

UPDATE: PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS & THE USE OF 'RPP'

> **Dave Crossley**, PIBC Executive Director

As members are aware, fully qualified Certified Members in good standing of PIBC are exclusively entitled to use the protected occupational title of 'Registered Professional Planner' and the accompanying designation 'RPP' in British Columbia to denote their certification with PIBC. This has been the case since 2012, when the Institute joined most other professional planning institutes across Canada in moving towards this consistent professional title and designation.

Certified members of PIBC who are also concurrently full members of the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) can also use the designation 'MCIP' to denote their association and affiliation with CIP, the national association (or 'FCIP' in the case of Certified Members who are also Fellows of CIP). Members of course may also have other applicable titles and designations stemming from their other educational or professional credentials as well.

The matter of how various designations and affiliations (or post-nominals) ought to be used, and in what order, is an ongoing point of conversation among many professions and professionals. Historically PIBC has not had a firm policy or practice in this regard, and the issue has come up in discussions with our colleagues at the other professional planning institutes across Canada.

To provide for some certainty and consistency, this matter was taken up by the PIBC Board of Directors at its May 2019 meeting. Based on the discussions, and with a goal of aiming for consistent approaches across Canada, it was agreed and determined that PIBC would adopt

the practice of listing the 'RPP' designation immediately following qualified members' names, followed by 'MCIP' when also denoting the national affiliation with CIP.

Going forward over time, this will now become the consistent practice across PIBC's publications, materials, correspondence and other instances where member names and designations are used. While not a requirement, members are also encouraged to consider moving to this consistent approach into the future, as you update documents, materials and other information pieces where you use your name and designations.

This is also an opportunity to provide an important reminder to all members that individuals in other membership categories, including Candidate Members, Student Members, Retired Members, and Pre-Candidates, are not permitted to use any professional title or designation (modified or otherwise) to denote their membership and affiliations with PIBC and CIP. Such is reserved for qualified Certified Members in good standing.

Finally, for some interesting background information and further thoughts on the use of 'post-nominals' please check out the 2017 article from Brian Brophrey, Registrar and Director, Member Relations, with the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI), which is reprinted from the Ontario Planning Journal here, for your information.



A PLANNER BY ANY OTHER NAME, IS NOT AN RPP

> **Brian Brophrey**, OPPI Registrar & Director, Member Relations

Are you handling your post-nominals correctly? I don't mean to be rude... I'm talking about the letters and acronyms that come after your name on your business card or signature block.

As you know, in Ontario there are certain conditions on the use of the designation RPP: the governing provincial legislation reserves the title for Full Members of OPPI, and the OPPI by-law further restricts it to practicing Full Members who are fulfilling the requirements of Full Membership (including meeting the annual CPL requirement).

There is no official designation associated with being a Candidate Member of OPPI. If you are a Candidate, you are of course entitled to claim this status on your resume or curriculum vitae, or in a letter or conversation, where you can explain it clearly. However, claiming a non-existent designation such as "RPP (Candidate)" on a business card, etc., could potentially confuse other people. In a worst case scenario, it could lead to a complaint to OPPI's Discipline Committee that you are being intentionally misleading about your status. Therefore, we strongly advise against the use of such manufactured titles.

There is some flexibility as to which post-nominals to use and in what sequence. But the general rule seems to be that you cite academic degrees, followed by professional licenses, followed by professional certifications (such as RPP), followed by professional associations and affiliations (such as MCIP, if applicable). Typically, you only list the most relevant 3-4 post-nominals, otherwise you risk looking like a spilled bowl of alphabet soup.

And of course you should use the acronyms that will be best recognized and most relevant in the circumstances. Perhaps you play a mean oboe on the weekends – but your heritage planning clients probably don't care that you have an MFA in music, and belong to the Canadian Federation of Musicians, Local 149.

Now that we've straightened this out, let's meet for a postprandial drink...

Brian Brophrey is OPPI Registrar & Director, Member Relations. This article was first published in the Ontario Planning Journal (Vol. 23, No. 2, 2017), and is reprinted here with permission from the Ontario Professional Planners Institute.