

# What's Next for the PIBC Peer Learning Network: A Powerful Tool for Urban Planners

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In response to the rapidly evolving context of planning legislation in BC, PIBC launched the Peer Learning Network (PLN) to foster connections between planning and built environment professionals across British Columbia. Whether you are a seasoned planner, a local government official, or an allied professional, the PLN provides a space to engage in valuable discussions, exchange experiences, and tap into the collective knowledge of your peers.

One of the standout features of the PLN is its diverse membership. Participants come from a wide range of specialties, and include planners, transportation engineers, developers, building officials, homebuilders, and housing providers, allowing insights into a variety of approaches – and potential issues – related to the new provincial housing legislation. It's also an excellent opportunity for smaller communities to tap into the experience and guidance of local government planners who have faced similar challenges.

The PLN wrapped its 2024 webinar series in October with PLN Webinar #4: Housing Needs Reports, featuring Heather Kauer MPA, RPP, MCIP, AICP, Director of Community Planning with the City of Abbotsford, and Jens von Bergmann, Founder and President of MountainMath. This webinar explored the value and opportunity of HNRs as part of a broader housing and community planning policy discussion<sup>1</sup>.

PLN was also present at the 2024 Asset Management BC Conference, "Today's Decisions – Tomorrow's Future," which took place in-person from November 6 - 7, 2024. It was an opportunity to network with allied professionals and share ideas with asset management champions, sustainability experts, CAO's, Local Government Delegates, and many others. Eric Aderneck RPP, MCIP presented as part of the PIBC Peer Learning Network, sharing



his research about the relationship between Infrastructure Servicing Costs and Residential Development Forms<sup>2</sup>.

## What's Coming in 2025

As the focus of planning activities begins to shift from compliance to implementation, the PLN has started to broaden the scope of its planned offerings.

Three webinars have been confirmed (and some completed) for 2025, including:

- January 15, 2025: *Ask a Lawyer #2*: For the second year in a row, a panel of lawyers will address the implementation of the provincial housing legislation. Topics include proactive planning requirements (OCP and zoning updates), inclusionary zoning, density bonusing, SSMUH and covenant considerations, and ACC/DCC considerations.
- February 26, 2025: *Proactive Planning for Big Needs in Small and Medium-Size Communities*: Practitioners from Delta,

Maple Ridge, North Cowichan, and Prince George will share insights on proactive planning for housing and infrastructure in their communities. A 'Lawyer-in-Residence' will provide legal perspectives.

- April 30, 2025: *The Cold Hard Truths about Housing Development and the Art of the Possible*: Three practitioners will discuss the economics of housing development, including challenges and opportunities. A 'Lawyer-in-Residence' will provide legal perspectives.

Additional webinars will be added for 2025, depending on feedback from network participants.

The PLN also continues to offer other opportunities to engage and interact with other practitioners. The online forum is a great place to share lessons learned and ask questions to your peers. You can also use the forum to follow up on Peer Learning Network (PLN) sessions or webinars, or participate in region or topic specific discussions. PLN will also be seeking input for peer-driven case studies and PIBC-led research in 2025. Stay tuned for more information on these exciting resources!

If you prefer to host your own event, PIBC is still offering funding support of up to \$1,000 for small groups of practitioners





working in or with local and regional governments (including planners who are both PIBC members and non-members), across BC who are interested and willing to self-organize and host a small peer learning event(s) in their local area. These events are intended to be hyper-local, self-directed, and peer-focused, and are intended to facilitate collaboration and practical information-sharing between practitioners as they work to implement newly created policies, practices, and tools.

The Peer Learning Network aligns with PIBC's commitment to fostering ongoing professional development for planners. As part of the professional designation process, PIBC

offers Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) credits for those who participate in sessions, making it an appealing option for PIBC members looking to maintain or advance their credentials.

The PIBC Peer Learning Network is more than just a learning platform—it is a community of professionals who understand the challenges of urban planning and are dedicated to improving the built environment. Whether it's exploring innovative housing solutions or finding ways to improve planning processes, the PLN offers a chance to be part of a vibrant, supportive community dedicated to ongoing learning and professional growth.

Kristin Agnello, DSocSci, RPP, MCIP, is the Strategic Lead of the PIBC Peer Learning Network and the Director of Plassurban Consulting Inc.



<sup>1</sup><https://www.pibc.bc.ca/pibc-pln-past-events>

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.pibc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/internal\\_pages\\_pdfs/resources/PLN/AMBC-AC-Presentation-InfrastructureCostsDevelopmentForms-EAderneck-Nov2024.pdf](https://www.pibc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/internal_pages_pdfs/resources/PLN/AMBC-AC-Presentation-InfrastructureCostsDevelopmentForms-EAderneck-Nov2024.pdf)

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