

2019 PIBC Awards

> Ryan Noakes, Director of Finance & Member Services

This year's awards were formally presented on May 8th in Vancouver by PIBC President, Lesley Cabott RPP, MCIP during the 2019 Conference – the BC Land Summit: Collaborations & Connections, following the Annual General Meeting.

2019 PIBC Awards for Excellence in Planning

Excellence in Planning Practice – City & Urban Areas (GOLD Winner)

Title: Nigel Valley
Neighbourhood Plan

Authors: BC Housing, D'Ambrosio
Architecture + Planning, and
TownSquare Planning Inc.

Partners: Broadmead Care
Society, Garth Homer Foundation,
Greater Vancouver Housing
Society, Island Community Mental
Health, McElhanney Consulting
Services, Murdoch de Greeff Inc.,
Ryzuk Geotechnical, and Watt
Consulting Group

Located in Saanich BC, Nigel Valley is a 9-acre site comprised of twelve individual properties, on which five stakeholder organizations provide housing and services for families, seniors, and vulnerable individuals with developmental and medical challenges. In collaboration with the stakeholders, BC Housing led and commissioned a comprehensive redevelopment study of the Nigel Valley lands.

The Steering Committee was mandated to identify a shared vision and to realize the synergies and efficiencies available through collaboration and partnership. Under this vision, the lands will be redeveloped into a mixed-used neighbourhood of market and non-market uses. Through phased



comprehensive redevelopment, the 185 non-market residences will be replaced and integrated with market housing along with an additional 280 affordable housing units. The Nigel Valley Neighbourhood Plan represents the largest land development initiated by BC Housing. Valued at \$250 million, the project also represents the

largest single investment in affordable housing on Vancouver Island.

The awards jury felt that this inclusive model helped bring a diverse group of stakeholders together. In doing so, the program achieved community-wide benefits, with opportunities to develop other programs to address social needs.

Excellence in Planning Practice – City & Urban Areas (SILVER Winner)

Title: VIVA Vancouver Bike Rack Design Contest

Author: City of Vancouver

Partners: Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, Car Free Vancouver Society, HUB Cycling, Landyachtz, Makemobile, Mobi, Modacity, Project 529, Vancouver Design Foundation, Vancouver Design Nerds, Vancouver Public Space Network, and Velofix

In Spring 2018, the City of Vancouver, through its VIVA Vancouver program, published a call for fun and functional bike rack designs that would hold two bikes upright and reflect Vancouver in a creative and original way. The contest was open to anyone living, working or going to school in Vancouver and provided a low-barrier opportunity for creative expression for people of all ages and abilities.

Over 450 entries were received. An independent jury shortlisted thirty designs to move forward in the contest. All entries were showcased at an exhibition in June, and the public was invited to vote for their favourite shortlisted design. The jury then

selected six designs to advance to the finalist stage. The six finalist designs were fabricated by the City’s Equipment Services team and displayed at a series of events in August where the public was invited to test out the racks, and vote for their favourite design. Four designs were selected as overall winners by the jury. These designs were added to the City’s street furniture catalogue and will be installed at locations around the City where new racks are needed.

The awards jury felt that this project really connected with the public throughout the process, raising the awareness and encouraging use of cycling, with great transferability to other communities.



Excellence in Planning Practice – Small Town & Rural Areas (GOLD Winner)

Title: Houston Downtown Beautification Plan

Authors: District of Houston and Urban Systems Ltd.

Partner: District of Houston Chamber of Commerce

The Houston Downtown Beautification Plan was created to encourage investment, pride and activity in the downtown. As in many small towns in BC’s northern interior, economic instability in the forest industry has stressed local businesses in recent years. Houston’s Council initiated the downtown beautification project in order to stimulate diversity in the economy and build local resilience by focusing on improving existing resources and attracting and retaining business that could be integrated with the community.

The beautification plan draws on best practices in placemaking to activate the downtown and create spaces where people can not only linger, but gather and celebrate. The plan includes recommendations to streamline development permitting and identifies opportunities for economic development that could further support activity, tourism opportunities and investment in the downtown.

The jury was impressed by the immediate implementation of the project, with low-cost urban design improvements enabling the community to quickly see benefits in the short-term. Like Houston itself, the jury felt this submission was “Naturally Amazing!”

**Excellence in Policy Planning –
City & Urban Areas (GOLD Winner)**

Title: Equity and Inclusion in Housing
Needs Assessments

Authors: City of Kelowna and
Urban Matters

Partner: Interior Health Authority



This project represents an innovative and ground-breaking approach to the way the City of Kelowna views and understands the housing needs of its residents – both today and into the future. In response to major housing challenges being experienced across the province, new provincial legislation came into force in early 2019 requiring all local governments to develop Housing Needs Reports. This intent of this project was to address homelessness, low rental vacancy rates and rapidly escalating home

prices. In order to change the conversation from home ownership as the end goal for residents, a new and unique approach for defining housing categories was created.

This new approach, coined the ‘Wheelhouse’, promotes equity and inclusion, and does not show the end goal to be home ownership, but rather demonstrates the continually changing needs of residents who may move around or across the Wheelhouse throughout their lives due to different, ages, stages and income levels.

The awards jury felt the use of data and clear, concise information was a great way to dispel public preconceptions about homelessness. The project demonstrated significant collaboration between planning and the social serving sector, which allowed for better awareness and solutions to how changes in market housing impact supportive or safety net housing.

With so many great projects submitted, the awards jury decided to grant two submissions a Silver award in this category this year. In no particular order, the two Silver winning entries were:



The Active Transportation Plan was developed over a five-phase process that spanned an 18-month period beginning in the winter of 2016. The plan provides a bold vision and comprehensive policy framework for active modes of transportation in Saanich over the next 30 years. The plan is intended to encourage walking and cycling as attractive, convenient and accessible transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities, and will lead to a healthier, more livable community with social, environmental, land use and economic benefits for all.

The Active Transportation Plan was developed based on rigorous and innovative technical analysis, combined with a robust, collaborative planning process that involved thousands of residents. The District Council unanimously adopted it in June 2018, and the District is now moving forward with the implementation of many of the recommendations of the plan.

The jury was impressed with the equity analysis done to ensure all residents could benefit, the extensive use of social media, the use of utility bills stamped with the project logo and a call to participate in order to reach out to over 25,000 households to raise awareness of the project.

Excellence in Policy Planning – City & Urban Areas (SILVER Winners)

Title: Moving Saanich Forward - Saanich's Active Transportation Plan

Authors: District of Saanich and Urban Systems Ltd.

Partners: 8 80 Cities, and R Streets Urban Strategies



**Excellence in Policy Planning –
City & Urban Areas
(SILVER Winners)**

Title: Arbutus Greenway Design Vision and Implementation Strategy

Authors: City of Vancouver Mott MacDonald, DIALOG and Urban Systems Ltd.

Partners: Diamond Head Consulting Ltd., Hemmera, Lucent Quay Consulting Inc., Maureen Smith Consulting, PBX Engineering Ltd., and Urban Access Design

The Arbutus Greenway will be a defining element of Vancouver’s urban landscape as a vibrant and beautiful public space for walking, wheeling, cycling, and streetcar. It is an opportunity to transform a 9-km disused historic rail corridor into a linear public space and multi-modal, active transportation route, linking five distinct neighbourhoods from False Creek to the Fraser River to create a “water-to-water” experience.

The scope of the project was to develop an inspirational, yet implementable, design vision, through collaboration with an integrated project team of planners, landscape architects, designers, engineers, artists, specialists in indigenous design, public art master planning, sustainability, and universal accessibility. It will be a destination that fosters both movement and rich social interaction – inspired by nature and the stories of the places it connects.

The jury welcomed how the strategy stressed the importance of planning and landscape architecture integration, while honouring First Nations reconciliation.

**Excellence in Policy Planning –
Small Town & Rural Areas
(GOLD Winner)**

Title: Bell McKinnon Local Area Plan

Authors: Municipality of North Cowichan, and Barefoot Planning

Partners: Herold Engineering Ltd., Murdoch de Greef Inc., and Watt Consulting Group

The Bell McKinnon Local Area Plan is a visionary policy framework that guides the transition of this important community corridor from primarily rural residential to a compact, sustainable growth centre. The plan pushes the boundaries of sustainable neighbourhood planning, including a number of progressive planning policies and development requirements – such as minimum tree canopy coverage, and minimum energy efficiency based on BC Energy Step Code. The vision of the Plan



is, "A model Green Growth Centre in the Cowichan Valley that is a vibrant, walkable, urban village that facilitates healthy living in all stages of life."

The awards jury felt that this project was excellent value for its budget, providing very

non-planner reader-friendly documentation, which distilled a tremendous amount of information into a useable document that highlights the complexity of planning issues facing small communities.

**Excellence in Policy Planning – Small Town & Rural Areas
(SILVER Winner)**

Title: Squamish 2040 Official Community Plan

Author: District of Squamish

Partners: Kerr Wood Leidal Associates Ltd., MODUS, Quest University Canada, Vancouver Coastal Health, Whistler Centre for Sustainability

The Squamish 2040 Official Community Plan (OCP) represents a comprehensive two-year effort, which culminated in a progressive plan that guides decision-makers towards a sustainable future. The OCP used an energetic, inclusive and personable engagement program that established a new standard of practice for the District. Hosting accessible, thoughtful, and meaningful conversations about salient Squamish issues, the process strengthened connections across the community, fostering broad participation and a strong sense of ownership.

The plan holds deep contextual relevance to Squamish, and takes aim at resolving paramount community issues. The OCP successfully synthesized a significant number of local plans, key strategies, and technical data to form a unified, well-integrated policy foundation. Applied health and resilience 'lenses' shaped and linked core objectives and policies to help the District manage growth in the face of climate change and complex natural hazards, while supporting the community's ecological and human well-being.

For this project, the jury particularly liked the use of non-partisan third-party researchers to analyze data collected from qualitative questions, helping to ensure the anonymity and protection of privacy of the participants and encouraging more to speak their mind.





Research & New Directions in Planning (GOLD Winner)

Title: Coastal Adaptation Plan - Fraser River Foreshore

Authors: EcoPlan International, Northwest Hydraulic Consultants Ltd., Connect Landscape Architecture, and the City of Vancouver

Partner: Musqueam Indian Band, Vancouver Coastal Health, Whistler Centre for Sustainability

The City of Vancouver's Coastal Adaptation Plan (CAP) - Fraser River Foreshore is a path-breaking approach to values-based coastal adaptation planning. Initiated in December 2017, CAP is one component of a larger, multi-year undertaking to determine the risk, consequences, vulnerability, and adaptation opportunities of Vancouver to future sea level rise and flooding from the Fraser River. One of the

first programs of its kind in Canada, CAP - Fraser River Foreshore was the result of the development of a new planning process to engage and co-design values-based solutions with the public.

The City of Vancouver used a participatory, values-based approach, to engage residents, stakeholders, and other partners, including the Musqueam Indian Band, over a seven-month period. Engagement activities were hosted across

the floodplain and took a systems approach to understanding the values and concerns of residents, Musqueam, asset owners, and businesses across multiple themes of service and risk.

The jury felt that this plan addressed the urgency for action regarding climate adaptation, with a public education focus and a great framework for other communities to use.

Research and New Directions in Planning (SILVER Winner)

Title: Integrated Asset Management and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan

Authors: Ryan Hennessey RPP, MCIP and the Yukon Government

Partners: Town of Watson Lake, Associated Engineering, and Christine Callihoo RPP, MCIP

Asset management (AM) is a challenge for many communities. The AM planning framework - ISO 5500x (International Organization for Standardization) - provides a complexity of recognized standards that does not address the knowledge and capacity gap that many communities face. The tools and processes that can help address the challenges of climate change, ageing infrastructure, and low carbon resilience are not readily accessible to smaller communities.

The intent of the project was to prove an approach for a pilot community – Watson Lake (located in southeastern Yukon about 435km east of Whitehorse with a declining population of ~790) – using simple tools and processes guided by ISO 5500x that can be readily adopted and applied consistently in the Yukon and potentially other rural remote communities to build more resilient communities via integrated AM.

The Yukon Government recognizes the challenges but also the imperative for asset management to support adaptation and mitigation strategies. The project set out to prove an approach to asset management planning suitable for Yukon communities while still based on the principles of ISO 5500x. The approach focused upon the intention to address the challenge of reducing GHG emissions, the consideration of natural capital (ecological services), and to provide insight on how asset management can support integrated energy and climate change related decisions via the existing capacity of the community.

With an emphasis on achieving strong international standards for asset management planning, the awards jury felt that this is a project that will serve as a model for other jurisdictions struggling with the importance of infrastructure maintenance.