Re-Branding the
Canadian Planning Profession

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if branding strategies could enhance the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder environment. To address this research question, the following objectives were developed and examined: (1) to gauge the perceptions of planning within different stakeholder groups in Canada; (2) to gauge the perceptions of the CIP within different stakeholder groups; (3) to develop a set of best practices in strategic planning and marketing; (4) to develop a set of best practices adopted by international professional planning NGOs; (5) to determine how to better market the profession and the CIP.

A mixed-method approach grounded in branding and strategic planning theory was used. This included content analysis, a web-based survey, and key informant interviews. The content analysis compared the practices of Canadian planning organizations with those of international organizations, in addition to examining best practices in marketing and branding. The findings derived from this phase served to develop a list of best practices that can be used as a tool for improvement within the Canadian planning context. The web-based survey, while not statistically significant, served to draw out themes, and identify potential issues and areas for further investigation. The key informant interviews elaborated on and clarified survey findings, providing rich data for analysis.

Findings indicated that the Canadian planning profession lacks unity within the planning community, a clear role and identity, position and influence, as well as general awareness, and fleshed out a variety of reasons as to why this is the case, while investigating areas for improvement. An analysis of the combined findings from the three research phases determined that branding strategies and strategic planning can indeed serve to enhance the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder environment. Recommendations focused on clarifying the profession's role and identity; building awareness; nurturing relationships between planning, politics and other related professions; advancing planning education; improving the CIP's leadership role; and re-examining the relationship between the CIP and its affiliates.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To Mama and Papa for your love, support and wisdom. You taught me everything.

To Darji for starting it all.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREMISE

The face of the Canadian planning profession has seen radical change in recent years. Our increasingly diverse society has evolved in such a way that requires planning to be done with a higher emphasis on external consultation and diplomatic negotiation. The profession now covers a wide array of professional fields, which makes it necessary for practitioners to adopt a communication-oriented cross-functional skill set. From this change stems a newfound ambiguous identity, which touches not only planners, but due to the profession's wide-reaching nature, a variety of external stakeholders as well. Literature indicates that this has led to a stagnation, or even decline in the position and influence of the planning profession within a multi-stakeholder context (Howe, 1994; Friedmann, 1994; McClendon, 2003; Peiser, 1990; Witty, 1998; Lightbody, 2006; Glazer, 2000). In order to understand this phenomenon and ultimately rectify the situation, it has become imperative that the planning profession be clearly defined and given a tangible and empowering "brand identity" within Canada.

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) is the organization representing the professional voice of planners across the country. As such, it is responsible for the promotion and advancement of the Canadian planning profession. Under this mandate, the CIP has made efforts to market and brand the profession in the past, but relatively little has been done to evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts thus far (Witty, 1998). Consequently, a study must be conducted to gauge the effectiveness of past CIP marketing efforts and to generate strategies that will improve the position of the profession within a multi-stakeholder context.

1.2 IMPLICATIONS

It is a generally accepted notion in the literature and among practitioners that the "social status" of the planner has been declining in recent years (Witty, 1998). Experienced planners consistently complain about their lack of power to affect real change and about the negative perceptions that the public has towards their profession. This is largely due to an unclear definition of planning in a Canadian context, given its multi-disciplinary and cross-functional nature (McClendon, 2003; Witty, 1998). Planners themselves do not have a consistent identity with which they can relate to, which leads to an ambiguous image projected to those outside the profession as well (McClendon, 2003).

As a dynamic and multi-disciplinary profession, planning combines political theory, econometrics and social theory, among others (Campbell & Fainstein, 2003; Hanna, 2000). Planners must thus maintain a broad range of knowledge if they are to approach the planning process with a holistic point of view that results in comprehensive decision-making with a long-term focus (Hanna, 2000). This very holistic nature is what makes defining planning in exact terms difficult, if not impossible, as it overlaps with a number of other theories, disciplines and professions (Campbell & Fainstein, 2003). A certain level of mistrust and skepticism has thus arisen and has engendered perceptions of indifference or even negativity toward the planning profession (McClendon, 2003; Glazer, 2000; Graham, Phillips, & Maslove, 1998; Beauregard, 1989; McAllister, 2004; Howe, 1994; Friedmann, 1994; Lightbody, 2006).

Consequently, literature indicates that the planner's voice often has little impact over real decision-making, weakening the value of their advice as a whole (McClendon, 2003;

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Witty, 1998; Friedmann, 1994). Decisions made by government officials are therefore frequently insufficiently and improperly researched, rendering, in some cases, the planning decision-making process ineffective (Peiser, 1990). While poor decisions are being made and implemented, the blame is shifted towards planners, negatively impacting professional morale and creating situations where opportunities that devote resources to highlighting the merits of the profession are lost (Friedmann, 1994; Howe, 1994). Each of these implications has combined to hasten the deteriorating credibility of the profession in recent years, which ultimately circles back to the initial lack of voice issue, igniting a cycle that has thus far failed to be broken (Witty, 1991).

Figure 1: Planning Profession Image Cycle
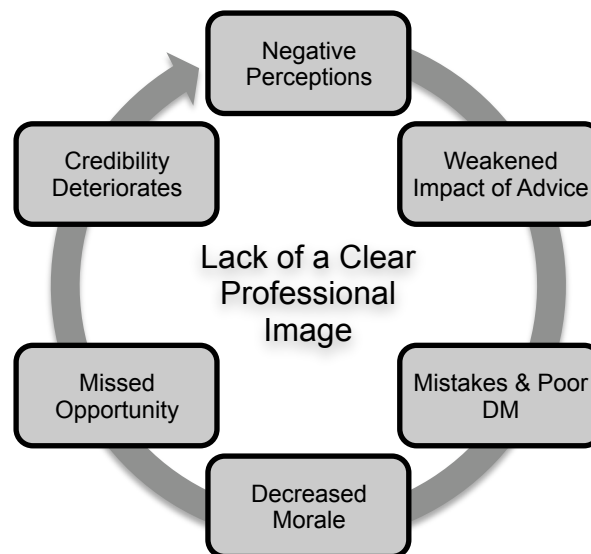
1.3 THESIS OVERVIEW

In essence, the goal of this exercise is to develop realistic and applicable solutions related to the present-day effectiveness of the Canadian planning profession's marketing

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efforts. As the face of the Canadian planning profession, the Canadian Institute of Planners'
(CIP) current approach must therefore be described and categorized in order to compare and
contrast it to what is successfully being done in other countries and by other organizations
today. This will be done by adopting a mixed-method approach using a variety of
quantitative and qualitative techniques. The literature review will serve to form a background
and contextual framework from which to understand the relevance and necessity of the study.
The content analysis will draw out a list of best practices from marketing theory and planning
organizations. The first phase of the research will consist of a web-based survey designed to
generate an idea of the opinions of various stakeholder groups regarding the position and
influence of the Canadian planning profession. Key informant interviews will then complete
missing links and provide a more in-depth investigation into the issues uncovered in previous
research steps. Once the primary research is complete, the findings will be compiled and
analyzed alongside the theory and best practices. Practical conclusions and
recommendations, formulated to advance the position and influence of Canadian planning,
will then be drawn and proposed.

1.4 THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis is composed of five major sections, each sub-divided into segments.
Section two covers a review of the literary body of work relating to the history and current
state of the Canadian planning profession, as well as an examination of findings that serve as
the basis for this study. Section three describes and provides justification for the chosen
mixed-method approach, as it relates to the goals and objectives of this study. It also includes
a discussion of the merits and drawbacks of the specific methods chosen for every phase of

the research design and outlines how each of these methods will serve to address a specific research-related question. Section four consists of a content analysis focused on marketing-related material, as well as various planning organizations. It includes a concluding matrix of best practices, which summarizes findings, while serving as a benchmarking tool for the Canadian planning profession. Section five consists of a presentation of primary research findings from the web-based survey and from key informant interviews. A thorough analysis of these findings is also presented, along with concluding thoughts developed from these. Finally, section six puts forward conclusions and recommendations established from the findings drawn out throughout this thesis.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION & STRUCTURE

This chapter will provide justification for the research topic, and will provide the context from which the research question will emerge. As very few studies examining the status of the planning profession have been conducted, this literature review will focus on gathering content that will help form the background and current context of the issue, while providing a justification for the study itself.

Section 2.2 will highlight the important evolutionary elements of the profession that have led to its present state, and will feature a discussion about recent literature that are relevant to the topic of this thesis. Section 2.3 will discuss the marketing theory and methods that have been used to highlight the profession. Section 2.4 will discuss the study purpose and thesis research question. Sections 2.5 and 2.6 will explore the profession's identity, and how this can relate to different elements of marketing. Finally, Section 2.7 will summarize the main findings in this chapter.

2.2 THE EVOLUTION OF THE PROFESSION

If we look at the idea that planners have become communicators and seek to educate the public through their "expert" status, we are once again reverting to the rational-comprehensive model that was used during the height of Modernism in the 1950s. In today's society, planners no longer hold the "expert" image they once used to. They are now seen as "middlemen," negotiators or facilitators (Taylor, 1992; Campbell & Fainstein, 2003;

McAllister, 2004; Lightbody, 2006). As such, the profession needs to acknowledge this change and provide a framework for planning professionals to practice under this newfound context. Today's planner does not simply determine land-use guidelines or where to build the next highway. Today's planner must combine a wide array of disciplines in order to make the best decision for the public good (Witty, 1998; Canadian Institute of Planners, 2007; McAllister, 2004). In addition to this, while coping with this change within, the profession must communicate this change externally. The public face of the profession must be up-to-date with the changes that have occurred over the years, so as to keep the public educated about what planners do and the evolving role of the profession in society (Witty, 1991). The literature on the subject seems to indicate that this has not been the case, and that a certain level of complacent stagnation has occurred instead, ultimately leading to an ambiguous understanding of what planning really is (McClendon, 2003; Beauregard, 1989). In order to initiate a change in perception, a broad and active campaign must be put out to remedy the public image of the professional planner today (Campbell & Fainstein, 2003; McClendon, 2003; Witty, 1998). While this remains the purpose of the study, it is important to first examine the root cause of this image shift to completely understand the current state of the Canadian planning practice.

2.2.1 Pre-1960s Planning

The late 18th century marked the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, a movement that grew into most of Europe and eventually into North America. Although technologically progressive, this period was characterized by rapid urban expansion and population growth, inadequate housing, water shortage and lack of proper waste

management, essentially rendering much of urban development into slums (Hodge & Gordon, 2008; McAllister, 2004). Migration from countryside to cities was occurring largely due to increased economic opportunity for lower class people, since growing manufacturing industry required large human capital. The result of this movement created an urban atmosphere of congestion, squalor and filth, where quality of life was greatly compromised for all members of the community (Hodge & Gordon, 2008; McAllister, 2004).

In addition, the emergence of the industrial city gave rise to excessive capitalism, and in that grew conflict regarding land use. According to Robert A. Beauregard, " different capitalists pursue different spatial development strategies in an uncoordinated fashion, thus creating an intracapitalist competition alongside a capital-labor struggle for control over the built environment" (1989, p. 109). This fragmentation resulted in inefficient infrastructure development, which further worsened conditions within urban cores. Rapid urban growth thus needed to be supported through the ordering of society and its built form (Beauregard, 1989; Hodge & Gordon, 2008; McAllister, 2004).

This widespread suffering and inefficiency sparked a need for intervention, which was initiated by political initiatives from radicals, socialists and utopians alike (Hodge & Gordon, 2008; McAllister, 2004). These initiatives, and the need thereof, combined to form the beginning of the modernist period that would last through to the 1970s (Beauregard, 1989; Filion, 2007; McAllister, 2004). Planners of the time saw the need to bring capitalist chaos under control, while fostering strong economic practices and maintaining the spirit of capital growth. Within this realm, the need to resolve social problems and improve quality of life was also acknowledged (Beauregard, 1989; McAllister, 2004). It was the belief of the time that as capitalism was controlled and industrial urban centers were made more efficient,

prosperity would be re-distributed to the lower class, which would consequently take on the values and behaviors of a new middle class (Beauregard, 1989). The expansion of the middle class would therefore indicate that the society itself did not suffer from dividing contradictions, and that this enabled planners to physically organize the city for the greater good of the public, essentially rendering diversity in background, values and lifestyles irrelevant (Beauregard, 1989; McAllister, 2004).

Through the pursuit of the balance between capitalist interest and social progress, "modernist planners situated themselves clearly within both a European rationalism and an American pragmatism"(Beauregard, 1989, p. 112). It is within this position that the rational-comprehensive planning model found its beginnings. This decision-making model is based on a scientific, expert-based approach that uses a highly logical, step-by-step process leading to a single optimal solution (Filion, 2007). At the time, planners were concerned with developing a measurable, performance-based process for planning decision-making, and were less concerned with abstract theorizing, particularly in reference to social theory (Beauregard, 1989). Under this approach, modernist planners were able to adopt an objective position that justified separating themselves from differing social interests, while avoiding claims of self-interest, and thereby allowing them to focus on the greater good of the society (Beauregard, 1989). While adopting this position, however, the issue of democracy within planning decision-making was brought into light, since modernist planners saw themselves as privileged "experts" on public interest, while democracy was left to the state (Beauregard, 1989; McAllister, 2004). Public interest, in this regard, was agreed upon by the majority of planners to be the functional and efficient organization of the city (Beauregard, 1989).

In addition to this, there was growing speculation and frustration regarding corruption and the power held by the political elite. Figures such as Robert Moses brought to light the fine line between politics and planning, as the public began to see politicians and planners as one and the same (McAllister, 2004). In fact, elements within society came together to form an environment where decisions were made by very few, in a self-serving manner. As McAllister (2004) puts it: "The chaos and disorganization of civic affairs in large North American cities, particularity in the eastern part of the United States, created an environment whereby individuals with resources were able to set up what came to be known as powerful urban political machines" (p. 27).

It is this very system that proved to be detrimental, and consequently led to the fall of modernism in the context of an evolving society. Focused on creating functional, organized cities, modernist planners often overlooked the needs, values and rights of different social groups. Through the pursuit of social conformity and non-differentiating architecture, planners were in fact alienating minority social groups, mostly ethnic or low-income, and creating spatial and functional segregation within communities (Fainstein, 2000; McAllister, 2004). Societies were evolving in a multi-faceted way, and the paradigms under which they were created in the 19th century were quickly becoming irrelevant come the 1970s (McAllister, 2004; Lightbody, 2006). The purpose of the reformist movement had been achieved, and was replaced by economic development in the 1980s (Beauregard, 1989; McAllister, 2004). Inner city slums had diminished, infrastructure renewal had occurred and capitalist interest was under control. Technological advancement, political reform and socio-cultural change has resulted in a more global perspective. Through this, there has been a shift from diversity between nations to diversity within nations, essentially bringing nations closer

together, yet pushing countrymen apart (Burayidi, 2000). The conformity and standardization bred through the modernist period, with its limited thinking and mass-culture channels has eroded away, leaving cultural, lifestyle and value diversity in its wake. A pride in non-conformity had developed, rendering ineffective the idea of catering to the greater good of all members of society by making decisions based on the needs of a single majority (Filion, 2007; Burayidi, 2000; Lightbody, 2006; McAllister, 2004). As states Lightbody (2006), "…modern society had become increasingly slivered into a greater number of special personal and institutional roles" (p. 499).

Furthermore, in the face of political and economic reform, the idea that rational-comprehensive planning will organically lead to the overall well being of the city has been disputed. According to Beauregard (1989), "national attempts to obliterate class distinctions through prosperity and collective consumption and the local attempts to provide events […] that celebrate yet minimize differences have not led to the 'embourgeoisement' of the working class" (p. 116). In addition, McAllister (2004) notes: "As a consequence, today's cities are ideologically, financially, and structurally unequipped to respond to many significant challenges confronting Canadian communities. Local politics – at least as represented through municipal institutions – left certain individuals and groups feeling shut out of the formal governing process" (p. 32). It is from this context that the planning profession has become what it is today.

2.2.2 Planning and Politics in Recent Years

The 1960s and 1970s saw a period of activism as a result of increasing diversity combined with the state of the political and planning system of the time. In fact, "citizens

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expected to be able to participate politically beyond the ballot box when decisions directly affected their interests" (McAllister, 2004, p. 32). Essentially, an increase in diversity in society resulted in growing demand by an increasing number of communities of interest for the right to participate more actively in major policy decisions (McAllister, 2004; Lightbody, 2006; Tietz, 2000). Consequently, this period also saw the rise of neighborhood associations that often pitted the interests of the private business sector versus those of residents, the working class and the inner-city poor (McAllister, 2004). These associations often, however, lacked resources and information about the decision-making process, and had little to no political power (McAllister, 2004). Nevertheless, they gave previously ignored segments of the population a voice and placed an increased strain on local governments during a time where local political authority and provincial financial aid was diminishing (McAllister, 2004). These trends continued well into the late 20th century.

In the 1980s and 1990s, postmodern times saw a reaction to these financial conditions, as a trend towards public-private partnerships between planners and developers had arisen (Beauregard, 1989; Neiman & Fernandez, 2000; Graham, Phillips, & Maslove, 1998; McAllister, 2004; Peiser, 1990). In fact, this period saw increasing corporate presence in local decision-making as local governments looked toward the private sector to participate in service delivery as a means to conserve resources (Graham, Phillips, & Maslove, 1998; Lightbody, 2006; McAllister, 2004). Since the business sector started to hold increasing power in the political arena, the conflict of interest line has been blurred, and planners and members of council can no longer claim the same objectivity they once did with regard to decision-making with the well being of the overall community in mind (McAllister, 2004; Lightbody, 2006). Within this context, development politics and social politics have become

somewhat separated, inherently rendering development politics "less democratic," in that decisions regarding subsidies to industrial investment, public infrastructure and private property are now considered "technical decisions" that are reserved for experts (Lightbody, 2006; McAllister, 2004). McAllister (2004) goes on to make the point that "in earlier years, and even in some places today, planning has been viewed as a scientific, objective process that separates incompatible uses through subdivision and zoning. But even the most professional planner makes choices among competing values" (p. 154). In essence, the simultaneous coupling of increasing social demands in a private sector driven society resulted in the disregard for rising demands by local politicians backing a business-based agenda.

It was also at this time that NIMBY made its appearance, and public participation took the local, national and international stage. These phenomena formed the basis for a society-centered view of democracy, and came directly out of criticisms that local governments were no longer able to advance democratic goals (McAllister, 2004; Lightbody, 2006) As Lightbody (2006) puts: "When this presumed balance is coupled with the public interest, or common good that municipal decision-makers see themselves as representing, councillors become no more than ideologically neutral policy arbiters intent upon producing generally fair and widely equitable public policies out of the competitive group interlay" (p. 266). Essentially, he argues that in the face of an increasing number of conflicting interests in communities, decision-makers were rarely able to satisfy the needs and demands of all sides, inherently implementing policy that best suits the "greater good" rather than dealing with controversial issues head-on. On the other hand, McAllister (2004) observes that "extensive consultation with citizens and interest groups also means that once those exercises have taken

place, it is politically very difficult for governments not to adopt, or at least appear to take seriously, the recommendations of that public consultation" (p.71).

2.2.3 Ambiguity and Mistrust

This new view on democracy brings about a new set of problems for planners and decision-makers. Interestingly, these problems seem to be similar to, yet opposing those that had arisen during modern times: decisions are once again being made for the "greater good" or in the interest of a controlling private sector, while good decisions for the community cannot be made effectively without the necessary power and influence. Lightbody (2006) even goes so far to mention that city councils have taken a large step away from the actual politics of city governing, instead directing accountability on the stakeholders or participants to an issue, including planners. He then lists five important sources for influence over decision-making: the media, business interests, labor unions, permanent bureaucracy and civic groups.

Perhaps the most relevant to this study and the most impactful of all of these sources of influence is the media. Despite the fact that it has little direct influence over decision-making for a particular issue, the tone and bias in reporting has a cumulative effect over the choices taken and forms the basis for most public opinion. In fact, McAllister (2004) attributes a great deal of responsibility for the mistrust in the political decision-making process, of which planning is a part, on this very source, saying "citizens who feel disaffected by the political process because it does not address their sets of needs, or because they feel it to be corrupt or ineffective, are reinforced in these perceptions by the media" (p. 71).

The issue may possibly be simpler than this, however. Bruce McClendon (2003), the director of planning and growth management for Hillsborough County, Florida, explains that "the public doesn't really know what planning is as a profession and doesn't know how to differentiate between the various occupational specialists who provide a wide array of planning products and services" (p. 221). This view is shared by Nathan Glazer (2000), who states: "the image of the planner in the public mind is not compelling; indeed, it is rather dim" (p. 224). Thus, the issue is to make the profession more compelling to the primary stakeholders. As a low-profile profession operating within a very dynamic framework, it is difficult to maintain a consistent positive image. McClendon (2003) goes on to discuss how negative anecdotes involving controversial urban renewal projects, the relationship between zoning and housing costs, and the effects of suburban development on the environment and society, are passed on through the years and form much of the perceptions of the small percentage of the public that is aware of planning initiatives. He also cites overlap with related professions like architecture and engineering, which he describes as competitors, as a contributing force to the ambiguity of the planning identity. McClendon (2003) comments: "the planning profession has also aged and, in many ways, has become invisible to many of the people, organizations and media interests that we care about" (p. 228).

These trends combined result in a complex situation where mistrust and confusion are engendered at both ends of the spectrum: planners are seen by the public as favoring the interests of the private sector, while the private sector remains wary of the public participation initiatives brought on by democratic planning processes (Beauregard, 1989; Graham, Phillips, & Maslove, 1998; McAllister, 2004; Lightbody, 2006; Peiser, 1990). In addition to this, Lightbody (2006) highlights the issue that the influence of professions such

as planning is hidden or often seen as inaccessible by the public, which emphasizes the low profile thereof. If the public cannot see what planners achieve, then how can they have an accurate view of the profession? Therefore, in their communicative efforts to mediate and integrate a variety of stakeholder interests while coping with a low public profile, today's planners suffer from a lingering unclear and conflicting public image that cultivates confusion and perhaps even mistrust (Lightbody, 2006; McAllister, 2004; McClendon, 2003; Glazer, 2000).

As a result, morale within the profession comes into question. Given this context, Deborah Howe (1994) has wondered how there could be any public support for planning at all or how people still continue to choose planning as a profession. She also indicates that "many practicing planners are insecure, discouraged, and tentative about their accomplishments" (Howe, 1994, p. 402). John Friedmann (1987; 1994) also makes observations along the same lines, indicating that "the profession is suffering from a crisis in confidence" (McClendon, 2003, p. 221), with most planners feeling like their work has failed or is useless. He also indicates that bureaucracy within the process, combined with the dynamic reality of communities, often renders plans useless and out-of-date (Friedmann, 1994).

2.3 STUDY PURPOSE & RESEARCH QUESTION

The evolution of the planning profession has altered the image and status of the planner in Canada, and has thus brought about the need to develop a new professional image, which must not only connect with planners, but with society as a whole. Herein lies the challenge of creating a clear, relatable identity that caters to the needs and expectations of an

increasingly diverse market. This study will seek to tackle this challenge through innovative means, by coupling strategic planning and brand management tools and using these to inform the research and develop a new approach to advancing the profession in Canada. Hence, the purpose of the study can be summarized as such: to investigate concerns about the decline of the Canadian planner's professional image, and to generate *realistic and applicable strategies* that will improve the *position and influence* of the Canadian planning profession within a *multi-stakeholder context.* This will be done by examining the current status of the profession, and by gauging the effectiveness of past and current Canadian planning profession marketing efforts. This thesis also serves a dual purpose in that it makes an academic contribution by providing a case study on professional services marketing

Research Question

In order to maintain a focus throughout the research process, the following research question will serve as a guide:

Could branding strategies and strategic planning enhance the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder environment?

2.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

In order to ensure that the validity and applicability of this study are sound, it is important to establish a framework from within which the findings will be drawn. The chosen theoretical perspective will serve as a platform for future development within the context of this study, which will be to strategically develop the Canadian planning

profession's brand image in order to increase its impact and influence. Given its strategic re-branding focus, this study should therefore be grounded in brand management and strategic planning theory.

2.4.1 Brand Management

Brand management is defined as "the process of naming products, managing brands and brand-line extensions to fully attain maximum brand equity and a brand's full profit potential" (Best, 2004). In this case, there will be a focus on a single "brand" representing a professional service offered to a wide range of "customers": the Canadian planning profession. Presently, this brand is suffering from an unclear image, which is what the brand represents in the mind of the customer (Best, 2004). As a result, both service providers and customers are unhappy with the current state of the brand. It is not reaching its full "profit potential," which in this case, can be understood to mean status or level of influence. The difficulties that the profession is facing can easily work within this framework and generate the action-oriented solutions that this study seeks to develop.

2.4.2 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning involves identifying and defining long-term goals for a company or organization, and then outlining general strategies and specific tactics designed to reach these goals (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2005). As the principal organization responsible for the state of the Canadian planning profession, the CIP's strategic plan for the future is written within this context. In order to effectively increase the influence of planners, the profession must make this a primary goal and use the correct tools to reach it. An accurate identification

of core competencies and a clear "competitive advantage" over other professions will help to develop strategies for future advancement. The inclusion of this framework is thus a necessity to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the recommendations developed through this study.

2.4.3 Combined Frameworks

Given that the goal of this study is to provide the Canadian planning profession with applicable, long-term solutions to the profession's image problem, a full understanding of both theories will be needed, with a specific focus on service marketing, which is the effective promotion, distribution and sale of intangible "goods" (Soroka, 2007). In order to do this, the "planning package" and "target market(s)" must be identified and clearly defined. In addition, within this definition, a formal strategic, if not "competitive" advantage must be explicitly highlighted (McClendon, 2003). Once these elements are identified, the profession will need to envision a brand identity that it wishes to portray and will then need to position the brand so as to highlight a value proposition within the competitive advantage. This will be the starting point for any strategically oriented marketing plan for the profession, and will ultimately lead to the re-branding of the Canadian planning service package (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2006; Soroka, 2007; McClendon, 2003; Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2005).

2.5 WHAT IS PLANNING?

The planning profession encompasses a wide range of disciplines, including political theory, econometrics and social theory. Within this scope it is necessary to recognize that each of these disciplines are interconnected under the planning context (Campbell &

Fainstein, 2003; Hanna, 2000). Any planner must therefore possess a broad range of knowledge in order to practice the profession with a multi-faceted, all-encompassing approach. Failure to do so will result in lopsided and ill-informed decision-making (Hanna, 2000). According to Campbell and Fainstein (2003), "planning theory seems to overlap with theory in all the social science disciplines, and it becomes hard to limit the scope or to stake out a turf specific to planning" (p.2). This is one of the elements that makes defining planning so difficult, especially considering the fact that "the boundary between planners and related professionals […] is not mutually exclusive: planners don't just plan, and non-planners also plan" (Campbell & Fainstein, 2003, p. 2). Because of its ambiguous nature, planning theory often borrows methodologies from many different fields, making a specific identification of the planning profession alone tricky (Campbell & Fainstein, 2003).

In his article for the *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *A Bold Vision and Brand Identity for the Planning Profession*, Bruce McClendon (2003) offers the explanation that planning is not a product, but is instead a service or a process. Within this description, however, the professionalism of planning is questioned, given the implication that planners don't *do*, but rather *suggest*. He goes on to give an action-oriented solution that deals with this issue: "to ensure that planning is recognized as a profession with a mission and a core vision, planning needs to be defined as the production, administration, and implementation of comprehensive plans" (p.226). This definition is highly marketable to each group of stakeholders, given the fact that it "includes executable actions, that can be seen, understood, felt, believed in, owned, and implemented by the community" (p.226). According to McClendon (2003), the planning profession's competitive advantage is therefore its "ability to identify interconnections within communities and human settlements" (p.226). Given the

fact that "neither the public, nor the profession has an agreed upon understanding of a compelling vision or core mission for the planning profession" (McClendon, 2003, p. 222), he believes that the creation of a brand identity for the profession, and – referencing the APA – a brand name for planning organizations, is key to differentiating planning from competing professions. To do this, he proposes a focus on name recognition, effective positioning and marketing, and indicates that this can only be done by building consensus within the profession. A unified vision, unique mission, and clearly identified core responsibilities of the planner are essential building blocks for this goal. Similar to the brand positioning and evaluation strategies discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis, McClendon (2003) proposes research into the history and tradition of the profession, listening to customers, evaluating the market and its potential, and analyzing competitors as a means to develop these brand elements. He makes reference to Sergio Zyman and Scott Miller (2000), who emphasize presence, relevance, differentiation, creditability and imagery as principles on which marketing strategies should be developed. This indicates that the profession must first focus on identifying and explaining what it is and what it does (McClendon, 2003).

McClendon (2003) also advocates for a focus on comprehensive planning, indicating that specialization within the profession should always be secondary to its comprehensive, holistic nature. He references Israel Stollman (2000), who acknowledges the evolution of the profession toward specialization, but indicates that it has contributed to its fragmented identity. Stollman (2000) goes on to state that "there is a fresh realization that problems of transportation, poverty, housing, economic development, and environment cannot be solved in isolation from each other" (McClendon, 2003, p. 227). Proposing a solution to the debate on specialization within the profession, Dowell Myers (1997) notes that the profession

should develop a more unified vision, which will in turn provide a "binding element for our internal diversity" (quoted from McClendon, 2003). McClendon (2003) summarizes the points above by stating: " planners need to be smart and bold enough to coalesce around a vision of a profession that is distinguished by its unique knowledge, expertise and capabilities in the area of comprehensive planning" (p. 228).

Although his article mainly focuses on the role that the APA plays in the American planning profession, McClendon's (2003) main points and concluding thoughts can easily be applied to the Canadian context and the CIP:

> The development of a brand identity is a necessary first step for increasing visibility and public awareness for planning. But this is not enough. The APA must empower itself with a strong brand name so that when the media, the general public, elected officials, students, academics, and practitioners need information about planning, the APA is at the top of their lists […] The stronger the brand name, the stronger the profession will be, and with this strength will come increased opportunities for individual planners to be effective performers excelling in the development and delivery of useful, satisfying, and rewarding products and services" (p. 229).

In 1998, David Witty conducted an in-depth study on the state of the planning profession in Canada and its outlook in the future. His research was mostly based on a review of North American and Canadian literature as well as an opinion-based survey of 502 CIP members designed to bring to the forefront issues that planners deem important and how they perceive their profession as a result. His primary research conclusions were the following:

The future of a dynamic planning practice is problematic without: (1) a reinvigorated profession which understands its role and finds substance in its work; (2) a firmer working linkage between theory and practice; and (3) redefined substantive and procedural methods to address the issues facing the planning profession. (p.254)

These conclusions were derived from a number of research findings developed from his survey of CIP members. These findings determined that a majority of Canadian planners believe that the profession is facing or is in a state of crisis. His research also showed that there exist highly differing views among planners regarding relevant planning theory, methods and education, as well as among stakeholders regarding what needs to be done to improve the profession and the planning process in Canada. He also found that planners believe that planning suffers from a lack of public support in Canada, in addition to not being well recognized by other professions. The latter makes it difficult to form good working relationships with related and often competing professionals (Witty, 1998).

Although these findings are highly relevant to the determination of the state of the planning profession, Witty's (1998) study did not gauge external stakeholder perceptions, and analyze practices by other professional organizations that could have provided more pragmatic recommendations to his research questions. This led to a more theoretical discussion and a study that focused mainly on internal attitudes and perceptions, rather than extracting realistic and applicable solutions to the present-day issue using a strategy-based approach.

2.6 PLANNING AND MARKETING

2.6.1 Why Planning is a Service

This thesis seeks to combine marketing theory with the planning practice. As such, it is important to identify what each element of the planning profession represents in a marketing context. We must first start with planning itself. If we wish to market the planning profession, we must first identify whether it is a good or a service. Goods typically refer to tangible products, such as a pair of scissors or a blouse (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). The planning profession does not produce a single factory-created product to be sold to consumers, therefore cannot be labeled a good.

Services can be defined as: "economic activities offered by one party to another, most commonly employing time-based performances to bring about desired results in recipients themselves or in objects or other assets for which purchasers have responsibility. In exchange for their money, time, and effort, service customers expect to obtain value from access to goods, labor, professional skills, facilities, networks, and systems; but they do not normally take ownership of any of the physical elements involved" (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007, p. 15) Now, let us identify the elements in this definition that can be assigned specific meaning: economic activities, purchasers, money, time and effort, value. If we look at the definition of planning and the definition of a service in a parallel manner, we can assign each of the previously listed elements of a service with elements of the profession. "Economic activities" can be described simply as "planning" and more specifically as "managing and balancing various policy and community development issues." The "purchasers" of the planning service would be the public or clients, depending on the planning sector. "Money," once again depending on the planning sector, is paid through taxes or by clients. "Time and effort"

would refer to the public or client's role/involvement in the planning process. "Value" would be the outcome of good planning that serves the interest of the client, or ensures the welfare of the public and environment. In the planning context, clients and the public have access to a planner's professional skills.

As can be seen, the elements of the planning profession fall neatly within the definition of a service, and as such, the planning profession will be referred to as a service in marketing-related discussions of this thesis.

2.6.2 Marketing the Planning Service

Given the re-branding focus of this project, a full understanding of basic marketing theory will be needed, specifically relating to service marketing. In the previous section, the planning "package" has been identified and defined according to the literature, along with the service elements of the profession. Within this definition, a formal strategic, if not "competitive" advantage must now be explicitly distinguished (McClendon, 2003). Once this advantage is identified, the planning brand must be positioned so as to highlight the value proposition within the competitive advantage (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007; David, 2005; Best, 2004). This will be the starting point for any strategically oriented marketing plan for the profession, and will ultimately lead to the re-branding of the Canadian planning service package (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2006; Soroka, 2007; McClendon, 2003). In order to get to this point, however, we must examine the challenges involved with marketing a service, and associated methods to surmount these. We will look at these specifically in the context of the planning profession.

The first challenge that the profession faces is that intangible elements usually dominate value creation (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). Value in planning is created by good planning practices that focus on the well being of the community. These often do not have solely physical qualities that directly affect each member of the community, but instead benefit the community as a whole in a subtle, yet impactful, manner. What this also means is that usually the public or clients cannot experience elements of the service with their senses in a way that directly relates to the value created, which makes it harder for them to evaluate the quality of the results (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). For example, the introduction of more office space in a community will not directly affect every resident, and may even be a source of contention for some, but the economic and social impact of this decision may be quite beneficial to the community as a whole. What the average community member sees, however, is usually the product of an architect or an engineer. This is where the problem lies because the public then has difficulty separating the tangible object from the factors that led to the decision to put it there. In order to counteract this problem, marketers often attempt to make the service more "tangible" through emphasis on physical clues, and use vivid imagery when promoting a brand (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). In this case, it would involve the imagery of economic prosperity and an abundance of jobs.

Additionally, tangible cues can focus on the service provider or point of contact (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). In the case of planning, these elements can include the appearance of the service provider, the delivery and presentation of the service, and professional accreditation. Planners come into contact with stakeholder groups in a variety of settings – for example, public consultations, municipal meetings or business meetings – and must therefore present themselves in an engaging, professional manner so as to project a

positive image. Similarly, the delivery and presentation of the service, which would include plans and reports, would also require engaging communication skills and professionalism. Accreditation can also add tangible value to a brand, in that it lends it increased credibility and that coveted "expert" status. The CIP's MCIP designation is the recognized professional accreditation for planners in Canada, for which planners must meet certain educational, experience and examination requirements to achieve. Planners must be aware of these tangible cues, as they are relatively simple ways to increase value.

The second challenge planners may face is that services are often difficult to visualize and understand (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). Because of its intangible nature, there is a sense of unknown, which leads to uncertainty and skepticism. This, in turn, leads to the perception by the public of greater risk associated with trusting planners (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). In these cases, marketers would seek to educate the public about the signs of good planning, the planning process itself, and how they can get involved. They would also highlight past successful performance and offer guarantees for the future.

The third challenge that planners may face is that the customers may be involved in the co-production of the service (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). This may seem ironic, since modern planning encourages public participation; however, despite its advantages, public participation often hinders the progression of the planning process (McAllister, 2004; Graham, Phillips, & Maslove, 1998; Lightbody, 2006). Although more educated than ever before, the public is often not equipped to handle the complexities of most planning-related issues (McAllister, 2004; Lightbody, 2006; Graham, Phillips, & Maslove, 1998), which in some cases may curtail the benefits provided by skilled planning professionals. The development of more technology-oriented, user-friendly means of participation may make

the planning process a lot more efficient. In addition, further education of the public may provide a sort of "training" that would help them better understand their role in the planning process (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). For example, the New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) is revamping their primary website to be targeted towards the public (New Zealand Planning Institute, 2009).

The fourth challenge that planners may face is that people may be a part of the service experience (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). This is referring specifically to the biases and influences that outside or related individuals have on the customers' enjoyment of the service. For example, media bias on a development project may severely skew opinions despite the fact that it may prove beneficial to the public. In addition, politicians and councilors are seen as the "face" of many planning decisions, making them often times the service delivery vehicle. Their appearance, attitude, behavior and general likeability can affect overall satisfaction with the planning process. In this case, marketers would once again emphasize the education of the public and all other stakeholders. They may also make an appeal for help, emphasizing the service concept, to all parties involved (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007).

The final major challenge that planners face is that quality control is not easily standardized (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). Planners are individuals with different sets of values and skills, and as such, practice planning under possibly widely differing perspectives (McAllister, 2004). In addition, the planning culture of one city may clash with that of another. As a result, it is very difficult to ensure service consistency among communities, or even individual planners, making reliability an issue in the eyes of the consumer. In order to avoid problems that may arise because of this, marketers would recommend implementing a

set of quality standards based on customer expectations – for example, a code of conduct or a set of ethical guidelines (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). The CIP has, in fact, recently launched a new project that would effectively address this challenge. Entitled "Planning for the Future," it seeks to re-evaluate and refine the membership certification and competency process, as well as ethical guidelines (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION: GUIDING ISSUES & ELEMENTS

In order to gauge the effectiveness of past and current CIP marketing efforts, and to generate realistic and applicable strategies that will improve the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder context, an effective research design must be carried out. Within the methodology aspect of the study, three broad issues need to be investigated.

The first of these issues is stakeholder perceptions. The literature review (Chapter 2) has drawn out the idea that there seems to have been an overall decline in the status and profile of the profession, thus leading to a decline in planner morale. In order to generate a full understanding of the situation, however, and to provide comprehensive reflections and recommendations stemming there from, further exploratory research needs to be conducted within the context of this study. To this effect, the general perceptions of different stakeholder groups, such as the public, developers, the media, the government, and public and private sector planners themselves, amongst others, need to be identified and analyzed.

The second issue to be explored is best practices that could work to enhance the position and influence of planners. The intention here is to generate findings about what works and what doesn't within three related categories, and to compare and contrast them to extract applicable recommendations within the planning realm. These categories are: (1) overall branding and strategic planning best practices, and (2) best practices by professional planning organizations, such as the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP), the Ontario Professional Planning Institute (OPPI), the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), the

American Planning Association (APA), the New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) and the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA).

The final issue to address is identifying the elements necessary to create a clear brand image and identity that contains a marketable competitive advantage that inspires confidence and trust. In order to advance the position of the professional planner, a specific niche needs to be distinguished and built upon to create a sustainable and effective competitive advantage that sets planners apart from other related practitioners in their realm of expertise.

In this chapter, the methodology of this thesis will be presented. It will include a discussion regarding the inquiry strategy applied, along with description of and justification for each method within the research design, using the research questions to create context. It will conclude with a brief discussion of the data analysis methods and issues surrounding validity.

3.2 STRATEGIES OF INQUIRY

3.2.1 A Pragmatic Perspective

The very nature of this study requires it to take a pragmatic position in the development of the research design. The findings, conclusions and recommendations that come out of this thesis will predominantly be problem-centered and oriented towards real-world practice. It will examine the current state of the Canadian planning profession, and look at the consequences of past decisions and actions taken within and outside of the profession. It will also look at a set of related best practices from a variety of angles with the goal of applying these to the current Canadian planning context. The resulting plan will therefore seek to generate applicable solutions for practitioners today. Under these

conditions, the focus is shifted away from the actual research methods and towards evaluating the problem in a pluralistic and effective way (Creswell, 2003). Thus, these elements combine to show basis for an inherently pragmatic research perspective (Hoch C. , 2002; Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002; Cherryholmes, 1992; Rossman & Wilson, 1985).

3.2.2 Quantitative vs. Qualitative Procedures

Research has always been conducted under one or a combination of two primary strategies of inquiry: quantitative and qualitative (Creswell, 2003; Howe K. , 1988). Quantitative methods focus on statistical and numerical analysis (Creswell, 2003; Howe K. , 1988; Neuman, 2007), and are used to discover trends or relationship using a rigorous set of guidelines and standards in order to ensure statistical validity and reliability (Creswell, 2003; Neuman, 2007). Although these methods are more commonly used in physical science studies, they are also used in social studies (Howe K. , 1988). In contrast, qualitative methods focus on non-numerical and descriptive data and may employ a variety of inquiry procedures (Babbie, 2001; Creswell, 2003). These methods are used primarily to uncover relationships, and the meanings and patterns associated with these (Babbie, 2001). Due to their descriptive nature, these methods are used mostly in the social sciences and inherently require a completely different set of analysis techniques (Babbie, 2001; Creswell, 2003). This section will provide a discussion comparing the pros and cons of each method, and will use these to provide basis for and to justify the use of a mixed-method approach under the pragmatic context of this study.

Quantitative Procedures

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In quantitative research, the investigator mainly develops knowledge by using postpositivist claims, and designs research to be either experimental or non-experimental (Creswell, 2003). Creswell (2003) describes "experiments" as "true experiments, with the random assignment of subjects to treatment conditions, as well as quasi-experiments that use nonrandomized designs" (p.14). When he speaks of quantitative surveys, he includes " cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection with the intent of generalizing from a sample to a population" (p.14). Surveys consist of structured, closed-ended questions with predetermined response options, thus rarely allowing for probing for further explanation (Creswell, 2003; Jo, 2004). In addition, quantitative studies have a specific and clearly defined research purpose (Jo, 2004).

Sampling methods usually have the goal of examining a smaller representative sample in order to make generalizations about a larger population, or to prove correlation between two or more variables (Creswell, 2003; Neuman, 2007). The validity of the statistical analysis and derived findings relies on the use of probability or random sampling (Neuman, 2007). This type of sampling allows the researcher to save time and cost by generating a sample that is significantly smaller than, but proportionally representative of, a larger population that he or she wishes to examine (Neuman, 2007). If executed correctly, probability sampling generates very accurate, highly defendable results, which has proven to be an effective tool for research (Neuman, 2007). Types of probability sampling include: simple random, systematic, cluster and random-digit dialing (Neuman, 2007).

In effect, if executed correctly, quantitative inquiry strategies have many associated benefits. They allow for precise measurements based on tangible numerical data. They produce statistically sound results that allow for accurate generalizations of a population.

They minimize bias and use standards of validity and reliability (Creswell, 2003). It is also important, however, to take note of the following drawbacks when developing a research design. Alone, quantitative approaches do not allow for clarification or in-depth descriptive analysis of trends. That is, they often fail to adequately answer the question of "why?" (Gaber & Gaber, 1997).

Qualitative Procedures

In stark contrast to quantitative research, in qualitative research, the investigator mainly develops knowledge by using constructivist or advocacy/participatory perspectives (Creswell, 2003). The research purpose is also not as specific and clearly defined as in quantitative research studies (Jo, 2004). Qualitative research uses a mostly non-standardized format that is less focused on a sample's representativeness and statistical analysis (Jo, 2004; Neuman, 2007). Instead, it focuses on descriptive data and is usually designed in the form of one of the following: ethnographies, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research and narrative research (Creswell, 2003). These strategies all require detailed collection of data under a careful examination and understanding of context (Creswell, 2003). Methods within these strategies – such as field observations, interviews or focus groups – center on open-ended investigation, are interactive and humanistic, and rarely make assumptions that would limit the direction of the participants' responses (Creswell, 2003; Howe K. , 1988). There is usually a strong focus on a single concept or phenomenon, while the researcher often brings his or her personal values into the study while collaborating with participants (Creswell, 2003).

As Neuman (2007) states, "the researchers' concern is to find cases that will enhance what the researchers learn about the processes of social life in a specific context" (p. 141). He goes on to explain that this is the main reason why qualitative researchers use nonprobablility sampling techniques in their studies (Neuman, 2007). This means that researchers do not focus on the larger population from which the sample is taken, and instead select a small number of individual cases based on the content of each case, with no specific preconceived idea of the sample size (Neuman, 2007). Types of nonprobability sampling include: haphazard, quota, purposive, snowball, deviant case, and sequential (Neuman, 2007). There also exist differences between quantitative research and qualitative research in the data analysis phase of a study. While quantitative research uses statistical analysis, qualitative data is rarely numerical and cannot be analyzed mathematically. Data is instead analyzed using coding, which essentially segments the data and organizes it into "chunks" under specific themes or terms (Creswell, 2003).

As with quantitative inquiry strategies, there are many benefits associated with qualitative inquiry strategies. Research design is typically less complex and time consuming than in quantitative research, as less focus is paid on representativeness and sample size. Qualitative research also inherently allows for the opportunity to develop a more in-depth analysis, as researchers are able to follow leads and delve deeper into the subject (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997). Despite its advantages, qualitative research also has its drawbacks. Research design and analysis can often be a time-consuming process. Also, the focused investigation characteristics of the research often do not allow researchers to make accurate generalizations of a larger population. In addition to this, due to its humanistic nature, qualitative research is highly susceptible to researcher bias or direct interaction with

participants, which may sometimes compromise the reliability of the data (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997).

3.2.3 A Mixed-Method Approach

A reflection upon the characteristics, as well as the benefits and drawbacks, of both examined strategies of inquiry might lead to the conclusion that one strategy is best suited for a different type of problem or study than the other (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997). Quantitative research is best suited for uncovering trends and identifying relationships, while qualitative research is best suited for examining and understanding a phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). In essence, these two strategies are located at opposite ends of the research design spectrum and often seem incompatible (Howe K. , 1988); however, there exists a third strategy of inquiry that unites both strategies and best serves the purpose of this study: a mixed-method approach.

Unlike the two previously discussed strategies, mixed-method studies usually take on a pragmatic perspective, where the focus is put on the problem itself and the goal of the study is to develop recommendations applicable in the real-life context (Creswell, 2003; Hoch C. , 2002; Howe K. , 1988). Mixed-method approaches involve "collecting and analyzing both types of data in a single study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 15). Research can be designed in one of three different forms: sequential, concurrent, and transformative (Creswell, 2003). In the case of this thesis, I will be using a sequential and concurrent mixed-method approach, which will focus on a survey consisting of open and closed-ended questions, key informant interviews, content analysis and a review of relevant literature.

There exist a number of purposes for mixed-method research that serve in the interest of a pragmatic study and increase the quality of the conclusions and recommendations developed through the research: triangulation, development, complementarity, expansion and initiation (Howe K. , 1988; Gaber & Gaber, 1997). Triangulation uses two or more methods to increase the validity and credibility of the findings. This will be further discussed in Section 3.6. Development is the use of one method to inform the construction of the other in order to strengthen and make more effective the second method (Gaber & Gaber, 1997). Interview guide questions were developed from survey results, and survey questions were developed from literature review findings, effectively strengthening each phase of the research design. Complementarity seeks elaboration or clarification of the results from one method with the results from a second method (Gaber & Gaber, 1997). In the case of this study, all three methods are complementary with each other. Expansion "seeks to expand the breadth and range of inquiry" (Gaber & Gaber, 1997, p. 100) by using each method for its own strength and by helping to analyze additional data generated by other methods. This sometimes prompts further investigation into the problem by highlighting disconnects between findings (Gaber & Gaber, 1997). In this case, each method was used to optimize its strengths. This also ties into initiation, which is essentially the opposite of triangulation, in that it seeks contradictions in findings between methods and uses these as an avenue for further exploration (Gaber & Gaber, 1997).

In short, the combination of each of these three methods in the context of this study will allow me to identify trends related to a hypothesized problem, while counteracting the limitations of the study and providing rich descriptive data that will inform the

pragmatically-oriented recommendations of the study. The following sections will go on to describe and provide further justification for the elements of the research design.

3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS & OBJECTIVES

Research Question: Could branding strategies enhance the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder environment?

In order to ensure an in-depth probe of the research question, it is necessary that the research question is answered by the methods employed in the research design. The following matrix details five significant research "sub-questions" composed of the following research objectives:

1. To gauge the perceptions of planning within different stakeholder groups in Canada.
2. To gauge the perceptions of the CIP within different stakeholder groups.
3. To develop a set of best practices in strategic planning and marketing.
4. To develop a set of best practices adopted by international professional planning NGOs.
5. To determine how to better market the profession and the CIP.

The matrix cross-references these questions and objectives with the research design methods that will be used to help answer them. Using this matrix helps to address validity concerns through the use of triangulation, and by ensuring most methods yield results that overlap, and either deliver complementarity or initiate further investigation (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997). A detailed explanation of each question and related methods follows.

Table 1: Methods Matrix

	Web-Based Survey	Lit. Review & Content Analysis	Key Informant Interviews
What theory will this study be grounded in?		x	
What are the perceptions of planning and the CIP within different stakeholder groups in Canada?	x	x	x
What are the best practices being used by international planning NGOs?		x	
What are the best practices being used in strategic planning and marketing?		x	
What is the CIP's marketing approach, and how can it be improved?	x	x	x

1. *What theory will this study be grounded in?*

In order to ensure that the validity and applicability of this study are sound, it is important to establish a framework from within which the findings will be drawn. The chosen theoretical perspectives, will serve as a platform for future development within the context of this study. Given its pragmatic nature and strategic re-branding focus, this study should be grounded in marketing theory using branding and strategic planning concepts. The literature review has served to further illustrate the need for such a perspective.

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2. *What are the perceptions of planning and the CIP within different stakeholder groups in Canada?*

This question seeks to either confirm or refute present assumptions found in the literature that perceptions towards the Canadian planning profession are generally negative. It also serves to draw out the underlying reasons for these assumptions or perceptions. In order to gain a full understanding of this issue, it is necessary to examine what different stakeholder groups think of the planning profession and the CIP, their relevance or effectiveness, and the differences in perception between these groups. A review of the body of literature surrounding this topic suggests that perceptions will be generally negative, if not ill informed towards the profession. Content analysis, a web-based survey and key informant interviews will combine to generate a multi-faceted, well-informed examination of the issue.

3. *What are the best practices being used by other professional planning NGOs?*

This question is designed to look at what other professional planning organizations are doing to market the profession. This longitudinal approach focuses on drawing out planning-specific practices being used in different countries or jurisdictions with formal professional planning organizations that could potentially be applied in the Canadian context. Content analysis focusing on organizational publications and

strategic documents will provide the necessary data to compile a list of professional planning NGO best practices.

4. *What are the best practices being used in strategic planning and marketing?*

In order to develop pragmatic recommendations that will help boost the image of planning in Canada, it will be useful to look at the best practices in strategic planning and marketing. Content analysis focusing on strategic planning and marketing publications will provide the necessary data to compile a list of strategic planning and marketing best practices.

5. *What is the CIP's marketing approach, and how can it be improved?*

Given the Canadian focus of this project, a complete understanding of what is currently being done to market the Canadian planning profession will be necessary. As the country's official planning voice, the CIP is responsible for all national marketing efforts pertaining to the profession, including the image thereof. As such, this study will seek to understand past and present marketing efforts – including implementation, monitoring and evaluation – made by the CIP to improve the perceptions and image of planning in the country, and the influence that planning practitioners have over decision-making. The content analysis outlines the strategies that are currently being used, as well as the implementation, monitoring and evaluation tactics; however, further investigation through key informant interviews

was necessary to gauge the effectiveness of these methods and to further develop an understanding of the CIP's marketing approach. Once these results were compiled, they were used to identify areas for improvement within this approach, and to develop strategies to address these.

3.4 METHODS

In order to examine these issues in a thorough and all-encompassing manner, a mixed-methods approach using a sequential and concurrent explanatory strategy grounded in branding and strategic planning theory will be used. The primary methods that will be applied will be carried out sequentially, with elements of concurrency within each method (Creswell, 2003). These include content analysis, a web-based survey and key informant interviews, with participants drawn from purposive and snowball sampling (Neuman, 2007).

3.4.1 Content Analysis

In the case of this study, the content analysis will be considered a method in itself. A part of the qualitative component of this mixed-method approach, this is the first phase of the research design; however, it will also occur concurrently with the other phases in order to integrate the findings within the other phases and draw from these as well (Creswell, 2003). The content analysis will look at documents published and surveys conducted a variety of professional planning NGOs, as well as strategic planning and marketing material, and will focus on identifying a list of best practices that may be used in the Canadian professional

planning context. Borrowing from Glaser's grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000), this phase will help inform the research question and objectives throughout the research process.

3.4.2 Web-Based Survey

Based on readings and observations, the second major phase of the research design will consist of a web-based survey gauging stakeholder group perceptions of planning. The goal of this step will be to gain a general idea of what different groups think planners do and how each group feels about the profession, and to use this data to either confirm or refute the information present in the literature. Stakeholder groups will be segmented into the following categories: public sector planner, private sector planner, council member/politician, university/college professor, media, developers, special interest (architect, engineer) and public. As a result, a web-based survey is an appropriate method to use, since it is inexpensive and can easily reach a large and diverse sample size (Neuman, 2007; Survey Research Centre, 2008).

I will use nonrandom sampling, as the sample size will not be pre-determined (Neuman, 2007). Sampling will also be purposive and will use the snowball technique, where I will seek out members of the different stakeholder groups and request them to participate in the study and to forward the survey link to any other person they believe will be relevant to the study or willing to participate (Neuman, 2007). The reason for choosing this combined sampling technique is that it allows me to reach a relevant sample that would otherwise be very difficult to reach (for example, through haphazard sampling), while expanding my sample size to reach the largest network possible (Neuman, 2007). The CIP has kindly compiled a list of current CIP members that are willing to participate in my study. In

December 2008, an email request for participation was sent through the CIP for privacy protection reasons. Participants were be given the option to get in touch with me for further information or participation in the interview phase of the study. Respondents that make this request were asked to send the survey to colleagues or friends that would be interested in the study. In addition, I simultaneously sent out email requests for participation to personal contacts that were relevant to the study, along with the same request to forward the survey to colleagues or friends. A reminder email was sent out to all initial contacts in the middle of January in order to take advantage of the maximum number of participants possible (Survey Research Centre, 2008).

It is important to mention that the purpose the survey is not to provide precise numerical data for statistical analysis, but to draw out broad directions in perception among these various groups and to provide potential avenues for further exploration. It is therefore unnecessary in this case to be preoccupied with the complete accuracy of population representativeness within the samples. No generalizations will be made from the sample to a larger population, as the purpose is simply to generate a collection of viewpoints from which to conduct further research. Given the nature of the study, the sample that would be necessary in this case, and budgetary and time limitations, a statistically representative study would be infeasible. Within this context, it is important to note that the inability to track respondents and establish a representative sample size is not a limiting factor (Jo, 2004).

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) made use of a variety of question types so as to collect the most accurate data in the most effective manner, and to maintain participant interest in the survey (Babbie, 2001; Survey Research Centre, 2008). Quantitative aspects of the questionnaire included structured questions with pre-determined response choices, while

qualitative aspects included open-ended questions that allowed participants to share additional thoughts or delve deeper into the question (Babbie, 2001; Survey Research Centre, 2008; Creswell, 2003). Formats included rating scale, yes/no, multiple choice, and text box (Survey Research Centre, 2008). The questionnaire was created during a five-month period, where it was examined by various members of the different stakeholder groups, and reviewed by a member of the University of Waterloo's Survey Research Center (SRC). It was consequently edited to be more comprehensive (Babbie, 2001; Survey Research Centre, 2008). It was developed using Zoomerang.com's web survey platform and included skips that allowed it to be tailored to the respondent's background (Survey Research Centre, 2008). For example, planners and CIP members were directed to a section asking about their experiences working in the planning field, whereas non-planners were directed to a section designed to test their knowledge of the profession. The question content was based on past research initiatives conducted by the CIP and OPPI, as well as on questions in a similar study conducted by David Witty in 1998 (Witty, 1998). Additional themes and ideas that serve as the foundation of some of the questions were grounded in the findings that came out of the literature review and content analysis.

3.4.3 Key Informant Interviews

The third phase of data collection was qualitative and will made use of survey results to develop interview questions for key informants within these different themes (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997). The goal of this step was to generate complementary data to the survey findings, bring out elements or examples of best practices used elsewhere, ideas

for improvement, and pictures of ideal scenarios under these themes (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997).

Purposive and snowball sampling was once again used in order to generate the most relevant and informative data (Neuman, 2007). The participants were sent an Interview Information and Request email, and were asked to reply if they wished to participate (Appendix B). In total, 20 interviews were conducted.

By targeting practitioners and key figures in the CIP, other NGOs and international planning organizations, and branching out to a sample network of interconnected individuals, a more in-depth investigation of the issue can be conducted (Neuman, 2007). Although the interviews should ideally be conducted in a face-to-face scenario in order to gain the most from personal interaction and body language signals (Patton, 2002), this was not possible. Given the geographical dispersal of interviewees, telephone interviews were used instead (Creswell, 2003).

The interviews were structured using an interview guide approach in order to keep a similar line of questioning for each interviewee, while maintaining a conversational tone, since the idea was to generate creative thought on complex issues (Patton, 2002). The interview guide (Appendix C) features questions that stem from the results of the survey (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997). It focuses on obtaining information that may help clarify survey results, as well as delving deeper into various themes.

Data recording procedures included interview notes and digital recording. Interviews were digitally recorded using the speaker phone function, and then recording the conversation using the GarageBand application for MacBook A consent form was filled out by each participant prior to the interview (Appendix D) In-depth investigation of each

individual was conducted prior to the interview so as to be aware of salient pieces of information and potential biases (Creswell, 2003). The information generated has been used in concurrence with data collected from other methods in order to inform the marketing-based recommendations that will stem from this study.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis stage of the research involved compiling survey results and conducting minor statistical analysis thereof (keeping in mind the non-representative population). Interview notes and the creation of categories of information for coding also comprised this phase of the research (Creswell, 2003). Once this was complete, the categorization and coding of the data collected from the content analysis and the interviews was be examined in conjunction with the survey results in order to effectively draw conclusions from the research findings (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997).

Coding focused on drawing out themes from the research, which included elements of the planning package that are important to focus on when considering the profession's position and influence. It also focused on adding detail and practical examples to the list of best practices identified in Chapter 4. For each theme identified, findings were summarized, and observations and recommendations were made. Once compiled, this information was related back to branding and strategic planning theory, and was evaluated for applicability to the Canadian planning context (Creswell, 2003).

3.6 VALIDITY & ETHICS

Concerns of validity related to bias and accuracy often arise when using a mixed-method or primarily qualitative approach, as is the case in this study (Creswell, 2003). I will seek to counteract some of these concerns through the use of several strategies. As reliability and generalizability are relatively irrelevant in primarily qualitative mixed-method research (Creswell, 2003), let us examine the elements of validity that would be applicable to this study. Construct validity and internal validity are the two elements that are most relevant in this case.

Construct validity is when "the researcher establishes correct operational measures for the concepts being studied" (Gaber & Gaber, 1997, p. 102). Triangulation of different data sources is a good way of ensuring construct validity, and has therefore been carefully integrated into the research design through the use of different methods to examine a single phenomenon (Creswell, 2003; Gaber & Gaber, 1997). In fact, the research design incorporates two types of triangulation methods: within and between (Gaber & Gaber, 1997). The within-method employs multiple triangulation strategies within one method (Gaber & Gaber, 1997). For example, some survey questions are designed to obtain the same information; however, the questions are asked from two different angles. The idea here was to avoid any potential misunderstanding or bias by the respondent, and to thus provide additional confirmation of the answer. The between-method combines dissimilar methods to examine the same phenomenon (Gaber & Gaber, 1997), which was the reasoning behind taking a mixed-method approach to the research design. The previously discussed Methods Matrix (Table 1) further demonstrates the emphasis put on effective between-method

triangulation of data sources. Triangulation has also aided the coding process, in that it provides additional justification for the themes identified (Creswell, 2003).

Internal validity "analyzes whether the investigator makes the correct observation on the causal relationship among studied variables" (Gaber & Gaber, 1997, p. 102). The identification and analyzing of biases, and the honest reporting of study limitations and findings serve to ensure that the study will have internal validity. In this case, biases have been clarified by investigating interviewee context and background before the interview process (Gaber & Gaber, 1997). They have also been clarified from the researcher point of view by the conducting of an honest self-reflection and identifying potential biases that my experiences might have brought to the study, which can be found in Chapter 5 of this thesis (Creswell, 2003). The credibility of the research has thereby been strengthened by the honest reporting of study limitations, data and findings (Creswell, 2003). Some member-checking has been used by taking the final report or specific sections back to interviewees to ensure accuracy (Creswell, 2003). Peer debriefing and external auditing were also conducted as an integral element to the thesis writing process (Creswell, 2003).

The complete research design for this thesis has been submitted to the University of Waterloo's Office of Research Ethics. It has been reviewed, received full ethics clearance on August 27, 2008. Subsequent modifications were approved on November 3, 2008 and July 2, 2009, with clearance being granted for an additional 12 months on July 3, 2009.

CHAPTER 4: CONTENT ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION & STRUCTURE

Given the fact that very few studies have been conducted examining the status of the planning profession, this chapter is essential to understanding the current context of the Canadian planning profession, as well as how it relates to other countries and professions. It will also serve to provide marketing and branding context to inform the research question. The chapter will thus focus on gathering content from branding strategy and various professional organizations. the background and current context of the issue, while providing a justification for the study itself. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Content Analysis will be considered as separate a method in itself.

Section 4.2 will serve to identify what the researcher describes as the "Planning Package," in which the definition of the profession will be explored. Section 4.3 will then analyze some of the best practices with regard to theory, professional planning organizations, and other professional NGOs. Finally, Section 3.5 will draw out conclusions from this analysis based on its findings.

4.2 THE PLANNING PACKAGE

In order to proceed with the marketing aspect of this literature review, it is first important to understand what planning is described as in society. We will therefore take a look at what different planning organizations around the world define as planning. We will also take a look at what these organizations describe as the responsibilities of a planner and

what areas of specialization they have identified. Given the Canadian focus of this project, we will narrow down the countries of interest to those whose societies are most similar to Canada's: the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia. Thus, we will be looking at the CIP, the APA, the RTPI, the NZPI and the PIA respectively. Please note that the NZPI is currently re-developing its website and no information regarding the profession beyond the organization's definition of planning is available.

4.2.1 Definition of Planning

As a starting point, let us first take a look at what different planning organizations around the world define as "planning":

Table 2: Definitions of Planning

Organization	Definition
CIP	"'Planning' means the scientific, aesthetic, and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities." (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009)
APA	"Planning, also called urban planning or city and regional planning, is a dynamic profession that works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations." (American Planning Association, 2009)
RTPI	"Planning involves twin activities - the management of the competing uses for space, and the making of places that are valued and have identity. These activities focus on the location and quality of social, economic and environmental change." (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2009)
NZPI	"Planning is concerned with the physical aspects of the natural and built environment, it also tries to create employment opportunities, to provide a choice of housing types and locations, and to encourage good urban design and urban renewal. Planning allows society to make decisions between alternatives and to balance the interests of different groups."

	(New Zealand Planning Institute, 2009)
PIA	"Planning is the process of making decisions to guide future action. The planning profession (which is also referred to as 'town planning' or 'spatial planning') is specifically concerned with shaping cities, towns and regions by managing development, infrastructure and services." (Planning Institute of Australia, 2009)

The evaluation of these definitions brings out several points of similarity:

1. Planning is for the public.

2. Planning is for the natural and built environment.

3. Planning is for the future.

Additional insight reveals that it is a dynamic profession focused on managing change and finding a balance in the context of a variety of competing interests. It is important to understand the themes that bring together each of these definitions, as common elements compose the essence of the profession's identity. An international perspective allows us to narrow in on a holistic definition of the profession, which will then allow us to come up with specific brand elements that can be translated into a practical strategy for its development.

Working from the definitions, let us now take a look at what these organizations describe as the responsibilities of a planner:

Table 3: Responsibilities of a Planner

Organization	Responsibilities
CIP	• "Conversion of land from natural habitats to urban built areas. • Maintenance and use of natural resources and habitats. • Development of transportation related infrastructure. • Ensuring environmental protection. • Planning social and community services. • Managing cultural and heritage resources.

	• Creating economic capacity in local communities. • Addressing transportation and infrastructure. • Work internationally." (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009)
APA	• "Help create a broad vision for the community • Research, design, and develop programs • Lead public processes • Affect social change • Perform technical analyses • Manage • Educate • Some planners focus on just some of these roles, such as transportation planning, but most will work at many kinds of planning throughout their careers." (American Planning Association, 2009)
RTPI	• "Managing development and helping to create affordable housing • Playing a role in regenerating socially-deprived areas and creating new jobs • Designing our towns and cities to include attractive buildings, vibrant public spaces and bustling shopping centres • Working to protect our countryside, trees, hedgerows, forests, grasslands, waterways, rivers and shorelines • Helping to bring back historic buildings into sympathetic use • Creating policies for managing traffic and providing sustainable solutions to our transport needs • Improving energy efficiency and cutting carbon emissions in our homes, factories and businesses • Engaging communities to have a say in how their living space is developed and protected to improve their quality of life." (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2009)
NZPI	N/A
PIA	• "Specialize in developing strategies and design the communities in which we live, work and play • Balance the built and natural environment, community needs, cultural significance, and economic sustainability • Improve our quality of life and create vibrant communities • Assess development proposals and devising policies to guide future development • Work in areas as diverse as housing, energy, health, education,

	communications, leisure, tourism and transport • Create new, and revitalize existing, public spaces • Conserve places of heritage and enhance community value." (Planning Institute of Australia, 2009)

When examined together, one can conclude that, for the most part, the responsibilities of a planner are the same across these countries. While some organizations, such as the CIP and the APA may describe these responsibilities in broad terms, others, such as the RTPI and the PIA elaborate and tangibly paint a picture of the job of a planner. The use of the first person reference by the latter two organizations is also of note. This conversational tone includes the reader in the discussion, effectively drawing in his or her interest. On the other hand, the tone adopted by the CIP and the APA is more sterile and serves mainly to list responsibilities.

Nonetheless, a wide variety of planner responsibilities can be derived from each of these lists, including designing communities, developing policy and strategic direction, ensuring economic vitality and managing infrastructure. What can be surmised is that planners are in charge of balancing the developmental, environmental, social, economic, aesthetic and historic needs of a community as they relate to policy. Interestingly, however, the responsibilities of a planner do not seem to be specifically related to a single or a few tasks. Instead, the focus is around the ability to *manage* and *balance* the various issues related to planning and policy using a number of different skills. What becomes apparent through this analysis is that, despite the efforts of the RTPI and the PIA, when one gets to the heart of the matter, the responsibilities of a planner are not as tangible as one might think.

Although not always the case, it is important to note that two of the observed organizations define areas of specialization within the planning profession. The following list describes the breakdown according to these organizations:

Table 4: Planning Specializations

Organization	Specializations
CIP	N/A
APA	• "Community Development • Land Use & Code Enforcement • Transportation Planning • Environmental/Natural Resources Planning • Economic Development • Urban Design • Planning Management/Finance • Housing • Parks & Recreation • Historic Preservation • Community Activism/Empowerment" (American Planning Association, 2009)
RTPI	N/A
NZPI	N/A
PIA	• "Urban development • Regional and rural planning • Development assessment and land use • Social and community based planning • Urban design and place-making • Environmental planning and natural resources management • Transport planning • Heritage and conservation • Neighbourhood and urban renewal • Infrastructure and services planning • International development" (Planning Institute of Australia, 2009)

What is noticeable when examining this list is that the areas of specialization identified by the APA and the PIA encompass the same categories as were identified when examining the responsibilities of a planner. It is interesting to note, however, that some organizations (CIP, RTPI, NZPI) do not identify areas of specialization. Why would some organizations identify areas of specialization within the profession and others not? It is true that in practice, many planners end up focusing on one area, for example, transportation (American Planning Association, 2009). It is also true, however, that many more planners end up working in a variety of different areas (American Planning Association, 2009). In fact, each of these specialization categories are often interlinked, resulting in cross-spectrum issues that affect many different areas, such as the economy, socio-cultural issues and the environment, to name a few (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009; McAllister, 2004; McClendon, 2003; Graham, Phillips, & Maslove, 1998; Witty, 1998). Could the lack of specialization identification by the CIP, RTPI and NZPI be because of this very issue? In the face of a changing profession focusing on a cross-functional skill set, it is quite possible that these organizations deliberately avoided creating a segmented or divided image in order to promote a new unified identity. This would be an area for further exploration in upcoming sections.

4.2.2. Summary

In conclusion, the side-by-side analysis of the descriptions of the planning profession according to the CIP, APA, RTPI, NZPI and PIA has shown that the profession is defined very similarly on an international level. Within all organizations are the elements of *public,*

natural and built environment, and future. In addition, the focus seems to be on using a cross-functional skill set to manage and balance various issues pertaining to policy. These issues, in turn, can relate to a number of interconnected areas in the community, such as transportation, the economy, land development, social development, etc. A question one might ask at this point is that if these organizations all seem to be communicating the same message about what planning is on their respective websites, then why is this message still so unclear to the public? This study will seek to answer this question as well, while providing recommendations to remedy the situation.

Regardless of the observation that the basic elements of planning are similarly understood among these different countries, the way that the message is portrayed to the public varies greatly. From adopting a descriptive personal approach to acknowledging the existence of specializations within the profession, each country has a different way of communicating its understanding of the profession to the public. The following section will delve further into these issues, and will seek to identify the strengths and weaknesses behind these various approaches.

Additionally, in order to examine the planning profession adequately in the context of this thesis, the following will serve as a guiding synopsis and definition of the profession based on the analysis of those provided by the CIP, APA, RTPI, NZPI and PIA:

> "Planning" makes use of a cross-functional skill set to manage and balance various issues pertaining to policy and community development, so as to ensure the welfare of the public, the natural and built environment, and our future.

4.3 BEST PRACTICES AND RELATED FINDINGS

4.3.1 Introduction

In order to effectively determine whether branding strategies can be used to enhance the profile of the Canadian planning profession, it is important to establish a benchmark for improvement. This section of the thesis will focus on branding strategies, professional planning organizations in different countries, and other professional organizations within Canada. The purpose behind looking into these various elements is to use the derived findings to develop a set of best practices that will serve as the aforementioned benchmark. Essentially, in order to develop relevant and useful solutions to today's planning problems, we must carefully analyze practices being applied in the real-world context. We can thus identify which practices work and which do not in a long-term strategy-based context.

4.3.2 Branding and Strategic Planning

To set the stage for this research phase of this study, we must first understand what we are looking for. As the research question focuses on branding strategies as a means for improvement in the profession, the basic elements of branding and marketing must be identified. The clear identification of brand elements is necessary to create a successful and sustainable brand. In order to determine whether this can be done in the context of the Canadian planning profession, it will be important to uncover strategies and frameworks that would allow for the identification of these elements. Once this is done, these strategies and frameworks will be used to inform the research and discussion phase of this thesis. While the field of marketing encompasses a wide array of strategies and models, the following list details some of the basic marketing elements that come together to shape a brand:

Target Market: This is the target audience of the marketing pitch. It may be composed of several different sub-groups that need to be segmented and identified individually. In this instance, it would include the different stakeholder groups that planners deal with, such as developers, the media, the public and council members, among others. In order to create a successful brand, planners need to keep track of the needs and behaviors of each of these sub-groups and have an externally focused, long-term approach to meeting these needs and predicting behavior (Best, 2004; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004). Selecting the right target markets will be critical for the CIP, since the Canadian planning profession has multiple stakeholder groups, and the CIP has limited resources with which to reach these. This would thus ensure that these resources are used the as efficiently as possible.

Competitive/Strategic Advantage: This is the planning value proposition. It is the element that makes planners unique and invaluable to the different segments of the target market (Best, 2004; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004). As previously discussed, McClendon (2003) stated that, in his view, the planning profession's competitive advantage is its "ability to identify interconnections within communities and human settlements" (p. 226).

Brand Assets: Intangible assets related to the brand that positively affect *brand equity*, which is the balance of all brand liabilities and assets. Essentially, good brand equity should yield positive results. Brand assets can include (Best, 2004; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004):

- *Brand Awareness:* The scope and scale of knowledge dissemination related to the brand within the target market segments.

- *Market Leadership:* Market share leaders. In the case of planning, it would be ambiguous, but it might be considered as the professional organization that possesses the

most planning credibility to the target market. It could also be considered as the profession – planning, engineering or architecture, for example – that commands the most influence in the political planning process.

- *Brand Relevance:* The degree to which the target market can relate to the value proposition and the brand image.

- *Brand Loyalty:* The customer retention rate. A long-term, relationship-based customer focus will generally increase brand loyalty.

Brand Liabilities, which are intangible assets related to the brand that negatively impact *brand equity*. These can include (Best, 2004; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004):

- *Customer Dissatisfaction:* High levels of customer complaints and dissatisfaction incur brand liability, which detracts from brand equity. In this case, "customers" refer to the stakeholder groups identified in Section 3.2.1 of this proposal.

- *Product or Service Failures:* A product or service that is not delivered to the full expectations of the consumer.

Brand Positioning probably has the most potential to impact the effectiveness of the brand. It is defined as "establishing a distinct place in the minds of the consumers relative to the attributes possessed by or absent from competing products," which, in this case, would be related professions like engineering and architecture (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). The importance of this element in the marketing strategy of a service delivery organization cannot be ignored. This especially applies in the case of the planning profession, where the consumer's mental image of the planning service can be much less clear than for that of a different service, such as dentistry. A good positioning strategy within the Canadian planning

profession may help clarify stakeholder expectations and image of the profession (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). If a position is not identified within the marketplace, and an action plan is not developed to support it, the organization can face several negative challenges. It may find itself in direct competition with a stronger competitor such as engineering It may find itself in a position where there is little consumer demand, which may affect the relevance of the profession. Its position may become so indistinct, that its main competencies become difficult to identify (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007).

The following figure, developed by Lovelock and Wirtz (2007) provides a framework for identifying an appropriate market position and developing an action plan to achieve it.

Figure 2: Developing a Market Positioning Strategy (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007)
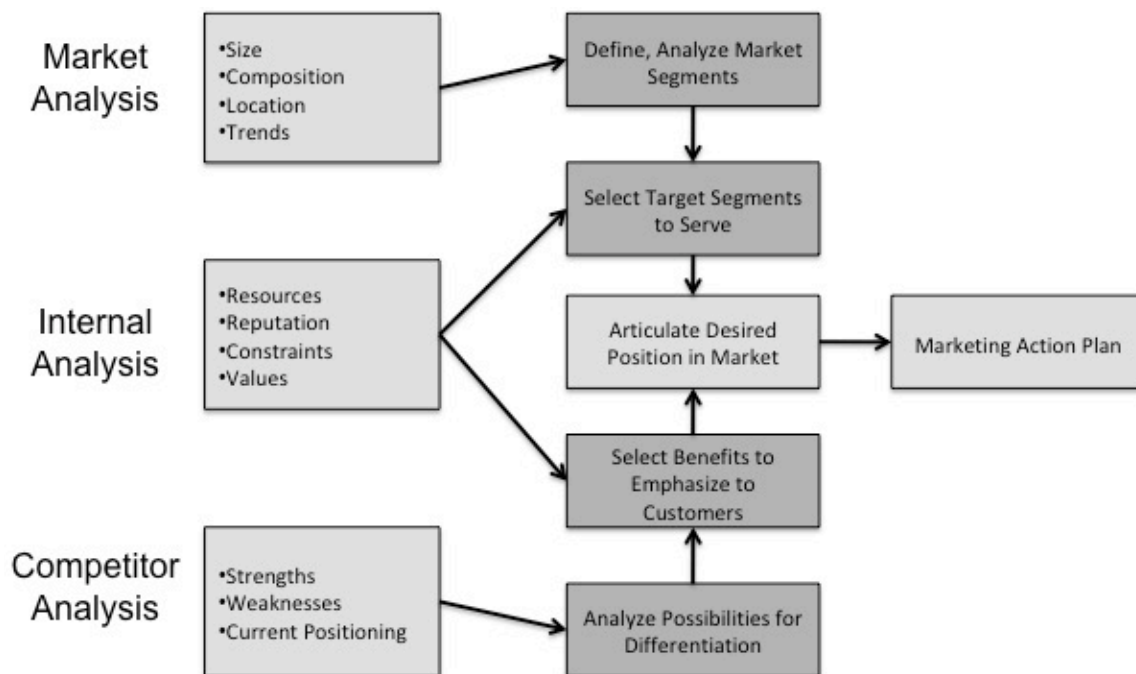
Conducting the three levels of analysis detailed in the figure will allow for the organization to gain a better understanding of the market in which it operates, its capabilities and goals, and its competition. Market analysis will serve to identify demand level and

trends, as well as the geographic location in which this demand exists. It allows the organization to identify market segments – associated with stakeholder groups in the case of planning – the various needs and expectations of each of these segments, as well as their perceptions of the organization and its competitors (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). Internal analysis provides the opportunity to examine the strengths, weaknesses, resources, capabilities, and values of the organization, and how these elements affect business operations. Once this is done, the organization will be in a better position to set priorities, and identify and serve target market segments (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). Competitor analysis, finally, allows the organization to identify opportunity for differentiation within the competitor environment, through the examination of competitor strengths and weaknesses. Once this is done, a desired market position can be clearly identified, and a marketing action plan can then be put in place (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). In the case of planning, the CIP will have to choose what other professional service to use as a reference point, and then draw out parameters defining the reference, so as to effectively position planning in relation to it. Given the premise of this study, this type of strategic marketing framework might prove useful to determine whether or not the profession is well positioned within the professional marketplace, and the actions it can take to improve.

As in most strategic planning initiatives, however, it is important to be aware of potential mistakes one can make. In the article The Questions you Need to Ask about your Brand (Keller, Sternthal, & Tybout, 2002), the authors outline common errors that organizations make – two of which can be applied to this study. Investing effort and resources into building brand awareness before properly establishing a clear brand position is often an exercise in wasted time and money. Brand position must be firmly established and

understood before effective awareness can be generated (Keller, Sternthal, & Tybout, 2002). In addition, organizations must first understand which brand attributes consumers care about before promoting them, otherwise time and resources may be put into promoting attributes that the target market does not care about (Keller, Sternthal, & Tybout, 2002). These are mistakes that could easily affect re-branding efforts in the Canadian planning profession if not paid attention to. In their efforts to effectively build awareness, the CIP should thus ensure that it focuses on promoting attributes that stakeholders, and not just planners, care about.

A *SWOT Analysis* is another essential strategic planning tool that serves to assess the organization's situation in relation to its environment. Essentially, a SWOT analysis is an exercise in which key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are identified (Best, 2004; David, 2005; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004; Siciliano & Gopinath, 2001). Using the uncovered elements, we can take the SWOT analysis a step further by incorporating the four categories into a matrix. See Table 2 for an example of the format it would take.

Table 5: SWOT Analysis Matrix (Siciliano & Gopinath, 2001)

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	Strengths vs. Opportunities (SO)	Weaknesses vs. Opportunities (WO)
THREATS	Strengths vs. Threats (ST)	Weaknesses vs. Threats (WT)

By creating this matrix, we are left with a tool that helps match up elements of the four categories against each other so as to generate alternatives to move forward. The SO

category can help the organization see how its strengths can help take advantage of opportunities. The ST category can demonstrate ways in which the organization's strengths can help mitigate threats. The WO category is used to identify areas that might hinder the organization's ability to take advantage of opportunities. The WT category helps identify areas of weakness that make the organization more vulnerable to threats. Once this matrix has been completed, it can be used to develop individual actions that may be included in the strategic plan. It is important to note that the effectiveness of such a tool depends on the precision of the elements incorporated. Therefore, when conducting a SWOT analysis, try to be as specific as possible with the items listed (Siciliano & Gopinath, 2001; David, 2005).

Finally, when dealing with services, *Internal Marketing*, defined as "marketing activities directed internally to employees to train and motivate them and instill a customer focus" (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007), can play a vital role in communicating a clear and unified vision to consumers (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007; Cano & Sams, 2009; Snell & White, 2009; Gilmore, 2003). Particularly in cases where the service is delivered over a wide geographic region, an organization's people need to display a consistent front, and provide uniform services across locations, thereby helping to ensure service quality and satisfaction (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007; Cano & Sams, 2009; Snell & White, 2009; Gilmore, 2003). In the case of the Canadian planning profession, planners themselves are the employees. A strong communication strategy needs to be developed at the top level, and then must be communicated effectively throughout the employee base. A culture based on effective internal communication can also help "achieve productive and harmonious working relationships, and build employee trust, respect, and loyalty" – qualities that could affect job satisfaction, and greatly benefit the Canadian planning profession (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007;

Gounaris, 2008; Cano & Sams, 2009; Snell & White, 2009; Gilmore, 2003). After all, as pointed out in the article <u>Building Brand Values through Internal Marketing</u> (2006), "the behavior of employees is […] the primary means through which shareholders experience the company they have invested in. It is also where communications teams find potential grounds for difference. Excellence in service is always a very positive attribute to build set of brand values around." Therefore, at the onset of any re-branding effort, ensuring buy-in from the very people who represent it is key. Planners must take ownership of their professional brand to ensure that this happens (Croft, 2007). Marketing Week (Anonymous, 2009) offers a list of top tips when implementing an internal marketing approach, the following being applicable to this study:

- Build trust and improve retention by developing a good internal marketing and/or communications plan that is open and transparent at all times;
- Ensure that your department/company's organizational goals and talent strategy are obvious to your marketers, so they feel they have objectives to meet;
- Consider extra training or development opportunities, either internally or externally;
- Explore as many learning and development opportunities as possible through external and internal mentoring and coaching;
- Ideas come at no expense - they can even save money. [Organizations] with ideas are also better places to work and this ensures higher morale;
- Encourage more teamwork across the business and help staff identify any mutual opportunities or problems common to the whole business.

Following these tips should therefore help the organization achieve internal marketing success.

4.3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation: Brand Metrics

In his article, *The Brand Report Card*, Kevin Lane Keller (2000) highlights one of the biggest problems facing brand managers: few are able to assess the strength, weaknesses and performance of their brand. He goes on to explain that it is difficult to take a step back and adopt a holistic perspective when you are immersed in the day-to-day management of a brand. The article focuses on creating a report card using the ten characteristics that the world's strongest brands share. According to the report card, the brand is to be rated on these 10 traits on a scale of 1 to 10, and then the results are to be used to incite discussion and promote brainstorming. While using this evaluation model, it is important to keep the customer's perspective in mind. This will help identify the right areas for improvement, along with brand strengths and weaknesses (Keller, 2000). According to Keller (2000), the 10 attributes shared by the world's strongest brands are the following:

1. The brand excels at delivering the benefits customers truly desire.

2. The brand stays relevant.

3. The pricing strategy is based on consumers' perception of value.

4. The brand is properly positioned.

5. The brand is consistent.

6. The brand portfolio and hierarchy make sense.

7. The brand makes use of and coordinates a full repertoire of marketing activities to build equity.

8. The brand's managers understand what the brand means to consumers.

9. The brand is given proper support, and that support is sustained over the long run.

10. The company monitors sources of brand equity.

As the planning profession is mostly a service delivery product, which isn't delivered to its consumers in a retail context, it might be difficult to evaluate some of these attributes within the context of this study. That said, a number of these attributes could easily apply. If we examine this list keeping this in mind, we will be left with a framework that will facilitate the identification of best practices in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

4.3.4 Canadian Planning Organizations

CIP Surveys and Studies

In 2005, the CIP conducted an OMNIBUS survey targeting 1200 Canadians. It attempted to gauge general perceptions of the planning profession in the general public. The survey results were accurate to within $\pm$2.9%, 95% of the time (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005). Findings showed that 90% of survey participants were unaware of the CIP, but those with a university education were more aware (14%) than the rest of Canadians (9% national average) (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005). The following chart indicates responses to the question asking what the role of the professional planner in Canada was:

Figure 3: Role of the Professional Planner (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005)
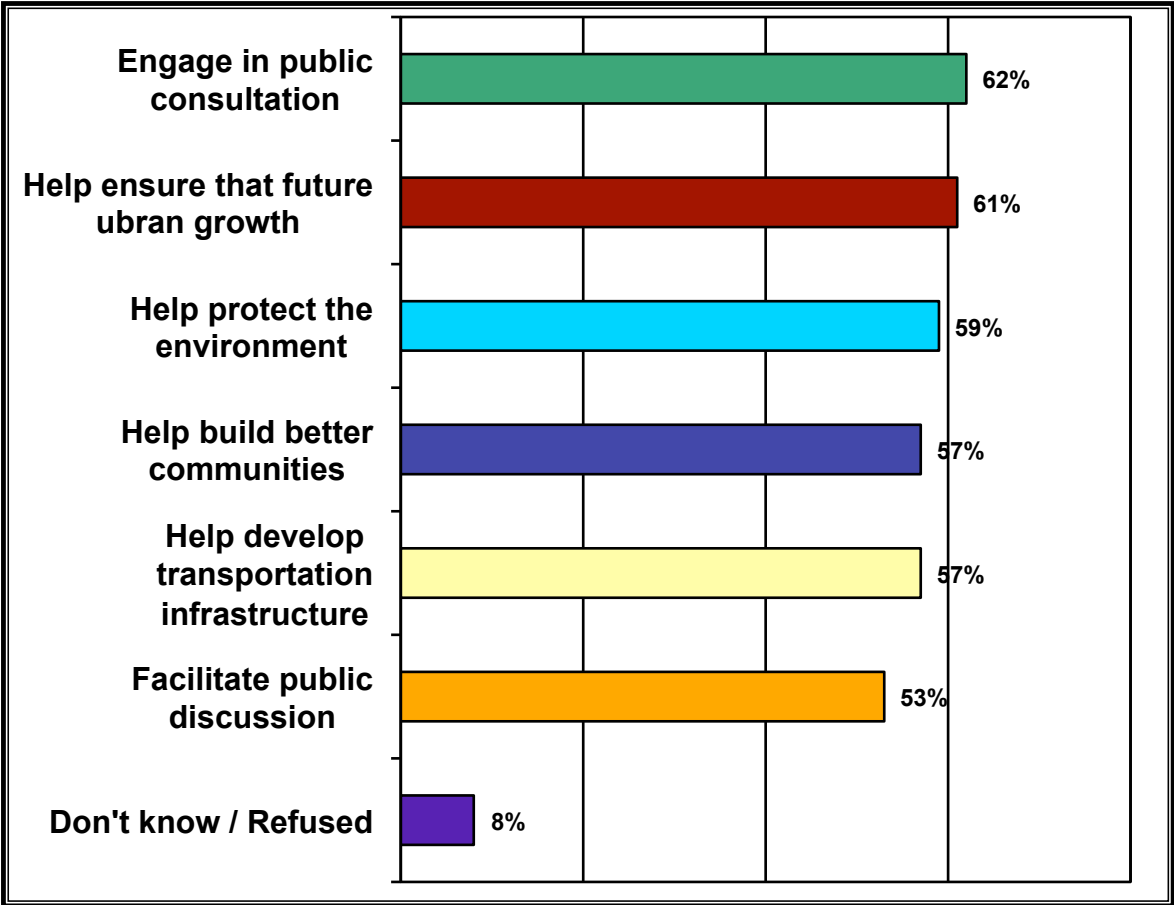
Interestingly, respondents from British Columbia, and to a lesser extent Ontario and Alberta, selected each response significantly more often than those in other provinces (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005). The report infers that these data suggest that the role of the planner is more understood in areas where infrastructure or economic development is high (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005).

Further findings show that despite mostly being unaware of the CIP, once informed about what planners do, 73% of respondents indicated that planners provide an important service. The description of what planners do was given as the following:

Professional planners provide research, analysis and recommendations to both the public and the private sector, intended to balance the needs of all sectors of society. More than half of those working in planning are government employees, mainly working for municipal/local planning offices. More than one-third works in private businesses. Many are involved in projects in other countries. (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005).

It should be noted that this description is free of biases usually highlighted by the media or by word of mouth, and as such, individuals who were unaware of the CIP answered given a different context than those who had head about the CIP. This could have possibly skewed the data, although without knowing enough about the context under which those who were aware of the CIP responded, it is difficult to tell in what way.

The report goes on to describe the typical profile of an individual who believes that planners are important as a university educated female living in Ontario, aged between 18 and 34 years old, who makes over $60,000 a year. The typical profile of the 20% of individuals who did not think planners are important is a male over 55 years old who lives in the Prairies and who has less than a high school education (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005). Conclusions from the survey are the following (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005):

1. CIP does not have wide ranging name recognition.

2. Planners are well regarded in Canada. This conclusion seems a little stretched given the study information and methods, yet seems like an interesting point for

further research. This information should therefore be used with caution when used throughout this thesis.

3. Communications would most effectively be targeted at B.C., Alberta and Ontario, given economic conditions. However, the report also makes the following statement regarding these provinces: "If CIP is looking at raising its own profile, it should consider doing so in those provinces first because the role of planners is so highly regarded it seems to be an excellent fit and an easier 'sell'"(Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005). Once again, the term "highly regarded" seems slightly stretched and will provide good basis for further investigation in this thesis.

4. The Prairies and Atlantic provinces could benefit from increased awareness of the role of planners. Given the CIP's relatively limited resources, any action to increase awareness should focus on optimal results, so as to produce the best return for the investment. For example, building awareness among a strategic target market, such as students across the country, may prove to be a more effective use of resources, as it may produce better quality results, with long-term impact.

A review of the CIP's 2010 Strategic Plan (2007), Communications and Branding Strategy 2006-2010 (2006) and Action Plan 2007 (2006) demonstrates a clear willingness to advance the status of the planning profession in Canada. A goal and vision for the upcoming years has been set. Target market niche segments have been identified, prioritized and analyzed. Strengths and opportunities related to competitive advantage have been detailed.

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Thought out, assessable branding and communications tactics have been laid out. More recently, the CIP has been recognizing the need for change in the Canadian Planning Profession. In fact, one of the focuses of the CIP Conference in Niagara Falls (Sept/Oct 2009) was to find ways to help planners manage change in society by adapting the way they practice. The conference's Call for Proposals (CIP/OPPI, 2009) featured the following statement:

> We also need to talk about our profession. Planners graduating today work differently – they work in web time, they can expect to have three to five careers over their working lives, and "traditional" planning may not be their choice. As fellow professionals and employers, how do we embrace and bring into our profession graduating and new planners? How do we bridge the differences between the generations? How do we harness the passion of this generation in our profession? What does a "good" planner do today? What will a "good" planner do in ten years? The conference committee is interested in sessions that explore the practice of planning, the needs of new professionals, and capturing the spirit of change in our planning institutions. (p. 7)

The CIP has started this process by taking steps to strengthen the image of the profession. The organization recently announced that it has and will be further reviewing and refining the organization's policies regarding ethical, competency and certification standards (Canadian Institue of Planners, 2009).

The Communications and Branding Strategy (2006) goal is: "[to] establish/promote a 'brand' for the Institute and raise awareness of the planning profession by promoting the nature and relevancy, recognition, ethics and standards of professional planning practice" (p.

3) Although this statement refers to creating a 'brand,' none of the documents make specific reference to brand elements. This is an integral part to the creation and promotion of a strong brand. The identity should be clear and definable. In addition, while identifying strengths and opportunities is important, no strategic plan is complete without a simple, yet detailed SWOT analysis, including threats and weaknesses (Best, 2004; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004; David, 2005). Organizations use this full set of information to generate proactive strategic initiatives that will secure future success. Finally, in order to fully benefit from a communications and branding strategy, tactics should be very specific and should include a time-bound monitoring and evaluation plan that incorporates measurable indicators of success (David, 2005; Gialloreto, 2006). Marketing plans are only successfully implemented when accountability is made clear (Best, 2004; Gialloreto, 2006; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004).

Throughout the evolution of this study, I have observed a clear increase in the amount of information and outreach initiatives included on the CIP's website. The CIP has developed a number of new publications designed geared at various stakeholder groups. Additionally, more emphasis is placed on national initiatives relating to climate change action, First Nations outreach, and building urban design interest. Along with these elements comes the showcasing of the organization's many international outreach initiatives. This progress has all been made within the development of a new user-friendly website launched along with a new CIP brand image. It is apparent, through these many changes, that there has been a clear effort on the part of the organization to clean up its image, and expand its reach (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009).

The CIP has made education at all levels a priority, with the introduction of publications such as Professional Practice Manual (Witty, 2009), ScenarioPlus (Canadian

Institute of Planners, 2009) and even <u>A Kid's Guide to Building Great Communities</u> (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009).

Written by David Witty, the <u>Professional Practice Manual</u> serves as an all-in-one manual for practicing planners, containing advice on a number of planning aspects, real-life case studies, perspectives on the Canadian planning profession, and day-to-day information relevant to planners and planning students alike. The manual is available free for CIP members, and to purchase for non-members (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009).

<u>ScenarioPlus</u> is a web-based newsletter designed to facilitate an inexpensive and rapid exchange of ideas and information between planners and other professions involved in community development and management. This newsletter is free of charge and is delivered every 6 weeks to subscribers, which currently total approximately 900. The initiative is based on the success of the original idea developed out of the Association of Professional Community Planners of Saskatchewan (APCPS) (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009).

Finally, <u>A Kid's Guide to Building Great Communities</u> was developed as a tool for professionals and educators to facilitate the education of children and youth about planning. Written by Elizabeth Miller and Mary Bishop, this guide contains a variety of learning tools that would be useful in a classroom setting. It is available free for download and to purchase for hard copy (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009).

Effectively counteracting some of the potential criticisms that may arise out of the CIP's Communications and Branding Strategy (2006), these initiatives tangibly demonstrate a new direction for the CIP – one that seeks to engage planners, as well as various segments of the population. Nevertheless, especially when it comes to public initiatives like <u>A Kid's Guide to Building Great Communities</u>, one might still wonder how the public becomes aware

of these initiatives if, as surveys show, the majority of the public remains unaware of the organization (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2005).

OPPI

As this study is based out of Ontario, I thought it important to incorporate the local context by examining the OPPI in addition to the CIP. Over the span of 10 years, the OPPI has been engaged in an internal evaluation of the organization and the profession in Ontario. The OPPI: Millennium Plan Monitoring Survey Final Report (OPPI, 2005) released in August of 2005, was developed as a means to evaluate the OPPI's Millennium Strategy (OPPI, 1999), a long-term strategic vision for the organization. The survey was conducted among the organization's members. 3118 emails were sent out and 1171 surveys were completed. A few of the findings are shown in the following graphs:

Figure 4: Organizational Effectiveness (OPPI, 2005)
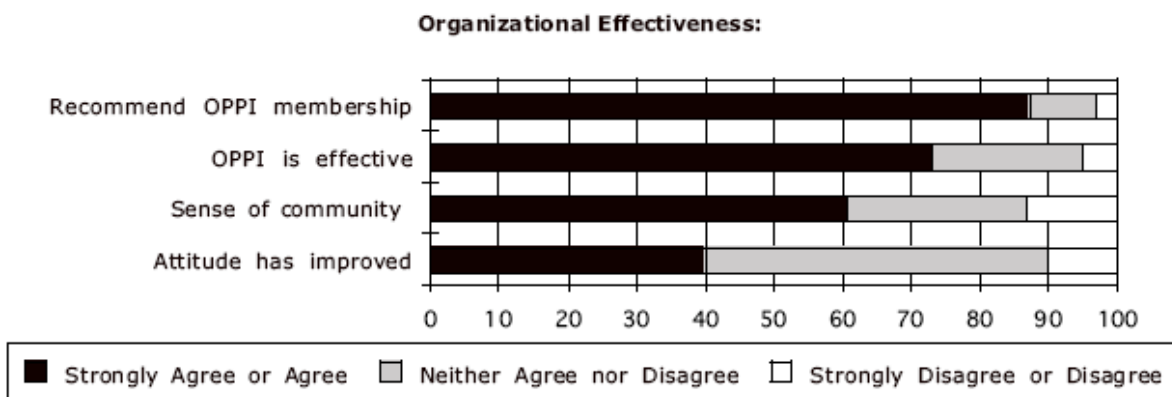
These results show that the majority of survey respondents believe that the OPPI is an effective organization, and would recommend OPPI membership to other planning professionals. In addition, approximately 60% of respondents believe that the OPPI fosters a

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sense of community, while 40% believe that the organization's attitude has improved. The combination of these findings seems to indicate an overall satisfaction with the effectiveness of the organization (OPPI, 2005).

Figure 5: Comparisons Between Districts (OPPI, 2005)
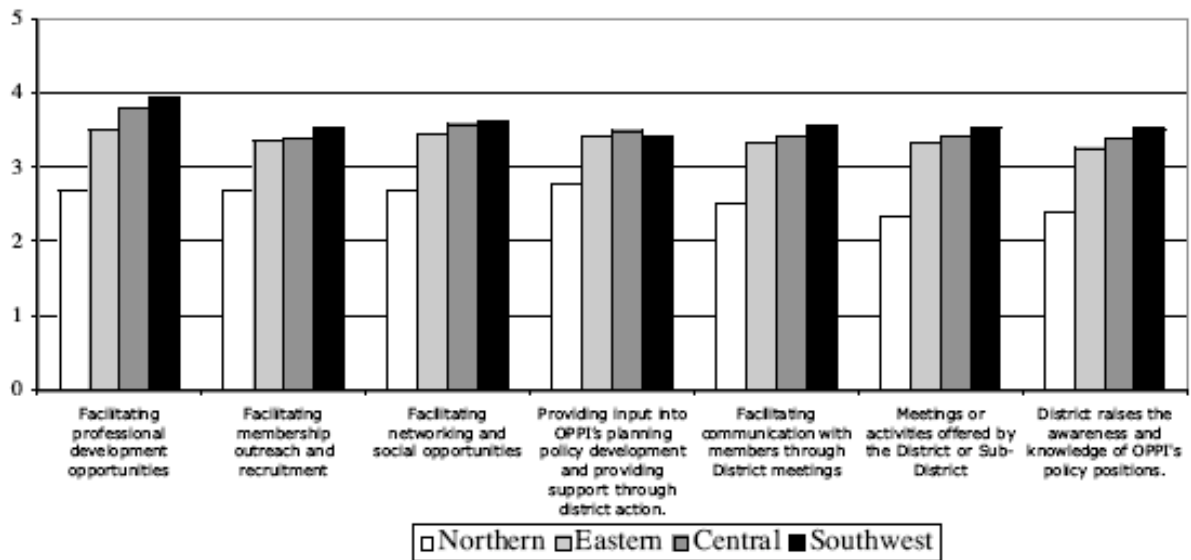
This diagram points to slight difference in the perceptions of OPPI members across regions. The Central and Southwest districts seem to express a higher level of satisfaction with regard to a number of attributes than the Northern and Eastern districts (OPPI, 2005).

Figure 6: Factors in the Achievement of OPPI Goals (OPPI, 2005)

The achievement of OPPI's goals has been facilitated by

Ontario Planning Journal	
New OPPI web site	
Planning Awards	
World Town Planning Day	
Brand Statement	
Effectiveness of spokespersons	

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

■ Strongly Agree or Agree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree or Disagree
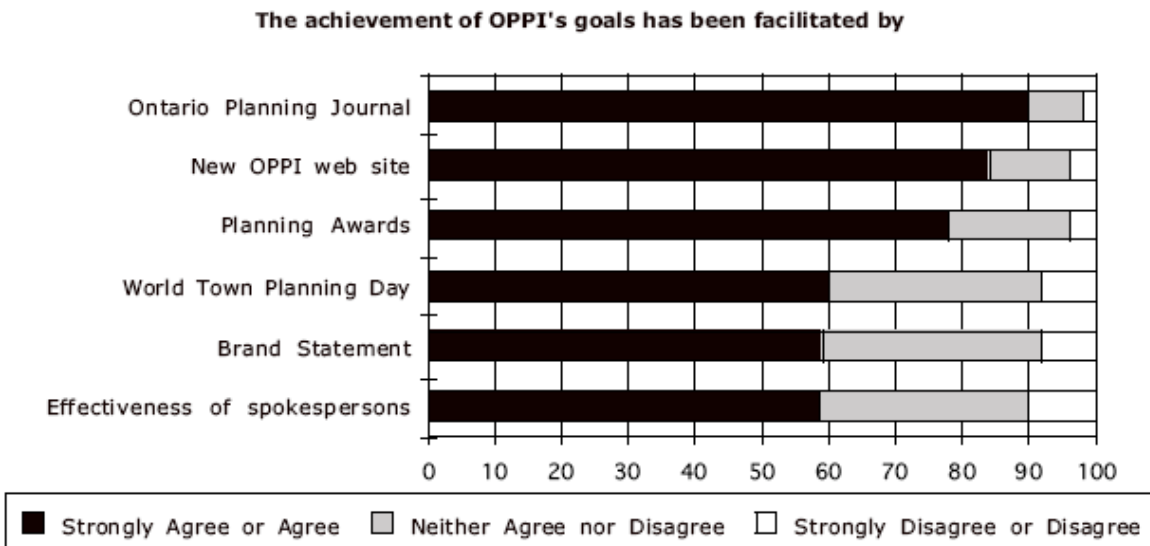
This diagram illustrates what members believe have been factors that have contributed to the achievement of the OPPI's goals. While the majority of respondents give credit to all of these factors, the Ontario Planning Journal is given the most, and the effectiveness of spokespersons is given the least.

Figure 7: Promotion of OPPI (OPPI, 2005)

In general, I would say that OPPI has

Increased recognition of planning	
Engaged and mobilized me	

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

■ Strongly Agree or Agree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Strongly Disagree or Disagree

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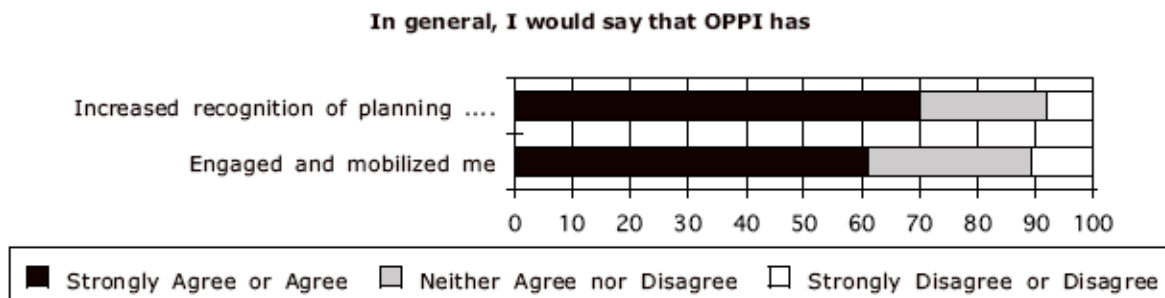
With regard to increasing the awareness and positive recognition of the role of planning and planners, over 70% of respondents believe that the OPPI has been successful. In addition, over 60% of respondents expressed that the OPPI engaged and mobilized its members to do the same (OPPI, 2005). These findings are important, as they show that efforts have indeed been made on the part of the organization and its members.

These survey results were used by the OPPI to produce a year-end report in 2008 (OPPI, 2008), highlighting the key achievements and accomplishments of the organization and its members. This document, made public by the OPPI, served as a demonstration of the organization's abilities, as well as its commitment to its goals. By focusing on results and accountability, this type of strategy works well to inspire faith in the OPPI among members and stakeholders – a feeling previewed in the survey results.

The organization's most recent strategic plan (OPPI, 2009) is presented in a uniquely visual, reader-friendly format. Incorporating colors and visual aesthetics designed to segment the pages into categories, the document draws attention to the OPPI's vision, mission, goals and key strategies. Although the content is similar to that found in the most recent CIP publication, the presentation thereof is anything but the same. In addition, the OPPI's strategic plan can be easily accessed by the public on its website, while the CIP's cannot. An emphasis on public access and understanding is clearly lost here by the CIP. Although its mission statement is prominently displayed on its home page, one can argue that not enough effort is put into the transparency of its strategic plan.

The OPPI, similar to the CIP, also engages in a number of outreach activities, including regular conference and networking events. These are designed to keep Ontario planners informed of the latest planning issues that affect their communities, as well as to

provide them with opportunities to build ties with other planners in the region. It also provides members with continuous professional learning activities, including skill-developing seminars and online courses. These activities demonstrate a willingness to keep up with the dynamic nature of the profession. Similar to the CIP, the OPPI also issues an online Members Update Newsletter in the goal of keeping OPPI members updated with the latest organization and professional news and events. Both organizations participate in activities related to World Town Planning Day, which focuses on the promotion of the profession and its activities to the public. Although the OPPI makes information relating to its involvement in this initiative accessible to the public, only CIP members can access the same information within the CIP. Like the CIP, the OPPI also publishes its own journal to keep planners informed of the latest planning issues and OPPI events. The Ontario Planning Journal is available free to members and for subscription to non-members. In addition to providing access to a number of policy papers and submissions, it provides a link to download the Kid's Guide to Planning discussed in the CIP section. It also provides access to a handbook called "Planning by Design," a joint initiative between the OPPI and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the purpose of which is "to share and generate ideas on how places can be planned and designed more sustainably for healthy, active living and to retain and attract residents, investors and visitors" (Ontario Professional Planners Institute, 2009).

An important question should be asked at this point, however: if the two organizations' visions, missions, goals and activities run nearly parallel, is there an overlap that occurs? As the OPPI's jurisdiction covers only Ontario, which finds itself within the CIP's countrywide focus, is there not a duplication of services? If this is the case, are

resources being used effectively? As a result, are these two organizations now in a position of competition with one another? If the goals of both organizations are, in fact, aligned, this situation would seem to be counter-productive – especially if it is not just occurring between the CIP and the OPPI, but with other affiliates as well. Thus, this issue not only highlights a resource efficiency problem, but also a potential problem of control over the brand, which could lead to conflict.

4.3.5 International Planning Organizations

In this section, a list of best practices in international planning organizations (APA, RTPI, NZPI, PIA) will be produced by highlighting similar and effective practices across countries. Using these as examples of good planning advocacy, they can be thereby translated to the Canadian planning context and incorporated into a long-term marketing strategy on the part of the CIP.

American Planning Association (APA)

The APA has arguably the most resources at its disposal, and is thus in the best position to raise the profile of the profession. Indeed, after an evaluation of the APA's operations, this organization should be looked at as a model for improvement in the Canadian planning community.

The APA Development Plan 2008-2009 *(APA, 2007)* is essentially the organization's strategic plan for the future. Accessible only to APA members, the plan outlines the APA's vision, mission, slogan, values, goals and implementation strategies. This document outlines the importance of planning advocacy at a number of levels, including engaging citizens as

well as elected officials to ensure that the profession is valued, respected, and produces high-quality decision-making (APA, 2007). Commitments are made and supported by timelines, action-based strategy and organizational accountability For example, with regard to the APA's commitment to the growth of the organization, the document states the following: "In two years, we will be measured by how we have increased public knowledge of and support for planning, improved services to our members, and by how we achieved growth of membership in targeted markets" (APA, 2007). This statement, coupled with pragmatic strategies for the achievement of 5 key goals, ensures that stakeholders can expect results in the near future.

The APA website is a clear manifestation of the organization's Development Plan *(APA, 2007)*. As a result, it is clearly not targeted toward planners alone. In addition to providing valuable member services, the organization's vision and mission statement clearly make reference to a number of stakeholder groups and seeks to make planning advocacy a priority. The APA's professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), instead takes charge of providing professional accreditation services, leadership and guidance to its certified members *(American Planning Association, 2009)*.

Using eye-catching aesthetics, the APA website is sectioned according to a number of themes designed to spark the interest of any visitor. As can be seen in the screen shot below, it provides many useful resources, including a "Discover" button on the home page, which links to a separate page that is structured and designed to educate the curious non-planner. It also features link that directs the reader to the "About Planning" page, which features a very detailed, clear and comprehensive explanation of what planning is, what planners do and how to be come a planner. This section is very informative and seems to encompass most of what

the layman would need to know about the profession *(American Planning Association, 2009)*.

Figure 8: Screen Shot of the APA Website (American Planning Association, 2009)
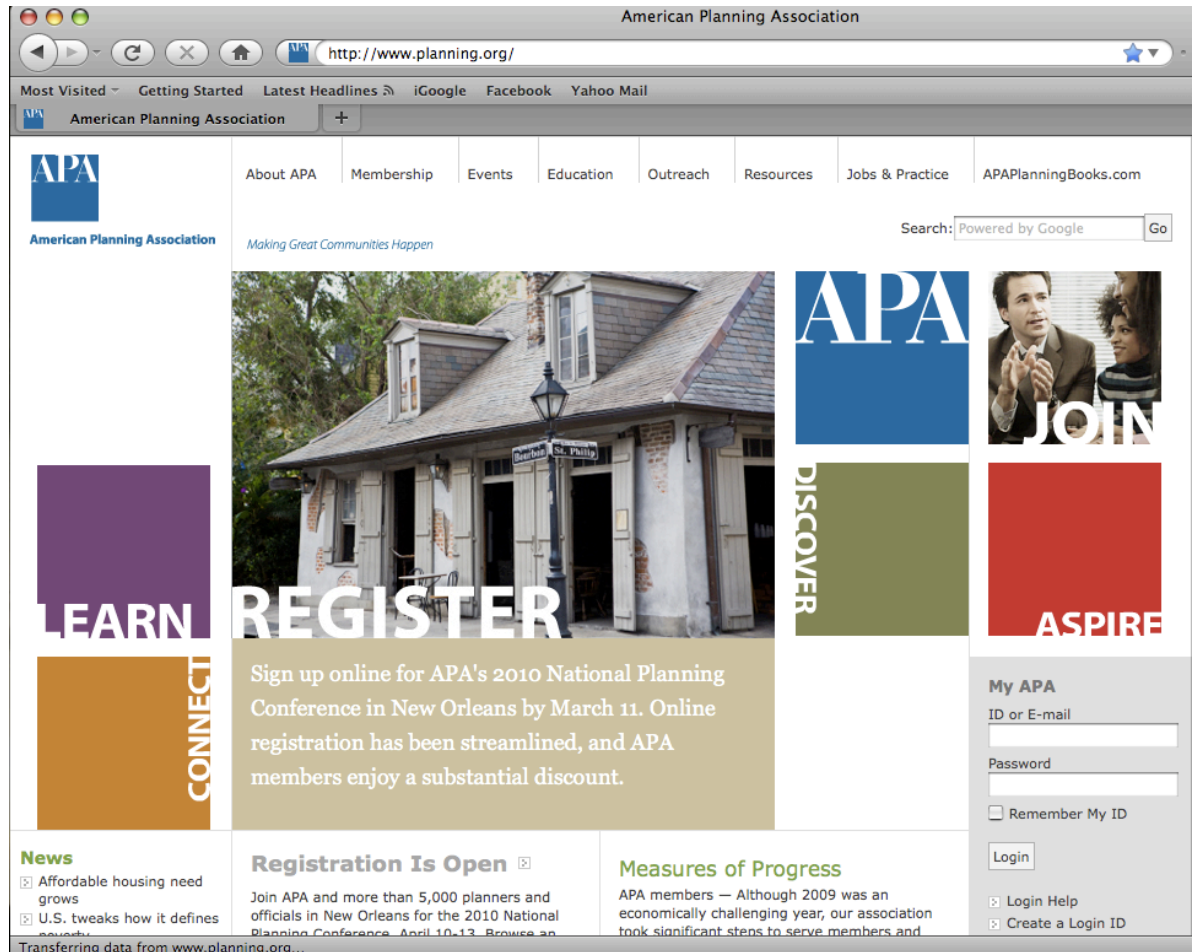
Like most other planning organizations, The APA organizes conferences, workshops, lectures, and symposiums to promote learning, networking and skill development within the profession. In addition, it oversees the publication of a number of journals, policy papers and reports, including the highly regarded Journal of the American Planning Association (JAPA). The organization takes resource access a step further, however, by offering podcasts and

videos of lectures and planning-related discussions. In addition, the organization promotes and engages in research and learning though research initiatives made public on the website. This is in addition to its involvement in the foundation of three important "National Centers for Planning": the Green Communities Research Center, the Hazards Planning Research Center, and the Planning and Community Health Research Center. Also, housed in Chicago is the APA Library, housing over 4,200 volumes of planning and related field works, and open to any interested citizen.

In addition to providing valuable resources to the public, the APA places a marked emphasis on recruitment into the profession. While the CIP's online recruitment efforts are somewhat sterile and hidden within the website, the APA's efforts seem to flow through almost the entire website with a clear emphasis on generating interest in planning issues. The "Discover" and "Join" themes particularly address this issue, and provide clear information regarding a career in planning *(American Planning Association, 2009)*.

With its website's interest generating aesthetics, its user-friendly interface, its emphasis on current events, and its focus on generating interest in the profession and planning issues, the APA seems to have successfully combined stakeholder education and member services *(American Planning Association, 2009)*.

Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

Serving the United Kingdom, the RTPI provides much of the same services as other professional planning organizations. It does, however, seem to display an interest and understanding in the dynamic nature of the profession, and the potential threats that may result, citing a changing political, social, economical and ecological context on a global

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scale. An exercise called "New Vision" has served as the foundation for the organization's Corporate Plan 2007-2010 (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007), its strategic plan for the future, which highlights a number of key points. As with most strategic plans, it also aligns goals with strategies for implementation and evaluation.

Given the evolution of the profession over recent years, the RTPI found it necessary to re-evaluate the state of the profession within the new context. As a result, the RTPI has redefined its understanding of the planning profession in the UK based on "a shift away from a narrow, regulatory focus to a broader practice of spatial planning which focuses on outcomes" (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007). The document also expresses that this shift has had an impact on legislation and policy within the UK (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007).

With regard to its members, the RTPI also notes that: "our members in many cases face challenges in their working environments, where they are not necessarily valued properly or treated equitably with other professions. Strategies that provide effective support for planners in the workplace must therefore underpin and be a test of all that we do" (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007). This is a clear recognition that the profile of the profession has been suffering in recent years, and must be addressed through strategic tools. Additionally, the document makes mention of an uneven gender balance as problem within the profession: "we have real grounds for concern that gender balance on entry is not maintained through career progression […] Thus strategies to promote equality and diversity must underpin and be a test of all that we do" (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007). The persistence of this inequality results in a member population being unrepresentative of society as a whole. The importance of diversity and equality within the profession therefore

becomes important to ensuring the same for the decisions that come out of the planning process (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007). Although this is an observation that has only been highlighted by the RTPI, the Canadian planning profession might want to consider whether or not this issue also affects its planning population, and what this may mean within the Canadian context.

The Corporate Plan (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007) also highlights the following: "While some business interests continue to demand a reduction of planning powers, there is also a growing recognition of the need for forms of planning which can secure community and stakeholder involvement, can create a clear spatial vision and can be the means to co-ordinate delivery. There is no reason to suppose this will change in the near future" (Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007). This comment on the potential threats and competition facing the profession brings to light some of the realities of the new political environment in which planning operates in the UK. This observation seems to be similar to observations made about the Canadian planning profession in Chapter 2 of this thesis. While not a SWOT analysis in itself, an effort to identify potential threats to the organization and the profession shows a willingness to adapt to change.

New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI)

The NZPI has been revamping its website during the past year, with the following message appearing on the home page: "Good planning helps to create better communities and enrich peoples' lives. We believe it is important that everyone understands how the planning process works. This site is going to be revamped and will be dedicated to the general public, it's aim will be to educate everyone on how to take part in the decision

making process, and effect positive physical, social and economic change in their communities…" (New Zealand Planning Institute, 2009). This initiative constitutes a best practice in itself. The fact that the organization is re-targeting its website to the general public shows a movement toward better public inclusion within the planning process by attempting to create an image for the profession in the country.

While the new website is not yet up and running, the current website features an active recruitment campaign seeking to educate potential future planners about the profession and how they can join it. It also provides a (yet inactive) link to a website geared specifically at planners, indicating that the general public will indeed be the focus of this new site. Similar to other professional planning organizations, the NZPI organizes an annual conference, and provides resources and services to its members and to the public to help promote planning education and awareness (New Zealand Planning Institute, 2009).

Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)

With a membership base of over 5000, the PIA serves as the face of the planning profession in Australia. Although its website, at first glance, seems scattered, unstructured and disorganized, the organization does provide a number of valuable services to the public and its members.

In 2004, the PIA published the results of its national inquiry, sparked as a result of a rapidly evolving profession (PIA, 2004). The document, entitled "Findings and Recommendations of the National Inquiry into Planning Education and Employment," serves as a highly in-depth analysis of the state of the Australian planning profession. The 66 page report contains an exceptional level of detail that aided the development of the PIA's

National Strategic Plan 2007-2012 (PIA, 2007). This plan not only clearly outlines the PIA's vision, mission, values and goals, it makes use of numeric performance indicators, ensuring that the strategies adopted will indeed be measureable, and the PIA will be held accountable to these (PIA, 2007).

Although the focus of the National Inquiry report (PIA, 2004) is not entirely in line with this study, I would like to draw attention to the fact that this report made use of 2001 census data to develop a labor market analysis (PIA, 2004). What we can take away from this is that census data might provide an easy way to track elements of the profession and how they change over the years. Given the quality of the Canadian Census data collected by Statistics Canada, this should be explored as a viable research and analysis tool for the Canadian planning profession.

This report also highlights the increasing demand for planners in Australia, and thus identifies the need to recruit younger members into the profession. Many comments were received by the organization about the need to lift the profile of the profession and to make it more attractive to young people (PIA, 2004). This should also be a focus adopted by the Canadian planning profession, as the demographics within the country's labor market will see significant change over the coming years.

Although the PIA offers similar services to its members as other planning organizations, the biggest attribute that differentiates it is its structure. Similar to other organizations, it does operate on a geographic basis, using Divisions; however, it also consists of Chapters "representing key [specializations] within professional planning practice" (PIA, 2007; PIA, 2009). The APA also incorporates a similar concept, which it refers to as "Divisions". These divisions primarily serve as a voice for planners to advocate

for a particular planning sector or issue (American Planning Association, 2009). This unusual approach serves to highlight, and even embrace the existence of specializations within the profession – a highly controversial issue in Canada. In contrast to the PIA and the APA, the CIP website almost seems to hide any mention of specialization. Thus, the issue of planning specialization in Canada is investigated further throughout the thesis research. In addition, it is worth noting that the CIP seems to also avoid mention of its affiliates. These are simply included in a list under the "affiliates" link at the top of the page with no mention of how the roles and responsibilities of the affiliates fit within those of the CIP. This ties into the issue overlap addressed in the OPPI portion of this section, and may serve as an indication of the effectiveness of the structure adopted among the CIP and its affiliates.

4.4 SUMMARY

Table 3 is a matrix composed of a list of best practices in marketing and planning drawn from the analysis conducted throughout this chapter. In order to capitalize on these best practices, a planning organization looking to develop a strategic plan for the future should aim to be "strong" in all of these categories, especially "Marketing." Given the fact that the CIP is bound by its limited resources compared to other organizations, however, it should realistically look at this matrix as a benchmark for improvement. By comparing itself to the other organizations presented, as well as to the best practices in marketing, the CIP should be in a position to identify areas for improvement in the development of its next strategic plan.

Table 6: Best Practices Matrix

LEGEND:
√√√√ = All elements present
√√√ = Several elements present, but not all
√√ = Some elements present
√ = Few elements present
X = No elements present
N/A = Information not available

	MARKETING	CIP	OPPI	APA	RTPI	NZPI	PIA
Identify all basic marketing elements in the organization	√√√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	N/A	√√
Conduct a SWOT analysis to better understand the organization's situation in relation to its environment	√√√√	X	N/A	N/A	√√	N/A	√√
Identify a desired brand position by conducting an analysis of the market, the organization and competitors	√√√√	X	X	√√	√√	N/A	√√
Develop a comprehensive and measurable Strategic Plan: vision, mission, values, goals, objectives and time-bound performance measurement metrics	√√√√	√	√	√√√√	√√√	N/A	√√√√
Focus on internal marketing strategies	√√√√	X	X	√√√	√√	N/A	√√

Organizational transparency through access to internal information	N/A	**X**	√√√√	√√	√√√√	X	√√√√
Delivery of high-quality, relevant services and resources to members	N/A	**√√√√**	√√√√	√√√√	√√√√	N/A	√√√√
Focus on member education	N/A	**√√√√**	√√√√	√√√√	√√	N/A	√√√√
Focus on stakeholder education and external promotion of the profession	√√√√	√	√	√√√√	√√	√√√√	√√√√
Focus on effective recruitment into the profession	N/A	**X**	X	√√√√	√√√√	√√√√	√√√√
Effective focus on self-evaluation and improvement	√√√√	√	√√	√√√	√√√√	√√	√√√√
Unique organizational structure, incorporating planning specializations	N/A	**X**	X	√√√√	X	X	√√√√
Website quality: effective layout and aesthetics	N/A	√	√√	√√√√	√√	√√	√√

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

After conducting an extensive literature review and content analysis, we are left with several questions that may best be answered through more in-depth primary research. This section will focus on providing analysis of primary research conducted through a web-based survey and key informant interviews, and will seek to extract findings that may serve to answer these questions.

Prior to data analysis, it is important to highlight the biases that may have occurred during the each phase of research. As the survey questions were developed during and after the literature review and content analysis, they could potentially be biased by the readings and exposure to Dr. Witty's (1998) study. This is further confirmed by the fact that the questions were designed to give a glimpse of the issues and themes the researcher uncovered in the literature review. In addition, because of resource and time limitations, it was simply impossible to survey a representative population of the "general public." This made it necessary to target personal contacts to initiate the snowball effect within this segment. As a result, many of the participants that identified themselves as non-CIP members were students or recent graduates that were known to the researcher. Their responses to questions may have been be biased accordingly, and this will be highlighted in the presentation of the survey results. CIP member contacts were obtained by the researcher through the CIP, which invited members to add themselves to a survey contact list on a voluntary basis. Due to this "opt-in" nature of recruitment, participants may be of a certain type – strongly opinionated on either

side of the spectrum. This might have ultimately, however, generated richer data, as the goal of this phase was to identify trends and potential issues, and indifferent or complacent views may have been filtered out.

Similarly, the interview questions could also have been biased by the literature review and content analysis readings, as well as exposure to Dr. Witty's (1998) study. As the interviews were used to elaborate on the themes and issues brought out by the survey, the interview questions and style could have additionally been biased by these results prior to conducting the interviews. During the course of the interviews, questions and directions for each interview could have been biased by the thoughts and directions presented by the preceding interviewees. These potential biases should be taken into account throughout the presentation of the results.

Now that the potential sources of bias are clearly identified, the analysis of survey and interview data, along with the presentation of the results thereof, can be made in an appropriate context. This section of the thesis will be segmented according to survey findings, and then interview findings, followed by general conclusions. Sub-segments may serve to further categorize these segments.

5.2 SURVEY FINDINGS

The web-based survey was conducted using the Zoomerang.com platform. It was launched on December 18, 2008, and received its last response on January 26, 2009. During this period, it received 100 responses – 50 CIP members and 50 non-CIP members, all of which live in Canada and are over the age of 18. The information was further segmented into

occupation, education level, and years of experience categories in order to gain a deeper understanding of the data. The following tables provide an overview of the participant pool.

Table 7: Occupations vs. Length of Time Practicing (Zoomerang, 2009)

What is your occupation? (Please select all responses that apply)	Total*	How long have you been in this occupation?				
		Less than a year	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	Over 15 years
	98	12	32	16	7	31
Public sector planner	32 / 32.7%	2 / 16.7%	9 / 28.1%	7 / 43.8%	3 / 42.9%	11 / 35.5%
Private sector planner	10 / 10.2%	0 / 0.0%	5 / 15.6%	1 / 6.3%	1 / 14.3%	3 / 9.7%
Council member / politician	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%
University/College professor	2 / 2.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	2 / 6.5%
Media	3 / 3.1%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	3 / 9.7%
Land development	3 / 3.1%	0 / 0.0%	2 / 6.3%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	1 / 3.2%
Architect	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%
Engineer	4 / 4.1%	1 / 8.3%	2 / 6.3%	0 / 0.0%	0 / 0.0%	1 / 3.2%
Student	31 / 31.6%	2 / 16.7%	9 / 28.1%	7 / 43.8%	1 / 14.3%	12 / 38.7%
Other, please specify	22 / 22.4%	7 / 58.3%	10 / 31.3%	1 / 6.3%	2 / 28.6%	2 / 6.5%

*Total = The number of respondents for the entire survey who answered the Row question and, if a filter is applied, meet the filter criteria.

Table 8: Occupation vs. Highest Level of Education (Zoomerang, 2009)

What is your occupation? (Please select all responses that apply)	Total*	Please indicate your highest level of education:					
		University - Doctoral	University - Graduate	University - Undergraduate	College	High School	Other, please specify
	100	5	42	47	1	1	4
Public sector planner	32 32.0%	1 20.0%	18 42.9%	12 25.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 25.0%
Private sector planner	10 10.0%	0 0.0%	7 16.7%	3 6.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Council member / politician	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
University/College professor	2 2.0%	2 40.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Media	3 3.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 6.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Land development	3 3.0%	0 0.0%	2 4.8%	1 2.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Architect	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Engineer	4 4.0%	0 0.0%	1 2.4%	3 6.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Student	33 33.0%	1 20.0%	12 28.6%	16 34.0%	1 100.0%	1 100.0%	2 50.0%
Other, please specify	22 22.0%	1 20.0%	7 16.7%	12 25.5%	1 100.0%	0 0.0%	1 25.0%

*Total = The number of respondents for the entire survey who answered the Row question and, if a filter is applied, meet the filter criteria.

Excluding resource-limited recruitment methods, participant numbers and segments were not manipulated or controlled in any way. Although not statistically significant, the results of this survey allow us to identify potential issues and areas for further investigation. A hard copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. General findings are as follows:

Out of 50 non-CIP member participants, 68% were aware of the existence of the profession. When asked what the roles and responsibilities of a planner are, many of these participants admitted to having only a vague idea, with responses that included:

- "Planning the layout of municipalities, cities, and so forth,"

- "To consider the problems that are [currently] encountered but also to anticipate upcoming issues,"

- "To help the city become what it wants to be;" and,

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- "Generally speaking, it is to understand the interactions of objects and energy (sound, light) in a given space, be it enclosed or exposed, and plan arrangements & design of these objects to fit a particular design."

Despite having a limited idea of the roles and responsibilities of a planner, it is encouraging that there is still, for the most part, a small understanding. It should also be noted that while many of these participants reported having a vague idea, a few participants still seemed to have a greater understanding, responding with comments such as:

- "To advocate and recommend options to communities/municipalities about the [spatial] needs/esthetics of the community/municipality. Planners can be used in many capacities, whether to help plan space to promote more environmentally friendly communities (i.e. more trails, bike lanes, walking routes) or to create safer communities who are at greater risk for natural disaster. I think planners are limited in some ways. Because they are working within a bureaucracy, their feedback and professional opinion will always be marginalized, as they have to work within the confines of a bureaucratic control system;" and,

- "A planner's role can vary depending on which sector of work one is in but roles can include: Current land use planning (re-zoning, subdivision work), Heritage planning, Environmental planning, Cultural planning, Future land use planning, and areas within Urban design. In all cases a planner is expected to provide the best possible solutions to issues at hand and work with a variety of sake holders to achieve solutions that works for more than one interested party."

As expected, the non-CIP member participants that were not at all aware of the planning profession (32%), for the most part, either declined to comment on the roles and

responsibilities of a planner, or indicated that they did not know what they were. In addition, only 17% of all respondents (36% of non-CIP members) were aware of the existence of the CIP, with marginal numbers aware of CIP affiliates, with the exception of the OPPI (10% of all respondents).

Another interesting finding that seems to corroborate some of the thoughts of Lightbody (2006), McAllister (2004), McClendon (2003), and Glazer (2000) is that non-CIP members tend to have more indifferent than negative perceptions of the profession, with 55% of non-CIP members indicating indifference, 36% indicating somewhat or very positive perceptions, and the remaining 9% only indicating somewhat negative perceptions.

When given an opportunity to elaborate on their responses, many participants expressed indifference because they felt they were not exposed to the profession, and therefore did not know enough about it to think of it in either a negative or positive light. In fact, one participant made the following remark, which may provide insight into the external image of the profession: "Don't know much about them, haven't had much contact with it. Heard that the profession is very exclusive and hard to get into." An investigation into this type of perception is important in order to understand the profession's image and its ability to attract new talent. Respondents that indicated positive feelings towards the profession expressed an appreciation for the work put into shaping our communities. Although appreciation was expressed, there still seemed to be a common feeling that in certain communities, the planning could be done better with regard to hot-topic issues like sustainability, the environment and urban sprawl. It is important to keep in mind the biases previously discussed when considering this data. Due to the fact that many non-CIP member respondents were known to the researcher, it is possible that the responses to this question

were positively skewed. Therefore, in order to eliminate some of these biases, this theme was addressed in the interview phase of the research, and findings will be presented in the following sub-section.

If we now take a look at the other half of the participants – CIP members – we can begin to understand the issues surrounding the profession and its image. 84% of CIP member participants currently practice planning. The remaining 14% of CIP members are mostly students or retired. 65% of the CIP members are generally satisfied with their career, and 35% are somewhat satisfied. None of this segment reported dissatisfaction with their careers. In addition, 84% of the CIP members would choose planning again if they had to choose a career path all over. The remaining 16% would not choose planning again, and many cited low remuneration and/or low professional respect as reasons why. These findings might serve as an indicator of morale within the profession. They suggest that, for the most part, planners are relatively content with their careers, despite only 14% of CIP members agreeing with the statement: "the public appreciates the work that planners do." These findings generally fall in line with those of Witty (1998) more than a decade ago, indicating that morale has not dipped over the years.

CIP members were also asked to identify the top three tasks they perform on the job:

Figure 9: Tasks of a Planner (Zoomerang, 2009)
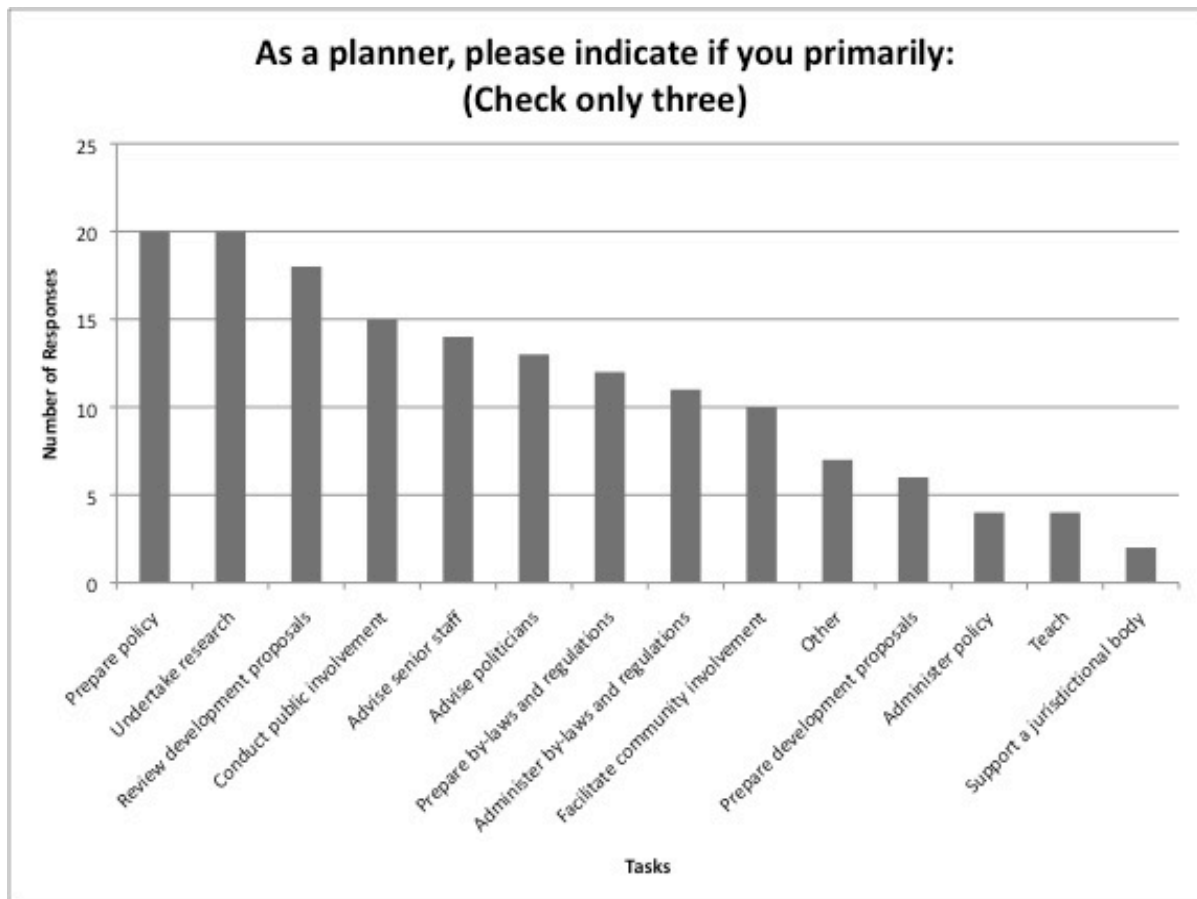
Prepare policy and undertake research received the highest rankings, followed by review development proposals and conduct public involvement. The lowest ranked tasks were support a jurisdictional body and administer policy; however, due to the small sample size and the CIP members varying greatly in years of experience and planning context, these results may only serve to give a very general idea of what planners do. In fact, when given the chance to elaborate, many CIP members explained that planners perform all of these tasks, but to varying degrees according to their job context. These results seem to corroborate those found by Witty (1998), who determined that "most planners understand that

comprehensiveness should be a part of the definition of planning" (p.123), as well as the definitions of planning examined in Chapter 4.

Participants were also given a chance to describe the roles and responsibilities of a planner in an open-ended response format. These responses were then coded to themes in order to determine if they matched up with the definitions given by different planning organizations in Chapter 4. The themes that were most commonly brought up were social, future and land use, combined with an action. Environmental, political, legislative and economic themes also commonly came into play. These findings are consistent with the definitions given by professional planning organizations around the world. Tying into this issue, data indicates that the majority of CIP member participants view planners as negotiators, with 88% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Once again, although not statistically representative of the entire professional planning community, these findings may provide a better understanding of the complex and dynamic nature of planning work.

The majority of CIP members (56%) indicated that they believe that most people outside of the planning profession are indifferent towards it, which falls closely in line with the results taken from non-CIP members (55%). These results suggest an acceptance or awareness within the profession of these external attitudes. Most of the CIP members cited a lack of clear professional identity, a low professional profile, lack of public exposure to planning issues, and confusion of roles with other professions, as key reasons for this indifference. In fact, 74% of CIP members indicated that the Canadian planning profession needs a new image and identity, with many participants making comments about an apparent complete current lack of an image. An emphasis on being a recognized profession is also

cited as important to this group, especially since 88% of CIP members identify themselves and other planners as being professionals. In addition, a significant 80% of the CIP members disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that the planning profession portrays a clear and unified image universally, and only about half of them (47%) believe that the roles and responsibilities of the planner are clearly defined within the profession. In comparison, 29% of non-CIP members disagree or strongly disagree with the former statement, while 60% neither agree nor disagree, which could again point to a simple lack of knowledge about the profession's image by the public. The reasons for this unclear or non-existent image are explained by some participants as planning is an extremely diverse and dynamic profession which varies according to the context, whether it involve different social, economic or environmental variables, and is therefore difficult to define in precise terms. These findings fall directly in line with those drawn out in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) and Chapter 4 (Content Analysis) of this thesis, and serve to further explain why planning organizations around the world define planning in very broad and all-encompassing terms.

Furthermore, 76% of CIP members agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "planners work in an overly political environment." This is a jump from the 50% of respondents that agreed in Witty's (1998) study. In fact, open-ended responses throughout the questionnaire consistently make reference to this issue, often alluding to their ability – or inability according to some – to challenge society's status quo. When asked their opinion on the statement "planning has failed to challenge the status quo," 62% of CIP members agreed or strongly agreed, showing an increase from the combined 40% in Witty's (1998) study. 16% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 22% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This said, a large proportion (48%) of CIP members disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement

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"planners make suggestions to council/clients that are rarely followed-through," while 24% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 28% agreed or strongly agreed. Additionally, similar to Witty's (1998) results, 84% of CIP members believe that the work that they do achieves positive results in the community, and 88% believe that the profession is necessary to ensure the effective functioning of communities. This contrasts with the only 14% of respondents agreeing that the public appreciates the work that planners do, although about 50% of respondents agree that community decision-makers appreciate the work that they do. Both these last findings show a decline since Witty's (1998) study. The combination of these issues paints a picture of the complex relationship between planning and politics, and its consequential influence on decision-making and morale within the profession. Presented with this avenue for further exploration, these themes were addressed in the interview phase, and results are presented in Sub-Section 5.3.

Results also seem to indicate that most CIP members believe that the general public does not know or understand what planners do. This belief is supported by the data relating to all survey participants, in that 67% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that "non-planners understand what planners do," and only 2% strongly agreed and 7% agreed with this statement (24% neither agreed nor disagreed). In fact, when looking solely at CIP members, the vast majority (78%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, suggesting that most planners feel misunderstood by the public. What is promising, however, is that 96% of all participants agreed that the general awareness of the planning profession in Canada should be increased. Although this is the case, the CIP should evaluate whether or not there is a genuine need for general awareness, or if would be more worthwhile to simply target marketing on a number of key stakeholder groups.

Additionally, only 38% of CIP members agree with the statement: "the planning practice is facing or is in a state of crisis." None of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 24% neither agreed nor disagreed. These results indicate a split opinion within the CIP member segment regarding the severity of the challenges facing the profession. This split becomes more apparent and is further explored in the interview phase. These last results, however, contrast with the results from Witty's (1998) study, where 69% of respondents believed that planning was in a state of crisis. These respondents blamed the profession's political nature, along with its relatively invisible public face, both elements outside the control of practicing planners. This contrast in findings might perhaps be viewed as an indication of progress in the Canadian planning profession over the past decade.

Another interesting issue that was touched on in the survey is that of related professions, and their credibility or strength in comparison to planning. Most of the CIP members (84%) agreed or strongly agreed that other related professionals, such as architects and engineers, have a lot more professional credibility than planners, compared to 57% of non-CIP members. Again, 31% of non-CIP members neither agreed nor disagreed, which suggests they do not know enough about planning to have an opinion either way. These results still indicate that planners do not think they are taken as seriously as "stronger," more high profile professions that are related to planning. When given a chance to elaborate, some CIP members even indicated that they are often confused with architects, engineers or politicians. The results also seem to show a split in opinion when it comes to whether or not the credibility of the planning profession is declining further. 30% of CIP members do not believe it is, and 26% believe it is, while 44% neither agree nor disagree. Similarly, 29% of

non-CIP members do not think the profession's credibility is declining, and 19% believe that it is, while 52% neither agree nor disagree. This is another theme that was brought up during the interview phase, in order to gain a better understanding of these opinions.

In the context of this study, it was also relevant to question CIP members about the effectiveness of the organization as the face of the Canadian planning profession. According to the survey results, 23% of CIP members believe that the CIP represents the planning profession within the professional planning community very effectively, while 67% responded "somewhat effectively" and 10% responded "not very effectively." None of the CIP members responded "not at all effectively." In contrast, when asked how effectively the CIP represents the planning profession outside of the professional planning community, 26% responded "not at all effectively," 43% responded "not very effectively" and 32% responded "somewhat effectively". In this case, none of the participants responded "very effectively." This data paints a telling picture, suggesting that CIP members believe that the CIP does a better job at representing the profession internally than it does externally.

Interestingly, however, it seems that the CIP has a hard time attracting its members to its website, one of its primary means of communication, on a regular basis. 65% of CIP members indicated that they visit the website less than once a month, and an additional 6% never visit it at all. On the other hand, only 28% visit the site regularly, from one to two times a month up to once a week. These numbers indicate that the CIP should be re-evaluating the website's purpose, and its ability to deliver on this. It should be noted, however, that most CIP members do receive regular newsletters from the organization via email, and would be kept up-to-date on CIP news through this initiative. When we take a look at CIP members' perceptions of CIP marketing initiatives, we see that 72% of

respondents do not believe that the profession markets itself at all, with 86% following up

with the view that the little that is done is not very, or not at all effective.

Combined with most participants' desire to see a new image and increased awareness

for the profession, these findings could point to potential issues involving the CIP's Branding

and Communications Strategy. In order to gain a deeper understanding of what exactly

participants wanted to see addressed through marketing, they were asked to prioritize a list of

issues that CIP marketing should be addressing through promotional initiatives. These are

shown in Figure 9 below.

Figure 10: Items to be Communicated by the CIP (Zoomerang, 2009)
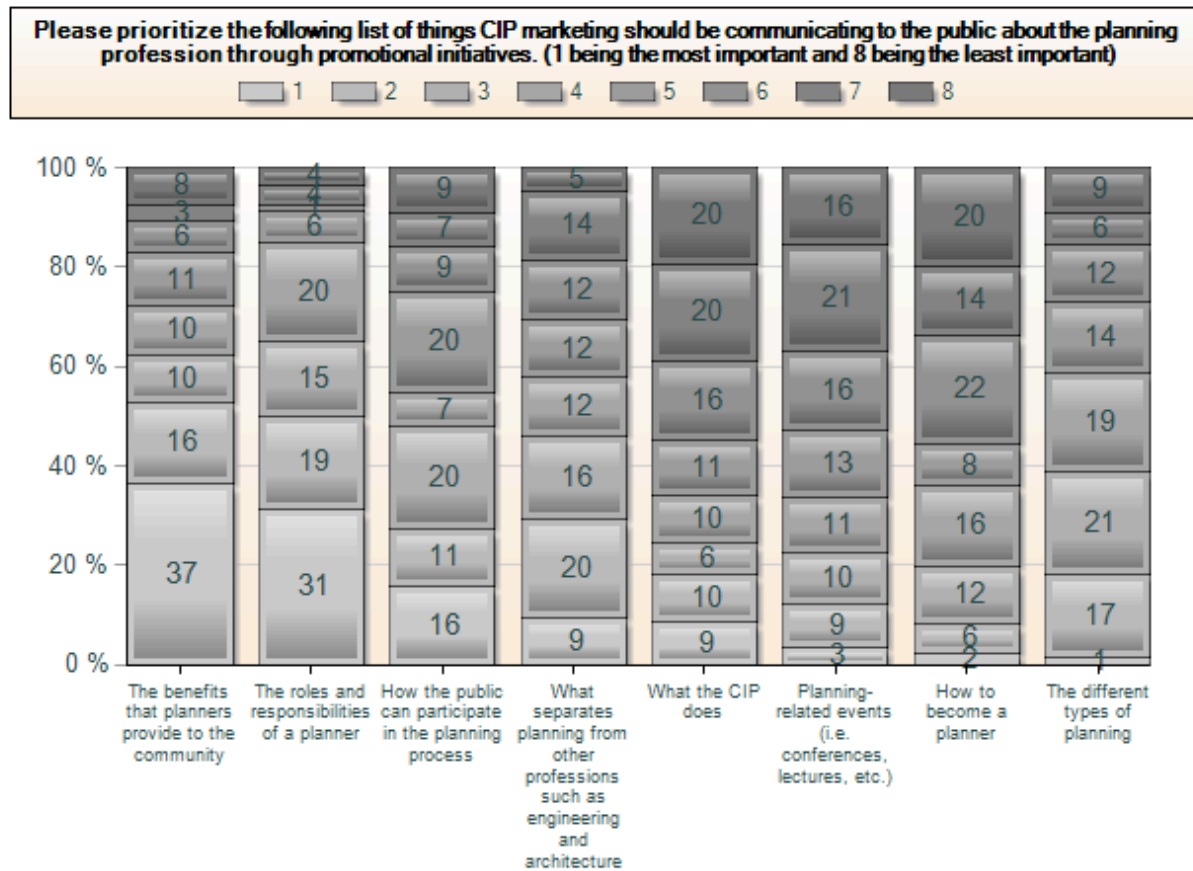
Among the top priorities for participants was the need to communicate the benefits that planners provide to the community, along with the roles and responsibilities of a planner. Closely related to the latter is what differentiates planning from related professions like engineering and architecture, which also ranked high on the list. Participants would also like to see an emphasis on informing the public about how they could participate in the planning process. The different types of planning situated in the middle of the list of priorities, and how to become a planner, what the CIP does, and planning-related events such as lectures and conferences rated at the bottom of participants' priorities.

Summary

This survey provided valuable preliminary results, which, on the non-CIP member side, appear to support the issues raised in the literature review regarding public perceptions. In addition, with regard to CIP members, the results have brought to light a variety of issues relating to how they feel about their profession, and have served as a starting point for more thorough investigation. It should be noted, therefore, that these results are reflective of the pool of participants and their respective backgrounds, which might influence the amount of priority one might put on a certain issue. For example, a non-CIP member with an established career as a dentist might not be interested in knowing how to become a planner; however, a student looking to start a career might be. For this reason, the results presented in this section are to be looked at as an indication of potential issues, and a source of ideas for further research. Many of these elements were indeed addressed in the interviews, and will be explored further in the following sections of this thesis.

This said, the following preliminary conclusions have been drawn from the survey results:

- Non-planners have a very vague idea of what planning is.

- Non-planners are generally indifferent toward the profession, a fact that many planners are aware of.

- All participants agree that the general awareness of the profession should be increased.

- Morale within the profession has remained the same over the past decade. Planners believe in the importance and impact of their work, despite feeling that this work is under-appreciated by the public.

- Planners see less of a crisis situation for the profession than they did a decade ago.

- Practitioners believe that planning is comprehensive in nature, and generally agree with some of the main elements of the definition of planning drawn out in Chapter 4: society, future and land use.

- Negotiation and communication skills are vital to planning.

- Practitioners would like to see a new image and identity for the Canadian planning profession.

- Practitioners increasingly believe they work in an overly political environment, and feel like they do not challenge the status quo.

- Participants believe that other related professionals, such as architects and engineers, have a lot more professional credibility than planners.

- CIP members believe that the CIP represents the Canadian planning profession relatively effectively within the professional planning community, but quite poorly

outside of it. The CIP, and consequently the profession, could therefore make better use of the tools at its disposal, such as its website, and could benefit from increased promotional efforts focusing on educating the public.

5.3 INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Once the survey phase of the research was complete, and the findings compiled and analyzed, 20 telephone interviews with key informants in the planning community were conducted. These interviews were, on average, 45 minutes in length, and were carried out using an interview guide (Appendix C) designed to elaborate on and clarify survey findings. Interviewees consisted of public sector planners, private sector planners, planning academics, and members of municipal governments. The individuals were spread out among 8 different provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. They also had varying years of experience in planning, and represented a balance of both urban and rural perspectives. This diverse group of participants allowed for the collection of rich and detailed data from this phase of my research.

To set context, the Table 6 contains a brief description of each participant. It is important to note that several participants chose to remain anonymous, while others allowed identification and attributed quotations. To maintain the privacy of the former, they are only identified in broad impersonal terms.

Table 9: Interview Participant Profiles

Participant	Years of Practice	Geographic Region	Sector	CIP Member	Planning Context
Anonymous "Participant1"	25+ yrs	Southern Ontario	Private	No	Urban and rural planning, land development, and teaching at the graduate level
Anonymous "Participant2"	N/A	Southern Ontario	No	No	Member of Council at a medium-seized Canadian municipality
Anonymous "Participant3"	9 yrs	Alberta	Public	Yes	Provincial level planning
Jill Grant, Ph.D., FCIP	20+ yrs	Halifax, Nova Scotia	Academic	Yes	Noted academic and professor at Dalhousie University's School of Planning
Anonymous "Participant5"	Under 10 yrs	British Columbia	Private	Yes	Planning consultant in rural BC that previously worked in the public sector
David Witty, Ph.D., MRAIC, FCIP	20+ yrs	Manitoba	Academic	Yes	Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba Former president of the CIP Completed his PhD ('98) at UBC entitled "Identifying a More Appropriate Role for the Canadian Planning Profession". His dissertation provides much of the basis for this project.

David Palubeski, FCIP	20+ yrs	Winnipeg, Manitoba	Private	Yes	President of Lombard North Group Former president of the CIP
Anonymous "Participant8"	N/A	Quebec	Public	Yes	Civil engineer and urban planner
Deb Biddiscombe, Ph.D., MCIP	N/A	Kamloops, British Columbia	Private	Yes	Manager of the Kamloops department of Focus Corporation consulting firm, specializing in aboriginal consulting. Previously worked as a Junior Planner for the City of Kelowna, BC.
Alaric Fish	6 yrs	Canmore, Alberta	Public	Yes	Planner for the City of Canmore
Robert Bjerke, MCIP, PPS	10 yrs	Regina	Public & Private	Yes	Director of Planning and Sustainability at the City of Regina President of the Association of Professional Community Planners of Saskatchewan (APCPS)
Mark Hornell, MCIP	25+ yrs	Victoria, British Columbia & Ontario	Public	Yes	Manager of Community Planning at the City of Victoria

Paul Bedford, FCIP	35+ yrs	Toronto, Ontario	Public	Yes	Highly reputed former Chief of Planning for the City of Toronto. In retirement, served as Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto, and Ryerson University Planning Schools.
Dennis Peck	15+ yrs	Northern Alberta	Public	Yes	General Manager of Planning and Development at the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Small community planning
Wayne Caldwell, PhD, MCIP, RPP	20+ yrs	County of Huron, Ontario	Public Academic	Yes	President of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) Professor in Rural Planning & Development at the University of Guelph's School of Environmental Design and Rural Development
David Watson	N/A	Calgary, Alberta	Public	No	General Manager of Planning, Development & Assessment at the City of Calgary
Paul Puopolo, MA, MCIP, RPP, OALA	30+ yrs	Kitchener, Ontario	Private	Yes	General Manager at IBI Group Kitchener Founder and President of Planning & Engineering

					Initiatives Ltd. (PEIL) before it was acquired by IBI Group
Jeanne Wolfe, FCIP, OUQ, FRGS	30+ yrs	Montreal, Quebec	Public Academic	Yes	Noted Professor Emeritus at McGill University's School of Urban Planning
Ken Seiling	15+ yrs	Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Ontrio	Public	No	Chair of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Ken O'Brien, MCIP	15 yrs	St. John's, Newfoundland	Public	Yes	Manager of Planning and Information at the City of St. John's

Once compiled, the data was coded to themes. The findings will thus be presented according to these themes.

5.3.1 Definition of a Planner: Roles, Responsibilities & Issues Surrounding Sub-Specialization

While discussing the definition of a planner with interviewees, the word "integration" was most often mentioned. According to participants, the primary role of the planner is to integrate the diverse and dynamic aspects of society. Within this theme, many participants cited the profession's holistic nature and the need for planners to balance social, environmental and economic factors (Participant1, 2009; Puopolo, 2009; Wolfe, 2009; Bedford, 2009; Palubeski, 2009; Witty, 2009; Participant5, 2009). In fact, several participants mentioned that they agree with the CIP's definition of planning that can be found in Section 4.2 of this thesis (Wolfe, 2009; Peck, 2009). Mark Hornell (2009), however, made

the interesting observation that the roles and responsibilities of a planner depend on the sector – public or private – in which the planner practices, since planning represents the municipality's interests on one, and the client's interests in the other.

Participant 1 (2009), who has been a prominent member of the profession for over 25 years, has witnessed the evolution of the profession from the planner's "expert" status, to its present "consultative" status. This current role was further reinforced by most of the other participants, who also emphasized the "communicator" role of the planner. Participant 1 (2009) explained that, in their opinion, the planner's role has recently included more public relations and negotiation, given an increased focus on public participation in the planning process. The individual expressed frustration with this trend, indicating that the public participation process is based on the premise that the public knows more than the planner, and is therefore the reason why the planner's "expert" status has died down (Participant1, 2009).

In addition, some participants emphasized that while planning is a diverse and holistic profession, one of the main focuses remains on land use (Peck, 2009; Wolfe, 2009; Participant2, 2009). Participant 1 (2009) emphasized this point, stating that: "planning is about the regulation of land-use. It's not about the regulation of all aspects of society. It's land use." While certainly a strong opinion, and perhaps one of the most extreme within this theme, this opinion does draw attention to the idea that planners should not forget the roots of the profession. Adding to this, however, is a more modern way of thinking, where most other interviewees adopted a broader view of the profession, indicating that the role of the planner is to plan for the future and the community's interest (Fish, 2009; Participant3, 2009; Participant5, 2009; Biddiscombe, 2009; Bjerke, 2009). For example, Robert Bjerke (2009)

indicated that in his experience in Saskatchewan, there has been a definite focus on land use. He does not, however, find this sufficient, since, in his opinion, land use is one component of a broad profession.

The idea of sub-specialization was discussed in Section 4.2 of this thesis, and focused on the risk of silos being created within the profession, and the idea that these sub-specializations may add clarity to the definition of the profession. When this issue was discussed with the interviewees, the general consensus was that it is natural, and even necessary, for people to gravitate towards a specialty (Participant3, 2009; Grant, 2009; Participant5, 2009; Biddiscombe, 2009; Palubeski, 2009; Bjerke, 2009). This said, not all participants agreed. David Watson (2009) was among those who do not believe sub-specializations add value to the profession. He believes that sub-specialization may lead to a loss of the planner's holistic perspective. David Witty (2009), however, described planning as "the United Nations of professions," that encompasses many different types of practitioners. Most interviewees felt that this tendency is healthy and necessary, so long as planners do not lose sight of the profession's holistic and integrative nature. David Plaubeski (2009), for example, cautioned that while specialization is good for the profession, planners should be careful not to build silos that they cannot see out of – a concern that all participants shared. It should also be noted that some participants strongly opposed the idea of sub-specialization because it detracts from the holistic nature of the profession (Participant1, 2009; Watson, 2009).

An additional concern was raised by Deb Biddiscombe (2009), who pointed out that a lack of specialization might, in fact, lead to confusion regarding what planners do. She indicated that since many planners do not want to be categorized into a particular "box," the

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profession becomes difficult to define. This attitude within the profession is also confirmed by Paul Puopolo (2009), who does not personally oppose sub-specialization, but knows that many of his colleagues strongly do. Alaric Fish (2009), who practices in the small town of Canmore, AB, added that sub-specializations should be recognized, but should not be forced. The reason for this being that given limited resources and opportunities in smaller communities, planners often need to be generalists, while larger cities may have more opportunity for specialization. This view is shared by Wayne Cladwell (2009), who indicates that, within a rural perspective, the planner is mostly a generalist.

Ken Seiling (2009), the Chair of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, sees the profession from the lens of a politician. He points out that sub-specialization is often a function of how a department operates, which can vary across communities and organizations. In his opinion, however, sub-specialization in planning is good because planners are then seen to have more expertise, and therefore more credibility. David Palubeski (2009) summarized his thoughts on the subject by stating that over the years, he has been a specialist in one thing or another. Over time, interests change and take you career in different directions.

Summary

To summarize, the findings in this section point to the idea that the roles and responsibilities of the planner are often a function of context, changing according to the size and culture of the community, and whether planning is practiced in the public or the private sector. Opinions of what a planner does may also change according to these variables, and additionally, according to individual experiences (Fish, 2009; Wolfe, 2009; Caldwell, 2009;

Hornell, 2009; Biddiscombe, 2009; Participant5, 2009). In general, however, the main elements of the definition of planning brought up by the participants are similar to those fleshed out in Section 4.2 of this thesis, where we looked at definitions across various international planning organizations. The synthesized definition developed from these seems to fit the thoughts expressed by the participants on this matter: "Planning" makes use of a cross-functional skill set to manage and balance various issues pertaining to policy and community development, so as to ensure the welfare of the public, the natural and built environment, and our future (American Planning Association, 2009; Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009; New Zealand Planning Institute, 2009; Planning Institute of Australia, 2009; Royal Town Planning Institute, 2009).

In Chapter 4 of this thesis, the level of attention given to sub-specializations within the profession varied greatly among planning organizations. This apparent divide in views has again been observed in the diverse thoughts expressed by the participants, confirming the existence of potential conflict surrounding sub-specialization within the Canadian planning community. The question, which is relevant to the very core identity of the profession, thus becomes: who is right, and who decides?

These are issues that are important to address in the re-branding context of this thesis. A strong, unified identity will form the foundation of any re-branding initiative adopted by the Canadian planning profession.

5.3.2 Planning and the Confusion with Related Professions

Planning, as we have observed through the survey results, does not seem to have the same top-of-mind awareness as certain professions that are related to planning, such as

engineering and architecture. Further investigation was needed at the interview stage in order to gain a deeper understanding of this. Interview participants were asked to describe the relationship between planners and these other professions, and then describe the value of the planning profession.

During this discussion, Participant2 (2009) brought up the idea that architecture and engineering operate on a micro scale, while planning operates on a macro scale. The participant explained that engineers and architects build, construct and implement elements of a larger idea, while planners explore community needs and options, and generate this idea, the concepts and the regulation thereof. The participant also added that planners take on the role of project managers while working with these other professionals (Participant2, 2009). This comparison opened a new avenue for exploration, and as Participant2 figured among the first to be interviewed, it was decided that subsequent interviewees would be questioned on their opinions of this idea. Most participants (Biddiscombe, 2009; Bjerke, 2009; Fish, 2009; Hornell, 2009; O'Brien, 2009; Puopolo, 2009; Watson, 2009; Wolfe, 2009) agreed with the idea of a macro versus micro relationship, but most cautioned that it only applied to some extent. As Alaric Fish (2009) noted, related professions have big picture capacity, but are often project driven. They sometimes, however, end up adopting a macro view as well, which makes for blurry boundaries between them. This view is also shared by Dennis Peck (2009), who added that planning is the process, and not the end result – there are many disciplines involved. Participant5 (2009) characterized the two sides as engineering and architecture being expert-driven, and planning being about engagement with stakeholders. David Palubeski (2009) offered the following explanation: "Architecture deals with buildings. I deal with how buildings fit together into a neighborhood or into blocks. I try to understand the

significance and interactions between those buildings in creating a space that people walk among and enter into, as well as the social and the economic and the environmental considerations." Additionally, David Watson (2009) points out that architecture and engineering adopt a problem-solving point of view – they already know the goal – while planners attempt to define this goal and work to achieve it. Paul Bedford (2009) described the differences between the professions as being that engineering and architecture have a more functional or utilitarian role, while planners think big and look at the long term. Jeanne Wolfe (2009) added that, in her opinion, engineers are "technocrats" for the most part. They do not take into account social and economic dimensions. Mark Hornell (2009) offered the summarizing explanation that it depends on the individual if they want to adopt a broader view or not. Either way could also make for a good engineer, or a bad planner, and vice versa.

The participants also brought up the need for communication between these different professions, and the importance thereof. Robert Bjerke (2009) explained that while engineering looks at design and is very detailed, and planners look at different needs, the two do not operate independently – there always needs to be communication between the two. Ken O'Brien (2009) agreed with this view, noting that while architects look at a single building and engineers look at a single site, planners look at how things fit together in the broader picture, and add the "human element" to the mix. In this broad picture, all of these professions are related and work together (O'Brien, 2009). Jill Grant (2009) indicated that the macro versus micro relationship would vary according to the job at hand, also agreeing with the idea that these professions work together, and adding that this relationship of teamwork is necessary. She pointed out that there occasionally exists conflict between these professions,

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but generally, they are coming closer together. An example of conflict she gave was the relationship between an urban designer and a landscape architect that may sometimes compete for work. David Palubeski (2009) added that planners "provide a bridge of communication amongst different professions".

In addition, when comparing planning with architecture and engineering, interviewees would naturally compare the social status and levels of influence of each profession. The general consensus was that planning has a lower profile than engineering and architecture, and that there seems to be confusion among the public regarding planning. Participant1 (2009) confirmed this by stating that there is "huge confusion" between the professions in the eye of the public. Robert Bjerke (2009) indicated that while he believes that engineering and architecture are more visible professions, it also depends on the community. Some cities are in a better position to invest political capital into the planning process, thereby making it more visible in the eye of the public.

Participant5 (2009) explained that the public values and understands engineering and architecture, and would probably understand the planning profession better if they were more exposed to issues on a day-to-day basis. Since they are not, this creates misconceptions and negative associations. This participant also indicated that, in their opinion, architects may sometimes even contribute to the confusion between architecture and planning by using the term "planning" in their own professional vocabulary (Participant5, 2009). Alaric Fish (2009) confirmed this overlap as well by adding that while planning does not have the same degree of recognition as related professions, planners make comments on architecture or engineering matters, and vice versa. He also indicated that in professional practice, depending on the context, certain professions are asked to take responsibility at a given time.

This issue was addressed by Dennis Peck (2009), who made the following observation: "A lot of times, when it really works, it's called an architectural wonder, and when it fails, it's called a planning blunder. So we kind of get hung when it doesn't work, and someone else gets the credit when it works really well."

Participant8 (2009), a civil engineer and public sector planner working in transportation, pointed out that engineering is more valued than planning, particularly in transportation because of the technical nature of the work. The participant also followed by noting that in transportation, there are stricter standards, whereas planning operates on a more subjective scale (Participant8, 2009). This statement is supported by Deb Biddiscombe (2009) who explained that, especially in transportation, engineers function as technicians and are viewed as such. Planners, on the other hand, take into account social, environmental and economic elements.

Summary

All in all, the issue of blurry boundaries between these professions discussed by Campbell and Fainstein (2003) in Chapter 2 seems to remain, both internally and externally. While the core roles of each profession may be clear, there is overlap when it comes to communicating and taking into account the greater needs of the community – practices that are beneficial to each of these professions. These findings also confirm the views of McClendon (2003) and Glazer (2000) highlighted in Chapter 2, who express that the public does not know how to differentiate planning from competing stronger profile professions, thus rendering it invisible to them.

The results do, however, identify potential sources of the problem, which also serve to point out areas for improvement: tangible vs. intangible results, political capital, overlapping roles, exposure, professional standards, and communication between professions. Addressing these will undoubtedly make the profession's re-branding challenge more manageable.

5.3.3 The Value of Planning

While the boundaries between the professions seem to be blurry, it appears that planners are clearly able to identify the value that the profession brings to the community. The planning profession's holistic nature was every participant's focus when discussing this issue. Planners believe that planning is the only community-related profession that consistently looks at the big picture and puts all the pieces of a problem together (Participant5, 2009; Caldwell, 2009; Hornell, 2009). In addition to this, Robert Bjerke (2009) pointed out several other attributes that add to the value of the profession. He mentions that in general, planners make good use of resources, as the focus of a project is always to identify priorities. He believes that planners help build political support for visions, as they are often required to engage with various stakeholder groups, including the public. He also believes that planners are able to conduct strategic planning for communities and achieve results with a long-term focus. Paul Bedford (2009) agrees that the planner's ability to "think big" and look long-term helps brings forth new and radical ideas, while Participant5 (2009) mentions engagement with stakeholders as valuable in itself, since it contributes directly to a holistic perspective. Jeanne Wolfe (2009) cites sustainability and the focus on the balance of social, economic and environmental elements as the value of the profession. Ken Seiling

(2009), once again, brings an external point of view to the issue and confirms that in his political experience, the value of the planning profession is in its ability to give a broader perspective.

Summary

The underlying theme of the participants' thoughts on the value of the profession seems to be its holistic, long-term focus. This finding supports the views of McClendon (2003) and Stollman (2000) identified in Chapter 2. McClendon (2003) additionally suggests that, in order to raise the profile of the profession, its holistic, long-term focus should be promoted as its competitive advantage differentiating it from competing professions.

5.3.4 External Perceptions of the Profession

"External perceptions" is a theme that has consistently been brought up throughout this research phase. As such, it would perhaps have the most impact on any re-branding effort related to the profession. In the case of this research, "external perceptions" refers to the perceptions of all stakeholder groups outside of the professional planning practice. While the interviews were primarily conducted with planners or individuals with close ties to planning, the researcher thought it important to uncover what planners themselves thought were the external perceptions of their profession, and their thoughts as to why these perceptions may exist.

One thing remains clear: the same confusion regarding the clarity of profession's identity and its relationship with closely related professions remains an underlying theme throughout this discussion. Almost all participants agreed that there is a definite lack of

understanding among the public as to what exactly planners do. People often confuse the profession with politics, land development and engineering, as has been shown throughout this chapter. There is also, for the most part, an air of indifference within the public, as people are not necessarily directly exposed to planning issues on a daily basis. As Participant2 (2009) points out, it is a person's experience that dictates general perceptions, and the average person does not have contact with the planning community. Dennis Peck (2009) believes that planners will "always be challenged by justifying their efforts and what they do," but that "usually really good work speaks for itself." This good work that can be traced back to the planner is usually the profession's best advocate. The problem is that "we're not real good promoters of ourselves" (Peck, 2009).

David Palubeski (2009) notes that explaining what planning is takes effort and can be difficult because of its multi-faceted, wide-reaching nature. This, in turn, contributes directly to the public's lack of understanding and awareness, a sentiment echoed by Robert Bjerke. (2009). Participant3 (2009) and Mark Hornell (2009) also cite a lack of exposure as a contributing factor, with Hornell adding that the few people who have been exposed think land use only and tend not to see the big picture. A "what's that?" attitude toward the profession is common among the public, according to Paul Bedford (2009), and Deb Biddiscombe (2009) even adds that members of her own family are unsure about what exactly she does. Ken O'Brien (2009) points out, however, that although planning has a low profile, he has noticed a growing interest among heritage, environment and neighborhood groups.

Part of the problem, according to Bedford (2009) and Jill Grant (2009), is that so many planners are not visible because they are buried in bureaucracy. This bureaucracy

seems to be engrained in the system – at least in the public sector. David Watson (2009) also mentions excessive red tape in the planning practice. A more extreme view is expressed by Participant1 (2009), who feels as tough planners have lost their public face in terms of their technical ability, and therefore are less respected as professionals. The participant also mentions that the fact that, in their opinion, there are no public leaders in planning, greatly affects the public's exposure to the profession.

In addition to this, Bedford believes that once exposed to the profession, many people have misconceptions the planner's role and responsibilities. People tend to equate planning with development and politics, which generates negative perceptions and mistrust. This view is supported by Wayne Caldwell (2009), Alaric Fish (2009) and Participant5 (2009). Caldwell and Fish also note that people seem to know a lot about planning issues, but not about what planners do. Fish further explained that, in his experience, planners must work to build trust, issue by issue. Participant5 (2009) goes on to explain that many times, mistrust is caused by perceptions that planning is simply a business driver and a political tool. Other times, the planner is seen as a "maestro" or an "academic." Participant2 (2009), who is a member of council in a medium-sized Canadian municipality, has observed that the media tends to emphasize the public's view that private sector planners are solely driven by money. This is a view that, in this participant's opinion, is not necessarily accurate.

The primary driver behind misconceptions, according to many participants, is the media. Its nature is to sell stories; therefore, it mostly covers controversial issues. Depending on the reporter, these stories can be sensationalized and leaves out pertinent information. This, in turn, can work against the planner and further encourage NIMBYism (Grant, 2009; O'Brien, 2009; Watson, 2009; Biddiscombe, 2009; Participant2, 2009; Participant3, 2009).

O'Brien (2009) further explained that, since most planning-related issues are not in fact controversial, they do not get media coverage. This often means that the good day-to-day work that planners do tends to go unnoticed by the public.

O'Brien (2009) points out, however, that although reporting is not always balanced, this is the nature of the media. Many planners believe that the media, if harnessed correctly and tactfully, can be a great tool that can work to planners' and the community's advantage. "The media is a resource that decision makers can either fear or embrace," says Palubeski (2009). The fear, he explains, is usually a product of the risk associated with dealing with the media. Planners need to recognize the opportunity that the media presents, and try to understand how to work with it (Palubeski, 2009). Dennis Peck (2009) has noticed a difference in the last ten years, where many cities have invested a lot in community planning and have started to see results. This, in turn, has resulted in a better reputation for the profession, given its more modern focus. As Peck (2009) explains, "our big challenge over the next few years is to not lose that good press that we've created and to make sure that our voice continues to be respected." David Witty (2009), whose 1998 study similarly investigated public perceptions toward the planning practice (Witty, Identifying a More Appropriate Role for the Canadian Planning Profession, 1998), has also noticed an improvement in public perceptions and media coverage over the years. He has observed a renewed interest in cities, where planning issues are now carried along with sustainable cities discussions. Additionally, Witty notes that public perceptions towards planning have generally improved, and that there is a new level of awareness when it comes to the profession's profile. He points out that the lack of awareness of the planning profession now mostly lies in its terminology (Witty, 2009).

Witty (2009) expressed a desire for the term "design" to be integrated in the profession's identity. An expression such as "city designer" would form a clear identity, provided less tangible elements of planning are included under the definition of design (Witty, 2009). Witty is not alone in observing an issue with the simple term "planner." Jill Grant (2009), Paul Puopolo (2009) and Participant5(2009) made the observation that the terms "urban planner," "land use planner" or "city planner" are much more recognized among the public. This is an issue that has also been noted among respondents of the web-based survey. This said, the marketing challenge lies in gaining consensus around which complementary word best encompasses all aspects of planning. For example, rural planners may object to the use of the term "city planner," or heritage planners may object to the use of the word "design."

Despite all of these opinions, several participants were also careful to note that the public's experience of the profession, and thereby its perceptions of it, would vary greatly across locations in Canada. Peck (2009) highlights this reality by pointing out that Canada is not one single place. It is a large country, which spans a large and complex geographical space, and is comprised of an extremely diverse collection of communities with varying levels of resources – an idea that is equally supported by David Witty (2009). Bjerke (2009) observes that the profile of the profession might be higher in Ontario and in British Columbia, as awareness and exposure to planning issues depends on the political capital around the process. He adds that, in his experience, planning has a lower profile in Saskatchewan because the regulatory planning context is less formal. Puopolo (2009) also confirms this idea, and has noticed that awareness is better in southern Ontario, where big cities invest a lot of money in the planning process, than northern Ontario, which is mostly

comprised of smaller communities with limited planning budgets. He adds that the issue of negative versus positive perceptions is not a function of the profession, but of the issue and its context (Puopolo, 2009) – a view shared by Ken Seiling (2009) and Jeanne Wolfe (2009). Participant3 (2009) also indicated that the public's experience of planning in Alberta has been greatly influenced by the province's context, as regulatory planning commissions were dismantled in the 1990s, and municipalities were left to plan without a formal planning structure. Present-day efforts to re-introduce planning has been greatly affected by a lack of awareness (Participant3, 2009). Ken O'Brien (2009), who practices planning in Newfoundland, also offered his own account of how context and place can dictate perceptions. O'Brien shared that the Newfoundland Resettlement Programs, which began in the 1950s and resulted in the displacement of thousands of residents and the abandonment of hundreds of communities, have had a deep and lasting impact on the perceptions of planning in the province. During those times, he states that planning was strongly associated with politics, which resulted in a lingering feeling of mistrust among residents toward the government and planning. Today, among older people, the feeling is still very much present, with older generations influencing the generations that came after (O'Brien, 2009).

With regard to the relevance of public perceptions toward planning, academic Jill Grant (2009) makes a good point. She is not concerned with potential negative public perceptions, stating: "I think municipalities and governments recognize how vital planning is to their ability to fulfill their missions and control most of their destiny, and that's what I think is the most important thing: how government feels about planning" (Grant, 2009). She adds that although she doesn't believe it would be easy to turn around public perceptions, as long as governments believe that planning is useful, it doesn't really matter. Participant3

(2009) also emphasized the importance of inter-municipal and inter-governmental cooperation, pointing out that this would help reduce sprawl and decrease the competition for resources. Participant5 (2009) also mentioned confusion about the role of planners within different levels of government. The public tends to assume planning happens only in local government. This participant pointed out that awareness should not only be increased to raise the profile of the profession, but also to educate the public about their own roles and responsibilities within the process (Participant5, 2009).

Summary

A review of the results presented in this sub-section points to one of the most significant issues affecting the profile of the planning profession: its unclear and widely unknown image. Most participants confirmed these thoughts, highlighted in Chapter 2 by McClendon (2003), McAllister (2004), Lighbody (2006), Glazer (2000), Myers (1997), Campbell and Fainstein (2003), Witty (1998) and Stollman (2000). Like in the literature, participants put the blame on the bureaucratic planning process, a confusing identity, the media and negative word-of-mouth, although survey results indicated that concerns about negative word-of-mouth might slightly exaggerated. Across the board, the problem expresses itself in a lack of public exposure to day-to-day planning issues, thereby making it vulnerable to the misunderstanding and lack of respect pointed out by Beauregard (1989); Graham, Philips and Maslove (1998); McAllister (2004); Lightbody (2006); McClendon (2003); and Glazer (2000).

The findings in this section have identified one additional element that has been generally unexplored in the literature. Canada is a large geographical space with highly varying resource and population dispersion within. As such, the planning process is carried out differently throughout the country, rendering highly location dependent the extent and quality of the public's planning exposure and education. This reality must be taken into consideration by Canadian planning organizations, planning schools, as well as all levels of government when developing strategies for the future.

5.3.5 Politics and Planning: Influence and Decision-Making

The relationship between politics and planning is often complex and controversial. Interview participants held widely differing views on this subject, and the resulting influence that planners have over community decision-making.

Some interviewees adopted a diplomatic stance, acknowledging the reality that Canada is a democracy, and that planning falls under political processes designed to represent the views of the majority. Academic Jill Grant (2009) believes that planners have a good role within the political process. The planner's role is to help politicians and Council members make decisions in the context of full knowledge. She is therefore satisfied with their level of influence, as the democratic process allows elected officials to make decisions in the community's best interest. She further adds that Council therefore has the right to make decisions, even if some planners do not agree with them. This, in her opinion, is preferable to the technocratic approach that some other planners would prefer (Grant, 2009).

As Jeanne Wolfe (Wolfe, 2009) points out: "planning is a political activity." However, she believes that planners have never had the amount of influence that they should have. Participant8 (2009) seconds this thought by expressing that, in their experience, planners cannot be happy with their level of influence. That said, Wolfe adds that since the mid to late 1990s, planning has been on the agenda for many communities. Governments are realizing that good planning leads to successful and prosperous communities. Additionally, planning has been an integral part of increasingly frequent discussions surrounding community sustainability (Wolfe, 2009).

Dennis Peck (2009) describes small town planning as a "blood sport" and makes clear his point of view by expressing that "planning is political." He adds that if an individual is

uncomfortable with this reality, they are in the wrong profession (Peck, 2009). David Palubeski (2009) makes a nearly identical statement to that of Peck: "planning is politics." In his experiece, both sides work toward deciding priorities, allocating resources and coming up with a vision for the community. In order for planning and politics to work together, there needs to be some level of faith between the two, and both must develop well thought-out, realistic solutions. The relationship breaks down when planning ideas do not work within the political context (Palubeski, 2009).

Participant5 (2009) finds the relationship between planning and politics interesting, but often frustrating. The participant points out that elected governments do not necessarily have long term interests in mind. Planners go through the effort of dealing with long-term issues, but often Council concentrates on the short term, and the decisions that come out of this structure are often reflective of this. This said, the participant stresses that the job of the planner is to be progressive and to help Council understand the alternatives. If the seed has been planted, the job is done. Frustration comes when decisions are made for what some may view as petty political reasons. This is when the planner feels insulted – a sentiment expressed by Participant3 (2009) as well.

Nonetheless, planners must work with the system and most learn to deal with these instances over time by becoming slightly detached (Participant5, 2009). Alaric Fish (2009) believes that the key to being an effective public sector planner is in how one manages his or her frustration. He concedes that planners must accept the nature of political influence in decision-making, and must come to terms with the fact that sometimes, decisions may not be what they had hoped for (Fish, 2009). Robert Bjerke (2009) expresses similar views and notes that the relationship between the two cannot be ignored. Planners and politicians must

learn to look at issues from a different lens, and planners especially must not lose sight of political motivations and objectives. He goes on to explain that plans are dependent on buy-in; therefore, planners must work with members of Council to help them understand their views. He cautions that often the temptation is to be closely aligned; however, one must not be a tool to the other. The strength in the system lies in the dynamics between the politician's short-term vision and the planner's long-term vision (Bjerke, 2009).

Mark Hornell (2009) adds that, similar to public perception, the relationship between planning and politics is dynamic and differs depending on location and context. This may either be frustrating or rewarding, as the dynamic changes every time there is an election. He explains that the process of getting a newly elected party up-to-speed can take up to six months, but that this also allows for a fresh start. Nonetheless, this is an inevitable consequence of democracy that must be understood by both planners and politicians (Hornell, 2009).

David Witty (2009) indicates that planners are involved in the allocation of resources, and as such, are susceptible to political influence and NIMBY. Inherently, there must therefore be a partnering between planning and politics. He then notes that he is not sure that he has seen an improvement in the cooperation between the two over the years. In small communities, money and limited resources put a lot of pressure on local politics, which inevitably has an impact on planning (Biddiscombe, 2009). In this type of situation, Biddiscombe (2009) notes, the pressure sometimes leads municipal and regional planners to "play politics in a big way" – a practice which, in her opinion, is highly irresponsible.

Other interviewees believe that Council and developers see planners as a necessary evil that they can use as tools to help achieve a particular vision or goal. Participant1 (2009)

believes that planning is too politicized, stating: "I've heard politicians say that planning is the best thing that ever happened because, basically, it centers all the activists – keeps them in, as one guy described it, 'one playpen, and I can hire a planner that's going to herd them and keep me out of trouble. And I can also use that for gauging politically where I should be on issues.' And that's a pretty cynical thing to say, but some of the smarter politicians I've seen today view planning very much that way". The participant also adds that, in their experience, there is a culture where very few planners stand up to Council and say: "you can't do that" (Participant1, 2009). Ken O'Brien (2009) feels that Council and developers view planners mostly as an obstruction, especially in his context of Newfoundland. While politicians do tend to listen to planners, they do not always agree with them. Often times, decisions have already been made before the issues have been presented to planners, which, similar to Participant3 and Participant5, O'Brien considers a real weakness in the system. Planners then start to wonder why they bother, as citizens start wondering why they don't have a better planning process (O'Brien, 2009).

Wayne Caldwell (2009) states that "there is a tendency at times throughout the profession to want to hide behind the statement 'well planners make recommendations and politicians make decisions,' which I think undervalues the contributions that we make. I think planners really do play a leadership role, and, while there is truth in [the previous statement], it undervalues the influence and the authority that we exert in that process." He adds, "the planner's perspective that is made public is […] a powerful indication of the direction that is likely to occur," concluding that planners therefore do hold an appropriate amount of power with regard to decision making in the political realm (Caldwell, 2009).

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David Watson (2009), within his experience in Alberta, holds views similar to those of Caldwell. He however highlights the point that generally, planners are hampered at the implementation stage, where resources and capital are not always available to follow-through on great plans. Although he was careful not to generalize beyond what he has experienced in Alberta, his observations fall along the same lines as those of Palubeski, Bjerke, Biddiscombe and Witty. Paul Bedford (2009) raises the same point as that of Hornell, stating that the planning-politics relationship varies across cities and regions. Similar to the views of Wolfe and Participant8, he believes that planners, in his experience, do not generally have the degree of influence that they should have with regard to decision making. Tying into the views of Watson, he concludes that resource allocation at the implementation stage is often where the relationship runs into trouble. Bedford cites the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan as examples where good planning ideas are hindered because of a lack of resources at the implementation stage (Bedford, 2009).

As a contrast to the views of planners on the relationship between planning and politics expressed up to this point, we will now focus on the two participants on the other side of the issue: Participant2, a member of Council in a medium-sized Canadian municipality, and Ken Seiling, the Chair of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. Participant2 (2009) describes Council's relationship with the municipality's planners a collaborative. During meetings of Council, all members of the decision-making process come together to try to come to a consensus on a given issue. Public sector planners are a key resource for information. Council views the as the experts on planning issues, as they are the "eyes and ears" outside of the political structure. In addition, these planners raise concerns

with developers over controversial issues. The participant explains that there is often a back and forth dialogue, where different parties do not always agree, but that ultimately, "[the public sector planner's] job is to support the decision of Council" (Participant2, 2009). With regard to private sector planners, their job is to work for a client, usually a developer, so the two sectors often have very different objectives. Planners in both sectors, along with members of Council, all carry their own biases. The job of Council within this context is to balance business interests and public interests, while considering the different needs within the community. The participant acknowledges that you can't please all sides, and that Council members must therefore make the best-informed decision based on as much information as possible (Participant2, 2009). Seiling (2009), for his part, explains that, as Regional Chair, he hears representation from planners, who research, write and develop policy, and then take charge of implementation. The role of the planner, in his opinion, is to give Council the broader perspective. With regard to decision-making, he estimates that about 90% of the recommendations of planners have gone through. He additionally mentions that, in his opinion, good planners should not get involved in politics – and most don't (Seiling, 2009).

Summary

Politics and planning go hand-in hand. This seems to be the reality that presents itself to the profession. Findings show that although this seems to be accepted by most participants, frustration still arises out of the dynamics between the two. A number of participants expressed frustration at the fact that their work sometimes does not end up seeing results, a reality pointed out by Howe (1994), McClendon (2003) and Friedmann (1994). Within this

reality, lies a varying level of complacency. Some participants believe that planners should have more power to affect change within the political context, while others believe that planning simply plays a role within it. Most participants, however, found themselves dispersed along the line between these two extremes, suggesting that both sides must work together for the long-term benefit of the community. These results show support for the idea that a strong brand identity for the profession, which would translate to better credibility, would help bridge the gap between planning and politics, and serve to strengthen relationships.

In addition to this comes once again the place-dependent nature of this issue. Similar to public perception, the dynamics between politics and planning vary greatly depending on geographic location, local culture and resources, and must therefore be taken into consideration in context.

5.3.6 Morale within the Profession

Many planners choose to enter the profession because they believe it would allow them to make a difference in the community, and because of its wide-ranging nature (Biddiscombe, 2009; Participant3, 2009; Participant3, 2009; Bjerke, 2009; Peck, 2009). Given this desire, it is important to investigate how previously discussed frustrations and complexities related to planning would possibly affect the morale within the profession.

Ken O'Brien (2009) believes that despite the frustrations relating to politics, the morale among planners remains more positive than negative. In fact, in what could be an indication of morale, he has observed an increase in the number of planners in municipalities across Newfoundland. Similar observations have been made in membership numbers to the

Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP), which, according to David Witty (Witty, 2009), have doubled in the last 20 years. Deb Biddiscombe (2009), although critical of the process at times, remains positive about her profession. She loves what she does for a living, as planning is highly varied work where she gets to work with the community and take part in land development while making a difference. Participant3 (2009) also made sure to make it clear that, although planning can be frustrating at times, the participant loves being a planner and is proud of what they do. The participant particularly likes the fact that planning supports one of the principles of the Constitution of Canada: good governance. Participant5 (2009) pointed out that morale often is a function of person and place. Some planners may get worn down, while some may thrive. The community in which this participant works is seeing a time of change. This has translated into a progressive culture, where planners have thrived on hope. The participant also added that sometimes it takes outside influence to push change within, and this often contributes to a positive morale (Participant5, 2009). Jill Grant (2009) indicates that the morale within the profession is relatively good presently. Government recognition of planning issues has boosted confidence in recent years, and has opened up opportunity for mobility and diversity. She cautions, however, that the tendency among planners is to do a lot of "navel gazing," where the role of the planner is constantly questioned. She adds that this is not necessarily negative, but to be wary, since it can undermine confidence (Grant, 2009).

One aspect of morale that could not be explicitly recorded in the interviews, but was acutely observed by the researcher is passion. Most interviewees displayed a genuine passion for their profession, their communities, and the issues these encompass. As Participant1 (2009) observed, albeit in a cynical tone, "in a different era, they would have been in

theology school." Although this participant intended the comment to reflect a negative occurrence in the general planning community, the researcher observed that, for the most part, this passion seemed to outweigh the frustrations and obstacles that the interviewees seemed to experience on the job, and helped breed a certain motivation to improve. It should be acknowledged, however, that this observation might be due to the fact that typically, the type of people that would volunteer to take part in a study such as this would tend to be passionate about the subject. This observation should therefore not be considered a generalization about the Canadian planning community as a whole.

Paul Puopolo (2009) is a product of the same generation of planners as Participant1. He expressed a concern with the younger members of the profession, in that they have brought a different mentality to the profession, which tends to deal differently with the public. He points out that in previous years, there used to be more camaraderie among planners, which he is worried that new generations are beginning to lose (Puopolo, 2009). Paul Bedford (2009) would also be considered a veteran planner. He makes an opposite observation to that of the researcher. In his experience, a large percentage of the planning community should not be planners. They are simply going through the motions with no real vision or principles, especially in the private sector. He cites a certain level of hypocrisy, and states that planners should be required to practice what they preach. For example, he would like to see more planners living in the communities that they have planned. That said, he is also careful to emphasize that there are indeed many passionate, good planners that are practicing (Bedford, 2009).

David Palubeski (2009) raises a good point in that he believes that presently, there is a lot of self-censoring within the profession. Planners sometimes keep their opinions to

themselves to protect their reputation and to avoid conflict. He also adds that, in the private sector, these opinions may sometimes be adjusted to the client's wishes. In order to ensure positive morale, planners must be made aware of this, and working environments must begin to foster objective and professional communication (Palubeski, 2009).

Summary

In light of the views expressed by participants, the morale concerns expressed by Howe (1994), McClendon (2003) and Friedmann (1994) in Chapter 2 do not seem to be as serious as expressed. While participant recruitment may have played a role in these results, the majority of participants, although at times frustrated, seem to be driven by passion for the profession. They also believe that morale is generally positive within the profession.

Despite this, there does seem to be some concern among older generations about the change in culture within the profession, and a certain hypocrisy and lack of passion among younger generations. Whether or not this concern can be substantiated, the feelings expressed exist, and may be contributing to a generational divide within the profession – a certain "old school" vs. "new school" tension. Opinion censorship and ethical boundary issues may also contribute to morale issues within the profession. These concerns highlight important areas for potential future research, as negative morale and divide within the profession can prove to be a great challenge to the creation of a single, unified and convincing brand image.

5.3.7 Planning Education

Education can play a significant role in the shaping of the planning profession in the future. The roots of almost every planner today are in education. The way students are recruited into planning programs and subsequently educated in preparation of a career in planning can have a long-lasting impact on the profession's profile. Are planning programs recruiting the right types of students? Are planning programs providing the right type of training? What should the balance between theoretical and practical learning be? These are just a few of the questions that the profession should be asking its educational institutions. A few of the interviewees see current planning education as adequate; many others see the need for more.

The initial focus of the researcher was on university recruitment. Many planning students come from a geography, sociology or political science background, mainly because these fields expose them to planning issues (Fish, 2009; Bjerke, 2009; Wolfe, 2009; O'Brien, 2009; Grant, 2009). For example, Jill Grant (2009) mentions that at Dalhousie University, many students come from the Geography Department at the University of Victoria, which encourages its students to look into Dalhousie's Planning program. Dalhousie also distributes promotional material regarding its planning program to other schools. Additionally, students may become interested in planning through contact with a planner or through word-of-mouth. She also has observed that interest in planning may be initiated though the lower value of a student's undergraduate degree or because a student wishes to use their scientific undergraduate knowledge in planning.

Recruitment, however, usually happens at the undergraduate or graduate level (Hornell, 2009; Wolfe, 2009). Participant3 (2009) believes that recruitment should begin

even earlier than that – in high school. This participant would like to see planning introduced in high school civics courses. Since the problem with the profession's profile is a lack of awareness, the interviewee believes that, by going to the source, many recruitment or professional turnover problems may be mitigated. The interviewee also emphasized the additional invaluable benefit of such a strategy: young people would be educated on their role within the planning process – a benefit highlighted by Alaric Fish (2009) as well. This would be the most effective way of increasing public awareness (Participant3, 2009). Deb Biddiscombe (2009) notes that, when it comes to recruitment, ambiguity can be positive and negative. The profession should be aware that while an ambiguous image may lead to curiosity among students, it may also encourage students to gravitate towards it when they do not know what else to do (Biddiscombe, 2009). This is an issue that Paul Bedford (2009) addresses as well. Recruits into the profession must display passion for it. As was Participant3, Bedford is a strong supporter of planning education at the high school level. In his view, kids do not get enough exposure to planning issues, and thereby do not have the opportunity to develop an interest in the profession (Bedford, 2009). Robert Bjerke (2009) elaborates on this issue, stating that students entering university would not pick planning as their first choice, since engineering and architecture have a higher profile. Planning schools need to find a way to attract students to the profession (Wolfe, 2009), but once the right students with the desire to make a difference are found, adequate education and the right career opportunities need to exist as well (Bjerke, 2009).

A few basic skills were mentioned by participants as being integral to professional practice: communication, economics, finance, politics, practical case analysis, and project management (Participant1, 2009; Participant3, 2009; Palubeski, 2009; Puopolo, 2009;

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Watson, 2009; Hornell, 2009; Bjerke, 2009; Wolfe, 2009). Participant1 (2009) expressed a serious issue with planning education, stating that it is simply no longer technically sound. As a result, the profession has lost its credibility, and the planner is no longer seen as an expert or a professional. The participant would like to see a change in the curriculum, incorporating more technical courses such as economics, finance, sociology and politics. The interviewee explains that planning education should reflect the diversity of the practice, but in reality, this is not the case. Participant3 (2009) also agrees that municipal finance should be an integral part of the planning curriculum, as it forms the basis for a lot of decision-making on the job. This participant also stresses the importance of practical experience, mediation and negotiation, as well as project management skills. These elements should be incorporated through all three major learning types to yield optimal results: visual, auditory and tactical (Participant3, 2009). Communication skills were consistently mentioned as the most important skill in planning, and many interviewees expressed an interest in seeing this better incorporated in the planning curriculum (Participant1, 2009; Participant3, 2009; Palubeski, 2009; Puopolo, 2009; Watson, 2009; Hornell, 2009; Caldwell, 2009; Wolfe, 2009).

In addition to planning education at the university level, several participants indicated that much of a planner's training happens over time on the job (Palubeski, 2009; Fish, 2009; Participant5, 2009). Some of these participants believe that this is the best form of training, while others expressed frustration with the fact that there is not enough practical experience given in planning schools. Alaric Fish (2009), who studied at the University of British Columbia (UBC), expressed some frustration with the latter; however, he highlighted the fact that he did learn a number of useful skills and he emphasized the importance of good

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theoretical foundations for critical on-the-job thinking. As Deb Biddiscombe (Biddiscombe, 2009) points out, continuous learning is a good thing. She is a big proponent of on-the-job training, and believes that internship programs work best for equipping students for the real world. A number of planners are also pleased with the CIP's continuous learning program (CLP) (Participant3, 2009; Biddiscombe, 2009).

David Witty (2009) also stressed the importance of achieving a balance between theory and practice, explaining that theory and practice inform each other, and that the profession needs that duality to exist. This view was also shared by Paul Puopolo (2009), Participant5 (2009), Wayne Caldwell (2009), Jeanne Wolfe (2009), Jill Grant (2009), and Mark Hornell (2009), who explains that planning schools need to recognize the "professional" aspect of planning education, and treat planning programs like other professional programs, such as business schools. For many years, there has been resistance within the academic community with regard to practice informing theory (Hornell, 2009; Witty, 2009). In recent years, however, planning schools have begun to introduce practical elements into the curriculum. (Wolfe, 2009; Grant, 2009; Witty, 2009) In hindsight, Witty added, the theoretical base of his education helped him move forward in his career. In his opinion, the planning program at the University of Manitoba has done a good job of integrating practical education into its curriculum through design studios (Witty, 2009). Jill Grant (2009) also believes that the planning program at Dalhousie University equips students very well for planning practice. The curriculum integrates a variety of practical elements, including a mandatory work term (Grant, 2009). Paul Bedford (2009), however, expressed concern with the fact that in some universities, many professors have never actually practiced planning. He likens this to medical students being taught by someone who has never been a

doctor. This, he explains, was his driving motivation for getting into academics. He wanted to balance the planning curriculum by incorporating his real-world experience. Students, he explains, must actually understand the reality of the planning practice in order to first decide if they really want to become planners, and then, be prepared for the job (Bedford, 2009). Dennis Peck (2009) and Participant5 (2009) provide a more balanced opinion of the situation. Curriculums can vary greatly across schools, and they believe that all planning schools produce competent planners with rich and diverse perspectives (Peck, 2009; Participant5, 2009).

Summary

The profession's identity, discussed by many in the literature, including McClendon (2003) and Witty (1998), can have a profound effect on recruitment into the profession: an unclear identity may in fact be attracting the wrong types of people into the profession. Some participants believe that planning education should start at a young age, thus exposing kids to the profession, while informing them of the role that they can play in the process. A few planning organizations, like the CIP and OPPI among others, have recognized this and have started implementing learning tools accordingly (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2009; Ontario Professional Planners Institute, 2009).

A number of suggestions for improvement in planning school curriculum were also given, including increased focus on communication skills and the technical knowledge that would support an "expert" status in the profession. In addition to theory, a focus on practical experience in planning schools was highlighted as being important. These observations and

suggestions can help planners keep up with the expectations of their target market segments, and may also contribute to defining future branding strategies for the profession.

5.3.8 Professional Planning Organizations in Canada

Similar to the discussion about politics, participants displayed wide varying views on the effectiveness of the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) and its affiliates. As participants derive from a diversity of planning backgrounds and experience, it is not surprising to come upon these results. Some participants believe that these organizations are doing an excellent job of representing the profession and increasing its profile; while others hold such opposite views that they have chosen not to become members and receive their professional accreditation. Many also fall in between these two positions, offering suggestions on how to improve.

David Witty (Witty, 2009), a former President of the CIP and member of its prestigious College of Fellows, has seen the organization change over the years. Beginning in the late 1980s, he has seen membership double to reach approximately 7000 planners. He has also seen the organization undertake a number of external initiatives, making links with China and a number of "major players" in Ottawa. He also reserves high praise for the organization's continuing education initiative (CLP), describing it as "excellent." In the past year, he has been aware of the CIP's efforts to implement stricter membership requirements. Although he agrees with the goal the CIP hopes to achieve, he is not sure they are going about it the right way. Architecture, Witty points out, has had problems with membership decline due to the implementation of stricter membership requirements. Planning may indeed follow suit. Instead, Witty proposes a more rigorous program accreditation process, similar to

that for engineering, in which 80% of the membership requirements have been met at the point of graduation. This would serve as a much more stable and consistent benchmark, as he believes that universities would respond with increased quality if they believe they might lose their accreditation (Witty, 2009).

Wayne Caldwell, President of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) from 2007 to 2009, has seen the OPPI's healthy, sustainable communities initiative achieve success through media coverage. He views this attention as an indication of potential for the organization. He also points out that the organization's themed symposiums have seen increased popularity within the planning community, as it provides opportunity for networking and information sharing. Caldwell explains that an affiliate organization like the OPPI does not have the resources to be everything for the profession, their ability to be selective can provide members with valuable tools and resources (Caldwell, 2009).

Alaric Fish (2009), who has been practicing planning for 6 years, believes that the CIP and the Alberta Association Canadian Institute of Planners (AACIP) have been doing a good job as is. They facilitate the sharing of information within the profession, which is highly useful for continuous learning. Their main function, in his experience, is therefore to promote the exchange of ideas. Since this function is being carried out effectively, he does not see a reason for more to be done (Fish, 2009).

Deb Biddiscombe (2009) would like to see the CIP increase its profile nationally and internationally. Currently, its focus is very internal, in that it largely serves its own members. This is important; however, Biddiscombe believes that the profession's profile could benefit from an increased external exposure on the part of the CIP. Additionally, she would like to see the CIP emphasize the importance of planning in Canada. Many stakeholder groups are

unaware of the impact that good planning can have on their communities, or conversely, the impact that bad planning can have. She cites the impact that Toronto's Gardiner Expressway has had on the city's waterfront, as an example of the latter. Biddiscombe also mentions an appreciation for the CIP's member outreach activities, such as the publication of Plan Canada, which helps her stay current on planning issues. She also likes the direction that the CIP has taken with regard to the opportunity that its CLP initiatives present to members. This demonstrates a push in its expectation that members will keep up-to-date with their planning skills and knowledge, which Biddiscombe believes will benefit the profession as a whole.

Robert Bjerke (2009) believes that representing the planning profession in Canada is "not easy," but that the CIP is doing a reasonable job at it. He does, however, offer a few suggestions for improvement. He would like to see the internal focus of the organization shift toward raising professional standards. He believes that the organization and the profession could benefit from the CIP engaging more with the public. In his opinion, he has also believes there is tension between the CIP and some of its affiliates. Each organization is trying to be the public face of the profession, and the overlap can create "turf issues" that get in the way organizational goals. He explains that the CIP then ends up being a "bridging body for the national discussion", but not necessarily with the highest profile. Bjerke believes that there should be more of an opportunity for a national, united voice. He suggests that organizations look at the operation, initiatives and strategies adopted by the American Planning Association (APA) as a model for improvement. That said, he acknowledges that Canadian municipalities must do so while considering the difference in resources and membership between Canadian and American planning organizations. Still, an example of an area of improvement could be the engagement of non-planner stakeholders, such as elected

officials, in the discussion about planning. Bjerke believes that this could help build recognition for the profession; however, it is not quite there yet (Bjerke, 2009).

Dennis Peck (2009) used to be a member of the CIP Council in the late 1980s. Although, at the time, he was not fond of the pressure to professionalize planning, he has attended most major conferences since 1985. He believes that these conferences provide a valuable opportunity to network, that the organization produces good publications, and that the CIP serves to tie planners across the country together. Alll in all, he believes that the CIP plays an extremely important role within the profession. Similar to Bjerke, however, Peck believes that the CIP could benefit from increased external relations by acting as a "lobbyer" to various levels of government (Peck, 2009).

Participant5's (2009) experience has mostly been with the Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC). The participant believes that the organization does a good job at bringing planners together through their various initiatives. That said, the individual also believes that planning organizations in Canada could do more with regard to Canada-wide standardization. In addition, Participant5 would like to see more initiatives that would help educate politicians, and create liaison with the media, as well as other professions (Participant5, 2009).

Ken O'Brien (2009) believes that the CIP and the Atlantic Planners Institute (API) are doing a fairly good job, but he also points out that there is always room for improvement, adding that "anything to raise the profession's profile will help." He also comments that the API's website is mainly internally focused, which is why he usually directs people to the CIP website for more complete information regarding the profession (O'Brien, 2009).

Jill Grant (2009), for her part, believes that the CIP and its affiliates are "doing a fine job," and operate in the best interest of the planning profession. She does, however, note that she does not always agree with the decisions made or directions taken. Additionally, she points out that there have been some disagreements between the various organizations over the years, more recently with regard to the membership renewal process, but that generally, they do a good job. With regard to the CIP, she credits this good job on a "great annual conference," along with the information and services provided to its members (Grant, 2009).

Perhaps one of the most critical views of Canadian planning organizations comes from Participant1 (2009), who says: "They don't have a clue. I don't think they understand what's going on." The participant expressed that the intention of this comment is not to be harsh, and adds: "they are well meaning people. They run lovely programs, but there is no true discussion" (Participant1, 2009). This individual expresses frustration with the movement away from the planner's technical expertise, giving planning in school initiatives as an example of poor direction. In addition, Participant1 does not believe that organizations like these can change organically. Usually change happens in response to pressure. The problem is that these types of organizations are political, and are based on elections. Therefore, people who come in trying to reform or make changes will not get elected. "Anybody that tries to change things always ends up having enemies" (Participant1, 2009). On a larger scale, the participant believes that things might change once rich countries start to realize that they do not have as much money as they thought they did, and therefore must be a lot more carful about how public money is spent, resulting in better quality decisions. Then again, the interviewee adds, things might never change (Participant1, 2009).

Participant3 (2009) holds a much milder view of the CIP, indicating that the organization is doing a good job. With regard to the AACIP, there is a generational issue that has created somewhat of a lull, but the organization has been managing it well and things are now starting to pick up. The participant does like the fact that the CIP engages in a number of overseas projects, yet believes that more should be done locally, especially with first nation communities. Additionally, the participant mentions that the trade shows that the CIP takes part in are not very useful, and perhaps resources could be used more effectively. Another direction that the interviewee would like to see the organizations take is accountability. In this person's opinion, introducing malpractice into the profession would raise the quality of the work done, thus raising the profile's credibility. More generally, the participant would like to see more done to raise the profession's profile within the country (Participant3, 2009).

Former CIP president, David Palubeski (2009), notes that although the CIP has been moving forward, similar to Participant1, he believes that it is not fully aware anymore. He would like to see the organization more engaged in dialog and discussion surrounding current planning issues where economic, environmental and social elements interconnect. He explains that "there are a number of areas that CIP needs to champion and move forward from the point of view of an organization that has a pretty broad view of things […] there is not another profession that can bring this holistic view" (Palubeski, 2009). Additionally, while recognizing and taking part in international planning issues, Palubeski would also like to see CIP focus some of its significant resources in domestic affairs (Palubeski, 2009).

In a view similar to that of Palubeski, Jeanne Wolfe (2009) would like to see the CIP start taking public positions with regard to current planning issues. Given the increasing relevance of urban issues and sustainable living in a worldwide context, Wolfe believes that

planning organizations in Canada could stand a lot to learn from Europe with regard to their understanding of public relations. She adds that in the past, the CIP had taken a stand on a number of public issues, effectively taking part in relevant social discussions. She gives the example of the 1970s, when the CIP took a stand on the problem of acid rain and ended up seeing change as a result. This type of culture within the CIP has changed considerably over the years. A recent example of the CIP's failure to take initiative was during the United Nations' 2006 World Urban Forum, where the profession was looking to set up an association of Planners Without Borders. As Wolfe puts it, "it all turned to ashes," and in her opinion, there is no other party to blame than the leadership of the CIP. She explains that while discussions were ongoing with the United States and Britain, the CIP did not even publicize the initiative on its website. This incident serves to illustrate a shift in culture that has negatively impacted the profession's ability to capitalize on opportunity for advancement (Wolfe, 2009).

David Watson (2009) believes that relevance is the key issue to address. Although he has nothing against organizations like the CIP, he is not currently a member of a professional planning organization. In his opinion, they are not particularly effective. He was a provisional member at the beginning of his planning career, but drifted away from the practice for about half of it. When he got back into the practice, he did not see much value in joining an organization. Despite this, he does see value in the CIP's accreditation process because it establishes a benchmark for standards (Watson, 2009).

Like a few other participants, Mark Hornell (2009) would like to see planning organizations "get over their provincial parochialism." In his opinion, the profession is too insular, with not enough cross-pollination. If the profession was pooling efforts and resources

nationally, economies of scale could provide for better outreach and services both at the provincial and national levels. He observes that what happens now is that most of the mental energy is spent at the provincial affiliate level, with just a little bit left over at the national level. This has reached the point where we now have a "coalition of independent provincial planning organizations," where standards of practice vary across provinces, depending on resources and initiative. The question that then arises is whether a planner from one province worth as much as a planner from another, and this fragmented reality is not good for the national unified profile of the profession (Hornell, 2009).

Paul Bedford (Bedford, 2009) offers advice for bridging the gap between these different views. Having seen the profession evolve throughout the years, he believes that the CIP and OPPI are trying and doing some useful work. Despite this, however, "they are still missing the mark." Bedford has come into contact with a wide variety of opinions throughout his career. He knows a lot of planners that are members of planning organizations simply because they feel like the credentials will help their careers. On the other hand, he knows many planners that are not members because they see these organizations as irrelevant and not rooted in reality. He would therefore like to see planning organizations strive to tackle this relevance issue, and thus break down barriers, through education programs, outreach initiatives and meaningful dialog. With regard to the profession pursuing stricter credential requirements, Bedford is not sure that this is the right way to address relevance: "It doesn't matter if somebody has a stamp. If they're still warming a chair with their stamp, it's not going to change much" (Bedford, 2009). Instead, while credentials are necessary, he believes that relevance comes through results, and this should be the focus. Despite his desire to see more focus within planning organizations, he has tremendous respect for the people that run

them. He believes that they are trying to do the best they can, and that good things are still coming out of their efforts (Bedford, 2009).

Summary

Results show highly differing views on the effectiveness of Canadian planning organizations. Some participants are satisfied with the job being done by these organizations, while others are completely dissatisfied and do not see a place for them. Criticisms, for the most part, fell in line with those pointed out in Chapter 4. Many participants would like to see an increased external focus, promoting awareness of the profession, and emphasizing its importance to the public. In addition, several participants mentioned that they would like to see these organizations take on a leadership role in current affairs involving planning issues. The issue of overlap between the CIP and its affiliates was also brought up as a potential problem, while the issue of professional standards drew a variety of opposing views.

What can be surmised from these results is that there is no doubt room for improvement within the CIP and affiliate structure, as well as each component's strategic direction. If these organizations indeed intend to represent the face of the Canadian planning profession, member criticism should be looked at closely as areas for improvement in the future.

5.3.9 Future Directions for the Canadian Planning Profession

At the end of each interview, participants were asked what they see for the future of the Canadian planning profession. Interviewees were given the opportunity to express their

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views on what they believe is the reality of the future, and what they would ideally like to see happen.

Despite the criticisms expressed throughout this section, several participants believe that planning is, and will continue to improve and be vital to the effective functioning of Canadian communities (Grant, 2009; Wolfe, 2009; Palubeski, 2009; Peck, 2009). Jill Grant (2009) envisions governments continuing to recognize the planning as a useful tool. Jeanne Wolfe (2009) notes that the profession has improved over the years, and believes that it will continue along the same path. Dennis Peck (2009) believes that the future of the profession is in good shape, and envisions an increased focus on infrastructure renewal.

A number of participants also believe that more can be done to keep seeing progress in the profession. David Watson (2009) holds a similar opinion to those of Grant, Wolfe and Peck, yet he adds that while people understand why planning is needed, it is just not reaching its full potential. This, he explains, is due to a combination of the economy and the political structure in the country. In order to make progress within this context, the profession will require planners with a different type of personality that will take leadership. Leaders must be good integrators and bring new energy to the profession, so as to build a stronger role in the public realm (Watson, 2009).

David Witty (2009) would like to see planners spend more time on what's been done well and build on this success. He would also like to see planners participate more in business matters and political matter, similar to what lawyers do. Along similar lines, Wayne Caldwell (2009) would also like to see planners step into leadership roles for planning issues. Planners as a whole are already in a position of leadership, yet have not always assumed this role. Caldwell sees this an opportunity and a challenge for the future to raise the bar not only

of the profession, but also of the quality of the work that comes out. The key is to capitalize on this potential so that society sees the value in good planning initiatives. He also sees a continuing desire among new generations of planners to work with the political side of things to achieve positive results in the community (Caldwell, 2009). Ken O'Brien (2009) believes that becoming more specialized in the kind of work planners do is the way to more forward – a sentiment shared by politician Ken Seiling (Seiling, 2009). Additionally, similar to Witty (2009) and Caldwell (2009), O'Brien sees planners working more closely with related professions and council to achieve planning goals. He comments that, in the future, there will not be as many resources available to planners, and as a result, the profession will have to adapt (O'Brien, 2009). Robert Bjerke (2009) would like to see the divide between the public and private sectors disappear. To do so, he explains, all planners must engage in real discussion with politicians and communities. Contrary to O'Brien, however, Bjerke (2009) and Grant (2009) believe that there will be an increased need for planners in the future. As this happens, Bjerke would like to see less bureaucracy in the planning process, and more resources devoted to making things happen. Additionally, Paul Bedford (2009) believes that the planning process should involve less public participation, and should instead focus on a vision and on getting things done. Ken Seiling (2009), on the other hand, cautions that planners must make sure that the public feels heard. While Seiling (2009) admits that it will be challenging to make policy match what happens on the ground, as Alaric Fish (2009) points out, good policy is what leads to change.

David Palubeski is not fearful for the profession's success, nor has he ever been. He does, however, believe that planners need to become more engaged in defining the future. They also need to focus on developing excellent communication skills in order to effectively

sell great ideas with long-term goals – a skill many other participants, including Wolfe (2009) and Puopolo (2009), described as vital as well.

In the next 10 years, Paul Puopolo (2009) sees a paradigm shift happening in the planning profession. Historically, in terms of land use, planners have been known as Greenfield developers. The role is now beginning to change, as intensification becomes the new form of development. As the role of architects and designers start to take more importance, where will this leave the planner? Within this context, Puopolo sees less opportunity for planners in the future, unless there is a change in mindset among municipalities (Puopolo, 2009). In addition to this, Participant1 (2009), Participant5 (2009) and Mark Hornell (2009) all comment on the need for increased technical respect toward planners. They would like to see more emphasis on technical training so as to maintain the planner's relevance and professional credibility in the public and political forum. The profession's relevance and credibility are issues of importance to Deb Biddiscombe (2009) Jeanne Wolfe (2009) and Ken O'Brien (2009) as well.

Given the current context, many participants commented on the ability of economic, social and environmental forces to incite change (Participant1, 2009; Hornell, 2009; Bedford, 2009; Fish, 2009; O'Brien, 2009; Peck, 2009) Issues of economic resources, environmental sustainability and social stability are emerging as vital to the well-being of future generations. Participant1 (2009) believes that as these needs approach a state of crisis, change will begin to happen. The profession needs this to occur in order for it to come out of its current lull (Participant1, 2009). Although Alaric Fish does not see "massive change" from how things are now in the profession's future, he observes that society is currently in a period of significant change, and if planners begin to stand up to market forces, and become

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advocates for what they believe is right while still respecting community wishes, the profession will continue to move toward a better outcome. He also believes that education needs to happen on a number of levels, including raising awareness among younger generations. He notes the huge complexity of these issues and how they will affect change, but despite this, he sees hope in future generations (Fish, 2009).

Summary

Findings in this section reveal that participants believe in the importance and value of the profession in Canada. They also believe that planners need to capitalize on their strengths in order further advance the profession. Although participants generally used this line of questioning to emphasize points made in earlier sub-sections, it is important to point out that given the communicative and leadership direction that planners see the profession taking, a strong brand that would foster credibility and trust would prove to be a strong asset to the profession.

5.4 SUMMARY

Chapter 5 analyzed survey and interview results, effectively confirming a number of issues raised in the literature. Table 7 demonstrates how the interview findings either confirm or refute the survey results, while also providing a deeper investigation into several underlying issues.

Table 10: Analysis of Interview Findings in Relation to Survey Findings

Survey Findings	Interview Findings
Non-planners have a very vague idea of what planning is.	Interview findings confirm this from the standpoint of a planner. Most participants felt that the general public is relatively unfamiliar with the roles and responsibilities of the planner.
Non-planners are generally indifferent toward the profession, a fact that many planners are aware of.	Interview findings confirm this. Almost all participants indicated agreement with this statement.
All participants agree that the general awareness of the profession should be increased.	Generally, participants indicated that they would like to see planning awareness increased, so as to remain relevant to stakeholders, mentioning that the awareness of planning-related issues is also important within this goal. Participants also indicated that addressing potentially ambiguous or negative perceptions would help, although all initiatives should take into consideration the varying nature of geographic locations, culture and resources across Canada.
Morale within the profession has remained the same over the past decade. Planners believe in the importance and impact of their work, despite feeling that this work is under-appreciated by the public.	Interview findings confirm this to some extent. Although frustrations with the planning process exist, participants demonstrated a true passion for the profession and their ability to contribute to the communities in which they live.
Planners see less of a crisis situation for the profession than they did a decade ago.	Interview findings confirm this. Although participants would like to see improvements within the profession, they did not indicate that there exists a crisis.
Practitioners believe that planning is comprehensive in nature, and generally agree with some of the main elements of the definition of planning drawn out in Chapter 4: society, future and land use.	Interview findings confirm this, although there exists conflict in relation to the issue of sub-specialization within the profession.

Negotiation and communication skills are vital to planning.	Interview findings confirm this. Participants agree that these skills are necessary, and add that technical skills, such as finance, law and economics are also important to the profession.
Practitioners would like to see a new image and identity for the Canadian planning profession.	For the most part, participants indicated that the profession needs a new identity and image, although some participants expressed satisfaction with the status quo.
Practitioners increasingly believe they work in an overly political environment, and feel like they do not challenge the status quo.	Interview findings confirmed that planners work in a political and bureaucratic environment, although it was unclear whether or not they believe this is increasingly so.
Participants believe that other related professionals, such as architects and engineers, have a lot more professional credibility than planners.	Interview findings confirm this. Participants indicated that there exists overlap between the roles and responsibilities of planning and those of related professions. In addition, tangible vs. intangible results, political capital, stakeholder exposure, professional standards, and communication between professions were also brought up as issues that could be contributing to confusion and decreased credibility.
CIP members believe that the CIP represents the Canadian planning profession relatively effectively within the professional planning community, but quite poorly outside of it. The CIP, and consequently the profession, could therefore make better use of the tools at its disposal, such as its website, and could benefit from increased promotional efforts focusing on educating the public.	Interview findings confirm this. Not all, but several participants indicated satisfaction with the internal representation of the CIP, but most participants indicated that the CIP could be doing more to represent the profession externally.

We were able to confirm, for the most part, that the broad definition of planning, as well as the roles and responsibilities of a planner, are similarly understood by both planning organizations, such as the CIP, APA, PIA, RTPI and NZIP, and by planners themselves.

These are promising results in the context of a re-branding effort for the profession. As discussed in Section 4.3.2, the key to a successful marketing communications plan, especially when dealing with a service, is to ensure a consistent message from the inside out (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007; Cano & Sams, 2009; Snell & White, 2009; Gilmore, 2003). By confirming that planners and planning organizations seem to generally be on the same page in terms of what a planner is and does, shows a certain level of unity. Despite these encouraging findings, however, a deeper analysis of the results indicates that this agreement does not extend beyond the internal planning community, and in reality is only superficial.

Throughout my analysis of the survey research findings, along with my discussions with each of the interview participants, whose planning-related backgrounds are highly diverse and unique from one another, one thing became apparent: along with this diverse set of backgrounds comes an equally diverse set of opinions relating to the deeper issues surrounding the state of the Canadian planning profession. Generally, the sources of these differences can be broken up into three main categories: regional context, public sector or private sector, and generational context. Each of these categories represents a challenge to any re-branding effort in the profession.

As previously mentioned, regional differences can mean differences in resources and culture, making the planning process very different from one place to another. If a centralized brand execution strategy is to be put into the hands of the CIP, regional differences must be considered. One way to deal with this would be to have the CIP develop one brand identity that all regions will agree upon, but then allow CIP affiliates to tailor activities to the regions' unique contexts. Additionally, this challenge can also translate over to the public versus private sector planning issue. Private sector companies might be communicating different

messages and positioning through their own marketing efforts, and these may differ greatly from the approach taken by public sector planners. The same approach could be taken here, in that the CIP could develop an all-encompassing general identity, while allowing for tailoring by private planning firms. Finally, the issue of generational split also poses a problem for branding in the profession. Research indicates that there exist diverging thoughts and perspectives between new generation planners and older generation planners. Younger generations tend to be more aggressive, idealistic and comfortable with technology. Older generations tend to hold on to values and practices that were formed at the beginning of their careers. This could pose a problem in terms of internal marketing, where buy-in is essential to promoting a unified brand message.

These individuals comprise the make-up of the Canadian planning community. Therefore, any attempt to improve the state of the Canadian planning profession must take into account these often-conflicting opinions – a task that would be undoubtedly complex and difficult to manage.

The profession's ambiguous public identity, discussed by McClendon (2003), Beauregard (1989) and Glazer (2000) amongst others, is one of the primary reasons behind its seemingly low profile. The general public simply does not seem to care about the profession or its related issues until one of these issues directly affects them, and therefore is generally unaware of the various elements of the planning process. Given this, one may wonder how the public expected to take part in the planning process if it is unaware of its very existence.

This, combined with a general lack of awareness, has led to mistrust and misconceptions, discussed by many including McAllister (2004). Planners are generally

aware of the effect that word of mouth has on the perceptions of the profession. The media, along with the bureaucratic nature of the process, add to this problem as well. There exists confusion and overlap between planning and competing related professions, such as engineering and architecture – professions held in much higher esteem among the public. Additionally, planners, who usually enter the profession to inspire change in the community, often find themselves in the background of the political decision-making process. This, in turn, has led to frustration that has the potential to affect the morale within the profession, although results show that the passion that drives planners seems to take precedence over these types of frustrations.

In addition to generating results that fall directly in line with the research question, the survey and interviews also ended up bringing to light a number of additional issues that may serve to clarify or expand on some of the core findings. Opinions expressed about planning education, Canadian planning organizations and future directions for the profession help better inform core findings, thereby enriching the recommendations developed in Chapter 6 of this thesis. These results indicate that, in general, planners would like to see a more technical and practical focus in planning school curriculum. They also suggest incorporating planning education into the elementary and high school curriculum. With regard to the CIP, its affiliates and future directions for the profession, a diverse number of concerns and suggestions for improvement were expressed, indicating that perhaps these organizations should take a closer look at member and non-member perceptions when developing their strategic plans.

Finally, the results helped identify a competitive advantage for the profession – a necessary step toward re-branding the profession, according to McClendon (2003).

Generally, it was found that the value of the Canadian planning profession is its holistic, long-term approach to bettering the community. This identified, the profession will be in a better position to market itself and generate more awareness. It should also help differentiate the profession from competing professions, and create a clear identity as to its commitment to the public.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Having conducted three primary research phases, and analyzed the data collected, we are now in a position to answer the study's research question: *Could branding strategies and strategic planning enhance the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder environment?*

In order to answer this question, the following objectives were developed in Chapter 3:

1. To gauge the perception of planning within different stakeholder groups in Canada. Given the scope of this project, this objective was met by superficially examining public perceptions through survey research, and through an in-depth investigation into planner perceptions through interviews. Chapter 5 provides a complete analysis of both of these research phases, and its conclusion provides a summary of these findings in the context of this study.

2. To develop a set of best practices in strategic planning and marketing. This objective was met by conducting a review of the strategic planning and marketing literature as it relates to planning as a service. Table 3 summarizes these findings into a matrix that can be used as a tool for improvement.

3. To develop a set of best practices adopted by international professional planning NGOs. This objective was met by analyzing the website and publication content of the APA, PIA, RTPI and NZPI. Table 3 summarizes these findings into a matrix that can be used as a tool for improvement.

4. To determine the CIP's marketing approach. This objective was met by analyzing the website and publication content of the CIP, and given my local context, the OPPI. A complete analysis can be found in Section 4.3.4. In addition, Table 3 summarizes these findings into a matrix that can be used as a tool for improvement.

Each objective of this study has been met, thereby supporting the answer to the research question: branding strategies and strategic planning can indeed serve to enhance the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder environment. Although a complex task, it has been demonstrated that other professional planning organizations are in fact making use of these strategies, and are consequently seeing results. In addition to meeting the objectives directly related to the research question, Chapter 5 results have uncovered a number of supplementary findings that present the CIP, as the face of the Canadian planning profession, with a set of starting points and suggestions for future development of the profession in Canada.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations – based on the themes drawn out from the literature and research – are being put forward as a starting point for the overall improvement of the profile of the Canadian planning profession.

6.2.1 Definition of a Planner: Roles, responsibilities & issues surrounding sub-specialization should be clarified

Thesis findings show that planning is consistently defined and understood across countries and within the planning community. This said, however, there still exists a gap between this definition and the various contexts that practicing planners in Canada find themselves in, be it the difference across geographical locations, the difference between the private and public sectors, or the difference between generations. In order to strengthen the definition of planning, the CIP should seek to identify these points of difference, and elaborate on each of them. This will undoubtedly help shed some light on the dynamic and unique nature of the Canadian planning profession.

In addition, given the evolution of the Canadian planning context, the idea of sub-specialization in the planning profession needs to be addressed by the CIP. There exist a wide range of conflicting views on the matter, but in order for the profession to gain awareness and better understanding among the public, a more clearly defined identity needs to be projected. This does not mean, however, that the profession's holistic nature must be ignored. In fact, it must be emphasized, with sub-specializations falling under this primary heading.

Sub-specialization could create fragmentation of the brand image or position, but also creates opportunity for the use of a "flagship" brand, where one brand can help define what the profession stands for. In the case of planning, the "urban planning" brand could be used to build the planning brand profile. While it would help to build an understanding of the entire planning profession, the risks of employing such a strategy would have to be considered. In the case of planning, the risk of, say, using "urban planning" as a flagship brand may create conflict with all other specializations, like rural planning, environmental

planning or heritage planning. Thus, the CIP would have to carefully evaluate this given the level of fragmentation in opinions in the profession, as discussed in Section 5.4.

Increased structure and tangible elements in the definition will help form the image of the planner in the public's mind. A good starting point for this initiative would be to conduct an opinion survey among all CIP members to better understand planners' views on sub-specialization, and how these manifest themselves in practice. Additionally, once again considering the fragmented nature of the Canadian planning profession community, and the fact that any effort to re-brand to create a single unified vision has the potential to create a significant amount of internal conflict, the CIP should consider outsourcing its re-branding effort. Hiring an external branding consultant would avoid tensions arising from the fact that the CIP has no real authority to impose a unified brand strategy on the various segments of the planning community.

6.2.2 Planning and Related Professions: Differences should be explained and relationships should be defined

Research confirms that there indeed exists confusion among the public between planning and other related professions, such as engineering and architecture. This problem is a result of many variables. Planning produces primarily intangible results, while architecture and engineering produce tangible results, giving them greater exposure to the public. Political capital may not necessarily be focused on good planning. The roles between planning and related professions are often blurred and overlapping. Professional standards in related professions are often stricter and more clearly defined. Finally, there may exist communication problems between planning and these related professions.

In order to differentiate planning from engineering and architecture, more emphasis needs to be put on defining and explaining the differences between planning and related professions. Additionally, the actual relationship between planning and related professions must be explained simultaneously. This strategy will allow for a deeper understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the planner in relation to other professions, and will start to establish an image of the relationship structure within the planning process in the public's mind.

As planning results suffer from a lack of tangibility, I propose that examples familiar to the layman be used to explain the role that planning plays in the community. For example, we can compare a planner to an advisor or a consultant to a corporation. An advisor or consultant will analyze all variables in a given situation, and develop a strategic plan for the long-term benefit of a corporation. Although this plan is designed holistically, with the best interest of the corporation, or in the case of planning, the public, in mind, it may or may not be followed by the directors of the corporation, or in the case of planning, the politicians. In addition, the implementation of the elements within the strategic plan will not be carried out by the advisor or consultant, but by the various departments within the corporation responsible for these specific elements. This can be likened to the architect or engineer carrying out elements of a plan instead of the planner. Additionally, case studies depicting specific situations could be developed to show the role that planners play in the community.

These types of examples, specifically ones that are directly relevant, will once again help develop a tangible and identifiable image of planning in the public's mind.

6.2.3 The Value of Planning: Its holistic nature is its competitive advantage

Findings suggest that the value of the planning profession is in its holistic nature. This is what sets it apart from all other related professions, and what justifies its very existence. Planning is a multi-faceted profession that looks at all angles of a given situation to come up with comprehensive plans with a long-term focus. In marketing terms, what differentiates one service from all others, thereby resulting in its value proposition, is its competitive advantage. Thus, the CIP should emphasize this vital core competency – the planning profession's holistic nature – in all educational and promotional initiatives it puts forward to the public.

6.2.4 External Perceptions of the Profession: Build awareness and clarify the image

The Canadian planning profession suffers from an unclear image, as well as a large lack of awareness among the public. This is largely due to the public's widespread indifference toward the profession, as it is generally little exposed to planning issues on a day-to-day basis. In addition, the public's understanding and knowledge of the profession varies across the country, as geographical location and local resources often dictate how much exposure they have to planning issues. Results show that both planners and the public would like to see planning awareness improved.

As such, the CIP needs to focus on building awareness of the profession outside of the planning community. This should be started off by emphasizing the most important elements drawn out in Figure 10, namely the benefits that planners provide to the community, the roles and responsibilities of a planner, and how the public can participate in the planning process. By using the Table 3 as a benchmarking tool, the CIP would be in a

position to determine the most effective way to increase planning awareness among the public. Awareness-building initiatives should include website improvements geared toward the public. In doing so, however, the CIP would have to simultaneously make efforts to direct the public to the website. This is where the issue of limited resources comes up. A multi-media campaign driving the general public to the website would be very expensive, and would not necessarily yield the results expected. If the CIP were to provide more services and information for the public on the website, it would also have to define what segments of the "public" matters to the planning profession. This could include certain community advocacy groups, potential planning students, and members of all levels of government, among many others. In order to determine the best course of action, the CIP would have to analyze the situation, draw out these target market groups, and develop promotional initiatives geared toward these. It would then have to produce an optimized marketing plan with firm deadlines for implementation, and time-bound measurable outcomes. A long-term approach to increasing awareness is proposed in Sub-Section 6.2.8.

6.2.5 Politics and Planning: Focus on relationship building

Once again, similar to public perceptions, the relationship between politics and planning can vary greatly across the country. Results indicate a general consensus that planners and politicians need to work closely to build and maintain relationships so as to reduce frustration and misconceptions that may arise within the planning process. As the face of the Canadian planning profession, the CIP, along with its affiliates, should play a role in building and sustaining strong relationships with local government so as to promote a healthy planning process built on mutual understanding.

6.2.6 Morale within the Profession: Dig beyond the surface

Although results seem to indicate a positive morale within the Canadian planning profession, we must consider potential study biases in considering this. While research participants expressed genuine passion for the profession, the literature, and to some extent, the survey results, indicate that this may not necessarily be the case within the entire planning community. Findings also suggest that there may potentially exist tension between new generation and older generation planners. Additionally, the issue of ethical boundaries being challenged and opinion censorship was brought up as a factor in the overall morale within the profession. These are important findings that would merit additional research being conducted. I suggest that this be handled by the CIP, given that it possesses a readily available database of planning professionals, and that this type of research would yield important insight into its membership base.

6.2.7 Planning Education: Planning schools should emphasize communication, technical and practical skills

In addition to building a strong theoretical foundation, research findings indicate that experienced practicing planners would like to see an increased emphasis on communication skills, technical knowledge and practical experience in planning school curriculums. To be more precise, planners indicate that in practice, written and oral communication skills are vital to the planning job, as much of it involves liaising, negotiating, mediating and building consensus among stakeholders. Additionally, technical knowledge in economics, finance, law, politics and sociology is also important to prepare planning students for the job, as these

are the frameworks within which plans must be developed. Finally, results suggest that some of the most effective training a planning student can get is through on-the-job experience. Thus, co-op and other internship types of experience should be further integrated into the planning curriculum. A balanced combination of these skills is vital to the "real world" planning context. Therefore, planning schools should focus on building programs that provide these elements to students, as these will best prepare them for the planning practice.

6.2.8 Planning Education: Focus on building awareness organically and improving planning education at all levels

The fact that the public remains largely unaware of the profession because they are not directly affected by it on a daily basis has been made apparent through the research. What has also been uncovered is that those who are aware of the profession are largely indifferent toward it for this same reason. Only once touched by a planning issue is an individual inclined to take part in the planning process and thus be exposed to the roles and responsibilities of a planner. Many academics and practicing planners have noted this phenomenon, dubbed NIMBY, over the years, and little has changed in this time. For this reason, and in the context of the CIP's limited resources compared to the APA or other professional organizations, I do not believe that a heavy dollar investment in advertising is, in itself, the most effective way to raise awareness about the profession among the public. Awareness cannot be forced on people if they do not have enough to care about.

The key, in this case, would be to gradually educate so that they begin to care. As was suggested by a number of interviews, I propose that, along with some investment in mainstream awareness building, planning education needs to be incorporated at all levels of

schooling – for example, in elementary school curriculum, in high school civics classes, at career fairs, as well as through a number of other recruitment methods. Younger generations have a bigger stake in the future of our communities, and the increased presence of planning issues in educational curriculums would give them the opportunity to learn about how they can affect the future of their communities. The profession can also build on the value of the MCIP designation, the CIP's professional accreditation, in campus events and professional promotion, effectively generating buzz and positive word of mouth. This strategy has worked well for professions like accounting, where accreditation programs like the CA, CMA and CGA have helped raise the profile of the profession.

Currently, research findings seem to indicate that the majority of planners come from a geography or political science background, or end up in planning because they are exposed to it through someone close to them. If planning truly is a holistic profession, it could benefit from an increased diversity of people entering it. It is also important to note that, when targeting students, one must acknowledge that they are already, in a way, "silo-ed" in their interests. It thus becomes necessary to cater to these silos, all the while differentiating planning from other professions and creating value for students. The Chapter 5 discussions regarding sub-specializations and the holistic value of the profession must also be kept in mind here.

Diversifying the pool of young planners that come into the profession also has the dual effect of increasing exposure to planning issues across a number of additional planes. By increasing awareness of planning issues and the importance of the profession in the community among younger generations, you allow for the development of interests and the increased opportunity and willingness to participate in the planning process. Additionally, by

providing a platform for organic growth within younger generations, a ripple effect will undoubtedly spread awareness and interest among older and future generations.

Although this strategy will see results at a slow pace, in the long run it will be more effective and utilize fewer resources. It will also help recruit the right kind of students into the profession.

6.2.9 Professional Planning Organizations in Canada: The CIP should take on a leadership role as the face of the Canadian planning profession

The CIP represents itself as being the national voice of the Canadian planning profession, and as such, should strive to take on a leadership role that falls in line with this. In this light, any strategic plan developed by the organization should make use of the best practices identified in Table 3. This table also serves as a benchmark for improvement, by comparing the strengths and weaknesses of other planning organizations to those of the CIP. Although it is clear that resources may not permit a complete overhaul, priorities for improvement should be identified and incorporated in the strategic plan. This also means actively listening to members and non-members alike, as they are ultimately the ones being represented. A number of research participants indicated that they would like to see the CIP take on more of a leadership role both internally and externally. It is apparent that this will not be an easy task, given the diverse and often conflicting opinions expressed by the small pool of research participants, but perhaps this is valuable information in itself. By openly acknowledging diversity in views and weaknesses, and by striving to improve on these, not only will the CIP start to make progress, but it will also inspire faith in the minds of all stakeholders.

6.2.10 Professional Planning Organizations in Canada: The CIP should adopt an internal marketing approach

As discussed in Section 4.3.2 of this thesis, the idea of internal marketing, if implemented correctly and wholeheartedly, can also prove extremely valuable to the profession. The conflicting views discussed in the previous sub-section are at the root of the problem. A clear unified image of the profession cannot be portrayed to the public when there is no unity on the inside. In order to successfully communicate what planning is about, the CIP must seek to understand the views and expectations of planners, and then develop a strong internal communications strategy, perhaps somehow extending beyond non-member planners as well. In addition to uniting planning practitioners, this will help ensure buy-in from planners themselves by building respect, loyalty and trust that will ultimately reach the public in the form of a singular, cohesive vision of what planning is all about. A strategy for this approach can also be developed with an external strategic branding consultant, as discussed in Sub-Section 6.2.10.

6.2.11 Professional Planning Organizations in Canada: The CIP and its affiliates should reorganize their structure

If the CIP hopes to effectively become a leader in representing the voice of the planning profession in Canada, the issue of internal competition must be addressed. It seems, through research findings, that the CIP currently finds itself in direct competition with its provincial affiliates in a number of areas. Services offered and initiatives taken by its affiliates should be complementary, whereas they now seem to be redundant. This not only

results in a fragmented image of the profession in Canada, but it is not an efficient use of valuable and oftentimes limited resources. These overlapping roles could also be affecting the organizations' credibility within the profession. The CIP should seek to work along with its affiliates to clearly define roles and responsibilities, with the CIP being at the head of all strategic goals, and affiliates providing tactical support and local services. As was uncovered in Chapter 4, the CIP should look toward the APA and the PIA for examples of clearly defined roles between the national planning body and its local affiliates or chapters.

6.2.12 Summary

The following table provides an illustration of the primary literature and research findings in this thesis, and how these align themselves with the recommendations proposed in this section.

Table 11: Literature, Findings and Recommendations Matrix

LEGEND:
1. Definition of a Planner: Roles, responsibilities & issues surrounding sub-specialization should be clarified
2. Planning and Related Professions: Differences should be explained and relationships should be defined
3. The Value of Planning: Its holistic nature is its competitive advantage
4. External Perceptions of the Profession: Build awareness and clarify the image
5. Politics and Planning: Focus on relationship building
6. Morale within the Profession: Dig beyond the surface
7. Planning Education: Planning schools should emphasize communication, technical and practical skills
8. Planning Education: Focus on building awareness organically and improving planning education at all levels
9. Professional Planning Organizations in Canada: The CIP should take on a leadership role as the face of the Canadian planning profession
10. Professional Planning Organizations in Canada: The CIP should adopt an internal marketing approach
11. Professional Planning Organizations in Canada: The CIP and its affiliates should reorganize their structure

Literature	Findings	Recommendations
Planning is not a product. It is a service or a process. It can, and must be marketed as such. The creation of a brand identity for the profession and a brand name for planning organizations is key to increasing planning's visibility and relevance, and differentiating it from competing professions. (McClendon, 2003)	Several international planning organizations have successfully utilized services marketing approaches in their strategic and communications plans. A summary of these findings can be found in Table 3. The APA, in particular, has emphasized creating a strong brand identity through developing the strength of its brand name.	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11
Understanding the profession's role and finding substance in the planner's work is important to the future of the Canadian planning profession. (Witty, 1998)	Content analysis findings demonstrate that international planning organizations generally agree on a definition of the profession; however, many survey and interview participants indicated that the roles and responsibilities of a planner are not clearly defined	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11

	within the profession in Canada. A review of the CIP and OPPI strategic plans confirms that this is indeed an issue on the agenda for improvement in the Canadian planning community. Additionally, findings from all research phases indicate that the public does not fully understand the planner's role, and are largely indifferent toward the profession.	
Neither the public, nor the profession has an agreed upon understanding of a vision and core mission for the profession. (McClendon, 2003)	International planning organizations' strategic plans mention similar visions and core missions. Interview findings also seem to indicate that most planners do have a similar understanding of the profession's vision and mission, and these fall in line with those articulated by planning organizations. Survey and interview findings indicate that a large public indifference toward the profession has resulted in a relative lack of awareness of the profession itself, along with any strategic vision, mission or goals articulated within. This said, survey results show that the public does understand that the profession is indeed vital to the effective functioning of communities.	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11
The strength of the profession lies in its comprehensive, holistic nature. (McClendon, 2003)	This has been confirmed at each research phase of this thesis: literature, content analysis, survey and interviews.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10
A majority of Canadian planners believe that the profession is facing or is in a state of crisis. (Witty, 1998)	Given difference in survey population sizes between Witty's study and this one, we cannot firmly refute this	4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11

	comment based on the findings uncovered in this thesis. This said, survey and interview findings do seem to indicate that the majority of planners do not believe that the profession is facing or is in a state of crisis. Instead, while they do express concern with some elements of the profession's future, they remain hopeful and optimistic that the profession will retain or improve its relevance in the future.	
There exist highly differing views among planners regarding relevant planning theory, methods and education. (Witty, 1998)	Survey and interview results indeed confirm this reality. The diversity in backgrounds and individual contexts within the planning community seem to deeply influence the opinions and views of Canadian planners.	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
There exist highly differing views among stakeholders regarding what needs to be done to improve the profession and the planning process in Canada. (Witty, 1998)	Similar to the comment above, survey and interview results seem to confirm this statement as well.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11
Planners believe that the CIP is too internally focused. (Witty, 1998)	Survey and interview results show that a large proportion of planners do, in fact, feel that the CIP's focus is too internal, and that it could do more to live up to its leadership role in the Canadian planning community.	9, 11
Planners believe that the profession suffers from a lack of public support. (Witty, 1998)	Interview and survey findings confirm this. These findings point toward a lack of awareness, and general indifference and ignorance of the profession among the public as the main reasons behind the lack of public support.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11

Planners believe that planning is not well recognized by other professions, which makes it difficult to form a good working relationship with them. (Witty, 1998)	Although interview participants' views fell in line with this comment, many expressed that there still exists a good opportunity to build relationships with these professions, and to work with them to produce results in the best interest of the community.	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11

6.3 FUTURE RESEARCH

Planning is a dynamic field, with changes occurring almost constantly. Throughout the development of this thesis, I must acknowledge that the organizations discussed herein have also been evolving with the profession. In order to remain within a manageable scope and the resources at hand, the research has been limited in a number of areas. Although not fully explored in this thesis, the following suggestions for future research areas may provide valuable additional information within the constantly changing context of the Canadian planning profession.

6.3.1 Larger, statistically significant survey sampling

Limited resources and reach did not permit for statistically significant sampling of the public and other stakeholder groups in the survey phase of this research. Valuable information can be extracted from such an initiative, especially if results are segmented according to various interest groups and geographical locations. To fall in line with the recommendations laid out in the previous section, I would suggest that the CIP roll out a nation-wide action plan to be implemented by the affiliates within a prescribed model. Once

the results come in, the CIP can then compile the findings into a single cohesive report. In the development of a strategic plan for the future, the clear identification of target market expectations can help the CIP deliver services and leadership to accurately meet goals.

6.3.2 Public vs. private sector planning

Although touched upon at times throughout the thesis, resources, once again, did not permit for the exploration of the dynamics between the public and private sectors in planning. A superficial glance at the interview findings and the profiles of the participants may indicate that this factor may indeed play a role in the diverse and often conflicting views of the participants about the profession. It would thus be interesting to uncover the similarities and differences between the public and private sectors in planning, then to determine whether or not these results would have an impact on the internal and external identity of the profession. In the context of a re-branding effort for the profession, these results may have a significant impact on any plan carried out.

6.3.3 Best practices from other professional organizations in Canada

Given the scope of this project, I was unable to include this element in my research, but I do believe a list of best practices from other professional organizations in Canada, such as the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects, Engineers Canada or Certified General Accountants Association of Canada, would hold even more valuable information for the CIP. Although not planning-related, these organizations may provide valuable information as to best practices in advancing the profile of a given profession in the Canadian context. Once again, I would propose compiling the results in the same format presented in Table 3 so that

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the CIP can once again use the list as a means to identify areas for improvement. Additionally, given the perceived higher profile of a number of competing professions, examining these organizations can also shed light on the reasons behind this.

6.4 SUMMARY

The research conducted in this thesis has demonstrated that branding strategies can indeed enhance the position and influence of the Canadian planning profession within a multi-stakeholder environment. This has been done by ensuring that all research objectives set out at the start of the project have been met. The research has also brought to light a number of additional issues relating to the planning practice itself, internal and external perceptions, education and identity, amongst others. This highlights the fact that although branding practices can be used to enhance the profile of the Canadian planning profession, this must be done in a while taking into account the larger context, complexities and dynamic nature of the profession itself. In doing so, it is important to identify the first steps for improvement, and in the case of this study, these have been to establish clear leadership within the profession, and set out a guiding outlook for the dissemination of information. In doing so, the CIP must head all future initiatives, and should therefore carefully consider the directions for future research proposed. Once a strong foundation for improvement has been put in place, the development of a strong identity through branding strategies can help propel the enhanced position, influence and profile of the profession into the future.

APPENDIX A

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Created: November 03 2008, 9:00 AM
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Language: English
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Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Page 1 - Heading

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Survey General Information

Page 1 - Heading

Greetings:

I am a Master's student in the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Mark Seasons on the image of the planning profession in Canada. It has been stated in the academic literature that the role of planners has seen considerable change in recent years. The purpose of this study is to understand how this role has changed, what external and internal perceptions are towards the profession, and what the implications are for planning theory and practice.
As part of my thesis research, I have developed a web-based survey to gauge the external and internal perceptions of the profession with regards to a number of stakeholder groups. As an individual directly or indirectly related to the planning profession, your opinions may be important to this study. I would therefore appreciate your participation in my research. Participation in this study is voluntary. Filling out the survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes. The questions are quite general and only pertain to your perceptions of the Canadian planning profession; however, you may decline answering any questions you do not wish to answer. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by not submitting your responses. There are no known or anticipated risks to participating in this study. All information you provide will be considered confidential and will be grouped with responses from other participants, ensuring the anonymity of all participants; however, anonymous quotations may be used. Furthermore, the web site is programmed to collect responses on the topic of and related to the planning profession alone. That is, the site will not collect any information that could potentially identify you (such as machine identifiers). Your opinions and perspective on this subject are valuable and will help to strengthen the overall quality of this research. The research may benefit the planning community, as well as all related stakeholder groups including municipal councils, developers, the media and the general public. Anticipated benefits to the academic community include increasing understanding of the evolution of the role of planners in Canada, and developing a clarified role definition for planners, as well as a new pragmatic perspective on traditional planning theory.

The data collected from this study will only be made accessible to myself and my supervisor, and will be maintained on a password-protected laptop computer. As well, the data will be electronically archived after completion of the study, maintained for one year and then deleted.

If you have any further questions about this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please feel free to contact either Navpreet Saini at n2saini@envmail.uwaterloo.ca or Dr. Mark Seasons at mseasons@envmail.uwaterloo.ca. Further, if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this study, please contact either investigator. As a follow-up to the survey phase of my research, I may contact certain participants at a later date to consider taking part in a short interview process.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics. However, the final decision about participation is yours. Should you have comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes in the Office of Research Ethics at 519-888-4567, Ext. 36005.If you wish to participate, please click the "NEXT" button at the bottom of the page. Thank you for considering participating in this study!

Regards,Navpreet SainiM.A. CandidateSchool of PlanningUniversity of Waterloon2saini@envmail.uwaterloo.ca

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Survey Instructions

Thank you for choosing to participate in this study!

This survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

To advance through sections, please use the "NEXT" button at the bottom of each page. You may use the back button of your browser to return to a previous page; however, please do so only if necessary, as your responses will be saved only by clicking on the "NEXT" button.
Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory; however, responses to these questions are not personal and serve important screening and administrative purposes. You may decline to answer any other questions if you wish, and you can withdraw from participation at any time. Declining to answer or withdrawing your participation will have no impact on your relationship with the University of Waterloo (UW) or the School of Planning.
Please click on "NEXT" to begin the survey.

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Section A: Administrative

Are you 18 years of age or older?

○ Yes
○ No [Screen Out]

Do you live in Canada?

○ Yes
○ No [Screen Out]

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Section B: Background

What is your occupation?
(Please select all responses that apply)

❑ Public sector planner [Skip to 5]
❑ Private sector planner [Skip to 5]
❑ Council member / politician
❑ University/College professor
❑ Media
❑ Land development
❑ Architect
❑ Engineer
❑ Student
❑ Other, please specify

....

How long have you been in this occupation?

○ Less than a year
○ 1-5 years
○ 6-10 years
○ 11-15 years
○ Over 15 years

Please indicate your highest level of education:

○ University - Doctoral
○ University - Graduate
○ University - Undergraduate
○ College
○ High School
○ Other, please specify

....

Page 4 - Question 6 - Yes or No   [Mandatory]

Are you a [full / provisional / student] member of the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP)?

○ Yes
○ No [Skip to 7]

Page 4 - Question 7 - Yes or No

Are you a member of any other professional organization?

○ Yes
○ No
○ If yes, which one?

....

Page 4 - Question 8 - Yes or No

Are you an active member of a neighborhood/community organization?

○ Yes
○ No
○ If yes, which one? What is its misson?

....

Page 5 - Heading

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Section C-1: General Attitudes and Perceptions

Page 5 - Question 9 - Yes or No

Do you currently practice planning?

○ Yes
○ No
○ If NO, why?

....

Page 5 - Question 10 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

My career as a planner was/is mostly:

○ Very satisfying
○ Somewhat satisfying
○ Not very satisfying
○ Not at all satisfying

As a planner, please indicate if you primarily:
(Check only three)

- ❏ Prepare policy
- ❏ Prepare by-laws and regulations
- ❏ Review development proposals
- ❏ Support a jurisdictional body
- ❏ Facilitate community involvement
- ❏ Advise senior staff
- ❏ Undertake research
- ❏ Administer policy
- ❏ Administer by-laws and regulations
- ❏ Prepare development proposals
- ❏ Conduct public involvement
- ❏ Advise politicians
- ❏ Teach
- ❏ Other, please specify

....

If you had to choose a career path all over, would you choose planning?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Why? Or why not?

....

Using the scale provided, please indicate your opinions about the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Planners work in an overly political environment.	○	○	○	○	○
Politicians expect unreasonable solutions from planners.	○	○	○	○	○
The public expects unreasonable solutions from planners.	○	○	○	○	○
Planning has failed to challenge the status quo.	○	○	○	○	○
Planning education does a good job preparing planners for practice.	○	○	○	○	○
Planners are negotiators.	○	○	○	○	○
Community decision-makers (politicians) appreciate the work that planners do.	○	○	○	○	○
The public appreciates the work that planners do.	○	○	○	○	○
The planning practice is facing or is in a state of crisis.	○	○	○	○	○

Please share any additional thoughts on the previous question.

....
....
....
....

In your opinion and experience, in general, what are the perceptions of the planning profession outside of the professional planning community?

- ○ Very negative
- ○ Negative
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Positive
- ○ Very positive

Why do you feel this way?

....
....
....
....

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Section C-1: General Attitudes and Perceptions

Does the planning profession market itself?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ If yes, how?

....

How effectively is the planning profession currently marketed?

- ○ Very effectively
- ○ Somewhat effectively
- ○ Not very effectively
- ○ Not at all effectively

Why do you have this opinion?

....
....
....
....

Does the planning profession need a new image/identity?

○ Yes
○ No
○ Why? Or why not?

....

Are the roles and responsibilities of the planner clearly defined within the profession?

○ Yes
○ No
○ Why? Or why not?

....

Please respond to the following questions according to the scale provided. Include any additional comments you may have.

	Very effectively	Somewhat effectively	Not very effectively	Not at all effectively
How effectively does the CIP represent the planning profession outside the professional planning community? ✎ Why? Or why not?	○	○	○	○
How effectively does the CIP represent the planning profession within the professional planning community? ✎ Why? Or why not?	○	○	○	○

On average, how often do you visit the CIP's website?
(Please select the answer that best applies)

○ Never
○ Less than once a month
○ 1-2 times a month
○ Once a week
○ Several times a week
○ Almost every day
○ Several times a day

What changes have you noticed to CIP's website since the beginning of June 2008?
(Please select all that apply)

- ❑ New logo
- ❑ New layout
- ❑ Easier navigation
- ❑ More services to members
- ❑ Clarified mission statement
- ❑ Different colors
- ❑ No changes
- ❑ Other, please specify

....

[Skip Unconditionally to 8]

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Section C-1: General Perceptions and Attitudes

Before your participation in this study, were you aware of the planning profession?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Before your participation in this study, had you ever heard of the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP)?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Before your participation in this study, had you ever heard of the:

	YES	NO
Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI)	○	○
Alberta Association, Canadian Institute of Planners (AACIP)	○	○
Association of Professional Community Planners of Saskatchewan (APCPS)	○	○
Atlantic Planners Institute / Institut des urbanistes de l'Atlantique (API / IUA)	○	○
Manitoba Professional Planners Institute (MPPI)	○	○
Ordre des urbanistes du Québec (OUQ)	○	○
Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC)	○	○

If you have had first-hand experience dealing with a planning professional, how would you describe this experience?

- ○ Very Positive
- ○ Somewhat positive
- ○ Somewhat negative
- ○ Very negative
- ○ I have not had first-hand experience dealing with a planning professional

Please provide further details about this experience. Why did you feel this way?

....
....
....
....

In general, your attitude towards the planning profession is:

- ○ Very positive
- ○ Somewhat positive
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Somewhat negative
- ○ Very negative

Why do you have this attitude?

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Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Section C-2: General Perceptions and Attitudes

To the best of your knowledge, what are the roles and responsibilities of a professional planner?

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....
....
....

In your opinion, what should be the roles and responsibilities of a professional planner?

....
....
....
....

Using the scale provided, please indicate your opinions about the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Planners have a lot of power with regard to decision-making.	○	○	○	○	○
Generally, the credibility of the planning profession is declining.	○	○	○	○	○
Other related professionals, such as architects and engineers, have a lot more professional credibility than planners.	○	○	○	○	○
The planning profession portrays a clear and unified image.	○	○	○	○	○
Planners are professionals.	○	○	○	○	○
Planners make suggestions to council / clients that are rarely followed-through.	○	○	○	○	○
The planning profession is necessary to ensure the effective functioning of communities.	○	○	○	○	○
Planners have failed to understand the needs of the public.	○	○	○	○	○
Planners can be trusted to make good decisions for the community.	○	○	○	○	○
Non-planners understand what planners do.	○	○	○	○	○
The work that planners do achieves positive results in the community.	○	○	○	○	○

Please share any additional thoughts on the previous question.

....
....
....
....

Re-Branding the Canadian Planning Profession

Section D: Ideas, Recommendations and Comments

In your opinion, do you think the general awareness of the planning profession needs to be increased?

○ Yes
○ No

Please prioritize the following list of things CIP marketing should be communicating to the public about the planning profession through promotional initiatives.
(1 being the most important and 8 being the least important)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
The roles and responsibilities of a planner	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The different types of planning	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
What the CIP does	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
What separates planning from other professions such as engineering and architecture	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How the public can participate in the planning process	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How to become a planner	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Planning-related events (i.e. conferences, lectures, etc.)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The benefits that planners provide to the community	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

In your opinion, should planners be more concerned with how they manage their relationship with the public or other stakeholders?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ If YES, how could planners improve relations with the public or other stakeholders?

....

If you have any additional comments or suggestions to make regarding the state of the Canadian planning profession, please take the time to share them.

....
....
....
....

I agree to the use of anonymous quotations in the thesis or any publication that comes out of this research, based on responses to open-ended questions in the survey.

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Thank You Page

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Your opinions and perspective on this subject are valuable and will help to strengthen the overall quality of this research. The research may benefit the planning community, as well as all related stakeholder groups including municipal councils, developers, the media and the general public. Anticipated benefits to the academic community include increasing understanding of the evolution of the role of planners in Canada, and developing a clarified role definition for planners, as well as a new pragmatic perspective on traditional planning theory.

If you have any further questions about this study, please feel free to contact either myself, Navpreet Saini at n2saini@envmail.uwaterloo.ca, or Dr. Mark Seasons at mseasons@envmail.uwaterloo.ca. Further, if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this study, please contact either investigator.

As a follow-up to the survey phase of my research, I may contact certain participants at a later date to consider taking part in a short interview process. If you wish to participate in this next phase of my study, feel free to contact me.

Once again, your participation is greatly appreciated!

Screen Out Page

Thank you for your interest in this study; however, to participate, you must currently be 18 years of age or older and reside in Canada.

Please direct inquiries to Navpreet Saini at n2saini@envmail.uwaterloo.ca.

Over Quota Page

Survey Closed Page

Thank you for your interest in this study; however, the survey is now closed.

Please direct inquiries to Navpreet Saini at n2saini@envmail.uwaterloo.ca.

APPENDIX B

Interview Information and Request Email (Sample)

Dear _____:

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in the interview phase of the study I am conducting under the supervision of Dr. Mark Seasons as part of my Master's degree at the University of Waterloo's School of Planning. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

It has been stated in the academic literature that the role of planners has seen considerable change in recent years. My research will seek to understand what lies behind the purported decline in the perceptions of the Canadian planning profession and the influence that planners hold with regard to decision-making. The research consists primarily of short surveys and interviews, and will also include a literature review, content analysis and case studies. Using the data generated, I hope to develop realistic and applicable solutions to these problems within the planning practice, and to add a new practical and forward-looking theoretical framework to the planning body of literature. The purpose of this study is thus to understand how the role of the Canadian planner has changed, what external and internal perceptions are towards the profession, and what the implications are for planning theory and practice.

As you are a member of the planning community, I would like to include you as one of several planning professionals to be involved in my study. You are best suited to speak to the various issues, such as the shift in the roles and responsibilities of the planner over the years, and the internal and external perceptions of the practice.

Participation in this study is voluntary. **It will involve an interview of approximately 45 minutes in length. It will take place over the telephone at your earliest convenience.** You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising me. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to ensure accuracy and facilitate collection of information. Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of my notes to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. All information you provide will be considered confidential and you will not be identified in the thesis or any publication unless you give permission for identification. If you wish to remain anonymous, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected will be kept for a period of 1 year in a locked filing cabinet at my home, after which it will be destroyed. Electronic data will be maintained on a password-protected laptop computer. As well, the data will be electronically archived after completion of the study, maintained for one year and then deleted. All data

will be accessible only by myself and my supervisor. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

If you have any further questions about this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please feel free to contact myself, Navpreet Saini, at n2saini@uwaterloo.ca.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics. However, the final decision about participation is yours. Should you have comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes in the Office of Research Ethics at 519-888-4567, Ext. 36005.

I hope that the results of my study will be of benefit to the greater planning community and all related stakeholders, as well as to the broader research community.

If you wish to be an interview participant, please contact me by email as soon as possible so we can arrange a date and time. I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this phase of the project.

Regards,

Navpreet Saini, BCom
M.A. Candidate
School of Planning
University of Waterloo
n2saini@uwaterloo.ca

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide

Questions:
1. Please describe your occupation, your roles and responsibilities.
2. Please briefly discuss your planning context.
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of a planner?
4. What do you think the external perceptions of the profession are? Why?
5. How do you think planners feel about their profession in general?
6. What should a planner be?
7. Should planning be defined in terms of sub-specializations (design, transportation, heritage, environment, etc) or should it be defined in broader terms? Why? What would this mean for the image of the profession?
8. What is the value of the planning profession? What do planners do that other related professionals, such as engineers or landscape architects can't?
9. Please describe the relationship between planning and other professions, such as engineering and architecture.
10. Why do you think other professional fields, such as engineering and landscape architecture, hold more credibility in the eyes of the media and the public? What can be done to remedy the situation?
11. How do you feel about the level of influence and power planners currently have over decision-making?
12. What is the biggest issue facing the Canadian planning profession?
13. Is the profession recruiting the right kind of students into the field? How do you feel about planning education? Is it adequate?
14. How do you feel about the CIP, as an organization representing the planning profession in Canada?
15. What image of planning does your organization portray?
16. Does your organization partake in marketing or promotional activities highlighting the profession? If so, what are these activities?
17. Does your organization devote resources to developing strategies to highlight the profession externally?
18. How does your organization reach out to its members and give them direction?
19. What other initiatives would you like to see underway, with regards to the imageability and the branding of the profession? What do you think is the best way of raising the profile of the profession?
20. Who should be responsible for implementing these proposed initiatives?
21. What do you think is the future of the planning profession? What would you like to see?

APPENDIX D

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Navpreet Saini of the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Dr. Mark Seasons. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted.

I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses.

I am also aware that I may choose to remain anonymous if I so wish, If this is the case, I am aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in the thesis and/or publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous.

I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher.

This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. I was informed that if I have any comments or concerns resulting from my participation in this study, I may contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics at 519-888-4567 ext. 36005.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

☐ YES   ☐ NO

I agree to have my interview audio recorded.

☐ YES   ☐ NO

I agree to the use of attributed quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

☐ YES   ☐ NO

I wish to remain anonymous, and to the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Participant Name: _____ (Please print)

Participant Signature: _____

Witness Name: _____ (Please print)

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please fax the signed copy of this form to 519-746-7966 or email the signed and scanned copy of this form to Navpreet Saini at n2saini@uwaterloo.ca. You may also send a signed hard copy to:

Navpreet Saini
338 Amberwood Dr.
Waterloo, ON
N2T 2G1

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