

## Research Program and Research Fellow in Cities and Communities

Today, more than 80 percent of Canadians live in urban areas, making Canada the second most urbanized nation in the world. Globally, cities have become major drivers of economic activity. The competitive advantage of nations is directly related to the performance of its cities, not just economically, but socially and culturally. It is a paradox of globalization that, in a wired world where integrated markets allow instantaneous transfers of capital and information, the importance of place is actually increasing.

In Canada, there is a growing recognition of the national and local importance of urban spaces as sites of innovation, economic development, and social and political interaction. And yet Canadian cities, as constitutional wards of their provinces, often have little political space – or resources – to address current challenges to urban success. To help Canada and Canadians make the transition to the new economics and politics of space, CPRN has launched a new Cities and Communities Research Program headed by Research Fellow, Neil Bradford. Five principles guide the program:

- **Place matters.** Cities and communities are the places where the challenges critical to Canada’s future – economic growth, social inclusion, cultural diversity, ecological sustainability – are being played out.
- **Collaboration is vital.** No one actor has the capacity to deliver inclusive, innovative, and sustainable cities.
- **Ideas come from the “ground up.”** Communities must be involved fully in developing solutions.
- **Every city and community is unique.** Governments must be flexible in adapting to the assets, challenges, and opportunities of different places from the big city-regions to the smaller communities.
- **Cities, suburbs, and rural areas are inextricably linked.** Metropolitan spaces need integrated, region-wide approaches.

On the basis of these principles, five broad research themes have been identified:

- **Inclusive Cities:** examining the various barriers and divides that continue to separate urban residents socially and spatially.
- **Multi-level Governance:** examining the governance structures, financial arrangements, and democratic processes required to move forward on the urban agenda.
- **Healthy Cities:** examining the interdependence of citizen health and urban land use, zoning, transportation.
- **Learning Communities:** examining how cities meet challenges through collaborative planning and innovative action.
- **Bridging Urban-Rural divides:** examining the variation in the assets, challenges, and opportunities in different municipalities across the country.

In addition to original policy research, CPRN's Cities and Communities Research Program also produces a monthly electronic research and conferencing digest, *Urban Nexus*, that monitors and reports on urban policy developments in Canada and around the world. Another key initiative of the Program is a series of **Structured Policy Dialogues** that bring together researchers, community representatives, and government officials to advance thinking and action on key policy priorities. Creation of an online **Urban Policy Forum** that would connect urban policy knowledge producers and users across Canada is also under consideration.

## CPRN Urban Policy Research

[Cities and Communities that Work: Innovative Practices, Enabling Policies.](#)

Neil Bradford. Discussion Paper No. F|32. June 2003. 96 pp.

[The Federal Role in Canada's Cities: Overview of Issues and Proposed Actions.](#)

F. Leslie Seidle. Discussion Paper No. F|27. December 2002. 28 pp.

[Urban Poverty: Fostering Sustainable and Supportive Communities.](#) Anne-Marie

Séguin, Gérard Divay. Discussion Paper No. F|27. December 2002. 48 pp.

[Immigration, Diversity and Social Inclusion in Canada's Cities.](#) Martin Papillon.

Discussion Paper. No. F|27. December 2002. 43 pp.

[Housing Policy for Tomorrow's Cities.](#) J David Hulchanski. Discussion Paper No F|27.

December 2002. 40 pp.

[Aboriginal Communities and Urban Sustainability.](#) Katherine A. H. Graham, Evelyn

Peters. Discussion Paper No. F|27. December 2002. 46 pp.

***Bringing Cities to the Table: Child Care and Intergovernmental Relations***. Jane Jenson, Rianne Mahon. Discussion Paper No. F|26. October 2002. 41 pp.

***Why Cities Matter: Policy Research Perspectives for Canada***. Neil Bradford. Discussion Paper No. F|23. June 2002. 95 pp.

These publications, as well as past and current editions of *Urban Nexus*, and other policy-relevant urban materials (speeches, slides, and shorter articles) are available on the CPRN Web site ([www.cprn.org](http://www.cprn.org))

Neil Bradford may be contacted at [nbradford@cprn.org](mailto:nbradford@cprn.org)