

City Builder Bootcamp Sessions

Inspiring Leadership – Keynote

Presented by Alice Klein

Alice Klein is the co-founder, editor and CEO of [Toronto's](#) longest-running free [alternative newsweekly *NOW Magazine*](#). For the past few decades Alice has had a birds eye view of the leadership in our city. At this event she will speak to the importance of being a strong leader, with the ability to take a stand, have courage and make hard decisions that are in the best interest in your community and your city.

Municipal Finance – Panel Presentation followed by Q & A

Presented by: Brian Kelcey, Ben Dachis and Colette Provost

Modern property taxes are complex, and property tax shifts and outcomes are often unpredictable. In ten slides, Brian Kelcey will give you a crash course in Toronto's property tax system, how it works, and why it's important for council candidates to understand the myths and hidden truths that are built into the system.

Land Use Planning 101 – Panel Presentation

Presented by Richard Joy and Rina Gerson

In a climate that has seen rapid growth and development, but also radical changes in land use policy and its appeals process, the group of Municipal leaders that will be elected in 2018 will face unprecedented challenges and responsibilities in shaping the way their communities will develop. This panel will address what the 2017 reforms to the Ontario Growth Plan and Ontario Municipal Board mean to our future Elected Officials and provide an overview of key considerations related to land use and development that prospective Candidates need to consider.

Building Equity at City Hall – A Lunchtime Talk

Presented by: Melissa Wong and Jessica Mustachi

Toronto is arguably the most diverse city in the world, yet its municipal government is far from diverse. Advancing an equity at the city level can be a challenging and frustrating process, but if you believe in building a city where everyone can prosper, it is essential. This discussion will highlight some of the key principles, strategies, and challenges to building a more just and equitable city.

Open Politics: How Digital Tools are Making New Citizen Engagement Approaches Possible – Interactive Workshop

Presented by Chris Cowperthwaite

Many of the disruptive innovations that we see affecting businesses have also affected non-profit and public sector organizations. Politicians and political parties are similarly faced with new challenges and opportunities to how they engage their constituents, raise money and make policy decisions.

This presentation will provide an overview of key tools being used for idea sourcing, online consultation, petitioning and canvassing and will illustrate with specific case studies.

Governing a Divided City – Interactive Workshop

Presented by Alex Dow

We live in a city that divides our communities based on geography, race and class. This session will provide an overview of the tensions involved when governing in a city where access to services amenities and public spaces are disproportionality available. Alex will talk about what it means to be engaged in the inner suburbs of our city.

The Power & Politics of Interest Groups in Toronto – Interactive Workshop

Presented by Ange Valentini

Your work as a decision maker begins right after all the ballots are counted on Election Day. There won't be a referendum to check back in with your voters... as an aspiring leader and decision-maker how will you be influenced and by who?

In this session we will explore who holds power in a democracy: specifically, what and who influences decision makers in local government here in Toronto. Together we'll start a map of Toronto's landscape of business interests, community interests, social justice groups, policy experts, lobby groups, faith groups, labour influences, and ratepayers groups.

This session should help you to understand the importance of building strong relationships and how to encourage active participation from a wide range of diverse interests and populations to inform fair and balanced decision making.

The Public Realm: Great Streets and Parks Working Together – Interactive Workshop

Presented by Claire Nelischer and Jake Tobin Garrett

As Toronto grows and densifies, our shared public realm becomes more critical. We need great streets to help us move around safely, but also to animate our neighbourhoods and serve local needs. We need great parks to provide opportunities for recreation and relaxation, but also to anchor our communities. Learn about the challenges and opportunities facing our public realm, and how strong policy and decision-making can help shape a more livable future for Toronto.

Finding Home – Interactive Workshop

Presented by Simone Swail

Housing is now the major social issue in large urban centres across the globe. In the GTA prices have skyrocketed so that even middle income households are struggling to find a place to live they can afford, while for others the dream of homeownership is quickly slipping away. As city builders, grappling with how we balance the need for new housing supply with existing communities, NIMBYism, gentrification and inclusion are at the core of building a vibrant city. Join this workshop for an overview of key issues, possible solutions and a discussion on what's at stake.

TransformTO: Climate Leadership to Build Better Communities – Interactive Workshop

Presented by Mary Pickering

Toronto shares an ambitious goal with international cities such as London, Berlin, and Washington D.C. – reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. TransformTO shows that Toronto can achieve this target using existing technology while creating many community benefits. But we must take bold action and we need to act quickly. Decisions that the City makes in the next five years will determine Toronto's carbon

emissions for up to a century. Mary Pickering will speak to the plan and the importance of continued leadership from city councillors to realize our vision for a low carbon, resilient Toronto.

Great Leadership - Keynote

Presented by Ceta Ramkhalawansingh

Ceta Ramkhalawansingh will share insight from her life long career as a community activist, co-founder of University of Toronto's Women's Studies Program and former City Councillor. Ceta will speak to the power of community and skills required.

Speaker Bios

Alice Klein – Keynote

Alice Klein is the co-founder, editor and CEO of Toronto's longest-running free alternative newsweekly *NOW Magazine*. Named in 2000 as one of the 100 Graduates Who Shaped the Century by the U of T Alumnae Association, NOW magazine editor/CEO and co-founder/owner Alice Klein draws on her experience in politics, business and psychology to focus on issues related to archetypal evolution and the global economy.

Klein is also a documentary producer, director and writer (2007's Call of the Hummingbird) and along with being a founding member of Green Enterprise Toronto (GET), and one of the co-creators of VoteForEnvironment.ca, she sits on the Boards of the Centre for Social Innovation, the Toronto Arts Council (TAC) and Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE).

Klein's commitment to community, culture and the environment have been a decisive force in shaping NOW Magazine's evolution as a publication that is both leading edge and enormously well-read.

Alex Dow – Presenter

Alex Dow is the current Director of Neighbourhood Initiatives at United Way Toronto & York Region following his city-building and community work at a number of non-profit agencies across 416 inner suburban neighbourhoods from Rexdale to Malvern. His prior work focused on community building through civic engagement, the development of neighbourhood assets, and engaging diverse populations in addressing local issues. United Way's network of agencies and community hubs in the inner suburbs provide vital services and supports to many communities across Toronto and the wider region.

Ben Dachis – Presenter

Benjamin Dachis is Associate Director, Research at the C.D. Howe Institute. He started with the C.D. Howe Institute in 2006 as a Research Fellow and also has experience with a major U.S. think tank. He returned to the C.D. Howe Institute as a Policy Analyst in January of 2008, and became a Senior Policy Analyst in 2011 and Associate Director, Research in 2016.

He has an Honours Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Toronto, and a Master of Science in Regional Science from the London School of Economics (LSE). He received the George and Hilda Ormsby Prize for the top MSc dissertation in the Department of Geography and Environment at the LSE. He worked at the Centre for Economic Performance, an interdisciplinary research centre at the LSE. He is also the Co-Chair of the Toronto Chapter of the Canadian Friends of the LSE.

He was a member of the 2012 and 2013 Insight Grants Economics Committee for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

He has written on municipal finance, infrastructure, tax, and energy, environmental and labour policy.

Chris Cowperthwaite– Presenter

Chris is Co-founder and Executive Director of the Open Democracy Project, a not-for-profit working to empower everyday citizens to drive change through civic and political action. Open Democracy Project publishes DemocracyKit, an open online platform to share advice and technology with teams running civic campaigns and hosts a DemocracyXChange summit annually

Chris founded the civic campaign studio Groundforce Digital in 2013, consulting on hundreds of political, advocacy, fundraising and idea crowdsourcing campaigns over a half decade. He currently serves as the Loran Scholarship Foundation Alumni Coordinator the GTA. He was a Loran Scholarship Foundation Board Director from 2013 - 2015 and a member of the Ten Oaks Project Board from 2008 - 2010. Chris holds an MBA from the Schulich School of Business (York University), a B.Sc. (Honours) and Diploma in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Waterloo, and is a Loran Scholar ('99).

Claire Nelischer – Presenter

Claire Nelischer is a Project Manager with the Ryerson City Building Institute, a multidisciplinary policy institute that delivers research and public programs to address critical urban challenges. Claire's work focuses on planning and policy to support the public realm and placemaking.

Jake Tobin Garrett – Presenter

Jake is a writer, illustrator, and advocate for public spaces who believes in the ability of parks to make physical and social connections in cities, bringing people together through shared experience. He works as manager of policy and planning for Park People, a charity that helps people activate the power of parks. Jake specializes in parks and public space planning, policy development, governance, and community engagement with a focus on creative thinking that pushes boundaries, fosters inclusive and accessible spaces, and engages through shared storytelling. He has lead research projects into the social impacts of parks, managed major public life studies, lead engagement walks, curated community photo essays, and more. Jake is a frequent speaker and commenter on park issues in Spacing Magazine and on CBC Radio. You can find more of his work at www.jaketobin.ca

Mary Pickering – Presenter

Mary Pickering is VP - Programs and Partnerships at The Atmospheric Fund (TAF), a municipal climate agency helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cities in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. Mary directs TAF's region-wide grantmaking and programming and leads collective impact and partnership initiatives, most recently co-directing development of the City of Toronto's TransformTO climate plan. She is an accredited partnership broker and mentor for the international Partnership Brokers Association.

Richard Joy – Presenter

Richard Joy is the Executive Director of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Toronto. Since his arrival as the first full-time ED at ULI Toronto the organization has doubled its membership and its staff and significantly increased its brand recognition throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Key initiatives that Richard has led at ULI Toronto include the Urban Leadership Program, Urban Plan Program, Meet the Chiefs dinner and two regional Symposiums. Prior to joining ULI, Richard served as the Vice President Policy and Government Relations at the Toronto Board of Trade and he was the Director of Municipal Affairs and Ontario (Provincial Affairs) at Global Public Affairs, a leading Canadian Government Relations firm. His extensive public policy knowledge and experience comes from years of service at Queen's Park and Toronto City Hall. Richard was the Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, responsible for the public policy development for the City of Toronto Act. He also served as executive assistant to MPPs George Smitherman and Michael Gravelle, as well as two City Councilors over a period that straddled the pre and post amalgamation of Metro Toronto. Richard received his Bachelor of Arts

in History from Carleton University. He currently sits on the Community Hubs Advisory Group for the Government of Ontario and the Advisory Committee for Ryerson's Centre for Urban Research and Land Development.

Brian Kelcey – Presenter

Brian Kelcey is an urban policy consultant and founder of State of the City Inc. He's a regular member of AM 640's weekly City Hall politics panel in Toronto, and his op-eds on city politics and policy have been published across the country in newspapers and magazines like Spacing, the Star, the Globe, Municipal World and the Hamilton Spectator. He previously served as budget advisor to the Mayor of Winnipeg, and as a senior political advisor at Queen's Park.

Jessica Mustachi – Presenter

Jessica Mustachi has over a decade of experience working in Canada, the UK and India, within the fields of child and family poverty, community safety, gender sensitive planning and community health. She has most recently been the Coordinator of Ontario Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty in Canada, hosted by Family Service Toronto. She holds an MSc from the London School of Economics and Political Science in Health, Community and Development.

Simone Swail – Presenter

Simone Swail is the Manager of Government Relations for the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF Canada) Ontario Region which represents over 550 housing co-ops in Ontario, home to over 125,000 Ontarians. Day-to-day Simone works to raise the profile of affordable housing issues in Ontario, and advocates for better housing policies from all levels of government. Most recently, Simone played a key role in CHF Canada's You Hold the Key Campaign which in 2017 successfully secured long-term rent subsidies for over 20,000 vulnerable households who live in co-ops across the country.

Melissa Wong – Presenter

Melissa Wong is the Director of Policy and Operations for City Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam. She holds a Masters of Social Work and specializes in social policy at the municipal level. She is the former Director of the Toronto Women's City Alliance and has been involved in advocacy for gender equity in municipal services and policy for over 10 years. As the Councillor's lead on social policy, her work has led to significant changes within Toronto's homeless shelter system and a comprehensive social and economic development lens on the Downtown East Revitalization Plan.

Ange Valentini – Presenter

Ange Valentini is a government relations and public policy professional, political advisor, strategist, campaigner and community organizer. The focus of Ange's work and advocacy is social inclusion, housing, and the needs of cities. Ange has worked in all orders of government in Canada – in the public service and as political staff. She has over 25 years of experience building creative solutions to complex challenges that drive social change and public good, bringing together stakeholders, influencers and decision makers across the private, public and third sector — with a focus on building relationships and stronger communities. She is a friend, ally, fundraiser, and supporter for many progressive causes and campaigns.

Colette Prevost – Presenter

Committed to advancing the rights of individuals through equity building leadership. Senior level administration and change management expertise. Leadership, training, mentorship in growth and sustainability of Social Service organizations. Colette has experience in executive leadership and management in areas of rights of women and

children across Canada. Brings particular expertise in matters of gender equity and gender informed social policy. Extensive experience and knowledge in organizational governance, change management and service system evaluation.

Andre Cote – Speaker

André is a strategy consultant working for a number of organizations in the areas of technology, talent and skills, public finance and city building.

Until recently, he was Senior Advisor to Ontario's Deputy Premier and Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, Digital Government services, and for Treasury Board Secretariat. He helped design and lead many exciting initiatives, including: the transformation of Ontario's OSAP student aid program; Ontario's digital services strategy to make the province a leader in offering easy, convenient, attractive online and mobile services and information for citizens; and the Province's Program Review exercise in support of balancing the budget.

Previously, André was manager with the Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance (IMFG), leading a range of projects and partnerships for the cities research institute at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs. He has also served as advisor to the Deputy Minister with the Ontario Ministry of Finance, worked for the Public Policy Forum, and has done consulting work for a range of public, private and non-profit organizations.

He is a graduate of the University of Toronto's School of Public Policy and Governance, and of Queen's University.

Ceta Ramkhalawansingh – Keynote

A co-founder of Women's Studies at the University of Toronto, in 2002 she was made an Honorary Member of the Women and Gender Studies Institute in recognition of that achievement. She received her MA from OISE in 1980, and pursued a career at Toronto City Hall from 1981 until her retirement in 2010 at which time she was the manager of Diversity Management and Community Engagement. Not one to stand still, in 2014 Ceta worked [as interim councillor](#) of Ward 20 (Trinity and Spadina), where which she has lived for over 40 years.