues

In Ontario, Section 37 of the Planning Act 1990 authorizes municipalities to pass bylaws supporting densification in return for facilities or services beneficial to the municipality and their residents. Section 37 amendments are accepted if the project meets municipal Official Plan (OP) objectives, but OPs do not necessarily include specific accessibility provisions to ensure developers are creating inclusive and accessible spaces. Section 37 also creates a gap in legislation where privately developed sites for public use do not have to meet municipal accessibility standards. In 2020, Section 37 was amended to include Community Benefit Charges (CBC) which changed the applicability of the regulation to certain developments. However, many of the issues apparent with Section 37 still exist with CBCs. This amendment does require single- and lower-tier municipalities to re-examine their practices and bylaws, providing an opportunity to fill the gaps of accessibility considerations. In the provinces and territories that do not have an AODA equivalent, how is accessibility being incorporated?

Accessible design specialists and municipal accessibility design guidelines or standards are bringing attention to the issues caused by unaddressed but foreseeable design barriers resulting from the application of incomprehensive planning acts. An amenity zone is part of the public’s right of way and is adjacent to the sidewalk. This area is usually a part of a site’s frontage, and, in high-density areas with mixed-use developments, amenity zones tend to feature public art, rest areas, and landscaping. Today, most rest areas and amenity zones are rarely made to be accessible, because the aesthetics of the design are valued more highly than equal access for people with disabilities. Additionally, these amenity zones are not navigable and can obstruct the clear path of travel and resting places due to defensive architecture. Defensive architecture is often included by developers to minimize what they perceive as costs to manage public spaces for which they are responsible.

Inadequate accessibility accommodations are also apparent with the absence of relief areas for service animals and appropriate lighting in urban areas. As an accommodation issue, animal relief areas are not included in federal, provincial, or local building legislation and design requirements, so they are often placed in isolated areas with limited signage and inaccessible navigation. Likewise, the parameters for sufficient lighting are undefined, with some municipal standards stating 10 lux while accessible design standards require a minimum of 50 lux. This requires planners to assess the level of lighting being provided; if it is too low for people with disabilities, then they are unprotected when using that area.

These are only a sampling of the many issues faced by the disabled community across Canada. City planners, urban designers, architects, landscape architects, etc. are not taught to see these issues and therefore, rarely have awareness, resources, or strategies to solve them. The solutions to complex design can be better addressed with existing resources from the disability justice community, many of which have been around for decades. The experts on accessibility and the built environment are disabled people with lived experience. This is why the Accessibility Canada Act has focused on the principle of “Nothing About Us Without Us.”

Conclusion

When cities integrate features of the Walkable and 15-Minute-City without addressing disability issues from the outset they are further entrenching systemic ableism in the built environment and dismissing the needs of far more than the 22% of self-reporting Canadians. When we spend time considering what we normally find in policy and standard practice and how many people it fails to assist or how it does not align with the Canadian Charter of Rights or Human Rights Code, it is troubling. The good news is there is growing interest in supporting new strategies and policies that are capable of addressing a rapidly aging population, accessibility, social and racial equity and inclusion, and life-altering events like COVID-19 – all working towards building acceptance of equity and justice on the basis of, “Who are we designing for?”

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Endnotes

We’ve painted a rainbow crosswalk. Now what?

By Tiffany Muller Myrdahl

Summary
Rainbow crosswalks have sprouted up in Canadian municipalities of all sizes. Known as a symbol of support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S) communities, rainbow crosswalks are also understood to signal inclusion of social diversity more broadly. Rainbow crosswalks provide a rare acknowledgment that sexuality is a critical organizing feature of cities; as such, they play a crucial role in providing visibility to sexuality and LGBTQ2S communities. However, these and other symbolic performances like the raising of the Pride flag are insufficient by themselves. They must be accompanied by other equity-development strategies.

Sommaire
Les passages pour piétons arc-en-ciel ont fleuri dans les municipalités canadiennes de toutes tailles. Reconnus comme un symbole de soutien aux communautés lesbiennes, gaies, bisexuelles, transgenres, queer et bispirtuelles (LGBTQ2S), les passages pour piétons arc-en-ciel sont également considérés comme un signe d’inclusion de la diversité sociale de façon plus générale. Les passages pour piétons arc-en-ciel constituent une rare reconnaissance du fait que la sexualité est une caractéristique essentielle de l’organisation des villes ; à ce titre, ils jouent un rôle crucial dans la visibilité de la sexualité et des communautés LGBTQ2S. Cependant, ces initiatives, tout comme des performances symboliques, comme le lever du drapeau de la Fierté, sont insuffisantes en elles-mêmes. Elles doivent être accompagnées d’autres stratégies de développement de l’équité.

While the rainbow crosswalk is not a ubiquitous feature of the urban landscape, it is increasingly common in Canadian towns and cities of all sizes. Often located in the downtown core, sometimes sited at symbolic intersections, the rainbow crosswalk is a pedestrian crossing painted in the colours of the rainbow to show support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S) communities. The pattern applied by municipalities varies, but the standard rainbow crosswalk is an “eight colour rainbow scheme [that] reflects the original Pride flag colours from 1978, symbolizing diversity and inclusivity.”

Why this particular gesture? Much like the rainbow pattern, the interpretations reported in council reports and the media vary. Support for LGBTQ2S Pride celebrations is a widely agreed-upon reason for installing a rainbow crosswalk. It is also understood to be a symbolic gesture of an inclusive community or an illustration of a wider embrace of social diversity. Surrey, BC Mayor Linda Hepner illustrated this sentiment: “When you look at 102 languages spoken here in our city, that rainbow sidewalk has gone way beyond just being an original LGBTQ sidewalk and it represents now a message of inclusiveness... in a city that as diverse as ours, that is a critical message.”

One unique feature of the rainbow crosswalk is the rare visibility it brings to the relationship between sexuality and the city. The role that sexuality plays in urban form and function is typically absent from discussions of planning and
urban governance. Yet, just as dominant frameworks of gender, race, and settler-colonialism contribute to the shape of cities and their service provision, so too, do dominant norms of sexuality. Everything from land use regulation to place-naming practices is steeped in heteronormativity, or the expectation and structural reinforcement of (monogamous, reproductive) heterosexuality as the singular option for human sexuality. Settler imperialist notions of kinship are legally codified and imprinted into urban morphology through such mechanisms as “marriage, the transmission of property, home ownership, [and] zoning.”

The re-naming of streets in Vancouver provides a specific example: Dupont was changed to East Pender in 1907, and Union was changed to Adanac in 1930, as part of “renewal” strategies seeking to distance these areas from their earlier association with sex work. Urban “revitalization” strategies offer another: municipal tools like “obscenity laws, prostitution regulations, and alcoholic beverage codes” have long been used to hasten the displacement of “seedy adult businesses, sex workers, and leathermen,” and cultivate a landscape deemed safe for private investment.

By contrast, many city staff and elected officials prefer to think that cities have little to do with sexuality. Municipalities often imagine themselves to serve “universal” users rather than a diverse set of communities whose bodies and experiences of the urban influence their everyday lives.

Moreover, sexuality, particularly of the non-heterosexual variety, is often deemed to be political, whereas many urban planning practices are framed as “beyond politics.” These perceptions are flawed. Queer sexuality is no more or less political than other forms of sexuality, which is to say that all bodies are intimately linked to political decisions and other expressions of power. Second, few planning practices can be described as apolitical. Beyond the fact that they stem from political decisions, planning practices play a critical role in shaping our everyday landscapes, and with it, our notions of what is acceptable and what is possible.

This is why queer placemaking matters: it makes visible what is possible. For some, this is a claim to space. In Maskwacis, a community of Cree First Nations near Red Deer, AB, human rights activist Chevi Rabbit argued, “The symbolism of having this crosswalk front and centre is signalling to the community that Two-Spirit culture has arrived and we’re back and we’re here and we’re going to make ourselves heard.”

It also signals increased acceptance of social difference more broadly; this may translate into “a reduction of homophobia and transphobia, both of which can be used against people who aren’t LGBT.”

However, a willingness to provide limited forms of LGBTQ2S visibility does not ensure motivation to think beyond rainbow sidewalks. One aspect of my research in Lethbridge, AB highlighted that there were strict limits to the willingness of Council and staff to see sexual diversity as part of the City’s business of inclusion. This incident centred on City leadership and administration’s response to homophobic harassment made in the form of complaints about a local theatre company. It was a unique opportunity for the City to put their inclusion framework to work, but what transpired was quite the opposite. Complaints against the theatre company became the basis for actions taken by the City to temporarily close the theatre; yet, most elected officials refused to recognize how homophobia played a role both in complaints or in the City’s handling of the situation. The case serves as a reminder that while rainbow crosswalks or an annual rainbow flag raising at City Hall may provide a critical element of visibility, especially in smaller urban centres, practices of inclusion must extend beyond the streetscape and the formal Pride performances.

The rainbow crosswalk must be seen as a starting point: it is not the achievement that meets and concludes a municipality’s attention to equity for its LGBTQ2S residents. Resident advisory committees are another strategy, and these can play a critical role in gathering information and helping to shape policy. In Vancouver, the Board of Parks and Recreation struck a working group in 2013 to “identify barriers to equal access to park and recreation services.” The work conducted, including hearing the voices of youth who did not feel welcome at community centre-run camps, inspired changes in City-sponsored
programming, community centre signage, and staff training. These lessons paved the way for many additional, ongoing efforts that reach across City Hall, among them the creation and implementation of trans, gender diverse, and Two-Spirit-inclusive data collection practices. Indeed, specific community needs remain invisible without disaggregated data.

In St. Catharines, ON, advisory committees have also played a central role in demonstrating that neither queer lives nor inclusion are single-issue phenomena. Minutes from the city’s Anti-Racism and LGBTQ2s+ Advisory Committees show cross-consultation on a number of matters, from Racist and Hate Incident Response Protocols to pandemic recovery. As well, these committees paved the way for Council approval of a new rainbow crosswalk design: “a chevron with black and brown stripes to represent queer and transgender Black, Indigenous and people of colour, pink and blue stripes to represent the transgender community, and... Purple in the chevron intersects with white to represent the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe territory and the Tow Row Wampum agreement.”

Attention should similarly be paid to the intersection of LGBTQ2S visibility and accessibility needs so that municipally-supported forms of queer inclusion do not produce unintended consequences. A rainbow crosswalk may decrease safe mobility for pedestrians and drivers, may be difficult to interpret for those with visual or cognitive impairments, and may not align with age-friendly community efforts. While the in-development Transportation Association of Canada study on non-standard pavement markings for crosswalks may offer insights on accessible rainbow crosswalks, it is worth considering whether there are other kinds of symbolic markings that would serve a similar purpose without risking inaccessibility.

During the crosswalk debate in Jasper, AB, Mayor Richard Ireland stated, “The question is whether public space is the appropriate place to make social statements.” When it comes to municipalities supporting equity and inclusion, use of public space is critically important. The stories we tell through symbolic use of public space, to draw from urban scholar Leonie Sandercock, become “constitutive of urban reality, affecting the choices we make and the ways we then might act.” Visible recognition of queer lives, across all of our diversity, is one important step toward building more inclusive cities.

At the same time, rainbow crosswalks are not enough. The visibility created in public spaces must be accompanied by significant commitments that stretch across the silos of municipal government, and that are supported by elected and staff leadership. Internally-diverse advisory committees, LGBTQ2S community-led engagement, and the collection of LGBTQ2S-sensitive disaggregated data are all strategies that can build upon the path created by the rainbow crosswalks.

### Endnotes

Challenging from within
To bring equity forward,
we must challenge our profession from within

By Jason Syvixay and Lyla Peter

Summary
Planning operates on a diverse spectrum, from public policy-making and development application review to compliance and enforcement. Yet within this structure there are often power dynamics at play that can suppress planners from marginalized and equity-seeking backgrounds into positions often perceived by others as subordinate. In this piece, we explore and confront the perceptions and realities of the profession – calling for all areas of planning practice to be celebrated, and for fewer silos. Tangible actions to address these concerns are presented, with the intent of recognizing contributions of all planners, and opening up opportunities across the planning field.

Sommaire
L’urbanisme fonctionne sur un spectre diversifié, allant de l’élaboration de politiques publiques et de l’examen des demandes de développement à la conformité et à l’application. Pourtant, au sein de cette structure, il y a souvent des dynamiques de pouvoir en jeu qui peuvent reléguer les urbanistes issus de milieux marginalisés et en quête d’équité à des postes souvent perçus par d’autres comme subalternes. Dans cet article, nous explorons et confrontons les perceptions et les réalités de la profession – en demandant que tous les domaines de la pratique de l’urbanisme soient célébrés et qu’il y ait moins de silos. Des actions concrètes pour répondre à ces préoccupations sont présentées, dans le but de reconnaître les contributions de tous les urbanistes et d’ouvrir des opportunités dans le domaine de l’urbanisme.

In a profession that claims protection of the public interest as a central value and moral compass, it is slightly incongruous how quickly many planners will dismiss the skill-sets, expertise, lived experiences, and contributions of planners not engaged in the so-called visionary planning spectrum of city-building. The continuum of planning work is varied, which means we should celebrate the many areas to which individuals may be drawn. As we advance forward into more uncertain times as planners, we believe it is important to be critical about the systems that suppress many into the positions they currently occupy. As Fergusson aptly questions, “What kinds of jobs are available to the professionals, and do professionals from various backgrounds have equal opportunities to do any of these jobs?”

One part of the planning spectrum is the development review and approvals process. Within Alberta, a significant level of decision-making (or power) is delegated to planners to assess development permit applications against regulatory requirements. However, in some circles, this planning role and responsibility is regarded as run-of-the-mill, mundane, and routine local government work. It is not uncommon for valid concerns about development timelines and costs to be met with continual efforts to streamline the approval process and attempts to remove areas of discretion. Streamlining efforts often do not consider the nuances of sites, the impact that different plans and regulations have on a development, or general good planning principles that shape...
decision-making. As such, the complexity of development review can be lost on those who are not involved in the process. One planner shared with us how their opinions are often not heard by policy planners, exacerbating a disconnect between policy and implementation. Another planner working in this area noted how they feel their work is disregarded and perceived as inconsequential. For example:

“In one case several years ago, I had to sit a policy planner down and explain why statutory plans do not normally apply to permitted use applications,” said one planner. “I became highly valued by these groups, but they’ll still pass me up for jobs when lateral positions open.”

Policy-level positions often require master’s degrees, whereas, positions in development review generally accept bachelor’s degrees. Costs of attending university and recruitment strategies that do not reach students from underrepresented groups present barriers for racialized people in attaining policy-level positions.3 Owens points to these criteria as “seemingly benign institutional rules that help to lock out students of colour.”3

In our own past experiences, we have even heard this area of planning practice compared to “factory work” or “dirt planning,” apparently devoid of the need to think critically about context, policy, or implication. These tropes illuminate a stratification in our planning practice – suggesting that policy work is more valuable than the rest, and that “on the ground reviewers” have little to contribute by way of input. On the contrary, in these instances, the planners (or development officers) thoroughly assess developments through the lens of zoning regulations and other policies, and ultimately approve or reject them; a power dynamic that can lead to positive or negative city building impacts. In short, their work matters.

Underrepresented

Why might we think negatively about development review work? Who is leading the efforts of your city’s policy-making and form-shaping? Who might be missing? What perspectives are most salient? What voices are absent? For Williams, planning “has been more like a picket fence, white-washed and reminiscent of the redlining that created gated communities while destroying too many communities of colour.”4 In many planning offices, there is often a lack of representation by women and by people of colour. One planner pointed out to us that development approval teams are generally overrepresented with racialized planners, compared to policy planning teams which are perceived to be predominantly composed of White planners.

“The higher the rank, the less likely you’ll see people of colour,” one planner said. “And you also see that dichotomy between policy planners and those working in development review.”

A study with more than 300 responses illuminated how planners of colour are often passed up for promotions: “The trajectory for planners of colour is different because they have different visibility. To be promoted, you need the sexy projects… Only White planners get the sexy projects.”5 Minority planners also report “feeling that they were subject to lower expectations and given less visible or less important work than their White peers.”6

In the United States, Blacks and Latinos are heavily underrepresented in the planning field, and few minorities hold senior-level positions in their organizations.7 Additionally, planners of colour are often relegated to “frontline positions in minority neighborhoods while other planners are in positions of influence over development and public policy.”8

A recent survey of the planning profession (1,850 respondents out of 7,658 members of the Canadian Institute of Planners) showed that only 8% of planners identified as people of colour [National Compensation and Benefits Survey, 2019]. Across the nation, the likelihood of Indigenous representation within traditional planning offices is even more severely reduced. In Canada, persons of colour account for 22.3% of the total population and Indigenous Peoples account for 4.9%. This survey demonstrates how racialized planners are underrepresented in planning, and as Ferguson argues, “It is both unfair and hubristic to expect planners who do not know the lived experience of vast proportions of the Canadian population to be adequately equipped to make significant decisions for them.”9

“Viswanathan and Lapointe in a special initiative by the Canadian Institute of Planners note how planners must reflect on their entitlement in order to truly advance a more inclusive profession.10 Simply acknowledging one’s power, however, does not always result in active steps to carve out opportunities for others. For example, if male leadership were to take GBA+ (Gender Based Analysis) or sensitivity training, it might inform and influence their perspectives, but it might not change the fact that women are still absent in positions of power within their office, especially racialized and otherwise marginalized women. Structural change to allow for more representation is difficult when those with power, predominantly male and White planners, benefit from the status quo.11 To accomplish the former would require an explicit change of hiring, retention, management and evaluation practices.

Indeed, proactive and purposeful action must be taken to ensure that different voices are heard, included, and supported across the spectrum of roles and within the power structure itself. But simply creating space for others to participate does not tip the balance in favour of those who are underrepresented in decision-making roles.

Organizations across the world are embracing diversity and inclusion training and, in some cases, actively seeking out the hiring of Black, Indigenous, and racialized individuals. However, when you look at the organizational structures, these individuals often remain in positions not of creating change, but of enacting the decisions of the change-makers. So, while an organization may support diversity, equity, and inclusion, are they actually meeting these well-intended aspirations? And how does an organization move away from systemic oppression and look to hire those who disrupt, innovate, dissent, or have different lenses on how to achieve organizational goals?

Social identity is tied to those who we perceive to be similar or dissimilar to us. Chaudhary’s research explores how people...
are taught to socialize and care more about those who are similar to them. Indeed, community make-up is often divided between those who are marginalized (often persons of colour) and those who are not. As city planning and investment proposals are examined, another stratification of power and privilege emerges. Perry explores the system of power and policy that has created and exacerbated the divides: “All researchers need to learn how to centre a community or group other than White people.”

However, if positions of power and decision-making remain White-centred, will we not continue to reinforce segregation both in how our communities are designed and built and who is doing the work to design and build them that way?

Our unconscious bias carries these power constructs onward, and we often view those who are not similar to us, or not part of these structures, as a threat. If we look at urban planning, it is easy to see that those who develop policy and regulations have a position in which they can either inadvertently, or deliberately, impose their views and desired outcomes onto communities. If communities speak up and identify that these plans do not work for their own neighbourhoods, are we in a position to objectively identify if we are meeting their needs if we ourselves are not able to understand or relate to the community?

As Harris notes, “the ‘pain’ of those diverse communities is often ‘left at the door’ and never allowed to cross the threshold into the planning process.” Harris further contends that “the planning field would be better positioned to advance issues of equity and social justice if it were more racially diverse.” How can we expect those from vulnerable communities to feel safe, believed, and listened-to during engagement sessions, if the planners at the opposite side of the table cannot relate to them, share in their experiences, or understand their cultural, social, and economic circumstances?

More than technicians

As planning theorist Paul Davidoff has argued, a “planner isn’t solely a value-neutral technician; instead, values are part of every planning process.” Growing research, however, illustrates a significant technocratic dissonance. Many planners see themselves as being neutral, technical experts, and view the adoption of values as a political process, best left for politicians. Yet, “planners can expect to need more than technical, instrumental knowledge in order to be effective. The planner with the calculator but who cannot cooperate with anyone will not last long.”

Planners working on policy may view themselves as greater advocates for inclusion, seeing the work of development approvals as one-dimensional – overtly technical and rational. Perhaps these disconnects and impressions result from the siloed nature of planning work, processes, department structures, and even the physical layouts of departments.

If we want to become more inclusive and just in our profession, we must lead by example, and integrate a lens of compassion while truly modeling a culture of respect for the work and contributions of all planners, including those working in development review and approvals. If we care for and nurture these principles, it may contour and adjust our pedagogical approaches and strategies so that we can more effectively address our own power in order to support the inclusion of others.

The profession needs to celebrate the work of planners who are engaged in all areas of the planning process.

Next steps

First, we believe the profession needs to celebrate the work of planners who are engaged in all areas of the planning process. How might this be achieved? Within bureaucracies, perhaps planners might benefit from exposure from both ends of the planning spectrum – implemented through annual staff and portfolio rotations. The Professional Standards Board (PSB) that reviews and accredits Registered Professional Planner (RPP) designations could also seek to reinforce and endorse the varied levels of experience attained.

“Prominent, always White male planners, lectured me on how I needed to get a proper planning degree and get a policy job, and move away from development work – in order to get my RPP designation,” recalled one planner.

Provincial planning authorities may also look to expand on their promotion of hard/soft planning competencies with examples of how these are met by planners working in the public and private sectors – acknowledging and celebrating the work undertaken by planners with racialized backgrounds, women, and those who are gender non-
If the planning profession wants to truly diversify its membership, the way in which it narrates and represents itself needs to be critically appraised.

Second, the profession needs to move towards an equitable practice, so that policies and plans themselves are inclusive. Allow minority planners to influence policy, ensure they are provided with meaningful and influential projects and assignments, and increase the number of minority planners at all levels of planning. To support the inclusion of marginalized communities and people, political support and leadership, champions for gender equity, financial and human resources, education, monitoring, and accountability should be made priorities. The Canadian Institute of Planners could play a role in identifying gaps in this regard, researching barriers and best practices, establishing public and private sector benchmarks for diversity, equity, and inclusion, and advocating for change. In the United States, according to information provided by a sample of employers, only 20% of minority planners in public sector agencies hold senior-level positions (APA, 2001). For planning offices to embrace a more inclusive workforce, it is important to acknowledge the implicit biases and structural/systemic inequities embedded in hiring processes, promotion of managers, and doling out responsibilities and portfolios. Cities might explore these biases with those underrepresented, working together to put forward meaningful changes.

Third, the profession needs to nurture a shift towards planners viewing themselves as necessary agents of change. If planners see themselves as more than just technical experts, they may begin to undertake their work through a more intersectional lens, including perspectives on gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, nation, and disability. Viewing their work through this web of values may also help in their self-recognition of entitlement, and privilege. Academia must play an important role, instilling and grounding these values into the practice of young and emerging planners. In addition, our professional organizations have a strong role to play, shifting the mindset of existing practitioners, championing the value of embracing new concepts, ideas, and voices.

If we fail to challenge the system, we perpetuate the norm, which means that we wait for change to catch up rather than embracing and meeting it. On a city building level, do we allow neighbourhoods to decay rather than proactively changing policy and regulation to meet the needs of residents today, and spur investment? As planners, we aspire to create communities that are inclusive. To do this, that lens of inclusivity needs to start at the centre of our planning practice.

### Jason Syvixay

RPP, MCIP, MCP, is an urban planner completing his PhD in urban and regional planning at the University of Alberta. He has worked as the managing director of the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ, a planner with HTFC Planning & Design, and more recently, has joined the City of Edmonton to lead and support the implementation of its Infill Roadmap.

### Lyla Peter

RPP, MCIP, MBA, is the Director of Development and Zoning Services at the City of Edmonton. She is fascinated by how people, geographies, politics and culture shape our communities, which has led her to work in small and big cities across three countries (Canada, United States, UK).

### Endnotes


### References


We are carrying our bundles forward

By Kamala Todd

What I never had but know
in blood and bone certainty
Carried in tufts (across no bering straight)
Embedded into spines groves clearings of
Mountain relatives

We could sit quietly in waitful prayer, not hungry
Our gratitude a silence
Guides, language, teachings stirred around with mossy crumbled stone As the medicines spoke
And larger mammals politely crept and took their worn down trails behind us

Worn down trail veins we knew
Mutual space we gave
Songs leaning down branches and
Birch leaf bark flutter

Dried needles our companion scent reminder
And no notch holes for spring boards no rusty metal
Hulking their greed
Just this unbreakable embracing whole
We knew you can’t separate can’t hurt one without
All of us feeling it

We knew rocks were grandfathers and the most warmkind of guides
We knew each bud blade wing flowed our language
And from the lesson the laws
the bright memory story to lead the way

It’s enough to make you bundle up soft leaves and bits of fur Precious oils and berry kernels a dried gift
Carrying from all the way back and all the way forward
Love stirred hands up with ancestral knowing and humble gut-deep gratitude

All of our laws know tell live this
It is written in the earth
Pressed lines on skin
From sitting in reciprocal relationship on turtle’s back.

Kamala Todd is a Métis-Cree mother, community planner, filmmaker, and educator with a Master’s degree in Urban Geography from UBC. Kamala was the City of Vancouver’s first Indigenous Arts and Culture Planner and was also the City’s Aboriginal Social Planner for several years. She is currently an adjunct professor at UBC SCARP and SFU Urban Studies.
We are in a time where significant change is being called for. Anti-racism work through our national, provincial, and territorial organizations is critical. This includes looking at the structures of our profession so we can be inclusive, actively anti-racist, and supportive of our Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) colleagues. I also believe it is critically important that this work is founded on and includes the voices and lived experience of BIPOC planners in their professional lives.

Like many people, I have spent much of this year learning, reflecting, and reading. I’ve reflected on recent comments and instances of racism that I have observed. Statements referring to new residents to a community as living in “an immigrant camp;” statements referring to a developer as “not respecting the laws of the Dominion of Canada” (the developer is a new Canadian from China); statements on multiple occasions referring to “those people” building new houses. Are other planners hearing statements like this? What do our BIPOC planning colleagues experience?

The understanding of the experience of BIPOC planners is an area that our profession needs focused conversation and work. Recently Dr. Anita Jack-Davies, a Black Scholar and Assistant Dean of Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, and Indigeneity at Queen’s University wrote of her experience as a student and an employee of Queen’s in the Alumni Magazine. The article, entitled “After the Fires Burn,” calls for immediate action:

We must now unearth other narratives that have remained hidden from view, buried and unarticulated. If we aren’t brave enough to do this now, there may never be a time when such stories will carry meaning.

And further states:

I am asking whether you are able to listen, to hear what I say, rather than to speak. I am asking whether you might begin to understand my point of view, rather than defensively proving your innocence.

Reflecting on the statements I’ve heard and the voice of Dr. Jack-Davies, it is not my observations of racism that need to be at the forefront of our anti-racism work. It is the experience of BIPOC planners in their planning education, in their development to become a Registered Professional Planner (RPP), and in their working lives both in the organizations and communities in which they practice. The voices of BIPOC planners must be a key focus of the work on race and equity of our profession, our national organization, and our provincial and territorial associations. We must see, hear, and actively listen to the work and voices of those leading on the work of anti-racism in planning. Share and learn from work such as the Black Planning Project, OPPI’s Anti-Black Racism in Planning Task Force, and CIP’s work on equity and inclusivity. We need to support our colleagues and take action on their calls for change. Let us listen, let us hear, let us see. Let us act.

Mary Lou Tanner RPP, FCIP, is principal planner and a partner with the NPG Solutions, based in Niagara, Ontario. She was formerly deputy city manager at the City of Burlington, and served as chief planner in several Ontario municipalities. Mary Lou is a past president of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute and was elected to the College of Fellows in 2019.

The Fellows’ Corner is an initiative of the College of Fellows. Induction into the College is the highest honour CIP can give to a planner, recognizing outstanding professional experience and contributions. Find out more at cip-icu.ca/About/College-of-Fellows
N'ous sommes à une époque où des changements importants sont nécessaires. Le travail de lutte contre le racisme par le biais de nos organisations nationales, provinciales et territoriales est essentiel. Il s’agit notamment d’examiner les structures de notre profession afin que nous puissions être inclusifs, activement antiracistes et soutenir nos collègues noirs, autochtones et de couleur. Je pense également qu’il est essentiel que ce travail soit fondé sur les voix et l’expérience vécue des planificateurs du BIPOC dans leur vie professionnelle.

Comme beaucoup de gens, j’ai passé une grande partie de cette année à apprendre, à réfléchir et à lire. J’ai réfléchi à de récents commentaires et exemples de racisme que j’ai observés. Des déclarations faisant référence aux nouveaux résidents d’une communauté comme vivant dans « un camp d’immigrants » ; des déclarations faisant référence à un promoteur comme « ne respectant pas les lois du Dominion du Canada » (le promoteur est un nouveau Canadien originaire de Chine) ; des déclarations faisant référence à plusieurs reprises à « ces personnes-là » qui construisent de nouvelles maisons. D’autres urbanistes entendent-ils des déclarations de ce genre ? Que vivent nos collègues urbanistes du BIPOC ?

La compréhension de l’expérience des urbanistes du BIPOC est un domaine dans lequel notre profession a besoin d’une conversation et d’un travail ciblés. Récemment, la Dre Anita Jack-Davies, chercheuse noire et doyenne adjointe du département de l’équité, de la diversité, de l’inclusion et de l’autochtonité de l’université Queen’s, a fait part de son expérience en tant qu’étudiante et employée de l’université dans le magazine Alumni. L’article, intitulé After the Fires Burn, appelle à une action immédiate :

Nous devons maintenant mettre en lumière d’autres récits qui sont restés cachés, enterrés et non articulés. Si nous ne sommes pas assez courageux pour le faire maintenant, il n’y aura peut-être jamais de moment où de telles histoires auront un sens.

Et elle déclare aussi :

Je vous demande si vous êtes capable d’écouter, d’entendre ce que je dis, plutôt que de parler. Je vous demande si vous pouvez commencer à comprendre mon point de vue, plutôt que de prouver votre innocence de manière défensive.

Si je me réfère aux déclarations que j’ai entendues et à la voix de la Dre Jack-Davies, ce ne sont pas mes observations sur le racisme qui doivent être au premier plan de notre travail de lutte contre le racisme. C’est l’expérience des urbanistes du BIPOC dans leur formation en urbanisme, dans leur développement pour devenir urbaniste professionnel agréé et dans leur vie professionnelle, tant dans les organisations que dans les communautés où ils exercent. La voix des urbanistes du BIPOC doit être un élément clé du travail sur l’origine ethnique et l’équité dans notre profession, notre organisation nationale et nos associations provinciales et territoriales. Nous devons voir, entendre et écouter activement le travail et les voix de ceux qui dirigent le travail de lutte contre le racisme dans le domaine de l’urbanisme. Partagez et apprenez des travaux tels que le Black Planning Project, le groupe de travail de l’OPPI sur la lutte contre le racisme noir dans l’urbanisme et le travail de l’ICU sur l’équité et l’inclusion. Nous devons soutenir nos collègues et donner suite à leurs appels au changement. Écoutons, écoutons, voyons. Agissons.
Displacing Blackness: Planning, Power and Race in Twentieth-Century Halifax
Displacing Blackness critiques the urban planning practice of causing harm despite intents to improve people’s lives. Rutland focuses on practices in twentieth-century Halifax to show broader lessons on how anti-Blackness is a core practice in current planning practice.

Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present
Maynard traces the violent anti-Black history in Canada from slavery to prisons and beyond to demonstrate how the state perpetuates poverty, unemployment, racial profiling, law enforcement violence, incarceration, immigration detention, deportation, and more. Given the role that planning plays in addressing poverty (i.e., housing) and in law enforcement (i.e., CPTED and bylaw enforcement), this is a must-read for planners.

How the Suburbs were Segregated: Developers and the Business of Exclusionary Housing, 1890-1960
Glotzer’s research on the origins of suburban segregation dismantles the myth of post-war suburbanization and white flight from cities to instead reveal long-term efforts by developers to specifically use racism to structure suburban real estate markets. While the research focuses on the Roland Park Company in Baltimore and its British funding and origins, the findings are likely applicable to the Canadian context were someone to do a similar study here.

Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society
320 pages. Edited by Sherene Razack, Between the Lines, 2002.
This anthology examines how spaces are created and the role of law in shaping and supporting spatial hierarchies that in turn create oppression. The authors dive into drinking establishments, parks, slums, classrooms, sex work, main streets, mosques, and borders to show how place becomes race in the eyes of the law.

Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life
Part of our work as planners towards reconciliation is understanding an accurate history of colonial impacts on Indigenous people in Canada. The award-winning Clearing the Plains examines how specific policies cleared the way for settlement and have resulted in present day disparities in health and economic outcomes.
Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility
Taylor demonstrates how segregation, zoning, and opportunism have resulted in poor and minority neighbourhoods that are so polluted that just living them is hazardous to health. The Canadian reader can learn from case studies across the US that show how racially-motivated decisions in zoning laws, eminent domain, government regulation, and urban renewal have resulted in environmental racism.

Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability
Hamraie offers a critical history of Universal Design through examination of design history through disability, race, and feminist lenses. Building Access traces the shift from “design for the average” to “design for all” in the built environment, law, architecture, medicine, technology, and society as a whole, showing through archival research how people with disabilities contributed to and advocated for many design discourses and how those contributions are erased in the historical record.

Stolen City: Racial Capitalism and the Making of Winnipeg
Stolen City exposes the manifestations of settler colonialism in the form of commercial areas (shopping centres), railroads, and housing. As a process, settler colonialism has attempted to mask and naturalize itself to the environment that it has stolen, in order to hide the way it works. In his book, Toews asks: whom does this infrastructure benefit and who is being displaced?

“An outstanding book. Mark Seasons is clearly the leading scholar in the field.”
—DAVID GORDON, professor, School of Urban and Regional Planning, Queen’s University

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Guest Editors’ Recommendations

Authors of articles in this issue of Plan Canada have provided an enormous number of resources and citations that we encourage readers to dive into. In addition, we wanted to share a few academic research and other publications that bring various perspectives to defining and practicing planning equity.

Nous encourageons les lecteurs à se plonger dans les nombreuses ressources et citations fournies par les auteurs des articles de ce numéro de Plan Canada. De plus, nous avons voulu partager des recherches universitaires et d’autres publications qui apportent diverses perspectives à la définition et à la pratique de l’équité en matière de planification.

Whiteness as Property
Harris traces the construction of race as a legal identity and status in property law, from relationships between slavery, race, and property and Indigenous land seizure. Harris defines the characteristics of Whiteness in property rights historically and through the 1990s and discusses ways to unravel the property interest in Whiteness.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/1341787

Racial Equity in Planning Organizations
Solis examines how American planning departments’ inner rules and norms reproduce racial inequality, and follows this analysis with a racial equity in planning organizations framework to align racial equity goals with the internal departmental workings. In this way, Solis identifies potential barriers and solutions to equity-based institutional change in planning organizations. The observations are broad and also applicable to Canadian local governments.
https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2020.1742189

Just City Essays:
26 Visions for Urban Equity, Inclusion and Opportunity (Vol. One)
Edited by Toni L. Griffin, Ariella Cohen, and David Maddox. The J. Max Bond Center on Design for the Just City, 2015.
The 26 essays in “Just City Essays” address issues of equity, inclusion, race, access and ownership in the context of affordability and climate change crises. The pieces cover perspectives from 22 cities across five continents from the perspective of planners, activists, scholars, artists, architects, mayors, doctors, ecologists, and philanthropists. Download at https://www.thenatureofcities.com/the-just-city-essays/

Principles of Mobility Justice / Mobility Justice and COVID-19
The Untokening Collective have published two reflections and recommendations from advocates, practitioners, and community members from marginalized identities across the United States on visions for mobility justice. Find more at: http://www.untokening.org/

Sex and the Revitalized City:
Gender, Condominium Development, and Urban Citizenship
Young, single women emerged in the late 1990s as powerful consumers in the wave of real estate development that was reshaping the landscape of cities. Reports claimed that condominium ownership offered women new-found freedom, financial independence, and personal security. But has home ownership truly empowered women, or were the reports merely celebratory rhetoric that disguised more disquieting trends? To get at the reality behind the rhetoric, Sex and the Revitalized City explores the phenomenon from the perspective of planners, developers, and women condo owners to reveal that women’s relationship with the city is being remade in the image of fast capital and consumer citizenship.

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