

# Professional Examination Preparation Package

## Introduction

The Professional Examination is the final step before your name can be submitted to the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) or your local Affiliate for admission as a full (certified) member. In order to write this Examination, you must have completed your work logging and received your Sponsor's sign-off, concluded at least a year of mentorship to the satisfaction of your Mentor and the PSB, and successfully completed the Ethics & Professionalism course and test.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to leave adequate time after the completion of the other certification steps to prepare for the Professional Examination. The Examination is rigorous and requires significant preparation, regardless of past professional planning experience. Candidates are encouraged to have a discussion with their Mentor regarding their level of preparedness to sit the Examination before they register. You are strongly encouraged to review your preparation materials, the Ethics and Professionalism course material, and this guide with your Mentor.

### ABOUT THIS PACKAGE

This package is designed to assist you in your preparation for the Examination. It contains the following:

- The Professional Examination - Overview (page 2)
- Examination Preparation (page 3)
- Rules for Conduct (page 5)
- Cheating Policies (page 5)
- Public Interest (page 7)
- Professional Responsibility (page 11)
- Ethics (page 14)
- Appendix 1 – CIP Code of Professional Conduct (page 18)
- Appendix 2 – Enabling Competencies (page 21)
- Appendix 3 – Additional Readings (page 24)

We hope you find this useful, and appreciate any feedback you may have. Kindly direct your comments to:

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## The Professional Examination – Overview

The Professional Examination is a three-hour, closed-book, multiple-choice Examination. It is in three sections, and tests your knowledge and understanding of the following non-technical areas of planning:

- Public interest
- Professional Responsibility
- Ethics

More details on how to prepare for each of these three areas will be provided in this package.

You will be tested using three types of multiple-choice questions:

### Standard Multiple Choice

Multiple Choice questions are composed of one question with multiple possible answers, including the correct answer and three or more incorrect answers. These questions test your knowledge on the practice of planning and key concepts from the study materials.

### Case Study Multiple Choice

Case Study Multiple Choice questions are composed of a scenario ending in one question with multiple possible answers, including the correct answer and three incorrect answers.

Case studies often present a problem, scenario, or reading upon which you will apply your knowledge, professional experience and understanding of the key concepts within the study materials to answer the question.

### True/False

True/false questions are composed of a single statement, whereby you must indicate whether the statement is true or false.

Examples of each of these three types of questions will be provided throughout this package.

The Professional Examination marking is such that you are not deducted marks for incorrect answers. It is in your best interest to answer every question. The Examination is pass/fail; a pass is 80%. You will be notified within 2 weeks of writing your Examination. **Please be advised, we only report pass/fail, and not a specific mark.** You are permitted three (3) attempts at the Professional Examination. If, after three attempts, you have not passed, you will need to go through our certification process in its entirety (work experience logging, mentorship, the Ethics and Professionalism course and test, and the Professional Examination) again if you wish to continue to pursue certification.

## Examination Preparation

### How to Prepare

There are a number of methods that Candidates have found useful in preparing for the Examination:

- Study the CIP Code of Professional Conduct, including the examples of possible non-compliance. Because it covers the planner's responsibility to the public interest, to clients and employers, and to the profession and other members, it bears (at least indirectly) on all three sections of the Examination. A copy of the Code is part of this package and will be provided to you during the Examination.
- Study your Affiliate's equivalent of the CIP Code of Professional Conduct. Please note, the Examination does not cover Codes of Conduct from provincial institutes. However, your province's Code of Conduct is based on and provides a local context to the CIP Code, governs your conduct as a Registered Professional Planner, and will be helpful in your future career.
- Review your work and mentorship logs. These may help remind you of the ways in which your own experience reflects the concepts covered in the Code and therefore assist you in generalizing the knowledge you gained. Reviewing the logs with a copy of the Code at hand may reinforce this.
- Study the Competencies, and especially the Enabling Competencies. Each of the Examination questions relates to several of the Enabling Competency domains and sub-domains (the relevant ones are actually included in the guidance provided to Examiners), so thinking about them may help you in writing the Examination. A detailed listing of the Enabling Competencies is included in this package.
- Review current and past articles in *Plan Canada* and any magazines or newsletters your Affiliate may publish. They may help you focus on how ethical, professional or public interest issues relate to daily planning practice.
- Study the Ethics & Professionalism course materials, and review the questions and cases at the end of the modules. While the Ethics & Professionalism course is not designed specifically as a preparatory course for the Examination, it will be helpful in focusing on some of the issues likely to arise in the Examination. You may not be required to take this course given your status with the PSB and your affiliate (i.e. if you became a Candidate member before 2012). However, it is the very strong recommendation of the Professional Examination Committee of the PSB that you take the course OR purchase the material and review it. Answer all the questions in the course material.
- Review the supplemental reading list in the study guide. Many are short articles or extracts from various publications. Be familiar with the content of these articles. Make notes on why this is important to know and tie it back to the Code of Conduct.
- Set aside some time to review the aforementioned materials with your Mentor and/or sponsor to confirm your understanding of the key concepts, identify any gaps for further study, prepare for the types of questions that may be on the Examination, and ask any questions you may have about the materials or your preparedness to sit the Professional Examination. Note that this may require more than one meeting with your Mentor.
- You may find other Candidates preparing for the Professional Examination – form a group to go over material and discuss the Code, the examples, the Ethics and Professionalism Course, your notes from your meeting with your Mentor, and the readings.
- Attend a workshop or seminar on ethics, if your Affiliate offers one.
- Attend a workshop or seminar on ethics offered by (or on behalf of) another profession, such as lawyers, accountants or architects. The issues of ethical behaviour, professional responsibility, and service to the public interest are common concerns of professions across the country and, while specific applications or methods of addressing them differ from one profession to another

and specific examples might differ, you are likely to learn something that is applicable to the planning context.

- Throughout this guide you will find text in each of the three sections that is bolded and underlined. These are areas where you are strongly recommended to make notes and review them with your Mentor.

In addition, we suggest you review the Professional Examination FAQ on the PSB website (<http://www.psb-planningcanada.ca/COURSES-EXAMS/professionalexam.php> )

## RULES FOR CONDUCT

1. No person will be allowed in an Examination room during an Examination except the Candidates concerned and those supervising the Examination.
2. Candidates must appear at the Examination room at least twenty minutes before the commencement of the Examination.
3. Candidates shall bring their photo identification (signed Photo ID) and place it in a conspicuous place on their desks. Photo identification may include any one of the following, as long as it contains a photo and a signature: An up-to-date Passport (any country) OR current Driver's License (any applicable authority) OR current Canadian health card (any province or territory).
4. Candidates shall place their watch or timepiece on their desks.
5. All notes and books, pencil cases, turned off cell phones and other unauthorized aids as well as purses should be closed securely and placed at the front of the Examination room. Candidates are not allowed to touch their bag or the contents until the Examination is over.
6. Candidates shall not communicate with one another in any manner whatsoever during the Examination. Only one Candidate may exit the room at a time, e.g. leaving to use the washroom and promptly return.
7. Unauthorized materials include, but are not limited to: books, class notes, or aid sheets. Unauthorized electronic devices include, but are not limited to: cellular telephones, calculators, MP3 players (such as an iPod), Personal Digital Assistants ("PDA" such as a Palm Pilot or BlackBerry), pagers, electronic dictionaries, Compact Disc Players, Mini Disc Players, Smart Watches and Smart Glasses.
8. Candidates who fall ill or feel that they cannot continue the Examination should report this to the invigilator and follow the steps below. The invigilator will complete an incident report, which will be placed in the Candidate's file. The Candidate must immediately consult a recognized medical authority and obtain a medical note. The Candidate must submit the medical note, the next day or as soon as possible, to the Professional Standards Board at [operations@psb-planningcanada.ca](mailto:operations@psb-planningcanada.ca)
9. During the Examination, if there are any emergencies, including health issues that require an ambulance, or security-related issues, 911 should be called first. If the fire alarm sounds, the building must be evacuated immediately. Candidates must follow the invigilator's directives and leave the Examination room in a quick and orderly manner. They must leave all Examination material, including laptops, on their desk and leave their personal belongings behind. The invigilator will escort the Candidates out of the building and wait until given instructions to return to the classroom by Security Services.
10. In case of emergency, a decision to resume the Professional Examination will be made by the PSB in consultation with the board members on a case-by-case basis.
11. The Professional Standards Board will make every reasonable effort to provide an appropriate environment for Examinations. This includes providing an adequate degree of seating space and prevention of excessive disruption and environmental noise. If a Candidate has concerns about the quality of the Examination environment, these concerns should be expressed to the invigilator, who is obliged to take note of them and take appropriate action, if possible. All such concerns should be reported formally to the PSB as quickly as possible.
12. If you are late for the Examination setup, invigilators WILL NOT DELAY THE START OF THE EXAMINATION to help you setup.

## CHEATING POLICIES

Cheating, as defined by the Professional Standards Board, includes any of the following offences:

1. Detecting materials (phones, tablets, additional computers, study aids), other than those permitted for the Examination, on a Candidate during the Examination. This includes viewing webpages on the computer used to complete the Professional Examination;
2. Removal of Examination questions from the Examination room, except by a person with designated authority to do so;
3. Any attempt to gain access to questions or information by deceit, fraud or trickery, or by some act contrary to the rules of the Examination;

4. Impersonation or attempted impersonation of a Candidate, including aiding and abetting someone to do so;

If someone is caught cheating, the following process will be followed:

1. The Candidate's Examination will be confiscated and the Candidate will immediately receive a mark of zero;
2. The invigilator will contact the PSB and provide their full report in the Incident Report Form;
3. The PSB will then contact the Candidate's PTIA. The PTIA will outline the next steps for the Candidate and status of their membership.

Cheating is at the sole discretion of the invigilator.

The following three sections go into detail about the three areas of professional planning practice covered in the Professional Examination.

## Public Interest OVERVIEW

In Canada advancing the public interest is viewed as a primary responsibility for the planning profession.

A fundamental consideration of the legislation is that planners are required to protect the public interest. The importance of protecting the public interest is also reflected in most of the Planning Acts across the country. Most provinces have legislation restricting the use of the name 'Registered Professional Planner' (RPP) or its equivalent to members of the respective PTIAs (Provincial Territorial Institutes and Associations) or CIP. The exceptions are Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland & Labrador, which currently do not have RPP legislation. Consequently, a planner has an overarching responsibility to serve the public interest. The first section of the CIP Code of Professional Conduct deals with public interest.

Under section 1 of the Code (Planner's Responsibility to the Public Interest), a planner shall: practice in a manner that respects the diversity, needs, values and aspirations of the public and encourages discussion on these matters; provide full, clear and accurate information on planning matters to decision-makers and members of the public, while recognizing the employer or client's right to confidentiality and the importance of timely reporting; acknowledge the inter-related nature of planning decisions and the consequences for natural and human environments; and, provide opportunities for meaningful participation and education in the planning process to all interested parties.

Additionally, section 2.1 of the code provides specific direction on a planner's responsibility to clients and employers. A planner shall, *"provide independent professional opinion to clients, employers, the public, and tribunals; perform work only within their areas of professional competence."* This has direct relevance to a planner's obligations related to protecting the public interest.

The protection of the public interest is a concept with a long history. Early attempts to improve the urban environment date back to pre-Roman times, with the application of grid patterns and sewer systems to increase the quality of life for urban inhabitants. The contemporary view of the public interest is a multi-layered concept based on a competition among different interests. In short, the public interest can be difficult to define and affirm given that there are multiple issues and views that the planner must address. This raises significant challenges for the practice of planning. While planning seeks to articulate the ideas which should direct the public policy debate, it must acknowledge the challenge of dealing with the multiple perspectives and values that are at play. Planning is an ethical act with moral consequences.

In their work, planners exercise discretion, are influenced by their personal values, and are called upon to make moral choices. These choices are informed by a system of norms that are found in the Code of Conduct, through experience in the practice of planning and applying the Code, and through experience in the courts about the role of professionals in upholding the public interest. The Code sets the standards of right and proper conduct. Those standards play two roles for practicing planners. First, they govern our judgments about the rightness or wrongness of actions, the 'goodness' or 'badness' of certain states of affairs, and the justice or injustice of social practices and institutions. Second, having set those standards of right and proper conduct, they direct us to act in conformity with those standards.

In acknowledgement of the ethical nature of our work, planners must come to understand the basis of the positions advanced in the pursuit of individual and stakeholder interests and the scope of their potential impacts on other parties. Where do planners turn to seek expressions of the public interest? Many argue that they are found in the positions taken by individual, stakeholder and lobbyist interests that coalesce around a particular planning issue. Others argue that it may be found in the interests expressed by clients. Still, others argue that there is a role to be played by government to set forth public policy which brings benefit to society as a whole. Another perspective considers the public interest to be local, context-specific and set out in the policies of community official plans.

The Code of Conduct outlines a planner's obligation to the public interest. The Module on the Public Interest in the Ethics and Professionalism Course has excellent material on the competing interests and determining the public interest. **Check the statements of provincial interests that appear in provincial planning acts in Canada – what does the planning act for your province say? Find one or two other provincial planning acts and compare them. What does this tell you about competing interests and defining the public interest?**

In order to identify the public interest, a planner needs to identify and address the underlying concerns behind what stakeholders think and say about an issue and to balance them against each other in order to reach a recommendation. This includes those interests that cannot easily be represented at the table, including; future generations, the natural environment, or the cultural environment to name a few.

Throughout the process of determining the public interest, a planner will utilize many of the enabling competencies, such as; critical thinking, integrity and trust, interpersonal, creation of a climate of excellence, communications, leadership, and professional and ethical behaviour. Determining the public interest requires each planner to understand the range of planning issues and apply their knowledge and analysis of planning issues to determine their independent professional opinion. They must also take into consideration the concerns of stakeholders, the public, and the elected leaders. The planner's role is to assess all of these factors and determine their independent professional opinion. **Read the Oakville Ontario and Burlington Ontario Municipal Board cases to understand how and why this obligation of the planner is so important.**

In preparing for the multiple-choice Examination, it is critical that you review the CIP Code of Professional Conduct and Module 5 (Public Interest) in the PSB Ethics and Professionalism Course. The Code will be your guide on how you practice as a planner throughout your career. Review the examples of issues/breaches of the Code of Conduct for each and every requirement of the Code. These can be found in Module 6 (Professional Codes of Ethics and Conduct) of the PSB Ethics and Professionalism Course. **Think of your own examples of where you have had to determine the public interest. Talk with your Mentor and colleagues about what they have experienced as well. Pay particular attention to the Public Interest Section of the Code of Conduct in researching and thinking about examples.**

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

### Multiple Choice

Which of the following statements is correct about defining the public interest?

- a) All issues must be identified by the planner.
- b) The planner's assumptions must be transparent.
- c) Planners must consider the social issues as well as the physical issues.
- d) All of the above.

Correct Answer: d)

#### *Rationale*

Fundamentally the planner's role is to identify and understand all of the issues, determine what assumptions are necessary to render an opinion, and do so in an honest and professionally competent manner. Thus a) and b) are completely correct. Social issues are increasingly important in land use decisions and work by planners. Refer to the article by Jill Grant (see Additional Resources) for a discussion of this point. Building cities, neighbourhoods, and communities means that the social fabric of the community – health centres, grocery stores, day care centres, homeless shelters, group homes – must be considered by the planner. There are often, but not always, land uses implications of the social fabric. The point of option c) is that social issues are as important as physical issues. One could argue that there are other choices of issues – economic, transportation, heritage, public process – that must be included



beyond physical issues. That too is correct. In the context of this question, c) is also correct meaning the question's correct answer is d).

### Case Study Multiple Choice

You are a municipal planner responsible for a neighbourhood plan (secondary plan/area specific plan). You've been asked to attend a meeting of the neighbourhood association for the area you're working on to give them an update. You attend and let them know some upcoming reports will be released and the specific date each will be released. Your municipality has a very strict practice that Council members get the reports first and then they are released to the public. You tell the neighbourhood association this and assure them you will release them specifically to them as soon as Council has them. The President of the neighbourhood association tells you that you are not serving the public interest by following your employer's practice and demands you release the reports regardless of when Council gets them. What do you do?

- a) Follow your employer's practice because the reports will be available prior to any decision being made on them.
- b) Release the reports prior to the Council getting them, contrary to your employer's practice.
- c) Email the link the reports to the President of the neighbourhood association as soon as they are available.
- d) a) and c)

Correct answer: d)

#### *Rationale*

Option a) is correct because you must follow your employer's practice. Making sure information is available to the public prior to a decision being made is a balancing act. The public, stakeholders, and elected leaders should have time to read and understand the documents, especially reports that contain independent professional opinion. Option c) is also correct because you are ensuring that the neighbourhood association is given the information, which supports transparency in decision making. Option b) is not correct: the public interest is not served by the planner violating a reasonable practice of their employer.

### True or False

A planner has an obligation to the public interest and the profession to provide an honest and impartial professional opinion.

- a) True
- b) False

Correct Answer: a)

#### *Rationale*

The planner's obligation is to provide independent professional opinion in the public interest. The opinion must be free of bias and must include all information that is known to the planner. Decision makers rely on the planner's obligation to serve the public interest so the honest and impartial statements are correct.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following is a list of additional resources that present public interest issues.

1. CIP Code of Professional Conduct
2. Module 5 (Public Interest) in the PSB Ethics and Professionalism Course

### 3. Ontario Municipal Board Decisions

Increasingly planning decisions are being reviewed in the courts. Ontario is the only jurisdiction with a tribunal which hears appeals of land use decisions. Ethical issues do arise in hearings whether in Ontario or elsewhere. There are four cases for your review which highlight planning practice issues. Each includes commentary on the planner and their responsibility.

- a) City of Stoney Creek – The planner and ethical practice in supporting their professional opinion
  - b) City of Ottawa – The planner’s obligation for thorough research and analysis (refer to the section on the TDL Appeal)
  - c) City of Burlington – The planner’s obligation for representing the public interest
  - d) Town of Oakville - The planner’s obligation for independent opinion and obligation to the public interest (particularly starting at paragraph 34).
  - e) Port Tower St Catharines OMB decision – The planner’s obligation to the public interest related to heritage and community revitalization issues (particularly the Board’s findings starting on page 44 of the decision; note the commentary on the Planning Report by the City of St Catharines).
4. OPPI’s Standards of Practice  
These standards of practice deal with various issues such as conflict of interest, the public interest, and trespass.
5. Acknowledgement of Expert’s Duty – Ontario Municipal Board  
This form speaks to the requirement of independent professional opinion and providing opinion within the planner’s area of competency.
6. “Rethinking the Public Interest as Planning Concept”, Jill Grant, FCIP, RPP, Plan Canada

## Professional Responsibility

### OVERVIEW

Under the Canadian Institute of Planners Codes of Professional Conduct, planners must fulfill fundamental responsibilities to the Public Interest, clients, employers, the profession and other planners. Planners must practice in a manner that is impartial to the diversity, needs, values and aspirations of the public, while acknowledging the inter-related nature of planning decisions and the consequences for both the natural and human environments. Planners must undertake independent professional judgement with diligence to serve both the client and the public without forfeiture of administrative responsibility. Planners must also maintain ongoing knowledge and education in planning theory and practice in fairness and consideration with other members. Professionalism is the manner in which you handle and are accountable for situations and behaviour with which you conduct yourself.

Registered Professional Planners must strive to maintain and promote a standard of conduct and excellence and uphold the respect of the public. Professionalism, honesty, fairness, loyalty, diligence, discretion and competence are integral to all interactions, whether with fellow planners, clients, or employers. When moving from one employment to another, it is important to uphold confidentiality and confidence. Any knowledge gained or discussions had during previous employment may continue to be current and relevant; however you must be careful to maintain confidentiality while acting in the best interest of the public, client and your current employer.

Conflicts of interest can take a variety of forms and can have direct or indirect beneficial interest in a decision or outcome. Representation of more than one party without full disclosure to the other party's knowledge is a professional conflict. You should exercise full disclosure of client and project representation in order to avoid such conflict. Any form of gain or advantage to your professional career through the use of your employer's resources outside of the employer's knowledge and permission may be considered a compromise to the integrity and competence of the your work for the client or employer. It is important to avoid conflicts of interest and more important to identify the presence of a conflict of interest. **Ask yourself any of the following questions to help identify a conflict: Is there a personal direct or indirect benefit in any form? Will the action compromise professional judgement or opinion, or what would a reasonable person think of this action? Think of examples from your own work and ask your colleagues for examples they have observed. Review your notes with your Mentor.**

If a conflict is presented, it is your responsibility to ensure that timely and full disclosure of a possible conflict of interest is identified to the client or employer. Disclosure of a conflict is often not enough and may require that you remove yourself from further participation in the process to avoid further conflict of interest.

Module 3 in the Ethics and Professionalism Course has additional information on Professional Responsibility. It is also important to have a thorough understanding the Canadian Institute of Planners Code of Professional Conduct. **As you review these sections, consider situations and examples where a planner's responsibility may be challenged. For example, when is a planner required to notify a client or employer that there may be a potential conflict of interest? Review all the supplemental readings in this guide. Make notes on what constitutes professional responsibility. Review your notes with your Mentor.**

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

#### Case Study Multiple Choice

As a planner for a municipality, you have provided a recommendation to Council to not approve an application for a freestanding sign that would allow for third-party advertising. However, after consultation with the applicant, the City manager has asked that you revise the recommendation to have Council support and approve the sign. How do you proceed?

- a) You value your employer; therefore you amend the report and recommend approval
- b) Do nothing and stay true to your recommendation for refusal
- c) Advise the City manager that the concern should be brought forward at the Council meeting
- d) Provide a number of alternatives for Council's consideration without amending your recommendation

Correct Answer: d)

### *Rationale*

As a professional, you should include the rationale and reasoning to support the recommendation provided. It would be left to Council to review the facts and information provided in the report. The City Manager would have the opportunity during the Council meeting to bring forward concerns with the proposed recommendation and open it up for further discussion.

### **Multiple Choice**

An objection was made against a development plan prepared by a particular planning consultant. The person filing the objection was a previous client of the consultant and has requested the development plan not move forward. The objector stated that the planning consultant had knowledge of confidential information which would benefit the development plan. The planning consultant was a previous employee of the objector, but has not worked for them for a number of years.

- i. It is the duty of the planning consultant to inform the current employer of the knowledge and information acquired from the previous employer.
- ii. The planning consultant should not be seen as expressing a different professional opinion on the development plan except where new information considerations has been acquired since working with the new employer.
- iii. The planning consultant should not use any of the knowledge or information acquired in confidence while working with the previous employer to benefit the new client.

Which of the following answers is correct?

- a) Only one statement is correct.
- b) Only one statement is incorrect.
- c) None of the statements are correct.

Correct Answer: b)

### *Rationale*

The planning consultant should not use any information or knowledge acquired confidentially during the employment time with the objector. Benefitting for personal and professional gain would be considered as a compromise to the integrity and competence of the professional's work for the client or employer.

### **True or False**

As a planner, you overhear your planning colleague disclosing confidential client information about a current planning project with the director of planning from a municipality outside of his/her jurisdiction. Are your colleague's actions considered a violation of the Code of Professional Conduct?

- a) True
- b) False

Correct Answer: a)

### *Rationale*

Under the Code, client information collected through professional activity must be protected in the

interest of the public.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional readings to consider include:

1. Five Skills for Young Planners – Plan North West, Autumn 2016  
This article provides insightful advice to young professional planners.
2. “Dear Dilemma” (see Public Interest section for more details)
3. OPPI’s Standards of Practice (see Public Interest section for more details)
4. Acknowledgement of Expert’s Duty – Ontario Municipal Board (see Public Interest section for more details)

## Ethics

### OVERVIEW

Planners who are practicing ethically meet two standards: competency and integrity. Competency is the commitment to planning education and learning through being a practicing planner. Competency is developed over time. Planners cannot be expected to be competent in every area of planning practice. For example, one planner may be specialized in environmental planning and natural heritage. This planner may not have knowledge in the areas of built heritage planning. The planner is competent within what their knowledge and experience in environmental planning/natural heritage has earned them.

Competency also means there is a commitment to ongoing professional education. New issues, theories, and approaches will arise. For example, a present issue is planning in the face of climate change. Climate change impacts infrastructure, neighbourhood design, waterfronts, creeks, natural heritage, and so much more. As planners, no matter what our area of competency (or areas of competency), staying current with new planning subject material is critical to maintaining competency. This means reading, learning from others, and doing professional development of ourselves over our careers.

Integrity is the second commitment by the planner to practicing ethically and within the Code of Conduct of the profession. It is a hallmark of a profession to commit to ethical practice. Ethical practice means meeting obligations to clients, the public, employers, and to the planning profession. Practicing ethically also means developing independent professional judgement or opinion, based on the expected standards of conduct of planners.

Ethics and the planning profession are issues that will arise throughout every planner's career. The Code of Conduct is a pro-active method of providing planners with expectations on conduct. Being a Registered Professional Planner means each of us will analyze our decisions through ethical planning practice. It means we must commit to knowing and practicing within the Code of Conduct. It also means we must hold each member of our profession to the same standard of ethical conduct. As you prepare for the Professional Examination, knowing the Code of Conduct is critical. Study the Code. **Develop examples from your own experience, observation, courses, and the Ethics Material on what a breach of each section of the Code would look like.** Translating each requirement of the Code to a real life situation is an excellent way to become familiar with the Code and to understand how it is practiced in the workplace.

As planners work in both the public and private sector, there are situations that will be specific to either one of the other. For example, planners in private practice may work for both public and private sector clients. How does one address real or perceived conflicts of interest? Should a private sector planner represent a private client in the municipality where the planner also does municipal work? What if the private sector planner is in a multi-disciplinary firm and the development work is done by engineers in the firm for a subdivision that has been approved? Both of these scenarios present a conflict of interest for the planner. **How would you answer these questions?** You are encouraged to discuss these questions with your Mentor.

Ethical issues and our understanding of them evolve over time. For example, at one point earlier in our profession, simple disclosure of a potential conflict of interest would be acceptable. The evolution of ethical practice now requires each of us to mitigate the conflict of interest. Mitigation is a heightened standard of practice and behaviour. This is expected of the profession because of the importance of the profession in how communities grow, the need for independent professional opinion, and a growing experience in Canada of the courts reviewing land use decisions.

Circumstances will arise in everyone's career, whether it is specific to you or a colleague that will require you to look to the Code of Conduct for the answers. Other resources include articles in various Planning Journals and the reading list for the Ethics and Professionalism Course. Once you become a Registered Professional Planner, it is very important that you continue to develop your understanding of ethical issues through reading, discussion of issues in your workplace, and staying current on practice decisions such as disciplinary hearing results.

How does a competent planner practice ethically? The ethical planner practices within the Code of Conduct for planners. The ethical planner stays current and knowledgeable about ethical issues. The sample questions below are taken from real life examples. Ethical issues in planning practice occur regularly. Some are obvious issues although these are rare. The most ethical issues fall into the grey zone. Be very mindful of the nuances that come with the grey zone. Competent planners stay knowledgeable and commit to lifelong professional learning in ethics and the planning profession.

You are strongly encouraged to go over Module 4 in the Ethics and Professionalism Course of the PSB. As well, at the end of the course material, there are examples of issues/breaches of the Code of Conduct for each and every requirement of the Code. **It is very important that you know and understand the Code, the examples, and think of your own examples that you have witnessed, an example that could occur, and talk to colleagues about their experience.**

Now more than ever there is scrutiny of professions and professionals. The world in which planners work is becoming more complex. There is a higher demand for professional competency and ethical conduct for planners. This section of the Professional Examination is to ensure you and the profession that the work you have done to think and act ethically and to work with professional competence has been achieved. You will not be questioned on your specific planning competencies; you will be questioned on how to work within your area of competency. Similarly, the ethical questions will present questions on the Code of Conduct and questions on scenarios where you will be required to make an ethical decision.

**You are strongly encouraged to make notes on each of the supplemental readings. What are the ethical issues? What do the readings tell you about the issue and how it is handled? Discuss these with your Mentor.**

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

### Case Studies Multiple Choice

You are working in a private consulting firm representing a client on a development. A junior member of your staff, whom you've worked with on a number of files and you trust, prepares an application for rezoning of a client's property. The application is going under your signature as the representative of the firm. The junior member is not a Registered Professional Planner but is a Candidate member having graduated from an accredited Planning School. It's Friday afternoon around 3:30 p.m. and you are flying overseas for two weeks vacation later that night so you're pressed for time. Prior to submitting the application, what should you do?

- Read over the entire application and sign it when you are satisfied with the content.
- Sign the application and submit it because you have confidence in the junior planner's work.
- Not sign the application but submit it.
- None of the above

Correct Answer: a)

#### *Rationale*

The application is going under your name as the representative of the client. You must always sign documents or have your name on reports only when you agree with the content of the document. This is an example of where you must comply with Section 2.2 of the Code of Conduct which states: "2.2 undertake planning services with diligence and render services with appropriate preparation."

You have recently joined a municipality as a Manager of Development Planning (you are two weeks into the job). There is a contentious development application – although you have heard of the application you are not familiar with it. Your department, prior to your arrival, issued a letter that the development application does not require an amendment to the Official Plan. The Councillor for the area calls you

about the application. The Councillor is opposed to the application. The Councillor asks you for your opinion on whether an Official Plan Amendment is required. What should you do?

- a) Listen to the Councillor and take as many notes as possible.
- b) Tell the Councillor you agree with the content of the letter.
- c) Tell the Councillor you agree with the Councillor's perspective.
- d) Commit to reviewing the file and the letter and getting back to the Councillor.
- e) a), b) and d)
- f) a) and d)

Correct Answer: f)

*Rationale*

Practicing in the public interest means professional planners must listen to all voices to help formulate their independent professional opinion. Listening to the Councillor and taking notes is absolutely appropriate. Committing to reviewing the file and letter, to determine your opinion, is also appropriate. You should not ever give your opinion without reviewing all issues related to a matter. In this case it would mean reading the file and the letter, reviewing any applicable documents (Provincial Plans, Regional/County Level Plans (if they exist), Official Plan, legislation), and speaking with your colleagues (planners, your Director, and perhaps lawyers) before drawing your own conclusion. Thus options B) and C) are not appropriate because you are not familiar with the application or letter at the point the phone call occurs.

**True or False**

You are a Senior Planner in a municipality. You've worked there for 15 years. While recently on your annual golf trip with seven friends, three of you decide to buy a condominium together at the golf resort. You have known these friends for over twenty years. One of the other owners works with you but in another department. The third owner is a partner in an engineering consulting firm. A major bridge project is being developed by the municipality you work for. You are part of the municipal team on the project. You are aware that the third owner in the condominium may be part of a team submitting a bid on the project. You speak to your boss and advise her/him that there is the potential of a conflict of interest. Your verbal disclosure meets your obligation under the Code of Conduct.

- a) True
- b) False

Correct Answer: b)

*Rationale*

Simply disclosing it verbally as a potential conflict is insufficient. Disclosing the potential conflict in writing is absolutely necessary. While it may not be a direct conflict of interest, there is a potential perception of conflict of interest and that is what you must disclose in writing. A verbal discussion is insufficient to address your obligations as there may not be a clear understanding of the issue. Put it in writing to be clear. If the third partner in the condo is part of a submitting team, you must withdraw from the evaluation part of the project in writing.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

The following is a list of additional resources that present ethical practice issues in real life situations. An explanation of the importance of each is provided for your assistance. You are strongly urged to read the entire document in each case.

1. Ethical Practice and the Issue of Gifts – Plan West Article, Spring 2017  
This article arises from a disciplinary matter in PIBC (Planning Institute of British Columbia). It addresses the planner's obligation for disclosure when presented with gifts from the development industry.
2. "Dear Dilemma" (see Public Interest section for further details)
3. Ontario Municipal Board Decisions (see Public Interest section for further details)
4. Recent articles from the Journal of the American Planning Association:



- a) Introduction – Planning Ethics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- b) Special Ethical Considerations for Planners in Private Practice
- c) Planning Experience and Planners Ethics
5. OPPI's Standards of Practice (see Public Interest section for further details)
6. Acknowledgement of Expert's Duty (see Public Interest section for further details)
7. "Are You Wearing Two Hats?" – Ontario Planning Journal – how planners must look at their role when acting in different capacities

## Appendix 1

# Canadian Institute of Planners Code of Professional Conduct

### 1. The Planner's Responsibility to the Public Interest

Members shall:

**1.1** practice in a manner that respects the diversity, needs, values and aspirations of the public and encourages discussion on these matters;

*[A Member unreasonably dismisses ethnic and/or religious based concerns.]*

**1.2** provide full, clear and accurate information on planning matters to decision-makers and members of the public, while recognizing the employer or client's right to confidentiality and the importance of timely reporting;

*[A Member releases confidential information, when they have been specifically requested by a client, employer or another planner not to do so.]*

**1.3** acknowledge the inter-related nature of planning decisions and the consequences for natural and human environments;

*[A Member recommends the elimination of an engineering requirement which they know is required to protect public safety.] and,*

**1.4** provide opportunities for meaningful participation and education in the planning process to all interested parties.

*[A Member conducts a public hearing process without the required notice(s) or without indicating to a member of the public that their speaking time will be limited.]*

### 2. The Planner's Responsibility to Clients and Employers

Members shall:

**2.1** provide independent professional opinion to clients, employers, the public, and tribunals; perform work only within their areas of professional competence;

*[A Member provides advice in an area of planning or another discipline where they do not have appropriate training and experience. An example is a Member who does not have professional competence in transportation planning and prepares a report with recommendations in this area.]*

**2.2** undertake planning services with diligence and render services with appropriate preparation;

*[A Member does not take the time and care needed to provide appropriate professional advice and presents a major report which has not been well researched and is poorly written and presented without a factual basis.]*

**2.3** acknowledge the values held by the client or employer in work performed, unless such values conflict with other aspects of this Code;

*[A Member ignores the client or employer's standards or needs in the work being done and does not adhere to the agreed-upon Terms of Reference for a project.]*

**2.4** respect the client or employer right to confidentiality of information gathered through a professional relationship, unless such right conflicts with other aspects of this Code;

*[A Member releases information that is confidential. This right of confidentiality does not extend to, for example, a situation where the Member is required to testify before a tribunal of the Member's Affiliate Institute where a complaint has been made against the Member by the client or employer.]*

**2.5** inform the client or employer in the event of a conflict between the values or actions of the client or employer and those of this Code in a timely manner;

*[A Member who does not immediately notify the client or employer that something they want the Member to do is in conflict with the Member's responsibilities under the Code. An example is a client asking a Member to share with them confidential information that the Member has collected in the*

*course of conducting an assignment for another client.]*

**2.6** ensure timely and full disclosure to a client or employer of a possible conflict of interest arising from the Member's private or professional activities;

*[A Member who does not immediately let the client or employer know of a situation where the Member believes they cannot continue to offer independent professional advice. An example is a Member employed as a consultant on the side providing professional planning advice in a municipality where the Member is employed full-time as a professional planner.]*

**2.7** not offer or accept any financial or other inducements, including prospective employment, that could, or appear to, influence or affect professional opportunities or planning advice;

*[A Member asks for or receives a financial or other benefit, including a job, in exchange for providing professional advice that is not independent and objective. An example is a Member providing biased conclusions, at the request of a client, in a report that will be received by a public regulatory body in exchange for gaining further work from the client.]*

**2.8** not, as an employee of a public agency, give professional planning advice for compensation to a private client or employer within the jurisdiction of the public agency without disclosure to the agency and written consent;

*[A Member accepts a bonus payment based on a planning approval achieved] and,*

**2.9** not, as a consultant to a public agency during the period of contract with the agency, give professional planning advice for compensation to others within the jurisdiction of the agency without disclosure to the agency and written consent in situations where there is the possibility of a conflict of interest arising.

*[A Member acts as a consultant providing professional planning advice to a developer on a project in a municipality at the same time as the Member is providing professional planning advice to the municipality on matters that may affect the developer's project.]*

### **3. The Planner's Responsibility to the Profession and Other Members**

Members shall:

**3.1** maintain an appropriate awareness of contemporary planning philosophy, planning theory and practice by obtaining professional education throughout their planning career, including complying with the Institute's continuing professional learning requirements;

*[A Member ignores the Affiliate requirements for continuous professional learning]*

**3.2** not in professional practice, extra-professional activities or private life, engage in dishonourable or questionable conduct that may cast doubt on their professional competence or integrity or that may reflect adversely on the integrity of the profession;

*[A Member at a conference spends all of the program time outside of the conference in a disorderly and disruptive manner.]*

**3.3** ensure that advertising or promotional activities fairly and accurately communicate the expertise and skills offered, including professional qualifications and affiliations, education and experience;

*[A Member provides false or misleading information on a CV or corporate brochure]*

**3.4** act toward other Members and colleagues in a spirit of fairness and consideration and not falsely or maliciously injure the professional reputation, prospects or practice of another Member or other colleagues;

*[A public sector Member, when asked to recommend a good planner for employment purposes by the public or developer, continuously gives a specific reference rather than referring to an approved list or the Affiliate's Directory of Planning Consultants]*

**3.5** respect colleagues in their professional capacity and when evaluating the work of another Member, show objectivity and fairness and avoid ill-considered or uninformed criticism of the competence, conduct or advice of the Member;

*[A Member makes derogatory comments at a Public Hearing on a planning matter about the work performed by another Member.]*

**3.6** not attempt to supplant another Member once made aware that definite steps have been taken toward the other's employment;

*[A Member offers a discount or other incentive to lure a client's business when that client is in the process of securing a contract with another planner.]*

**3.7** only sign or seal a final drawing, specification, plan, report or other document actually prepared or checked by the Member;

*[A Member seals a final site plan, prepared by a friend, who is a non-member, without checking the plan and thoroughly understanding the project.]*

**3.8** report to the Institute the behaviour of any Member believed to be in breach of this Code in a timely manner; *[In spite of extensive media coverage and personal knowledge, a Member does not report that a fellow CIP member has vociferously criticized a planning scheme proposed by the firm of another Member.]*

**3.9** only make public statements on behalf of the Institute if authorized to do so *[In the media a Member states that members of the Canadian Institute of Planners are opposed to the demolition of a local heritage building when no such statement has been made];*

**3.10** comply with any reasonable request of the Institute for information or for the co-operation of the Member in pursuit of any Institute objective;

*[A Member refuses to co-operate in an investigation by the Member's Affiliate Institute of alleged professional conduct by either the Member] and,*

**3.11** respect the process and decision of any discipline proceeding affecting a Member.

*[The Member, who is the subject of a disciplinary matter, makes light of the procedure and does not prepare for and participate in the procedure in a professional manner.]*

**Discipline** Affiliates shall establish by By-law policies and practices necessary to administer their Codes of Professional Conduct to ensure the proper handling of complaints, investigations, disciplinary reviews, sanctions, and appeals, and to reduce risk and liability. Such information shall reflect legal requirements and best practices used by professional associations. \*Reference to the "Institute" refers to CIP.

## Appendix 2

### Enabling Competencies

#### **Domain: Critical Thinking:**

##### Sub-domain: Issues Identification:

- Understand effective issues identification practices to determine and manage issues.
- Able to identify and track emerging issues in light of project goals, resources and stakeholder interests.
- Able to facilitate processes to identify issues and seek input, categorize, analyze and report on issues.

##### Sub-domain: Problem Solving and Decision Making:

- Understand effective problem-solving and decision making practices and underlying values and potential ethical issues.
- Able to define problems and identify viable options and possible solutions.
- Able to relate activities in one area to others and assess potential for the integration of ideas.
- Able to pull together diverse ideas, issues and observations into a simple, clear and useful analysis and/or presentation.
- Able to support complex decision making.

##### Sub-domain: Research and Analytical:

- Understand methods and practices to find relevant information and conduct an analysis.
- Able to compare and integrate data from various sources and identify cause/effect relationships.
- Able to analyze results effectively.
- Able to evaluate results.

##### Sub-domain: Innovation and Creativity:

- Understand and encourage practices to support innovation and creativity in work environments.
- Use innovation and creative practices and tools to facilitate decision-making.

##### Sub-domain: Political Awareness:

- Understand political motives, issues and actions.
- Actively follow political trends, issues and activities.
- Demonstrate awareness of how political trends, issues and activities influence decision-making.

##### Sub-domain: Change Management

- Understand stages within the change process and practices to implement change.
- Able to monitor issues and anticipate potential changes.
- Use change management processes to implement decisions.

#### **Domain: Interpersonal:**

##### Sub-domain: Integrity and Trust:

- Understand the importance of maintaining high standards of integrity and trust.
- Able to provide a balanced picture, respect others and build trust.
- Able to set a positive example.

##### Sub-domain: Diversity and Inclusiveness:

- Understand the elements of diversity and difference.
- Appreciate the value of diversity.
- Able to apply policy and practices to accommodate diversity and inclusiveness.
- Able to articulate recommendations for consideration and action.

##### Sub-domain: Facilitation:

- Understand the value of facilitation to plan making and implementation.

- Understand practices to facilitate situations.
- Able to facilitate situations to support decision-making and engender commitment.

**Sub-domain: Negotiation:**

- Understand practices to support negotiations.
- Able to support position and presents issues in a factual and persuasive manner.
- Able to build on common ground and seek compromise when appropriate.

**Sub-domain: Collaboration and Consensus Building:**

- Understand practices to support collaboration and consensus building.
- Able to assess and analyze an approach to support improvements.
- Able to facilitate collaboration and consensus building situations.

**Sub-domain: Conflict Management:**

- Understand practices to manage conflict.
- Able to assess the nature of a conflict and suggest an approach to address the conflict.
- Able to address conflicts in a non-judgmental fashion, clarify differences, and build on common interests.
- Able to propose recommendations for consideration and action.

**Domain: Communications:**

**Sub-domain: Listening:**

- Demonstrate capacity to listen effectively and understand messages.
- Able to confirm messages have been received and are understood.

**Sub-domain: Written and Oral Presentation**

- Understand practices and tools to support simple and effective written, oral and visual/graphic presentations.
- Able to express ideas in a clear, organized and effective manner, both verbally and non-verbally, to achieve understanding.
- Able to communicate complex matters and be persuasive.

**Sub-domain: Information and Knowledge:**

- Understand types of information and knowledge required to support decision-making.
- Able to translate and integrate various sources of information.
- Able to support timely, relevant and accurate communications.

**Sub-domain: Use of Information Technology:**

- Understand issues, trends and how to integrate multi-media material into written, oral and visual presentations.
- Use current technology to complete work and make informed decisions.

- Evaluates the use of technology and, through benchmarking (review of best practices), identify opportunities for improvement and support of technical staff.

**Sub-domain: Internal and External Relations:**

- Understand the importance and practices of successful media and other external relations activities required to communicate messages effectively.
- Understand various types of internal communications and processes used to gather and disseminate information.
- Engage in activities to improve internal and external relations activities.

**Domain: Leadership:**

**Sub-domain: Vision:**

- Understand the importance of values and vision, and methods and processes for vision development and promotion.
- Apply a critical, integrative thinking approach to issues.
- Able to support the development of values and vision, monitor progress and identify when to make corrections.

**Sub-domain: Responsiveness and Influence:**

- Anticipates future needs and developments.
- Understand how to effectively engage stakeholders in complex issues.
- Understand how to connect needs and solutions and influence decisions.
- Able to propose influential recommendations to key stakeholders.

**Sub-domain: Team Building:**

- Understand team building techniques and dynamics.
- Act as a leader or member of a multi-function team.
- Build and motivate teams.

**Sub-domain: Climate of Excellence:**

- Understand frameworks to support quality and performance measurement.
- Understand the meaning of accountability and practices to support accountability.
- Able to apply practices and tools to manage for results and achieve positive outcomes.

**Sub-domain: Managing Resources and Results:**

- Understand policies and processes to effectively manage resources and results expected.
- Able to manage human and financial resources and achieve targeted results.
- Able to assess the use of resources and identify areas for improvement.

**Domain: Professional and Ethical Behaviour:**

**Sub-domain: Continuous Learning:**

- Understand practices to support life-long learning, mentorship and coaching for self and others.
- Able to assess development needs.
- Engage in continuous learning and promoting the value of learning for self and others.

**Sub-domain: Ethical Standards:**

- Understand ethical responsibilities and dilemmas for the professional planner.
- Understand and demonstrate adherence to establish ethical standards.
- Set highest standards for self and others, and monitors practice.

**Sub-domain: Professionalism:**

- Understand the role of the professionals generally.
- Understand the role of the planner in the development of the profession.
- Monitor changes in the profession and demonstrate professionalism.
- Participate in activities to support development of the profession.

## Appendix 3

### Additional Readings

Please see the Additional Readings document for more helpful articles and resources to help you prepare for the Professional Examination.

- Five Skills for Young Planners – Plan North West, Autumn 2016 (page 1)
- Planning West Spring 2017 – *Gifts and other inducements* (page 2)
- “Dear Dilemma” excerpts (page 8)
- Ontario Municipal Board Decisions (page 21)
  - Burlington (page 21)
  - Oakville (page 49)
  - Ottawa (page 73)
  - Stoney Creek (page 97)
  - St. Catharines (page 114)
- Journal of the American Planning Association Articles (page 181)
- OPPI’s Standards of Practice (page 219)
- Acknowledgement of Expert’s Duty – Ontario Municipal Board (page 235)
- Rethinking the Public Interest as a Planning Concept – Article by Jill Grant, FCIP, RPP (page 236)
- “Are You Wearing Two Hats?” – Ontario Planning Journal (page 239)
- “Serving the Public Interest” – Marilyn Radman, MCIP, RPP, Ontario Planning Journal (page 240, continued on page 239)