



DECOLONIZING PLANNING EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT

Research Phase 1 Summary Report
Key Informant Interview

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OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
School of Community
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(SCARP)

*Prepared for the Planning Practice and
Reconciliation Committee of the Planning
Institute of British Columbia*

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Message from the Mitacs Team

To the Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee and the PIBC Board of Directors,

It is our pleasure to present to the Committee and the Board this summary report of work-to-date on the MITACS Accelerate Fellowship research project *Assessing Possibilities and Challenges for Decolonial Planning Education and Practice in British Columbia*. It is our hope that it will be of use to the Institute and its membership as they grapple with the challenges of social and professional ignorance about Indigenous planning and decolonial approaches and the colonial nature of the planning profession.

There are three parts to this report. **Part 1** presents an overall **Research Summary, provides terminology and background, describes the overall research project.**

Part 2 provides **Research Summaries of the Key Informant Interview Methodology and Key Findings**. This part also provides more detailed discussions on the methods and the interview data.

Part 3 outlines the **next steps** of the research, briefly describing the methodology and processes for the next phases of the research.

Throughout the process of undertaking this research we have been in communication with Sanala Planning; they have provided guidance during the development of the MITACS Accelerate Fellowship application and the development of our research design. This report is intended to stand alongside Sanala Planning's (2023) *Exploring Pathways for Indigenous Planning Membership - Recommendations Report* and their ongoing work with the PPRC.

Sincerely,



Christopher Lamb, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, SCARP, UBC



Maggie Low, Assistant Professor, SCARP, UBC

Report Summary – Key Insights from our Key-Informant Interview Research

“my first message is, ‘you just have to do it.’ Whatever word you want to use; reconciliation, decolonization, Indigenization; it involves everyone, and it can't just be Indigenous people taking on the burden and the labor and the emotions of doing this...it can't just be the few Indigenous instructors, the few Indigenous planners.”

- Indigenous participant

“[decolonizing planning means] confronting that sort of colonial mentality... that ignorance is a colonial convenience, obviously, linked to erasure, and linked to colonial theft of Indigenous lands, right? There's a purpose to it. There's a structural racism component to it.”

- Non-Indigenous participant

“Now, we need to start making this argument to PIBC, to CIP, that this [colonial] history of planning needs to be a core component of what you're teaching, to understand on a deeper level. If we're gonna have this conversation about Reconciliation, that education piece needs to come first, that truth piece needs to come first, and once that understanding and education is there, then we can start talking about Reconciliation.”

- Indigenous participant

“I think that we do need to refresh our competencies in some ways. And I think that line of Indigenous knowledge needs to be better articulated as to, ‘what is a competency to be working in Canada in particular, as a planner on the topic of land use, when land is really at the heart of Indigenous identity?’”

- Non-Indigenous participant

“Indigenous planning is inclusive and relational and healing: healing the land, healing us, bringing us together, collaborative. It's the antithesis of all the things that I feel are pushing us towards collapse. And so, for me, it feels imperative to uplift Indigenous Knowledges and planning in all of their diversity and uniqueness.”

- Indigenous participant

“I would say to planners who are professionals who are out there practicing, I would just say, “Wake up!” The whole landscape is changing. IPCAs are changing the landscape. The modern treaties are changing the landscape. We're not in some 1950s [laughs]. Whatever you think was true before, power is held by Nations in the future.”

- Non-Indigenous participant

Part 1: Introduction

We begin this report with the words of the planning educators who generously shared their time, perspectives, and experiences. These educators articulately and thoughtfully portray the challenges that PIBC and the planning profession face in working meaningfully towards Reconciliation and uplifting Indigenous planning in BC, the Yukon, and Canada.

As we elaborate later in this report, in our interview participants speak of the efforts they take to facilitate student learning in Indigenous planning contexts and how they endeavour to teach students the responsibilities of decolonizing planning and planning for Reconciliation. As these participants demonstrated, educators have the power to tackle the 'truth-telling' aspect of Reconciliation, and to teach their students accurate and responsible histories and theories of planning. This includes instilling capacities for ways of being that will stand graduates in good stead to approach their work and relationships with Indigenous people and communities with respect, humility, and proactive engagement. As potential future members of the PIBC and the profession, these students will be well-positioned to advocate for the changes needed in the Institute and beyond.

However, the question remains whether PIBC, and the profession at large, is ready for these students. As the participants in this study highlight, there is a pressing need for systemic and institutional changes now, and PIBC has a significant role in creating this change.

Overall, interview participants reported that systemic and conceptual transformation is required to make the profession (and the PIBC) ready for the students coming its way so that they can practice according to their codes of ethics (including anti-colonial approaches). Participants suggested a number of potential paths for PIBC to take, including:

- Mandatory CPL credits that require learning and deep understanding of the colonial nature of the profession and the need for transformation of individual and institutional practice for meaningful Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples
- Mandatory CPL credits that provide opportunities for reflection and adoption of 'ways of being' focused on humility, open-mindedness, context/place/Nation-specific approaches
- CPL credits on deeper understandings "place" and "Land"
- CPL credits that provide opportunities for practicing planners to meaningfully 'land in community'
- Involve Indigenous firms/experts in development of these
- Involve the schools in development of curricular requirements, professional core competencies, professional standards, etc.

Part 1: Introduction

These suggestions raise important questions for the PIBC, through its PPRC, to consider:

- (How) can the institute(s) support the schools' relationships with communities?
- (How) can the institute increase its presence, and the planning profession's visibility, in Nations to "sell" planning as a path to supporting community goals?
- Can the institute provide further scholarship and funding opportunities to Indigenous students in planning program

Terminology

Aboriginal is a legal term, most often used by the government of Canada as an umbrella term for the Indigenous peoples of Canada. This includes First Nations and Métis people (status and non-status) and Inuit. Many Indigenous people prefer that we use the most precise term for a people: so, xʷməθkwəy̓əm (**Musqueam**), skwxwú7mesh (**Squamish**), and səliłwətał (**Tsleil-Waututh**) Nations, for example.

Colonialism is the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another territory or people and exploiting both the land and the people economically. It usually involves domination, oppression and marginalization of Indigenous peoples and rejection of Indigenous sovereignty.

Settler colonialism refers to the colonial strategies of dispossessing Indigenous peoples from their land, replacing them with settlers, and attempting to eliminate Indigenous peoples or assimilate them into settler society.

The term **First Nation(s)** refers to the Indigenous people(s) of Canada who are not Inuit or Métis. The term indicates the richness, complexity, and independence of Indigenous societies as well as presence in Canada prior to Europeans. The traditional territories of First Nations encompass all land from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans.

Indian is a legal term used by the government of Canada to define some Aboriginal rights. We use it only in that context.

The term **Indigenous** refers to the diverse peoples whose ancestral territories and traditional systems of law and governance predate colonial nations. In Canada, Indigenous encompasses First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, territories, communities, and forms of identification and governance that exist beyond those defined under the Indian Act.

Inuit are many culturally distinct Indigenous peoples whose traditional territories span the Arctic.

The descendants of non-Indigenous fur traders and Indigenous women are amongst those called the **Métis**.

Part 1: Introduction

Background:

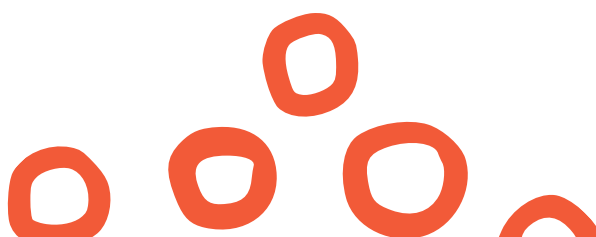
This project is a collaboration between Dr Christopher Lamb (Postdoctoral Fellow) and Dr Maggie Low (Assistant Professor, Indigenous Community Planning Co-Chair) at SCARP UBC and PIBC's Planning Practice and Reconciliation Committee (PPRC). In September 2023 Christopher Lamb met with Sarah Atkinson (Chair of the PPRC) to discuss the potential for a research collaboration focused on helping PPRC implement changes highlighted in the **PPRC Committee Update: 3 Years and Counting**. This Update indicated two Actions to be undertaken by the PPRC: 1) *"PPRC will hire an Indigenous consultant to work toward a path to PIBC membership that recognizes Traditional knowledge,"* and 2) *"PPRC will engage with accredited Universities to discuss required courses for planning programs that include Indigenous teachings and awareness of reconciliation and decolonization."*

To address Action 1, PPRC hired Sānala Planning; the results of Sānala's scoping work are available in their 2023 Recommendations Report.

Through 2024, Dr Lamb and Dr Low developed a MITACS Postdoctoral Fellowship grant proposal to support a research project exploring the possibilities and challenges for Indigenous and decolonizing planning education in BC and Canada. Developed in partnership with the PPRC, this project is also designed to address and extend the work of that committee, particularly Action 2 from the 2023 Update. The overall objectives of the MITACS Accelerate Postdoctoral Fellowship Project (awarded October 2024) are to:

1. Explore Indigenous and decolonial planning educators' perspectives and experiences with teaching Indigenous and decolonizing planning
2. Assess planning students' and the PIBC membership's knowledge and attitudes about Indigenous planning, Reconciliation, and decolonization, investigate what they have learned through their education, and explore obstacles to their learning and understanding
3. Provide key learnings and feedback to the planning schools, the PPRC and PIBC, and relevant communities

Through this research we hope to provide insights and recommendations to help the PIBC work towards its goal of uplifting Indigenous planning and its commitment to robust Reconciliation. The results of the research are intended to provide evidence-based guidance to aid PIBC's Reconciliation mandate to develop required Indigenous and decolonial education for PIBC membership. Through its process, this research also facilitates engagement with the accredited planning schools around planning program and course curricula and ongoing Continued Professional Learning Program (CPL) credits focused on Indigenous teachings and awareness of Reconciliation and decolonization.



Part 1: Introduction

Last Spring (2025) we undertook and completed the key-informant interview research with Indigenous and decolonial planning educators at the four planning schools in BC to explore their experiences and perspectives on the research topic. This report outlines the approach to this Interview research, highlights key findings from the interview data, and provides some preliminary insights that may be used to inform conversations at the planning schools and PIBC about Indigenous and decolonizing curricula and Continued Professional Learnings (CPL).



Interview Research Summary: Methodology

Key-Informant Interviews: Participant Demographics		
20 Total	6 Indigenous	14 non-Indigenous
4	UNBC School of Planning and Sustainability	
4	SFU School of Resource and Environmental Management Planning	
5	UBC School of Community and Regional Planning	
7	VIU Community Planning; Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas Planning	

20 Open-ended interviews conducted:

- With Indigenous planning instructors and non-Indigenous instructors at the four planning schools in BC – UBC, SFU, UNBC, and VIU
- Open-ended interviews lasted 1-2 hours
- Participants were asked to share their experiences and perspectives on teaching (about) Indigenous planning, Reconciliation, and/or decolonization
- Participants shared their perspectives on the possibilities and challenges for Indigenous planning and Reconciliation in planning education and professional spaces

Interview Research Summary: Key Findings

Grounding Concepts	Participants emphasized the diversity of Indigenous Peoples in BC and Canada and reiterated the importance of acknowledging and centering the specific and unique places, contexts, ways of knowing and being, and perspectives of each Nation in any planning process.
	stressed the importance of non-Indigenous people taking up the work of decolonizing planning education and working on Reconciliation in the profession.
	highlighted distinctions between ‘decolonizing’ planning, ‘Indigenizing’ planning, and planning for Reconciliation and the importance of understanding these distinctions in order to properly situate the work required of non-Indigenous planners and the PIBC.
Pedagogical goals, methods, successes, and challenges	providing students with opportunities to learn with and from Indigenous people through community-based projects and practicums
	highlighted the excellence of their students and emphasized the importance of the relationships that their programs and faculty have with Nations and Indigenous organizations, illustrating the central role that these relationships play in establishing meaningful community-based learning

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Pedagogical goals, methods, successes, and challenges	shared the challenges with sustaining meaningful engagements with communities across courses and years: including overall inadequate funding for Indigenous collaborators, the need for more long-term relationships with communities; the inadequacies of some schools' outreach to potential community collaborators; and the realities of Indigenous Peoples' experiences and learned wariness of predatory and extractive engagement.
Possibilities for Indigenous planning and Reconciliation	Indigenous resurgence: participants spoke of seeing Nations increasingly involved in planning projects traction from various levels of governments' Reconciliation actions as well as more general social momentum for Reconciliation, including growing societal awareness; emphasized the imperative to continue growing awareness through education – in various levels of schooling as well as in professional spaces
Challenges for Indigenous planning and Reconciliation	disconnection between the structures and practices of planning and the realities and goals of Indigenous Peoples: "business-as-usual" planning stands in the way of ethical practice fundamental tensions at play in non-Indigenous organizations and planners "making plans" for lands that are the territories of Indigenous Peoples; need deep understanding of these tensions need to create more capacity for planning in communities: there are not enough Indigenous people in planning in general and planning for their communities in particular issues with current pathways to planning education and professional membership for Indigenous people and even questioned the value of RPP certification to Indigenous people and planners in the current context of the profession, highlighting the possibilities for "different" paths for Indigenous planning. lack of understanding within the profession of the discipline's colonial heritage and the ways that planning has been – and still is – "utilized to control and dominate Indigenous communities," and suggested that the institutes, like PIBC, have an important role in supporting conversations about Reconciliation. extractivism in planning relationships with communities and the 'Indigenizing' of 'Reconciliation' work undertaken by institutes like PIBC and other professional organizations and businesses.

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Participant ideas for PIBC	financial support for improving Indigenous and decolonizing planning education, including grants for funding student travel to communities, scholarships, honoraria for Elder participation in education
	hosting or resourcing in-community information sessions on planning as a profession
	making sure the profession is a safe space for Indigenous planners to practice, making relevant Continued Professional Learning requirements. For example, mandatory CPL training; embedding historical and conceptual context through training which would need to be designed by/with Indigenous folks
	Foster and support more engagement and collaboration between the institute, professionals, and the schools.
	ensure that planners have more responsibilities to engage with Nations and Indigenous organizations in their daily practice and to embrace a deeper understanding of the role of planning and planners in fostering responsible relationships – meaningful Reconciliation – with Indigenous Peoples

Interview Methods

Grounding, Research and Participant Recruitment

To contextualize the project, I conducted desktop research and literature review of all academic literature published from 2015 to present on Indigenous planning and decolonizing planning practice in general, and education in particular. Combing through hundreds of research papers published in Canada, the US, Australia, and New Zealand, I developed a set of pertinent research questions to guide the key-informant interviews. The review of literature also provides a context for analyzing participant responses. At this time, I also developed and submitted an application to the Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) at UBC to conduct the interviews. Once Ethics clearance was achieved, I recruited and conducted interviews with educators at the four planning schools in BC. Participants were selected for recruitment based on their involvement in teaching and research about Indigenous planning and/or Reconciliation and decolonization in planning.

Conducting Interviews

The key-informant interviews took place in-person at a place of the participant's convenience or over Zoom and were audio-recorded. The interviews lasted 1 to 2 hours and were largely unstructured to follow the interest and emphases of the participants. The interviews were loosely guided by a set of questions:

- What is Indigenous planning, and what do Reconciliation and decolonization in planning look like to you?
- What is the role of education in decolonizing the planning profession?

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

- How do you teach Indigenous planning, Reconciliation, and decolonization?
- What are the possibilities and challenges for Indigenous planning, Reconciliation, and/or decolonization education at different scales?
- What are the possibilities and challenges for Indigenous planning, Reconciliation, and/or decolonization in the profession/practice?

Once each interview was complete, I transcribed the audio recording by hand, noting significant orthographic information (pauses, inflections, gestures, and laughs), and omitting extraneous words (um, like, etc). References to names of people and places of employment and residence were removed from the transcripts. Potentially sensitive information conveyed in the interviews were noted and highlighted, particularly information that respondents conveyed about Indigenous communities to which they belonged or worked with. Participants were provided with the opportunity to review and revise their transcripts. During these steps I took note of observations of initial trends in the data and potentially interesting quotations in the transcripts

Interview Data Analysis

For this research I used the qualitative data analysis software NVivo to code the data. Once all the interviews were complete and had been transcribed, I uploaded the transcripts into NVivo and generated demographic tags for the interview cases to indicate whether participants were Indigenous (self-identified) or non-Indigenous and to record the school (and place) where they teach.

In the development and analysis of the data, I undertook Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke; Byrne, 2021). I adopted an **experiential orientation** to data interpretation in order to emphasize the meaning and meaningfulness ascribed by the interview participants (Byrne, 2021). I took this decision because the aim of this part of the research was to prioritize educators' own accounts of their attitudes, perspectives, and opinions. Also, the research questions in the interviews were aimed to examine educators' attitudes and perspectives regarding their own experiences of delivering Indigenous and decolonial planning education.

I adopted a predominantly **inductive** approach, coding in NVivo the semantic meaning communicated by respondents and the latent meaning interpretable in their responses.

Key Interview Findings

Research Question	Key Topics in participant responses
What does decolonization and reconciliation in Planning look like?	• Indigenous focus • Critical anti-colonial perspectives • Ambivalence about colonialism
What is the role of education in decolonizing the planning profession?	• Foregrounding Indigenous and anticolonial content • Teaching about Indigenous resurgence • Teaching ethical and anti-colonial 'ways of being' a planner
How do you teach Indigenous and/or decolonizing planning?	• Building ethical and accessible spaces • Place- and community-based work • Indigenous and anti-colonial focused activities
What are the possibilities for education at different scales?	• Good work of the planning schools • Openness and effort of students • Meaningful ongoing Relationships with Indigenous Peoples
What are the challenges for education at different scales?	• Challenges for the schools • Challenges for the instructors • Challenges for the students
What are the possibilities for the profession?	• Indigenous Resurgence • Institutional efforts • Social momentum for reconciliation
What are the challenges for the profession?	• Scale of challenge and systemic inertia • Disconnect between profession and Indigenous Peoples • Apologia and individual inertia

Across the interviews participants shared their experiences and perspectives on Indigenous planning; Indigenizing and decolonizing planning; the place of planning in Reconciliation, and the role of education in each of these. This summary report highlights key themes that emerged across the following Key Topics:

- Centering and uplifting the diversity of Indigenous Peoples, Planning, and Places
- Decolonizing planning and Planning for Reconciliation
- The role of education and participants' pedagogical approaches
- Successes and challenges in the planning education space
- Successes and challenges in the professional space

This report also shares participants' suggestions for how PIBC can support and uplift Indigenous planning while working towards decolonizing planning and embracing planning for Reconciliation in education and the profession at large.

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Centering and Uplifting the Diversity of Indigenous Peoples, Planning, and Places

Despite centuries of colonial policies and practices in Canada, Indigenous Peoples continue to engage in their own planning activities (generational decision making based on cultural, environmental, and spiritual concerns) with(in) their lands, enacting and adapting dynamic planning practices in place since time immemorial. Across the interviews, participants emphasized the diversity of Indigenous Peoples and reiterated the importance of acknowledging and centering the specific and unique places, contexts, ways of knowing and being, and perspectives of Nations in any planning process.

Participants spoke to the importance of the diversity of Indigenous Peoples' ways of knowing and being, governance and cultural systems, languages, and planning principles, asserting that the multiplicity and diversity of Indigenous Peoples means that there will not be one Indigenous perspective or approach to planning. This understanding is exemplified in the words of one Indigenous participant: "Indigenous people planning according to Indigenous ways of knowing and being."

As such, participants were adamant that non-Indigenous planners and organizations should not attempt to codify generalizations of what Indigenous planning needs to be or look like. As one participant stated, because each Nation is unique, planning approaches must be geared to "what planning would look like for a specific Nation at a particular point in time, given their unique political, cultural, social, economic, environmental contexts."

Integral to this Nation-specific approach, participants highlighted that the diversity of Indigenous Peoples is rooted in places and relationships to Land.

that relationship to land, I mentioned it earlier, is so important...Because that's who we are. We're not here, we wouldn't be the people that we are if we didn't have the land. Everything that we do stems from that and our responses to the waters, to the mountains, to the river, to the trees that we have, and what our landscape looks like.

- Indigenous participant

Indigenous Peoples' ways of knowing and being have arisen through generational relationships with(in) place. As one participant stated, such a Nation-specific approach is geared towards the "unique epistemologies of a Nation" and "in many cases, especially on the West Coast, the multimillennial arc of the narratives that hold together the truths and the sacred knowledges of the people in place."

Participants discussed how Indigenous planning is related to Indigenous futurities – received generational teachings of responsibilities to ancestors *and* future generations, rooted in reciprocal kinship relations with the land and waters through place. These teachings emerge through place (take place) and, thus, generational planning means planning for future generations' continuing kinship relations with(in) specific places on the lands and waters.

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

We think seven generations ahead, that's also a teaching we have...Our ancestors survived and persevered and planted forests, planted trees; moved our long houses; didn't fish in this spot for future or didn't hunt in this bar, didn't get that animal for future generations and kept things alive; thinking for their kids, for their grandkids, for the generations that you won't see....It's hard to do planning sometimes because you feel like nothing's getting done [laughs] and you're not seeing the end result. But it's that teaching: how we won't see a lot of it. You're doing it for the ones that are yet to come, and to honor the ones that are gone.

- Indigenous participant

Non-Indigenous planners and organizations working with Indigenous communities have a responsibility, then, to be cognizant of and support the unique place-based generational planning practices and recognize the continuity of past, present, and future relationships of the Nations with(in) their lands.

I think that's the difference with normal planning when you're a city planner and when you work on planning with a Nation, is that; these people are...this is their life. They're never going to go anywhere. Like, if I don't like the plan that is happening in this part of the city I live in, I could just move. These people cannot move. They're not going to move; they're not going to. This is their life, this is their very being, this is their culture. This is how they define themselves and their environment.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Decolonizing planning, Indigenizing planning, and planning for Reconciliation

The imposition of colonial land regimes in Canada continues to obstruct and limit the possibilities and capacities of Indigenous Peoples to engage in planning relationships with(in) their Lands. The PIBC and non-Indigenous planners across BC and the Yukon have an important role in decolonizing these land regimes and planning structures in order to “make space” for the resurgence of Indigenous planning. As the responses of the participants make clear, Reconciliation is not an end goal or destination, but rather an enduring practice of relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples with(in) specific places across the lands and waters of what is now known as Canada.

Each interview participant was asked to share their thoughts on decolonization and Reconciliation in planning. Most participants reiterated the importance of non-Indigenous people taking up the work of decolonizing planning education and working on Reconciliation in the profession. As these Indigenous participants reiterated:

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

"my first message is, 'you just have to do it.' Whatever word you want to use; reconciliation, decolonization, Indigenization; it involves everyone, and it can't just be Indigenous people taking on the burden and the labor and the emotions of doing this...it can't just be the few Indigenous instructors, the few Indigenous planners"

"I think that's very much the work of settlers: to decolonize."

"Reconciliation should be white people's work."

How can non-Indigenous planners and organizations support and work alongside Indigenous Peoples to uplift their planning practices? There are significant distinctions between decolonizing planning, Indigenizing planning, and planning for Reconciliation that can help inform discussions at the PIBC and beyond. Participants emphasized the importance of understanding these distinctions in order to properly situate the work required of non-Indigenous planners and organizations.

[decolonization] is such a buzzword right now, and people are really jumping on it, and I think in some ways that's really great, but in other ways, if you don't have a clear understanding of what that means to you organizationally, and how far you're willing to go as an organization, you can't really have the conversation, because that conversation needs to have clear parameters for Nations to decide for themselves how much they want to engage with that process.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Decolonizing planning:

Many of the participants spoke of decolonization as the process of undoing the harms caused by colonization, suggesting that it can be characterized as "repair work" and "redress." They stressed that, at the most fundamental level, decolonization is about Land Back: the return of land to Indigenous Peoples that they may continue to plan with, in, and for their lands. These participants recognized the discomfort that can come with discussions of decolonization – and Land Back – in settler colonial places like Canada.

I think there's a fear of losing control right now. The control lies all within Crown governments and settlers and people who own land as individuals... now, if people are forced to reckon with the way our society is built in terms of this individual-based wealth and ownership of land and control over it, and that colonial governments and settler people have all of the control. It's those things that people don't want to give up. Or they can't imagine a different world, or how we would get there.

- Indigenous participant

While recognizing this potential fear, participants emphasized the importance of planners embracing "curiosity" and "humility" and of working through "vulnerability," "uncertainty," and "discomfort."

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

None of this is new to people. We learn how to do new things all the time. It's just this thing, and this topic is so scary and tension-filled and emotion-filled that it gets people overthinking things where they shouldn't and not thinking hard enough where they should. But I think we all need to use our specific skill set and knowledge set to push this whole movement forward...it's not just Indigenous people that should be doing uncomfortable scary things and putting themselves out there in everything they do to just kind of survive and be welcomed in a place.

- Indigenous participant

In many cases, participants suggested, decolonization looks like the “recalibration and rebalancing of power” over land use decisions.

I'm in meetings with Deans and Vice Presidents and Presidents and every time they talk about decolonization, I bring up what I think are kind of radical ideas for the university... and I say things like, “you know, you guys could always give the land back to [the local Nations] and negotiate a lease agreement. You know, it wouldn't be so hyper radical, you could negotiate a 99-year lease but come to the negotiations in good faith.”

- Indigenous participant

Alongside the emphasis on Land Back and the resurgence of Indigenous sovereignties as fundamental to decolonization, participants also acknowledged that it can be pragmatic to use the term decolonization when talking about the work needed in big systems and structures like Universities, Government entities, and Planning Institutes.

The more non-Indigenous folks in an organization, the more the work of that organization is decolonizing – correcting harmful ideas, language, and internalized white supremacy. Part of this work is refusing racism and white supremacy and committing to meaningful work in supporting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in planning spaces and practices. However, participants also stressed the importance of non-Indigenous planners and organizations confronting the “colonial mentalities” that have been perpetuated through – and as – ignorance of settler colonialism and the Eurocentrism at the heart of much of Western planning.

confronting that sort of colonial mentality... that ignorance is a colonial convenience, obviously, linked to erasure, and linked to colonial theft of Indigenous lands, right? There's a purpose to it. There's a structural racism component to it.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Those sets of beliefs have shaped a whole regime of institutions and laws and sets of rationales that usually marginalize Indigenous worldviews and systems, land governance, or, you know, environmental governance.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

The process of decolonizing planning – repair work and redress – directs non-Indigenous planners and organizations to “make space” for and to support Indigenous People to flourish in planning. This directive includes supporting Nations' unique and diverse sovereignties and ways of planning with(in) their lands.

Indigenization

Indigenization is like the bloom. It's not about undoing the harm. It's seeing the beauty in Indigenous Knowledges, ways of knowing and being, as I've been describing, and giving space for that beauty to emerge and to flourish, and for us to bask in that.

- Indigenous participant

Participants spoke of Indigenization as the flourishing of Indigenous presence. This means, for example, that an organization is substantially impacted by Indigenous presence: the presence of Indigenous members as well as Indigenous perspectives, ways of knowing and being, and practices. All the participants in this study emphasized the importance of making space in the profession for more Indigenous people to become planners. This requires both “making planning relevant to Indigenous situations,” and opening planners and organizations to concepts, discourses, and practices different from those rooted in a “dominant white Western Anglo perspective,” “extractivism,” and “commodification.”

Several participants contrasted the conceptual foundations of ‘Western’ and ‘Indigenous’ planning principles. For example, an Indigenous participant spoke of Indigenous planning as “land relationship planning,” and highlighted the significance of the difference between this term and the more ‘traditional’ Western term “land-use planning.”

We talk a lot about how the language we use really matters in terms of how we view processes or species or our role in the natural world. And I would say, this dichotomy between ‘land use’ planning versus ‘land relationship’ planning: the word ‘use’ versus ‘relationship’ just implies totally different things, even in English... we use the words ‘manage’ and ‘use’ and things like that. But they don't really sit well with a lot of Indigenous people, because they all focus on people, and they all focus on kind of extractive verbs or human-centered verbs... our language and our connection to place and our values really drive the processes that we choose to use to govern our relationships with the land. And I think it's pretty clear that Western values and language really drive this ‘land-use planning’ idea and Indigenous values and languages drive more of this relationship process.

- Indigenous participant

For the Indigenous participants in particular, Indigenizing planning means resituating planning's frameworks (ontic and epistemic) such that Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships might be reframed through positions of good faith and true mutual respect of diversity; where Western ways of knowing, being, and planning are not running roughshod over Indigenous Peoples' place-based and generational ways. Such an approach in turn may

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

further unsettle and transform planning discourses and practices.

For example, participants highlighted the importance of the value of reciprocity which, from many Indigenous perspectives, includes reciprocity with place and land. They suggested that non-Indigenous planners and organizations have important responsibilities to consider how planning projects can take into consideration deeper understandings of place. Part of this imperative would see non-Indigenous planners and organizations having “a deeper understanding of place, allowing place to be a part of the Planning process, and having its own voice, allowing place itself to be a participant in the planning process.”

Relationships to a place are a lot bigger than just a relationship to a specific geographic location, which is what people often think of when you say, 'a place.' It's a relationship to all of the living, breathing, spirited beings that are there, and the relationships and the culture and the actions, and the history and the future, and all those things.

- Indigenous participant

I think what's unique and really important about these strong connections to place and culture...is the importance of thinking at both scales: of being grounded, being grounded in literally the ground in that place, being grounded by place, being grounded by what's important at a small scale, or locally, that matters to people; but then, also, being able to apply some of the philosophies and priorities and values, that we share, at a broader scale. I think both are necessary for making change, because of the way our governments and decisions and things like that are set up.

- Indigenous participant

These participants emphasized the role that Indigenous 'land-relationship planning' can play in opening non-Indigenous planning to Indigenous wisdom in the face of growing social and environmental challenges.

Indigenous planning is inclusive and relational and healing: healing the land, healing us, bringing us together, collaborative. It's the antithesis of all the things that I feel are pushing us towards collapse. And so, for me, it feels imperative to uplift Indigenous Knowledges and planning in all of their diversity and uniqueness.

- Indigenous participant

Planning for Reconciliation

Participants defined Reconciliation as ongoing, place-based, reciprocal relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. In this context, then, what is 'planning for Reconciliation'; how can planning support these relationships?

The participants stressed that Reconciliation is not just token 'acknowledgment'. There is

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certainly a function of 'truth telling', and education plays a big role in communicating the history and presence of colonialism in Canada's social, political, and economic structures, including the planning profession.

Now, we need to start making this argument to PIBC, to CIP, that this history of planning needs to be a core component of what you're teaching, to understand on a deeper level. If we're gonna have this conversation about Reconciliation, that education piece needs to come first, that truth piece needs to come first, and once that understanding and education is there, then we can start talking about Reconciliation.

- Indigenous participant

Beyond this, Reconciliation involves, at minimum, working towards the remediation of colonial harms over generations of Indigenous people by providing economic uplift in Indigenous communities. Some participants discussed the role of Economic Reconciliation; for example, 'co-management' and 'resource extraction' agreements that support "independent, sustainable First Nations economies." As one participant highlighted, there is a growing appreciation of the need to take a 'planning approach' to resource development projects in First Nations' territories, and that there are significant opportunities to "leverage" the uncertainty around Aboriginal Rights brought by DRIPA that has increased First Nations' political power in resource project negotiations.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act has put tremendous opportunities and tremendous resources, but tremendous obligations, on the part of First Nations to try and participate in this realignment of provincial policy and programming and legislation with the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, as well as the capacity to participate in these quite significant economic development projects.

- Non-Indigenous participant

One of the Indigenous participants referred to the kinds of Economic Reconciliation happening in the "hybrid land regime models" of specific Nations' housing developments in the Lower Mainland, where Nations are mixing Fee Simple, Reserve Land, and Treaty Settlement Lands to make "the best of it within existing systems."

Yet, as this participant remarked, Economic Reconciliation largely means "working through certain limitations within settler colonialism" while "not necessarily talking about fundamentally changing those systems."

It's the fact that we were willing to play the game and get involved in business, which, like I said, falls into an avenue of "acceptable" choices. Like, "take us to court, negotiate with us, do business with us, but don't set up a blockade and wear camouflage."

- Indigenous participant

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Beyond the 'economic' forms of Reconciliation, participants emphasized the importance of systemic approaches and policy-level changes that can transform the norms of planning practice and "fundamentally change those systems."

You know the idea of greenwashing? I think there are a lot of folks who haven't done that internal decolonizing and are using that term [Reconciliation] to describe or to propose work that that is contrary to Nations' interests, and desires. We know the rise in the term Economic Reconciliation. And especially in the context of this Federal election, the idea that if we do resource extraction and make a shitload of money and give lots of money to the Nations: that's Reconciliation. And so, yeah, language evolves and grows. And we need to be careful to know when terms reach their useful life.

- Indigenous participant

Participants stressed that, ultimately, Reconciliation must go further to more transformative (decolonial) forms, where non-Indigenous parties change their frames of reference to be better partners in ongoing relationships. At one level, participants referred to the importance of embracing 'Two-eyed seeing', where "what we're really doing is trying to balance the two worlds, because I think we should adopt a lot of Indigenous and First Nations ideas and policies" alongside Western planning.

Planning for Reconciliation clearly requires much more than 'business-as-usual' relationships between planners, projects, and the places they plan for: changing "behaviors away from this extractive relationship to be one based in reciprocity" (Indigenous participant).

We look at the land in our reciprocity, and how do we relate toward the land, and how do we give back? It's kind of how you look at it in Indigenous ways.

- Indigenous participant

An understanding of kinship-based Reconciliation, or, you know, environmental Reconciliation along with human-to-human Reconciliation or Nation-to-Nation Reconciliation, right? So, it's also changing societal behaviours away from this extractive relationship to be one based in reciprocity.

- Indigenous participant

At another level, most of the participants took this systemic argument further, "pushing for changes in the provincial planning regimes, policies and legislation" that recognize Nations' self-determination and sovereignty.

How can we get to a place of self-determined community decision-making that's respected by the State as an understanding of what Reconciliation looks like?

- Indigenous participant

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There is clearly a tension in teaching planning for Reconciliation: some participants spoke to the challenges of teaching students (how) to support Indigenous Peoples' sovereign decision making while operating pragmatically within the strictures of Crown sovereignty to provide service according to the specific needs of the Nations they may end up working with. This is particularly the case in the current context of DRIPA in BC, where planners may end up working with or alongside Nations participating in "consent-based agreements" for resource and development projects.

Under DRIPA, this notion of First Nation Consent is brought into the equation, and nobody knows what that means. We know that it doesn't change the 'no veto' rule. We know that that old consultation regime still applies...you just work through a process until everyone has sort of got some comfort with it. You're not blocking the process. You might not love every part of it. But who does love everything? And you kind of work through the process until you're all kind of comfortable with it proceeding.

- Non-Indigenous participant

However, most of the participants were keen to stress the implications and opportunities Indigenous resurgence in BC and Canada present to non-Indigenous planners and organizations, highlighting historical and Modern Treaties, the progression of Supreme Court rulings on Aboriginal Title, and Indigenous-led planning and conservation movements.

I would say to planners who are professionals who are out there practicing, I would just say, "Wake up!" The whole landscape is changing. IPCAs are changing the landscape. The modern treaties are changing the landscape. We're not in some 1950s [laughs]. Whatever you think was true before, power is held by Nations in the future.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Participants here further emphasized the importance of planners embracing "curiosity" and "humility" in their work, approaching each new relationship with an openness to learning and the vulnerability to sit with discomfort when faced with challenges. In particular, participants reiterated the importance of overcoming fear: fear of failure, of being challenged, of being wrong, and the discomfort that can come with these feelings.

If you come just being yourself and not with this idea of fear or feeling like you're going to mess up, but knowing that you will, and someone might call you out... I get called out all the time by Elders [laughs]. It can be uncomfortable, but you have to be okay with being uncomfortable.

- Indigenous participant

Key to this position of humility, openness, and curiosity is a willingness to embrace an approach to Nations on their terms: on the terms of each Nation's place-based ways of knowing, being, and language.

If we come into decolonial planning questions with constructs that are of a Western orientation, we simultaneously bring in an eclipsing set of narratives that run the risk of marginalizing or place-taking from the Nation-specific iterations of the constructs that matter to them. And that's where I even challenge the question of decolonial planning, right? Is that the overarching banner of this? Or is it, you know, "what is the role of allies in training to support Nation-specific, Nation-driven planning that has been undertaken for multiple millennia in situ, so to speak?"

- Non-Indigenous participant

Drawing together the perspectives of the participants provides a picture for what planning for Reconciliation might look like:

- A fulsome understanding of the impacts of colonization on Indigenous wellbeing and self-determination
- An appreciation of deeper understandings of place that may open approaches to kinship-based reconciliation amongst Peoples and Lands.
- Flexibility and openness to learning such that planners are prepared to approach each context and Nation on its terms, with recognition and capacity to provide the support of their expertise on a case-by-case basis.

This picture presents a shift in the discipline's orientations from extractive, commodifying, capital-focused approaches to more reciprocal kinship-based approaches to relationships with Indigenous Peoples and lands. For the participants in this research, Planning for Reconciliation requires emerging and established planners to be prepared to support specific Indigenous Nations – as partners or across negotiation tables – in their specific goals, whether these are in terms of 'conventional' planning projects or more 'reciprocal,' 'environmental,' 'holistic,' and 'kinship-based' forms.

Pedagogical Approaches: Teaching Planning for Reconciliation.

Overall, participants located their pedagogical approaches and goals in providing students with opportunities to learn with and from Indigenous peoples – by “landing them in community” – and preparing them for this by teaching anti-colonial lessons.

Participants spoke of foregrounding Indigenous and decolonial content in their classes, including teaching the history and current contexts of settler colonialism in Canada, critiques of planning, and the limits of Western approaches to planning.

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There's a role in acknowledging that our theoretical orientation and our discourse is very much dominated by a white Western Anglo perspective. And that there are many other perspectives that we need to take into consideration and become familiar with, in order to actually call ourselves well rounded planners.

- Non-Indigenous participant

We were just talking about the challenges that I have with my one course, in that half the term is spent talking about settler colonialism, the history of planning, how planning has transformed place through time, how planning as a tool has been utilized to, you know, control and dominate Indigenous communities. That's the history of Canada. I'd like to talk about Indigenous planning!

- Indigenous participant

Along with content focused on the systemic issues of colonialism in the history and present of planning, most participants highlighted the significance of personal accountability and of individual planners' responsibilities in Reconciliation. They discussed how they teach their students to adopt and actively take an anti-colonial position in their future work. These participants endeavor to teach their students to acknowledge and address the colonial foundations of the profession and the ingrained colonial mentalities that "marginalize Indigenous worldviews, systems, and land governance." Key to these learnings is the adoption of epistemic and ontic diversity; an orientation towards recognizing multiple worldviews, knowledge systems, jurisdictions, and sets of legal systems in the cross-cultural contexts of planning work.

From the planning perspective, it's the sense of positionality. It's an exposure to a different starting place for planning and planning process and trying to reconcile different sets of values and worldviews.

- Non-Indigenous participant

An understanding of alternative and diverse epistemologies, introducing them to the understanding that Western knowledge is one way of knowing the world, living in the world, and being in the world.

- Indigenous participant

Sensitivity to acknowledgement of Reconciliation is critical topic for our times...if we don't at least give students a perspective that not everyone is like them, "not everyone has the same bodily experience of space and place that you might," we're never going to be able to develop that sensitivity.

- Non-Indigenous participant

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Participants also focused on how they teach students “ethical ways of being a planner.” These participants emphasize particular approaches to “being” a planner and “doing” planning as the root of their pedagogy, exemplified in this participant’s approach:

What's most important is to be a certain type of planner who's critically self-reflective, who is process-oriented as opposed to outcomes oriented, who has a strong understanding of themselves and their own identities, and a strong sense of internalized white supremacy and how that shows up in community, whatever your background. I mean, Indigenous folks have internalized white supremacy, too, right? It means being a planner who has a balance of hard and soft skills, who can work with different contexts and focus on relationship. Who has a deep connection to land and humility and the ability to...who has an understanding of how to play a supporting role and support the community to lead and drive the planning process.

- Indigenous participant

Participants spoke to their goals of instilling in students a ‘relationship-building’ ethic rooted in humility; fostering students’ openness to learning and capacity to “sit with discomfort” with the emotional intelligence to work through their (inevitable) mistakes without becoming paralyzed by fear.

It's almost foolish to try and give students confidence in the background knowledge. It's more like, knowing how to ask questions, knowing how to be humble, knowing how to pay attention, knowing how to find information from different sources. And also, how to come into situations where you don't know the context but can still show up with confidence.

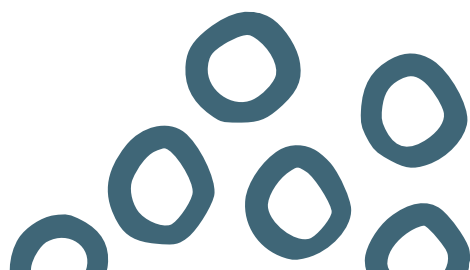
- Non-Indigenous participant

Further, participants described how they strive to teach their students to envision possible futures of Reconciliation and to “use their privilege” to become “peaceful warriors” to “advance Land Back” and “kinship values” within planning. These participants hope their students take up the task of addressing colonial ignorance in and through their own work and embracing a “commitment to support Reconciliation.”

I'm able to really instill those values and really bring them around to what Reconciliation should – and could – look like and provide them with the tools to be able to critically engage in that conversation in the workplaces where they end up.

- Indigenous participant

Participants emphasized that a key part of their teaching revolves around teaching students how to support Indigenous planning through developing an understanding of the diversity of Indigenous perspectives, knowledges, and languages and the importance of place.



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More and more, as I grow in my teaching experience, [I'm] trying to support the students to listen carefully for those models, those teachings about planning, that would only come from that time and place, only from [a specific Nation], that don't exist anywhere else in the world. And to vaunt that, to validate it, to uplift it, to pour their energy into bringing that up to light and supporting the community, to move forward with that woven into how they do their planning, and not to feel tied to these Eurocentric models all the time that have the potential to wreak continued harm.

- Indigenous participant

Alongside teaching anti-colonial positionality and recognition of the centrality of the diversity of Indigenous Peoples and places, participants emphasized the importance of teaching students “the vocabulary of planning” and a suite of practical planning skills that students may put to use in the service of the specific Nations or Indigenous organizations they may end up working with.

I hope that they would learn the enough basic information and skills to be effective on the ground in the morning...how to go out there and effectively work for First Nations' interests

- Non-Indigenous participant

There's a through line on what I call the vocabulary of planning. You know the sort of tools and the sort of desk-ready stuff: the zoning and bylaws and official comprehensive plans and all that sort of stuff.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Participants shared their successes and the challenges they face in teaching Indigenous planning, decolonization, and planning for Reconciliation

Pedagogical Successes

Overall, participants were eager to highlight the excellence of their students. They remarked on students' levels of awareness of important and complex topics and issues. They also spoke to students' receptivity to their pedagogical goals, tracing the impact of EDI initiatives and the TRC Calls to Action in public K-12 education and the Universities in BC. For these participants, students' prior exposure to Indigenous and decolonial education efforts has clearly made an impact.

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Post TRC, the level of curriculum integration and Indigenous knowledge that is showing up, Indigenous histories, that's showing up in K-12. And my [child] is 13, right...just finished elementary school last year [and] had just tons of Indigenous content from K-7. And not just the Orange Shirt Day, right? Which in and of itself has been a pretty phenomenal mobilization campaign. But, you know, Indigenous Elders coming to the school to talk and going on walks to identify plants, and sessions on residential schools...So, already at 13 [they] probably know more about Indigenous history than I did when I was into my twenties, to be honest with you.

- Non-Indigenous participant

I can see some positive impacts of those EDI priorities, and that the kids that I have in my upper-level courses and the grad courses, they have some sense, and they knew, and they likely have read you before. And so, they're coming because they're very interested and very engaged.

- Indigenous participant

Speaking to the Indigenous planning concentrations and focused courses in their programs, participants remarked on students' capacities for respectful engagement with Indigenous community partners.

I would say, honestly, not to hype our students up right now, but these ones...they're just very relational...they'll just talk to people and love chatting...just willing to sit and listen and not be scared to sit at the table...You know, everyone doesn't have to be extroverted, but they very much go out of their way to make that relationship. People aren't gonna come to you, you need to go to them. Especially in community engagement, you kind of have to go after that. I think that's been a really cool dynamic, seeing them being comfortable with being uncomfortable. And then going out of their way to build that relationship, which I've really appreciated.

- Indigenous participant

We'd been out to the community a couple of times, and at the end the Elders told these students that they were now, "we will treat you like our children. You are our young people, you are our future." So, this is a small band of seven white, I think we had two Indigenous young women, but this is...they had just impressed the Elders in the community

- Non-Indigenous participant

Participants also spoke to the strengths of their programs, highlighting efforts at increasing opportunities – including funding – for Indigenous students and the Universities', programs', and faculty members' efforts to Indigenize the Academy and University learning. In particular, participants focused on the relationships that their programs and faculty have with Nations and Indigenous organizations, illustrating the central role that these relationships play in establishing meaningful community-based learning.

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Our faculty's had many opportunities to build relationships out in communities, so that we have these great opportunities to build relationships and learning as an exercise that is shared. And I think the communities here welcome students.

- Non-Indigenous participant

I'm grateful that the Nation has ever agreed to work with us [laughs]. I just hope it lasts forever.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Throughout all the courses, for example, people that are teaching planning, I know a lot of their field work is with First Nations, and they have a lot of collaborations and partnerships with First Nations

- Non-Indigenous participant

I think the practicum is a really good effort towards landing students in community. And I think that can happen there. And we have enormous flexibility. You know, students can take longer to finish their program. It's really beautifully set up to support that happening in community, and not necessarily in the university.

- Indigenous participant

Pedagogical Challenges

Participants also reported that they face many challenges in their teaching. Just as they spoke to the significance of the relationships they and their programs have fostered with Nations and Indigenous organizations, participants spoke to ongoing difficulties with building, maintaining, and repairing relationships with communities. There are real challenges with sustaining meaningful engagements with communities across courses and years, including issues of precarity and inconsistency; the overburdening of Indigenous experts, educators, and partners; and the potential tensions between the requirements of planning programs and goals of Indigenous community partners.

It's a little bit challenging, because you're designing the course, hoping that next year also all these people are available.

- Non-Indigenous participant

That also puts a huge burden on Indigenous practitioners and knowledge holders. The demand to constantly be coming in and giving an hour-long guest lecture or sharing their knowledge. And so, I think one of the things I struggle with the most in terms of decolonizing education is trying to get as many different people's understandings and knowledge and experiences and perspectives into a classroom without placing so much demand on everyone.

- Indigenous participant

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We've tried to partner with a one semester course a couple times. And that was okay, but the lift for [the Nation] was quite a lot in terms of finding something that students could even do...what are things that can be picked up by people that maybe don't have specific technical skills that actually would be useful? So, that actually is quite a lot of work for [the Nation] to even find that and figure that out and coordinate with other departments.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Universities are...if [you imagine] that same small-town picture, then you have individual faculty members who don't know who else is doing what, they don't know what University is doing what, you have them constantly like, "knock-knock. We'd like to have First Nations consultation." It'd be like Jehovah's Witnesses!

- Non-Indigenous participant

Further, participants remarked on the tensions between the goals of Indigenous planning education – and decolonizing planning education for Reconciliation – and the colonial nature of the Academy.

One of the other things I would talk about in terms of the challenges for teaching decolonization, is how much the colonization mindset is built into the University. It truly is the belly of the patriarchy and colonization, all of the baddest of who we are. But there has to be this place where we are willing to start unpicking it from the inside.

- Non-Indigenous participant

I think what immediately comes up for me is the potential disconnect between what's best for students and what's best for communities...one of the things that we have – we meaning the [program's] faculty – have wrestled with over the years is this quandary of like, "are we a program that trains people to get jobs working with Indigenous Peoples? Or are we a program that uplifts Indigenous planning knowledge and centers Indigenous planners to be certified and to be validated for their approaches?"... we have had students in the past who are like, "well, I have a [program] certificate, I should be able to work in communities." But there's still some internalized white supremacy there.

- Indigenous participant

Participants also emphasized a number of challenges facing the planning schools, including overall inadequate funding for Indigenous collaborators, the need for more long-term relationships; the inadequacies of some schools' outreach to potential community collaborators; and the realities of Indigenous Peoples' experiences and learned wariness of predatory and extractive engagement.

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I think Nations have just been burned too many times in the past, working with academics, or working with Planners, and having knowledge theft, and all the rest of it.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Participants spoke about the differences between the programs across the province, specifically in terms of the resources available and the relationships that have been established.

I think we're at the very early stages of building that relationship. I think that what UBC, what SCARP, has done with x̣ṃəθḳ"əỵəm is a really great way to create that foundation in community, with a community partner that [xxx] just doesn't have.

- Indigenous participant

In terms of us having that sort of relationship, I think it's going to take some more building...Right now, it's still just very individual. So, if I get run over by a bus tomorrow, where does it go? And that's just poor organizational design, if you can't answer that question. And right now, I can't answer that question. I think the organization at [xxx] is putting some of the right investments in community liaison...I think it's important. But I do think that concept of organizational relationship, and how do you maintain that, I think that's pretty important.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Participants shared what they see working in professional practice as well as the barriers to supporting Indigenous planning, decolonization, and planning for Reconciliation

Positive movement in the planning profession

Twelve of the twenty participants shared what they thought were positive movements in the planning profession that may support Indigenous planning and planning for Reconciliation. When asked about the possibilities for Reconciliation in and through the planning profession, participants spoke of seeing Nations increasingly involved in planning projects.

I do, in general, see Indigenous communities in smaller places, or adjacent to smaller settler towns and cities, working with other partners more than they used to.

- Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Some of the stuff through that CEDI program; for example, it has done relationship building around economic development, is pretty cool. Infrastructure Sharing Agreements are another wonderful opportunity, where “we don't need 2 water systems, so we better actually sit down and figure out what this is gonna look like.” You know, that's an opportunity for relationship building and education, and in many respects, and often, reconciliation of past harms and acknowledgement of problems.

- Non-Indigenous participant

We try and focus on the glimmers, or the opportunities, and really talk about examples of how Indigenous Peoples and Nations across the country are either leveraging some of these tools or asserting their self-governance in different ways that are just really brilliant and inspiring.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Participants also highlighted the traction resulting from various levels of governments' Reconciliation actions as well as more general social momentum for Reconciliation, including what they see as a growing societal awareness.

Barriers to uplifting Indigenous planning and working towards decolonization and planning for Reconciliation

However, nineteen of the twenty participants spoke at some length of the challenges facing the profession; the one participant who refrained from commenting professed a lack of familiarity with the discipline.

Participants emphasized frequent disconnection between the structures and practices of planning and the realities and goals of Indigenous Peoples. In some cases, participants spoke to how “business-as-usual” planning stands in the way of ethical, relational approaches more generally.

The problem is, when it walks out of the Academy, as much as you have tried to say to planning students: “These are the things you have to think about, these are the barriers you're going to be up against,” as soon as they hit the real world, the real world is not sympathetic to doing your best. The real world wants it done quick, under budget. Get the check boxes. “Oh, did you talk to the Chief? Excellent! We have consulted!” And does not want best practice, does not know best practice... [former students] are probably violating their code of ethics, as we speak, because the city manager says, “if you do that I'll fire you.” And that is the real world for a lot of planning students when they get out there. The people they will be working for, the city councilors, the regional districts, who don't care about actually doing a good job or meeting your professional code of conduct. Because that's not their business.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Other participants focused on the fundamental tensions at play in non-Indigenous organizations and planners “making plans” for lands that are the territories of Indigenous Peoples.

there are actually, you know, there are multiple, coexisting sovereignties and sets of laws, Indigenous laws that long pre-existed Crown law. And embedded within that, a lot of codes of conduct that inform environmental governance

- Non-Indigenous participant

[Nations are] getting a lot of invitations to participate in OCP updates. What does that mean to them? I don't know, right? So, there's a lot of navigating that. What does that mean in terms of our relationships? Our government-to-government relationships, if we're engaging on this level.

- Non-Indigenous participant

I think that we do need to refresh our competencies in some ways. And I think that line of Indigenous knowledge needs to be better articulated as to, “what is a competency to be working in Canada in particular, as a planner on the topic of land use, when land is really at the heart of Indigenous identity?”

- Non-Indigenous participant

There are added complexities involved for planning organizations and individuals working with different forms of Indigenous governance, when the anti-capitalist approaches of many leaders and planners sit outside the “norm” of “business-as-usual” planning.

That's why I kind of roll my eyes at PIBC talking about decolonization is just because just planning is so, typical Western planning, right, is so colonial. It's all about being like, “all right, here's this empty land [laughs]; we would come in, plan what should go here, and then build it.”

- Non-Indigenous participant

A lot of planning is intended to protect private land ownership and the interests of private landowners, and that's a good part of what we do as planners is just “let's create bylaws and rules to protect the individual property owner. And make sure their interests are held as at the very highest level.” And I, you kind of go, “Okay. Well, you know what about everybody else?”

- Non-Indigenous participant

On the first day of my planning degree at [xxx], the first lecture, the opening slide, was my instructor saying that the premise of planning in Canada, and Western planning, is that the role of the planner is to protect individual property values so that property owners can experience land lift. And at the end of the day, what we're doing is protecting property value. And obviously, that's not what I'm doing. I couldn't care less about protecting individuals' stolen land property value, right?

- Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Where Nations are involved in the more 'conventional' planning projects, participants spoke to the challenges of capacity for many across the province, particularly outside the lower mainland.

We just had a meeting, and the point was made that 5 years ago, one guy in the First Nation I work with, which is 300 people give or take, one person could stay on top of the consultation business, if you will, the Crown consultation obligations through the referral system. One person could more or less keep track of that. And since then, the big change has been the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act that has put incredible pressure and incredible opportunities on the backs of First Nations in small communities. So, that one guy that had the referrals is no longer possible.

- Non-Indigenous participant

It's a ton of a lack of capacity on the First Nations side. The First Nations, and I mean, this is not unusual, but just on Stuart Lake, you know, there's Binche, Tl'azt'en, and Nak'azdli Whut'en, and each of them are potentially 300 people, maybe smaller. And they're trying to run a full raft of family services, and everybody's trying to run their own Federal government and local government services. I mean Saik'uz is 400 people!... you meet any council member from any First Nation. And you say, "Oh, yeah, what's your portfolio?" And they'll say, "Oh, I'm economic development and housing, and..." it's unbelievable!

- Non-Indigenous participant

Further, the participants emphasized that there are not enough Indigenous people in planning in general and planning for their communities in particular.

I was in a planning meeting with [their student] and there were three PhDs in the room, one person working on [their] Masters, somebody else working on their PhD, and it occurred to me as I was sitting out in Chilliwack, that I was the only Indigenous person in the room, and there were no Stó:lō people there. And, like I said, I had my one student interviewing my other student, or my graduate, on behalf of a First Nation. And so, there was a weird moment of, like, "wow, our First Nations are full of these non-Indigenous bureaucracies." I don't know how to describe my feeling about that.

- Indigenous participant

Our faculty brought together some land use managers from a bunch of different Nations in the lower mainland and on the islands and on the coast; brought them together for a knowledge exchange and discussion. And I don't know. We probably had a close to 20 different land use managers or people in that role, land use managers or planners, or what have you. And two of them were Indigenous, you know, and both of them, weren't, you know, representing their Nation? They're representing different Nations!

- Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

For all the participants, there is a clear imperative for non-Indigenous parties to financially support Nations' engagement in planning projects.

We need to have a conversation around how do we go about, from this perspective of power, work with local Nations to try and understand where they might be able to engage with us in a way that makes sense for them. And then that always comes back to the question of funding. And I would argue that there's pretty broad acknowledgment in local government that we do need to provide sustaining funding if we want to actually be engaging with Nations, because that's the only way that they're going to be able to do that... We can't expect them to continue to give us the benefit of all of this knowledge without providing sustainable funding.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Beyond supporting Nations' engagement, there is a clear imperative to support Indigenous people in becoming planners for their communities.

As a profession, we need to have a good look at that, and understanding, "Why is that the case? What is it about our intake? What is it about our curriculum that is allowing for this to persist?" ...it is [about] empowering, you know, community members to become involved in planning for their communities.

- Indigenous participant

Having those technical skills is really important too, like learning how to do feasibility studies and bringing that back into our hands instead of having consultants or having people come from the outside world to do that. How do we bring it in-house and how do we make that more accessible, and doing all that budgeting and things like that, that are, yeah, more technical, but I think are important for us to do on our own, too. And bring in our ways, in our thoughts, towards it.

- Indigenous participant

Participants highlighted issues with current pathways to planning education and professional membership for Indigenous people and even questioned the value of RPP certification to Indigenous people and planners in the current context of the profession, highlighting the possibilities for "different" paths for Indigenous planning.

Those colonial barriers that we create to become a registered professional planner: "here's your one route. You need to go to an accredited planning school. You need to get a mentor, you have to write an ethics exam. You have to do this written exam. This is your only route into being a registered professional planner." I'll contend to you, I think that students are saying, "you know what? I don't have to be RPP to practice planning. I'm not jumping through those hoops anymore." And I think the profession needs to wake up and say, "What do you actually need to be or to do to be a planner, to call yourself a planner?"

- Non-Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

You know, the world of Indigenous planning is like a parallel world to, certainly municipal planning, municipal and like corporate planning. And I think there are certainly opportunities to link those worlds, and certainly for emerging Indigenous planners. There could be a lot of value in the networking opportunities, the learning...But I think there's a lot of reckoning to be done within, you know, I use these terms 'conventional' or 'Western' or 'Eurocentric' planning; with the values that those approaches are based on, and how contrary those can be to the values of many Indigenous planners.

- Indigenous participant

Participants also highlighted the lack of understanding within the profession of the discipline's colonial heritage and the ways that planning has been – and still is – "utilized to control and dominate Indigenous communities," and suggested that the institutes, like PIBC, have an important role in supporting conversations about Reconciliation.

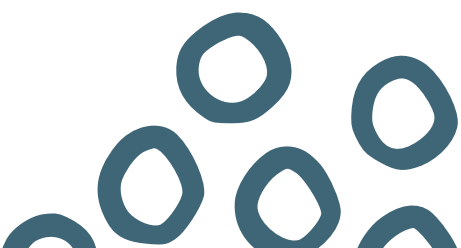
The Part of the issue is none of this content, or none of this learning, is a part of the core competencies within the professional planning field. And so, now we need to start making this argument to PIBC, to CIP, that this history of planning needs to be a core component of what you're teaching, to understand on a deeper level.... once we have that understanding and education around this history and this long-standing relationship between planning as a practice and as a profession and its role in Indigenous communities, then we can start talking about..."What does planning for communities, planning for place, look like outside of what it has been historically?" Instead of applying these values systems, or these understandings of what's good for Canadian society, on Indigenous communities. It's learning a different process of engaging community to understand what those aspirations are and applying that or bringing that into planning design.

- Indigenous participant

Furthermore, participants were wary of extractivism in both planning relationships and the 'Indigenizing' of 'Reconciliation' work undertaken by institutes like PIBC and other professional organizations and businesses.

I'm really keen to see what could be done to create more effective spaces for revitalization of Indigenous planning knowledges both within and without outside of the Academy. I think PIBC could potentially play a role in that; CIP could potentially play a role in that. But it can't be extractive. It can't be for the benefit of these institutions, or to glean best practices that white planners can then use to get more work out of our communities, you know? And that feels like it's always been a bit of a tension point. It's like, the Indigenization for whom? By whom? For what purposes? That needs to be really carefully considered, I think.

- Indigenous participant



Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Educators' efforts at facilitating student learning in Indigenous planning contexts and teaching students the responsibilities of decolonizing planning and planning for Reconciliation are making a difference. Educators have the power to tackle the 'truth-telling' aspect of Reconciliation, and to teach their students accurate and responsible histories and theories of planning. This includes instilling capacities for ways of being that will stand graduates in good stead to approach their work and relationships with Indigenous people and communities with respect, humility, and proactive engagement. As potential future members of the PIBC and the profession, these students will be well-positioned to advocate for the changes needed in the Institute and beyond. However, the question remains whether PIBC, and the profession at large, is ready for these students? There is a pressing need for systemic and institutional changes now, and PIBC has a significant role in creating this change.

Participants' ideas for PIBC

Participants wondered if it would be possible for PIBC to provide financial support for improving Indigenous and decolonizing planning education, including grants for funding student travel to communities, scholarships, honoraria for Elder participation in education, as illustrated in the following quotes:

The opportunity is what really costs. I've got commitment from folks in [local Nation] that if I've got a group of students really interested in this, and I know that's a concern for [local Nation], they would welcome them! And they'd do that same thing of feeding them, and they would bring them to Chief and Council, and they'd bring them to a community feast. But we don't have the money to get them there. And neither does [local Nation]. So, I think a grant that with a nice sounding name that students could apply for to fund travel, associated with undergraduate and graduate experiential learning. It'll look good on their CV. They'll get the money I haven't got to be able to get them to places. So, that's the first thing is that PIBC starts, and any of them actually across the country, start putting their money where their mouth is. It's so easy to say we're committed to Truth and Reconciliation, then we don't do anything to actually build any bridges.

- Non-Indigenous participant

whenever I'm asked, I'm always supportive of anybody who has any capacity to develop scholarships for people working in these spaces, to support grad students. I always think there could be more of that

- Indigenous participant

Money: scholarships, bursaries, giving money to communities. You know, working with Indigenous elders. And if you don't have that knowledge as a planner, go find it somewhere. And have the profession as a whole give money to that, and value to that...

- Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Participants stressed the need for PIBC to support the work of increasing Indigenous presence in the profession by, for example, hosting or resourcing in-community information sessions on planning as a profession, making sure to highlight how planning can be meaningful, respectful, and relevant to Indigenous contexts:

Figuring out how to have more Indigenous planners come through this system right? Or more Indigenous people become planners. Right? And that's something that I'm wondering, like, what is the role of PIBC? What is the role of CIP in supporting that?... it's having those conversations in communities around community. And what's good for community, and thinking about what their role in community should, what they would like to do, and what they would like to build, and showing them that planning is an avenue as a profession, as a career, to really allow you to develop the tools and skills to push communities forward in good ways.

- Indigenous participant

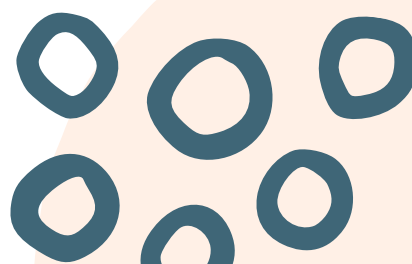
Participants highlighted the imperative of ensuring the profession is a safe space for Indigenous planners to practice, suggesting various approaches to making relevant Continued Professional Learning requirements: for example, mandatory CPL training; embedding historical and conceptual context through training which would need to be designed by/with Indigenous folks.

I would say, PIBC's role...I think the majority of their work has to be around making sure that the space that these students are coming into is a safe one... it's that educational piece of dismantling those colonial ways of practice, thinking, and being, even just collegial racism and microaggressions. Working on addressing that within the practice.

- Indigenous participant

Certified planners, we all have to get our Continued Professional Learning, our CPL, we all have to have to hit our 18-hour benchmark, right? It'd be kind of interesting to see if there was like a 5-year push where 5 of those hours had to be related to some sort of Indigenous training or something, right? PIBC, for example, hosts Webinars, often with Indigenous content, or will have Indigenous speakers associated with more generalized content. So those opportunities are there, which is awesome. So that could certainly play a role in advancing, albeit on a voluntary basis...but could [it] have a little bit more teeth to it, potentially? If some of those CPL units were designated for x number of years for Indigenous-related content.

- Non-Indigenous participant



Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

if we actually make those regulatory changes and Act changes through DRIPA, which we are supposed to be doing...changes to the Local Government Act, or changes to the Archaeology Branch into the Heritage Act, that will have real implications for how planners in Municipalities and Regional Districts do their work. And it's going to have to be accompanied by training. So, it'd be nice if that training wasn't just, "bylaw 47 now has to be changed." But that there was a little bit of history. There was a little bit of context. There was a little bit of the "why this is happening," and not just the minutia of the regulatory change.

- Non-Indigenous participant

And the rollout and the education and training, it'd obviously make a ton of sense to collaborate with Indigenous knowledge holders and Indigenous firms, to do that work.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Participants also suggested PIBC, and CIP and the other regional institutes, might foster and support more engagement and collaboration between the institute, professionals, and the schools.

I think that the professional associations certainly should be providing...the chance for professionals to work together across the country and produce reports or policies on issues that move the profession forward, and not just hire a consultant...[for example] PSB, The Planning Standards Board, is that part of the CIP that works on competencies...they hired some educational consultants who came up with the most generic set of consultant...you know, just did not respond with anything that schools could really use. You'd have to go to business school to be a planner...it was a very generic set of competencies. And they did that without consulting with the schools, who hopefully, some of the schools have actually taken an interest in pedagogy and competencies, and that kind of stuff. Anyway, they're just really arm's-length.

- Non-Indigenous participant

I would like to see PIBC more involved with the schools... my impression is that PIBC, they don't talk to the schools enough, on the whole, like just sort of every day. In an everyday way. So, the PIBC has a group called PIBC Academic Liaisons, which is, you know, a faculty member from each of the PIBC schools and a student, and they get together and they talk. And that group has been active in making sure that the schools are more represented in the publications. But when does the PIBC actively engage with the schools? For me, they come once a year, the board comes once a year, and I say whatever I think.

- Non-Indigenous participant

Part 2: Key Informant Interviews

Finally, there was an overall sense that PIBC, and the other institutes in Canada, should encourage planners to embrace responsibilities to engage with Nations and Indigenous organizations in their daily practice and to undertake to gain a deeper understanding of the role of planning and planners in fostering meaningful Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. In many ways, this final quote encapsulates many of the thoughts and perspectives shared throughout the interviews.

If you're doing some sort of planning exercise, to have a requirement of engagement with local Nations; that in and of itself, to have to do that every time you plan something, I think, would teach people a lot. At least slow them down to think about it. Yeah, cause it's actually crazy...at your fingertips is deciding what all of our lives look like in terms of relationship to each other and the place we're in and accessibility to things. And that's a huge responsibility that maybe isn't thought about as much. And this whole idea of land-use planning, to decide what our land is used for? Is a huge responsibility that affects everyone. Yeah, or maybe just talking about that more [laughs]. What power do you as a planner have? What responsibility do you have to everyone and to people who were the original stewards of the land?

- Indigenous participant

Next Steps

Our next steps are to find out what emerging and practicing planners know, and what they think, about Indigenous planning, Reconciliation, and decolonization; to report back to the PIBC and the planning schools; and to generate academic knowledge through the publication of journal articles. This work involves:

- The design of a survey instrument – drawing on the findings from the key-informant interviews – to assess planners' knowledge and social attitudes about Indigenous planning and Reconciliation.
- The administration of the survey to planning students completing their degrees at the four accredited planning schools in BC and to the PIBC membership. The survey will explore emerging and practicing planners' knowledge and attitudes about Indigenous planning, Reconciliation, and decolonization, investigate what they have learned through their education and work experience, and explore obstacles to their learning and understanding.
- The analysis of survey results. Depending on the structure and design of the co-designed survey instrument, we will use qualitative and quantitative analyses to assess respondents' knowledge in relation to their responses to social attitude and demographic questions. For analysis of responses to open-ended survey questions on the surveys, the qualitative analysis software NVivo will be used to organize and code data. Qualitative data from the survey will be analyzed using in vivo and inductive methods to build themes and sub-themes based on common and significant words and expressions for discussion. For multi-select/multiple choice questions, we will employ quantitative analyses of responses to determine trends across respondents' knowledge and attitudes.
- Knowledge mobilization and reporting back. We will combine findings from the survey analyses with the findings from the key-informant interviews to provide benchmarking and recommendations to PIBC and the planning schools. This may include the development of stakeholder and community reports, graphic representations of findings, manuscripts for academic publication, and in-person engagements and events.

