

Graduate Internship Opportunity

Summer 2025

PROJECT TITLE

Complete Communities: A Sustainable Urban Planning Internship

ORGANIZATION

Community Social Planning Council

Project Background

The Community Social Planning Council (CSPC) of Greater Victoria has been dedicated to fostering sustainable and equitable community development. One of our notable initiatives is the Regional Household Affordability and Prosperity (RHAP) project which underscores our commitment to collaborating with the Capital Regional District on projects related to equitable and sustainable planning and development in the sector of housing affordability. Our collaborative project—The Complete Communities Project—partnered with municipalities: Colwood, Langford, Esquimalt, Saanich, and Oak Bay, aligns with our broader goals of enhancing community resilience.

The complete community is a broad concept and can be defined in several different ways. In this project, complete communities refer to areas designed to meet the diverse needs of their residents while minimizing environmental impact. These communities provide a variety of housing options to accommodate people at all stages of life, foster local employment opportunities, and offer essential amenities and services—all within a sustainable 15–20-minute walking distance. By reducing reliance on cars, promoting walkability, and enhancing access to resources, complete communities contribute to long-term environmental and social sustainability.

This project supports local governments and modern Treaty First Nations in advancing identified community goals through the creation of more complete communities. The project supports communities in undertaking assessments to inform land use decision-

making, considering housing needs, supply, and location; and providing transportation options including increased walkability.

Through this collaborative effort, we seek to create geodatabases which incorporate GIS layers focused on housing, transportation, and daily needs. These layers will be used to conduct a spatial analysis of social, economic, and environmental well-being across the five partnered municipalities. This project represents a step towards more inclusive and effective collaboration across municipal boundaries to improve sustainable planning equity across various sectors and support diverse demographics.

Project Description

Purpose:

The Complete Communities project aims to create detailed and interactive GIS-based maps which reveal the completeness of given communities by layering spatial data related to transportation, housing, and daily needs. Ultimately, these maps will be the basis for analyzing the sustainable well-being of communities, identifying gaps, and will help inform policy and planning recommendations for our partnering municipalities.

Value:

The value of this project is that, while there is a focus on addressing the priorities of each municipality on a local scale (identifying work that is ongoing in each municipality and tailoring parts of the project to help supplement that work), this project additionally seeks to build-up the connectivity between municipal partners by taking a regional mapping and analytical stance. In other words, the value of this project is that it acts as a bridging element between different partners around the CRD and seeks to identify and solidify nuanced relationships between communities.

This project incorporates a strong equity focus, aiming to identify gaps in urban equity resources, while also developing implementation frameworks to address these gaps as they relate to local and regional governments.

Actionability and Timeline:

May-August 2025:

- Perform spatial analysis of social equity indicators across the five municipalities and the region and develop a corresponding composite index of social equity.
- Collaborate in producing a *Phase 2 Report* outlining the analysis of the produced maps which begins identifying and developing recommended action plans.

- Help organize and facilitate community engagements around information sharing and informing municipal partners and the general community with geospatial findings.

Host a closing community engagement in the form of a community conversation or webinar to relay back information to the community and encourage continued engagement post-project completion.

Scope of Work

This project entails a collaborative initiative between the Community Social Planning Council (CSPC) and five partnering municipalities (Colwood, Langford, Esquimalt, Saanich, and Oak Bay) to address prosperous urban planning which incorporates a strong sustainability and equity lens.

Community Engagement:

- Assist in organizing and facilitating community engagement events to share information on complete communities and related spatial data. These events aim to inform the public about ongoing work, fostering broad and equitable participation in discussions around livelihood and prosperity.

Development of Spatial Analysis Summary Report

- Familiarize and review the factors that contribute to the Complete Community outlined by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and other localized literature related to sustainable planning and development.
- Collaborate with the CSPC and partnering municipalities to develop a summary of the spatial analysis related to the housing, transportation, and daily needs maps.
- Draft implementation frameworks to be distributed to partnering municipalities.

Key Research Questions:

- What are the relationships between the mapping lenses, or more specifically the indicators?
- What do the maps show that supports identified community goals?
- What do the maps show that might be hindering progress towards identified goals?
- What plans and policies are in place that contributed to these patterns?
- For strengths, where and how might these conditions be created elsewhere to help achieve community goals?

The scholar will work closely with the CSPC Complete Community's team and city planners from partnering municipalities to ensure the project aligns with the priorities of all partners.

Key Deliverables

The core deliverable will be a comprehensive report due by August 15, 2024, outlining the project objectives, background, research findings, analysis, and recommendations. This report will serve as a foundational document for both the Community Social Planning Council and partnering municipalities to be implemented in the final Complete Communities summary report and for potential future iterations of the project.

Specific deliverables from the scholar include:

- Community Engagement Summary: Detailed documentation of the community engagement process, including methodologies used, stakeholders engaged, and findings.
- Spatial Analysis Summary Report: A summary report of the conducted spatial analysis of the maps that are created by the CSPC GIS team.
- Dissemination of Materials: Materials such as presentations, infographics, or briefs to share the project outcomes with other municipalities and stakeholders.
- Project Timeline and Milestones Documentation: Documentation of project timelines, achieved milestones, challenges encountered, and how these challenges were addressed.

All deliverables should be provided in a digital format, and where applicable, be prepared for publication or dissemination to broader audiences. The scholar will work closely with the CSPC Complete Community team and their GIS specialists to ensure all deliverables align with project objectives and stakeholder expectations.

Time Commitment

The following are critical dates and an optimal schedule:

May 1 – May 15, 2025: Project Onboarding: Familiarization with literature produced by the CSPC, UBCM's Complete Communities Guidelines, and other literature related to sustainable planning and equity indicators. Understanding the project objectives and expectations.

May 16 – June 16, 2025: Community Engagement: Conducting community outreach, facilitating discussions, and documenting findings.

June 17 – July 31, 2025: Development of Spatial Analysis Summary

August 1 – August 10, 2025: Evaluation and Preparation of Deliverables: Gathering feedback, evaluating implemented strategies, and preparing the final report and other deliverables.

August 11 – August 15, 2025: Final Presentation and Project Wrap-up: Presenting project outcomes to stakeholders and wrapping up the project.

It's important to note that while these dates provide a general framework, there's flexibility to adjust based on the scholar's progress, unforeseen challenges, and stakeholder availability. Regular check-ins will be scheduled between the scholar, CSPC, and municipal partners to ensure the project is on track and to provide the necessary support and guidance.

Preferred Skills & Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Community engagement experience
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Strong technical and drafting skills
- GIS training or experience
- Design and layout skills

Additional Project Requirements

We are seeking a candidate with a strong interest in sustainable development, urban planning, and equity-based analytical methodologies. In addition to the skills listed in the previous section, the following attributes would make a candidate particularly well-suited for this project:

- Knowledge in Municipal and Regional Sustainable Planning: Understanding the principles and practices of sustainable urban planning will be crucial for navigating the project's objectives.
- Understanding of Equity and Inclusion Principles: A foundational understanding of equity and inclusion principles, especially as they relate to urban planning and sustainable development, is essential for the success of this project.

- Synthesis and Communication Skills: The ability to synthesize complex information into clear, accessible formats for diverse audiences will be valuable in ensuring the project's findings and outcomes are effectively communicated.
- Familiarity with Interactive Online Mapping Tools and Data Visualization Techniques: Experience or willingness to learn about interactive online mapping tools and data visualization techniques will be beneficial for the project's objective of creating an interactive online mapping tool.
- Collaborative Work with Diverse Communities: Experience or willingness to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities, racialized minorities, and other equity-denied communities is vital for ensuring the project is inclusive and representative of the diverse voices within Victoria.
- Community Engagement Experience: Prior experience in community engagement, especially in a context of municipal planning initiatives, would be advantageous.

These additional skills will not only contribute to the success of the project but will also align with the overarching goals of fostering prosperity and equity into municipal and regional planning processes. The ideal candidate would be enthusiastic about working collaboratively with a diverse team and engaging with the community to drive meaningful change in how we understand *community* within the CRD.

Program Information

Dates: May 1—August 15, 2025

Compensation: Scholars are paid approximately \$31.80/hr for 250 hours of work (based on UVic Research Assistant pay rate)

Application Deadline: January 31, 2025

Contact: Laurel Currie (sustainability-scholars@uvic.ca)

[Visit our website](#) to learn more about eligibility and application requirements.