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## MELANIE HARE

It's been just over a decade since I celebrated the completion of my Master of Urban and Rural Planning at the Technical University of Nova Scotia. The impact of the Planning program, my fellow students, the Faculty and Halifax remain firmly implanted on my personal and professional life. The values of community, intellectual rigour and teamwork are critical legacies that I apply regularly in my planning practice.

In 1993 I departed Halifax to return to my Ontario homeland, which was in the midst of economic recession but rich in planning initiatives. The non-profit housing sector, Women Plan Toronto, Safe City Committee and the Canadian Urban Institute were fertile grounds for me to engage in many valuable planning efforts. I also entered the world of planning consultancy, first with Bousfield Dale-Harris, Cutler and Smith and ultimately with Urban Strategies Inc.

Urban Strategies Inc. is a Toronto-based planning and urban design firm that offers a wide range of services to public and private clients in Canada, the U.S., the Caribbean and Europe. The firm integrates planning and design thinking and applies an urban approach to a range of city building challenges. Equipped with the most advanced graphic communication tools, Urban Strategies integrates planning and design in a holistic, consensus-building approach to projects. Urban Strategies is distinguished as much by its unique approach to projects as by the quality and success of its work.

The creative and dynamic environment at Urban Strategies stems from the range of projects in which we are engaged and the talent and commitment of the people employed. My particular practice has focused on planning policy, strategic planning and community design. I have been involved in reinvestment strategies for cities such as Detroit; campus plans for UC Berkeley, University of Waterloo and Georgian College; community planning locally and abroad in places such as Barbados; growth management policy development; and revitalization efforts in the Toronto waterfront. As a complement to my consulting work, I am engaged in Ontario's current planning reform and civic initiatives in my role as Chair of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Government and Legislation Working Group, as Member of the Board of

Directors of the Canadian Urban Institute and as an Advisor to George Cedric Metcalf Foundation.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my work has been the exposure to a variety of urban centres and their communities. Based on this experience, it is my opinion that cities are embarking in a new era with regard to meeting the needs of diverse populations, ensuring their economic competitiveness and civic vitality, effecting creative partnerships in delivery of urban infrastructure, and creating beautiful, inspiring places. Cities are organic, dynamic and complex entities that continually challenge planners and designers to seek adaptive and creative solutions.

**Melanie Hare (MURP 93)** is a partner at Urban Strategies, [www.urbanstrategies.com](http://www.urbanstrategies.com)



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