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Changing the Conversation

Challenges to Integrated Planning

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation e-Dialogues:

Integrated Planning Series

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Panelists

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Christine Callihoo, Registered Professional Planner

Joan Chess, Planning Consultant

Kevin Hanna, Project Lead, National Municipal Adaptation Project, University of British Columbia

Alastair Moore, Doctoral Scholar, **Meeting the Climate Change Challenge (MC3)**, Royal Roads University

Rob Newell, Doctoral Student, **Meeting the Climate Change Challenge (MC3)**, Royal Roads University

Ann Dale

Welcome to the first in our series of conversations on planning. Could I ask each of you to briefly introduce yourselves?

Rob Newell

Hello, everyone. My name is Rob Newell, and I work with Ann as a researcher in the Meeting the Climate Change Challenge (MC3) project (<http://mc-3.ca>). I look forward to our conversation today.

Ann Dale

Welcome, Rob, looking forward to our conversation today, and the role that planning plays in all of our lives.

Alastair Moore

Hi from over here in Montpellier, France. I am an urban planner and doctoral researcher working on the Meeting the Climate Change Challenge 2 (MC3-2) project. My research interests include the role of everyday (tacit) practices in sustainability transformation processes and sustainable development paths, especially those related to the current energy transition. I am Director with the One Earth Initiative Society and co-founder of Greenworks Building Supply (Canada's first all-green building material

supply company). Other posts include working as community energy manager with the City of Richmond, promoting sustainable urban development in Eastern Europe and China (with Sustainable Cities International), and exploring applications of sustainability indicators like the ecological footprint and material flow intensities.

Ann Dale

Welcome, Alastair, what is the weather like there? Dreary and rainy here in Victoria.

Alastair Moore

Hey Ann, I won't make any friends by saying that it's 25 degrees and sunny. In fact, we just ate lunch outdoors! We're AirB&B-ing in an eco-quartier that reflects a good degree of integrated planning which is apropos!

Joan Chess

Hello everyone. Its Joan Chess in Prince George. I'm a Registered Professional Planner and work in community sustainability planning, mostly with small towns.

Ann Dale

Joan, do you think integrated planning is easier in small towns, easier to engage the key stakeholders?

Joan Chess

In some respects, yes. People value their natural surroundings, the lifestyle, and sense of community. They understand the connections. They are also very practical and do know each other, and the community's capacities.

Christine Callihoo

Hello everyone! I am Christine Callihoo; a registered professional planner in Vancouver BC. My primary area of focus and interest is enabling community adaptive capacity and increasing community resiliency.

Ann Dale

Kevin Hanna from UBC Okanagan and a dear colleague won't be able to join us today, but he sent me some responses he wishes to make which I will insert as we move along. Joan and Christine, please move to the e-panel section and jump in when you are ready.

Our first question of the day, what is integrated planning and why is it so important?

Alastair Moore

For me, integrated planning is more process-related than a static thing, and its related more to good governance than to efficient government. In this way it is iconoclastic in that it requires a breaking of old ways of doing planning, and the siloed government departments that do not traditionally collaborate at a strategic level.

IP considers multiple community goals, constraints, interests, and values simultaneously while (e.g. for land use, neighbourhood densities, character of the built environment, parks and open spaces, as well as public infrastructure and facilities), in an attempt to realize development that promotes social well-being, sustainable economic growth, and ecological integrity. The plan's design and implementation processes require material input by all groups with a vested interest in the plan's outcomes.

This type of planning is especially important when addressing complex challenges like climate change and sustainable resource management that operate across space, time and traditional government jurisdictions. Basic IP merges land-use and transportation, but ideally other domains are included like waste, water planning and provision of other social services.

Ann Dale

Alastair, it seems to me that integrated planning must be very difficult given the current organization of local government, in fact, all government levels. An example, they have both ISCPs and OCPs, shouldn't they be integrated and considered along with disaster management planning?

Alastair Moore

Good point Ann. When local governments have multiple strategic plans, it quickly becomes "how does one coordinate the various plans"? If a community has an ICSP and an OCP, my feeling is that at least each must adhere to the same explicit values and principles. Or, ideally they should each resonate with each other. This requires plans being flexible and adaptive to changing priorities and other plan objectives. It gets complex, but as you said, planning can often be complex. And yes, disaster management planning should be reflective of other local government plans and vice versa.

Rob Newell

IP considers multiple community goals, constraints, interests, and values simultaneously while planning (e.g. for land use, neighbourhood densities, character of the built environment, parks and open spaces, as well as public infrastructure and facilities), in an attempt to realize development that promotes social well-being, sustainable economic growth, and ecological integrity. The plan's design and implementation processes require material input by all groups with a vested interest in the plan's outcomes. This type of planning is especially important when addressing

complex challenges like climate change and sustainable resource management that operate across space, time and traditional government jurisdictions. Basic IP merges land-use and transportation, but ideally other domains are included like waste, water planning and provision of other social services.

Kevin Hanna

Integrated planning can have many meanings, but for me it means that agencies or other responsible organizations work in an integrated institutional framework to achieve common goals. There is a setting in place for working together for common purposes and objectives. And, it means looking at problems as being complex (they usually are, but maybe not always) and accounting for the coupled biophysical/technical and social/cultural dimensions of environment and natural resource management challenges inherent in these realms.

Christine Callihoo

I had pondered this question and batted about a couple of high-level potentials:

- All relevant parties 'at the table' (however this is formatted) with the capacity and ability to fully participate in the development, planning and execution (at some level)
 - All relevant professions (and those they represent) 'at the table', alongside the community they work on behalf of, engaged in creating the outcome
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Rob Newell

I think full participation is key in the integrated planning process. There are certainly cases where people can be 'brought to the table', but more in a token gesture manner. In addition, some processes could involve people meeting more to update one other on what they are doing within their various realms or silos, rather than truly working together. True integration is not just a matter of one department keeping other departments apprised of what they're doing; rather, it involves understanding the issue from a systems approach. For example, thinking about how recreation, community health and transportation fit together when building a green corridor system.

Christine Callihoo

I fully agree, Rob. Participation and process are key to integration. And key to process is an inclusive front-end to establish the how in the process, the why, etc. so that the inclusive dialogue can then enable ownership of the outcome.

Throughout any process, communication (as established at the outset in terms of desired communication) is key to enabling ownership of the outcome.

Joan Chess

I see integrated planning as ensuring all aspects of a community or an area are considered when looking to the future envisioned by the residents, and how they will pursue achieving that desired future, considering both challenges (eg. climate change) and opportunities. The approach needs to be tailored to each community and its

unique circumstances.

Ann Dale

So, what I am hearing is that integrated planning is both process and product, that the community must be engaged. Do any of you have examples of successful engagements that resulted in a better plan?

Alastair Moore

I think the C of Vancouver's greenest city plan is a good example of a dynamic, integrated plan. It was created with high levels of community stakeholder input, and it is regularly monitored and reported on which allows for tweaking and improvements. It is also quite comprehensive (in terms of themes) and it allows for community priorities to emerge naturally. An example of this emergence I think is the strong emphasis on local food sustainability that has been seized on by local residents.

Joan Chess

There are many examples of great community engagement: Cranbrook, Mackenzie, Campbell River. I'd also like to clarify the connections between ICSP's and OCP's. With the 2005 federal Gas Tax Agreement, local governments in BC were required to apply integrated community sustainability planning principles to all their local planning (i.e. they were not required to have a stand-alone ICSP document). All LG's have met this requirement in various ways; and yes, the resulting plans and policies are better connected.

Devin Causley

At a national level, FCM is now developing a similar platform that will allow communities to connect with each other for this engagement. It is targeted to our Partners for Climate Protection members. It is currently in development and should be available in March.

Rob Newell

I feel that I have brought this one up in past dialogues, but T'Sou-ke certainly is a good example of a community that has done incredible work in community engagement and it has led to great results. T'Sou-ke is a small First Nations community on Vancouver Island, who is known for its solar energy operations. Although their solar energy infrastructure is quite impressive, they have also made strides developing in other areas such as local economy, working toward food security, youth initiatives, etc. T'Sou-ke takes a comprehensive approach to planning looking more broadly, and in terms of sustainability, and I believe this can be in part due to the how extensive and complete their community engagement process was (I believe they actually have managed to engage every member of the community at some point in their planning). Of course, T'Sou-ke is smaller than most BC municipalities; however, I think it still quite illustrative of the importance of putting the effort into engagement.

Comment from the e-Audience

Troy Macmillan: I'm certainly for disaster risk reduction measures being part of integrated planning at the community level, to echo Ann's point. I think communities that integrate adaption and sustainability into their integrated planning processes are already further ahead, as there is significant overlap between adaption and resilience thinking/planning. To me, it signals the need to move disaster management planning out of the fire hall and into the adaption planning shop (more often than not).

Alastair Moore

I agree considering mitigation and adaptation is extremely important as it brings local concerns about future risks (and opportunities) into direct contact with the rather more distanced issue of global GHG emissions.

Christine Callihoo

I must admit that the siloing of disaster risk reduction from integrated planning is a frustration for me as a planning practitioner. Community members see why disaster risk reduction and emergency planning should be part of the overall community planning process, but often other professions working alongside planners (as well as Councils) see disaster risk reduction and emergency planning as a separate area of focus and may impede the integration.

Comment from the e-Audience

Ben Clark: While the City and higher levels of government have the jurisdiction and policy levers, we are seeing how important it is to mobilize and engage residents at the neighbourhood and block level in order to build support for sustainable development actions.

Alastair Moore

Good point Ben. I recently read that 'power to do' something is very different to 'power over' someone', and that engaging actively and sincerely with community stakeholders and residents is much more likely to give a local government the power to do integrated planning.

Ann Dale

Alastair mentioned Vancouver as a successful example of integrated planning and a comprehensive community engagement process. Joan mentioned it is sometimes easier to have integrated planning in smaller communities, as they know the place. Place is definitely an important factor, as is food security. How many plans mention food security and access to local produce in their plans? I just found out that Vancouver Island has only one energy supply line to the Island and the majority of food is imported?

Moving to our second question, what are the barriers to implementing integrated planning? A few have already mentioned silos and stovepipes and the current organization of government departments? What is the evidence of integrated planning? As one of our e-audience asked, "how do we avoid pushing water up a hill?"

Alastair Moore

I think the key barriers include:

- Organizational structures of government that encourage territoriality, rather than collaboration and shared responsibility.
 - Government department budgets that are hard-won in the first instance, and fiercely protected in the second. There are no 'bonus points' for taking the time to share budgets and partner/collaborate with other departments on strategic plans. Rather, the risks of slowing one's own progress and not realizing department tasks de-incentivize cross-departmental planning processes.
 - Complexity of integrated planning encourages single-focus (sector) planning initiatives
 - Lack or limited availability (or access to) requisite expertise in numerous domains
 - Conflicts between institutionalized goals, interests, cultures and ways of doing things
 - Insufficient trans-disciplinary and integrated planning capacity
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Christine Callihoo

In addition to Alastair's list, I see the barriers being:

- Jurisdictional boundaries (federal, provincial, municipal, agencies, etc.)
 - Language barriers - create a common language amongst the professions - note the "Towards Effective Dialogue between Engineering Practitioners and Climate Scientists - A Primer to define Common Language", BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure et al, June 4 2014.
 - Governance impediments - decision making (i.e. via Council) does not require a working framework that involves integration
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Alastair Moore

Thanks for building on this Christine. I totally agree regarding the jurisdictional constraints that LG's face. Integrated planning must be accompanied by integrated structures of governance.

Ann Dale

Alastair, can you please unpack what you mean by "territorialization of energy"? Thanks.

Joan Chess

Barriers that I see are staff with limited time given their workloads; needing to be able to work differently rather than it being another assignment (i.e. integration as the 'new

normal'); the ability to develop the contacts and build networks across departments, agencies and organizations; and mobility – it takes time living in one area long enough to get to know who's who.

Joan Chess

I like this point around moving toward 'integration as the new normal'. When you step back and look at it, integration really shouldn't be 'another assignment'. Ultimately, with more comprehensive planning, better communication and approaching development with the understanding that we operate within interconnected systems, we actually end up reducing redundancies. But, you're right in that this will require working differently before we can fully realize these benefits. This does make me think about what this new way of working would look like? I envision less (or at least different) 'departments'.

Kevin Hanna

Barriers to its implementation. Power relationships are a key limiting factor. Agencies and even the political level do not like to share resources and power, so there can be resistance to creative IP settings. Users (industry, environmentalists, etc.) can also be resistant if they thin their interests and objectives might be weakened an an IP setting.

Christine Callihoo

EGO (Power relationships, etc.) may be a dominating impediment to integrated planning. How do we encourage people to come together, check their egos at the door, and collaborate to create outcomes that are in the best interests of the collective?

Alastair Moore

Totally agree Christine. Too often the metrics used to measure staff/department success do not include integration and 'joining forces' with other departments.

Ann Dale

As Alastair noted above (changing the metrics, would changing how people are evaluated be a simple immediate step?

Rob Newell

It would be interesting to explore 'integration indicators'. In MC3, we do look at integration as part of our suite are indicators of development path change, but specifically metrics and measures that demonstrate that communities are or are not engaging in integrated approaches is an interesting thought. Of course, if we model this off of a classic community indicators system, we might then once again run the risk of compartmentalizing issues and aspects of community development. For example, would we then measure the integration between transportation and community health separately from sense of place and health? I'm thinking out loud here, but I feel that there needs to be a more complex and/or nested approach to

measuring integration that you would with things like water quality, employment, etc.

Christine Callihoo

Would love to work on the development of 'integration indicators'! What do these look like? How can these be incorporated in our everyday work?

Alastair Moore

These are key questions Christine, and ones that we are looking at right now in MC3 as we develop an indicator framework for transformational change at the local government scale.

Christine Callihoo

Very cool! I look forward to reviewing the results of your work. Let me know if you have a use for an additional participant; would be pleased to assist.

Alastair Moore

Thanks Christine, I appreciate your enthusiasm and willingness to help out!

Rob Newell

I feel that barriers to planning begin in our education and training stages. Although Interdisciplinary are programs growing, the academy itself is still very much segregated into disciplines, particularly with the natural and social sciences. It kind of makes sense that people would then develop into a profession with a certain understanding of what problems they should tackle, how they should be tackled, and who they should be working with in the majority of their hours. If we model our education systems more around how we should be engaging in practice, perhaps we might be able to better engage in more integrated approaches?

From the e-Audience

Ecourbanism: Two major barriers I see are 1) the lack of understanding amongst key decision makers of the financial benefits that could be associated with, and 2) the lack of legislative requirements and/or ability (especially infrastructure costing and land use).

Ann Dale

Illuminating the co-benefits of integrated planning, what works, why it works and wherever possible is critically important for accelerating further innovation. We have published a co-benefits map, showing the relationships between acting on climate change and what are the unanticipated and often unplanned consequences. Changing the rules of the game is also important. When the mayor of New York regulated that all new communities could be no farther than 5 kilometres from a transit station, guess

what, more compact, dense community planning occurred.

Alastair Moore

In my experience Ann, many co-benefits are usually only referred to quietly as they are considered too difficult to monitor/measure and report on.

Ann Dale

Listening to the conversation, as always, it is about people, their practices, their relationships and the networks they are part of, and even the structure of our knowledge systems, if A not B, when we live in a world of 'and' and the need to think about systems. Messy, wicked problems demand collaboration, climate change adaptation and mitigation does not fit into any one department, it crosses departments. FCM attempts to stimulate this level of cooperation and collaboration across municipal governments.

So moving to our last question, what are the solutions to increase its take-up in planning departments across the country, first, and second, infuse it as a government culture?

Christine Callihoo

Options to consider in order to enable greater integrated planning may include:

- Acknowledge (publicly; create a dialogue) that there are impediments to integrated planning across Canada and that this is an important issue to address and why.
- Focus upon breaking down the silos between researchers, practitioners and policy makers
- Require broadening the dialogue to include the communities and other essential voices
- Sustaining the conversations between the silos on an ongoing fashion to the point whereby the silos are no longer silos but simply aspects of a governance framework

Kevin Hanna

I think that creating shared data and information settings may be the first step to creating an effective and efficient IP setting, sharing power and creating new institutional structures can evolve from that. But again, larger scale IP organizations may eventually become a barrier to IP, scale matters. Scale of the IP implementing system/structure, and the scale of attention, and the scale at which we respond to communities and their needs and concurs.

Christine Callihoo

Agreed. I would also add the requirement for a shared language—ensuring that the terms we are using to communicate across silos, with the community, with the politicians is collectively understood. This requires a number of the professional silos

to manage the message and avoid 'speaking above' others. Dialogue to date with professional organizations has revealed that the lack of a shared language is perhaps one of the most significant barriers to integrated planning.

Rob Newell

I'm echoing an earlier statement, but it seems quite relevant to this point. Shared language should be developed within our educational institutions so that people engaged in natural sciences learn how to speak to those engaged in social sciences and vice versa. Rather than simply learning highly specialized language as one's education progresses, one should also learn ways of communicating said language to others (or at least learn what terms other disciplines use and are familiar with).

Ann Dale

Christine, you raise a key point. Is there a common definition among planning practitioners about what integrated planning means? We have unanimous agreement that community agreement is essential. Alastair raised the point about finding the best practices and communicating them.

Christine Callihoo

Good question, Ann! I don't believe that if we were to survey planners from across Canada that we would not be provided with a concise definition for the term 'integrated planning'. However, what we would likely receive is a number of definitions that resemble the definition potpourri similar to terms like sustainability planning. However, I do believe that planning professionals could provide a fairly good general definition based upon their academic and practice. This goes back to the need for a shared language. How do we know that we are enabling integrated planning when we don't have a shared understanding about that the term means?

Alastair Moore

I do think that Europe has some compelling examples of integrated planning that result in healthy, complete, functional communities. In some ways, I'm sitting in one in Montpellier as I type. Mixed use, lots of amenities, no building over 5-stories, tramways/buses nearby, schools (for different ages), traffic-calmed roadways, barely big enough for one small car, play/recreational facilities, green buildings, all embedded in a multi-phased master planned development.

Joan Chess

In my experience, most planners in BC are aware of and use an integrated approach (or at least try their best depending on the organization's culture).

There's also an element of 'Be the change you want to see', in advancing integration throughout a government agency. Make connections; introduce people when the opportunities occur.

We also need to communicate with others how their individual discipline and expertise is needed; how it fits in. Having the generalists (like planners) with the comprehensive approach is important. However, we also need the range of experts involved as we develop solutions that are realistic. As Christine said earlier, its having the people around the table.

Alastair Moore

You're absolutely right about the need for experts around the table. As experts can be relatively expensive (especially for small communities), one solution is to seek funding for expert involvement from senior levels of government.

Joan Chess

Re: land use and infrastructure costs, the [MCSCD has a Life Cycle Costing Tool online](#), free for LG's and anyone to use. Its includes both development and operating costs. Users enter the costs using data from their locations (eg. snowplowing, concrete), and the spreadsheet calculates the costs.

Ann Dale

Interesting tool, Joan. We also need an inventory of tools that are out there, including open source. In our latest research project trying to develop an integrated model for sustainability planning for decision-makers, we discovered that there are major data gaps that need to be filled.

Alastair Moore

I agree it's important to raise the profile of a new type of planning; Integrated Planning. It may seem obvious to some but this is a new approach to managing for the future. This profile raising (using using best practice from around the world to show the social, economic and ecological benefits realized) should involve FCM, CIP and provincial planning bodies, and all levels of government. We should be celebrating successes and highlighting the meaningful benefits of IP.

Within local governments we should:

- Reward departments that merge budgets to undertake IP by giving them a 10 or 20 percent return on every dollar spent on IP in the next year's budget.
 - Link senior government funding to existence of integrated sustainability plans.
 - IP advocates to engage with planning schools to encourage greater focus on IP.
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Ann Dale

We are nearing the end of our conversation. Thank you, panelists and the e-audience for your interest and your engagement. Any last comments?

Alastair Moore

I agree that landing on a sound definition that everyone can relate to is key. Ann, you also mentioned potential co-benefits. I see a few co-benefits of IP. These might include:

- Development of more generalists in planning departments; people who know a little about a lot, and who might be better able to make connections between the goals, constraints and interests inherent in separate domains.
 - Greater financial return on capital based on synergies (economies of scale) discovered during IP process.
 - Improved morale among government staff as partnering on planning can bring staff into closer contact which can reduce internal competition and in-fighting.
 - Enhanced governance as multiple actors (in and outside of government) become comfortable (hence habituated) to working with each other.
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From the e-Audience

Ben Clark: One last plug here for the **EcoDistricts Planning Framework** (previously Portland Sustainability Institute). It includes a lot of the key points we have discussed here today and has some interesting examples of being applied in Ottawa and elsewhere.

Joan Chess

There is a need to keep a focus on implementing the sustainability plans and strategies in LG's. Unfortunately, there can be a sense of 'oh the planning is done, let's move on.' It's important to remind/show staff and decision makers that their everyday work is part of implementing the plans, and keep track of progress over time.

Rob Newell

Very much agree. Viewing this as a continual process is quite important, and I think is particularly important with integrated approaches. Taking an integrated approach requires continual examination of the relationships between systems and aspects of communities. This would involve ongoing uncovering of both co-benefits and trade-offs, and definitely calls for a dynamic process!

Joan Chess

This converged nicely with the e-audience chat, as we were just noting the importance of developing/tailoring indicator systems so that they can be place specific and appropriate. On that note, thank you everyone for the conversation!

Alastair Moore

Yes, thank you all for a thought provoking e-conversation.