

Volunteer Highlights

Erin O'Neill, RPP, MCIP



Erin first became involved with APPI by working on logistics for the 2009 conference, held in Fort McMurray. Erin's involvement and enjoyment working on the conference, led her to join APPI Council. Fast forward to 2022, Erin was the chair of the first in-person APPI conference in Canmore Alberta, since the start of COVID-19. Her insistence on a full hybrid conference to bring people together and reconnect, was an inspiring success. As Erin states, the conference "was able to reach planners throughout Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. We sold out the in-person event and we had over 100 people join the online portion".

Erin's most important memory was taking part in advocating on behalf of the Institute at a time when there was a risk of losing regulation, by stressing to the Minister of Labour, the importance of such governance in the Alberta planning profession. This

challenging task provided the opportunity to strengthen APPI, by working to update both APPI's Code of Conduct and regulation towards preserving the right to RPP title. In addition to learning APPI's true role as a regulator, Erin has learned and worked towards preserving the inner workings of APPI from governance and operational perspectives.

Erin enjoys the collaboration and varying perspectives between volunteers, and what they "bring to the table". Erin has seen APPI evolve since 2009, which is a result of those varying perspectives, making it possible to meet the vision of being "the face of the planning profession within Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. We serve the public interest by providing regulation, advocacy, promotion and services to our members". Erin believes the planning profession offers many paths of serving the public, based on a wide variety of learned skill sets.

Erin feels fortunate to know a diversity of planners in many stages of their careers within APPI, providing a cross-section of professional knowledge "to ask a question, get advice or bend an ear". Further, giving back to the Institute through informal mentorship to early career planners, Erin's advice to young planners is to "get experience doing land use planning and working with developers so you understand how policy is applied. If you do not have that experience, you will not be able to write good policy".

Erin's friends and colleagues would describe her as outgoing, with an excellent sense of humour, and ability to tackle complex, large-scale projects or wicked problems. Outside of work, Erin likes to spend time baking, DIY, quilting and searching small towns for hidden shopping gems.