

Speed Mentor Biographies
Meet 8 RP Leaders in 2-hours – Endless Insights Await
Day 1 of the RPIC National Summit
Tuesday, November 25, 2025

Mentor Name:

Ann Marie Sibbald

Current Role & Organization:

Retired Government Executive | Sharing Knowledge & Experience

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Defence, Real Property, Infrastructure, and Government Transformation with specialization in program management, governance, and strategic renewal.



Professional Background:

Ann Marie Sibbald retired in 2025 after nearly 40 years of dedicated service to Canada, where she held senior leadership roles and guided major projects and transformative initiatives. A multi-domain leader, she brought a rare mix of technical expertise and business acumen across engineering, materiel management, infrastructure, and enterprise operations. Among her proudest contributions were those that delivered lasting impact: modernizing the Canadian Forces' clothing and protective equipment for deployed operations, introducing the Maritime Helicopter, shaping the Department of National Defence's Real Property portfolio, and overseeing federal infrastructure projects, including NRC's new transportation science hub. Ann Marie was widely recognized for her ability to bring people together, strengthen governance, and leave behind frameworks and teams that continue to thrive. Beyond her many accomplishments, she is most remembered for the energy, collaboration, and care she brought to her work.

Why I Mentor:

I mentor to share knowledge and experience gained over four decades and to help future leaders navigate complex challenges with confidence. I enjoy sharing stories on topics like delivering results (small or big), fostering resilience, teamwork and good governance – hoping to inspire along the way. Mentoring also keeps me learning, current and connected.

Fun Fact / Personal Interest:

I started my career in 1987 working as an engineer at the University of Ottawa Engineering Center of Excellence for batteries and fuel cells, where I fell in love with electric vehicles. Fast forward to today, you're more likely to spot me in the garden, on the golf course, driving my EV or planning my next adventure.

Mentor Name:

Bill Varvaris

Current Role & Organization:

Director General, Department of Fisheries

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Real Property - Corporate Real Estate



Professional Background:

Bill Varvaris has been the Director General of Real Property and Environmental Management at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans since 2016.

In 2006, Bill began his career in the federal public service at Public Works and Government Services Canada in the Real Property Branch (RPB) where he held several positions in strategic planning and portfolio management.

His experience extends to the international forum where he served as Executive Director at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan before joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development as a Real Estate Project Manager during his assignment in New Delhi, India.

Bill has been a member of the RPIC board of directors since 2019, a member of the Executive Committee of the National Executive Forum on Public Property (NEFPP) since 2019. Bill also served as Chair for the NEFPP Board of Executives between 2021-2022 and continues to serve on the Board as Past Chair.

Why I Mentor:

I mentor because I believe in the power of shared knowledge and the importance of cultivating the next generation of real property professionals. Having worked on the implementation of the corporate real estate model at DFO, I've seen firsthand how strategic thinking and collaboration can transform public sector asset management. Mentoring allows me to pass on lessons learned, foster innovation, and help others navigate the complexities of our field with confidence. My hope is that mentees gain not only practical insights, but also the inspiration to lead with purpose and drive meaningful change in their own organizations.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

Love building things!

Mentor Name:

Debbie Baxter

Current Role & Organization:

Senior Advisor, EY Parthenon

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Real property, finance, operations, workplace, housing,
Defence



Professional Background:

Debbie Baxter, CMC, FCPA, ICD.D, has more than 30 years of experience working with businesses to implement change – from changes in real estate utilization, to changes in culture or technology. She is a client advocate who can uniquely combine the ability to recommend the strategies that drive the desired business outcome as well as have the leadership insight to oversee adoption of the change.

Debbie is most passionate about the opportunity presented by the federal real property portfolio as we innovate and try new approaches to old problems. She is always thrilled to work with clients to adapt their business and their portfolios to the trends evident in our economy and society that will challenge our existing infrastructure and drive the need for a new way of thinking about real property.

Debbie's efforts have been recognized on a national level. In 2013, Debbie was named to the Top 100 WXN list of the Most Powerful Women in Canada in the Trailblazer Category. With a background in operations and technology, Debbie is a Certified Management Consultant, Certified Public Accountant and holds a Corporate Directors ICD.D designation.

Why I Mentor:

Earlier in my career, I benefited tremendously from various mentors – gathering insights that I continue to utilize today. As a result, I grab every opportunity to return this favor and share my insights with others. Mentees should expect straight talk and actionable advice on the professional challenges that we discuss.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

I am learning beginner French to keep my brain active and engage with my francophone clients. Also, I'm a keen golfer and wine enthusiast. My happiest place is in my kitchen trying new recipes to share with my family and friends.

Mentor Name:

Diane Orange

Current Role & Organization:

Retired Assistant Deputy Minister

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Real Property, Federal Public Service



Professional Background:

Diane Orange is an accomplished public sector leader with 25+ years of experience in shaping strategic policy in the federal government. As Assistant Deputy Minister, she led the Horizontal Fixed Asset Review, the most extensive federal real property management review over 35 years. A recognized expert in real property, Diane actively champions the Real Property Institute of Canada (RPIC) and mentors emerging public servants.

Why I Mentor:

I am passionate about mentoring because empowering the next generation of public servants starts with truly listening to them and sharing experiences. My goal is for mentees to gain actionable insights, develop confident leadership, and cultivate a deep, enduring commitment to public service.

Mentor Name:

Ghislain Sauvé

Current Role & Organization:

Director General, Technical Services and Facilities at the
Correctional Service of Canada

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Real Property Portfolio Management, Program Management



Professional Background:

I have served in my current capacity at the Correctional Service of Canada since 2015. Previously I was a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, providing infrastructure management and support both in Canada and on deployed operations.

Why I Mentor:

To give others the benefit of my experience, some of which was earned the hard way, and to get insight into the challenges experienced by my colleagues.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

I enjoy hiking, glamping and reading up on history, to see where current events fit in the overall arc of human events.

Mentor Name:

Heather Tesselaar

Current Role & Organization:

National Director, Real Property Management Services, Defence Construction Canada (DCC)

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Public sector real property management, infrastructure and environmental services, portfolio management, development planning, energy management, facility maintenance, GIS, CAD, BIM.



Professional Background:

Heather Tesselaar is the National Director of Real Property Management Services at Defence Construction Canada (DCC), a Crown corporation providing infrastructure and environmental services and full lifecycle support for Canada's defence requirements. Heather is responsible for developing national strategy and leading business development for real property management, including portfolio management, development planning, energy management, facility maintenance, and technical services such as GIS, CAD, and BIM. After 11 years as an engineering officer in the Canadian Armed Forces, Heather joined DCC in 2009 and has held various roles across Canada, from Gagetown, New Brunswick, to Wainwright, Alberta and many places in between. Heather holds a Bachelor of Science (Chemical and Materials Engineering) from the Royal Military College, an MBA (with Distinction) from Heriot-Watt University, and is a Professional Engineer.

Why I Mentor:

I mentor because I believe people rise faster and farther when someone invests in their potential with honesty, encouragement, and practical guidance. I also find purpose and energy in helping others navigate challenges I've already faced, turning my experience into someone else's momentum.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

I am training to do a triathlon next summer.

Mentor Name:

Jim Anderson

Current Role & Organization:

Partner and Past Chair, DIALOG (multidisciplinary design practice with studios in Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, and San Francisco)

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Architecture, multidisciplinary design, strategic leadership, team building, operational management, mental health advocacy.



Professional Background:

Jim Anderson is an architect with over twenty-five years of experience at DIALOG. His career has evolved from project architect managing large and complex teams, to Toronto Studio management, National Operations management, and ultimately Firm Managing Partner and Chair. Currently, as Past Chair, Jim focuses on building strategic relationships, pursuing key projects, and assembling effective teams for project delivery. Under his leadership, DIALOG was recognised by Deloitte as one of Canada's Best Managed Companies. Jim is a Senior Fellow of the Design Futures Council (DFC), contributing to global industry innovation, and an active member of the Ontario Association of Architects, serving on both the Discipline and Registration Committees.

Jim holds a Bachelor of Architecture from Carleton University and completed Executive Education at Stanford University. He is licensed to practise architecture in 9 Canadian provinces and 17 American states, and holds national security clearances with Procurement Canada and Public Safety Special.

Why I Mentor:

Throughout his career, Jim has remained a people person, deeply believing that aligning individuals with their passions and fostering continuous learning is the most effective path to success. He mentors to help others discover their strengths, encourage active learning, and build collaborative, innovative teams.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

Jim is passionate about community engagement. He served on the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's (CAMH) Corporate Advisory Council (2018–2021), helping to promote mental health awareness. He was instrumental in launching the Workplace Mental Health Playbook for Business Leaders.

Mentor Name:

Jonathon Preston

Current Role & Organization:

Vice President Federal Services Canada, AECOM

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Consulting: Program Management, Infrastructure and Environmental Solutions, Sustainable Design, Strategic Advisory Services



Professional Background:

With nearly 30 years of experience as an engineer and executive, Jonathon has led projects and programs across North America and Africa in mining, construction, consulting, and government (Defence and Environment). Brings deep real property expertise and a track record of delivering complex infrastructure and environmental solutions in remote and challenging environments worldwide.

Why I Mentor:

Mentoring matters to me because it offers a chance to see things through someone else's career lens, this helps me grow just as much as they do. I've benefited from mentors early in my journey, and I hope to give that same support, perspective, and encouragement to others navigating their own paths.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

Enjoys taking part in multi-day Ultra Marathons. Recently participated in the Run for Rangers 5-day race in Kenya, supporting rhino anti-poaching and conservation efforts.

Mentor Name:

Jordan Wilson

Current Role & Organization:

Director, Environmental Management, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

- Contaminated Sites / Remediation
- Greening Government / Operations



Professional Background:

Prior to joining government, Jordan worked for over a decade in private industry—principally, as an associate and environmental engineer at a professional services/consulting firm overseeing numerous environmental assessment and remediation projects. Now at ECCC, he leads the work to remediate the department’s contaminated sites, as well as the efforts toward greening government initiatives to reduce GHG emissions, reduce waste and water consumption, assess and increase climate resilience, and much more. He is also responsible for the department’s National Center of Expertise on Fleet and Materiel Management, and leads ECCC’s transition toward zero-emission vehicles.

Jordan is a strong advocate for lifelong learning, and is a professional engineer (P.Eng.), a certified risk manager (CRM), and holds a master’s degree in environmental and energy law (LLM). He lives in Fredericton, NB, and is an advocate for strong regional representation within the public service.

Why I Mentor:

I was fortunate to have tremendous mentors early in my career that heavily shaped my professional and leadership development. I hope to pay their generosity forward and aid in the development of the next generation of leaders shaping our country—and, of course, to personally learn and grow as well.

Mentor Name:

Kevin Montgomery

Current Role & Organization:

Director General, Real Property and Environment, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)



Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Kevin's industry focus lies within the federal public sector, specifically in real property management, corporate services, and strategic infrastructure planning. His key specialties include leading major capital projects, overseeing national property and facility operations, and driving workplace modernization initiatives. He has extensive experience in emergency response coordination, ensuring operational continuity during crises such as natural disasters and public health emergencies. Kevin is also skilled in interdepartmental collaboration, policy development, and aligning real property strategies with broader government priorities.

Professional Background:

Kevin has over 25 years of experience in the federal public service, with a strong focus on real property and corporate services. He has held senior leadership roles at Public Services and Procurement Canada, where he led major infrastructure projects, national property and facility management operations, and strategic planning initiatives. His career also includes leading workplace renewal efforts at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and operating a shared services team at Natural Resources Canada. Throughout his career, Kevin has played a pivotal role in coordinating government responses to natural disasters, public health emergencies, and civic unrest, underscoring the strategic importance of real property in maintaining operational continuity and employee safety.

Why I Mentor:

I mentor because I believe deeply in the value of public service and its impact on the country. I see mentoring as a way to give back, support emerging leaders, and help build a resilient and forward-thinking public service.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

Kevin holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Alberta, and a Master of Business Administration, International Management from the University of Ottawa.

Mentor Name:

Mark Quinlan

Current role and organization:

Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Real Property Services Branch,
Public Services and Procurement Canada

Industry and areas of expertise:

Government infrastructure and real estate; public sector operations;
workplace transformation; fit-up and renovation projects; law;
accounting



Professional background:

Since 2023, Mark has been responsible for the operations of Real Property Services at Public Services and Procurement Canada, including project management, project delivery, facilities management, technical services, real estate services, strategic sourcing and infrastructure asset management. He is also responsible for the Office Portfolio Plan, Disposal and Housing, and Client Relations Services.

Prior to his current role at Public Services and Procurement Canada, Mark worked at the Canada Revenue Agency as Assistant Commissioner of the Quebec Region and has held several other executive positions in the federal public service, including Vice-President of Operations at Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, as well as Regional Director General of the Quebec Region for Public Services and Procurement Canada.

Why I mentor:

I believe in the power of public service and the importance of developing the next generation of leaders. Mentoring allows me to share lessons I have learned from navigating complex government systems in an effort to support others in finding purpose and making an impact in their careers.

Fun fact or personal interest:

I am proud of my Irish heritage, and I love to travel—whether it's exploring the world or making the familiar trek between the Eastern Townships and Ottawa. My work often involves navigating through resistance and uncertainty, but as an occasional surfer I thrive in rough water—balancing seriousness with a playful sense of humour.

Mentor Name:

Max Neelakantan

Current Role & Organization:

Director, Owner-Investor,
Science and Parliamentary Infrastructure Branch,
Public Services and Procurement Canada



Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Industry: Realty & Asset Management

Expertise: Leasing & Acquisitions, Asset Management, Portfolio Planning, Governance and Oversight, Funding Frameworks & Budget Requests

Professional Background:

I started my career in 2010 with PSPC as part of a development program within leasing. This provided me the opportunity to work in different parts of the organization, allowing me to develop a broad understanding of the real property world. This allowed me to quickly work my way up to be a team leader (“Senior Leasing Advisor”) in 2013.

In 2016, I switched roles to work on the Parliamentary Precinct in a planning role, where I worked my way from manager to director.

Since April 2022, I also represent PSPC as a member of the Sparks Street Mall Authority, which looks after the Sparks Street Mall, located directly south of Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario.

Why I Mentor:

My career has taken me from CR-04 to EX-01 and everything in between. I have an unorthodox style which challenges the status quo and I hope others can find value in that.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

While I really enjoy my job, it has allowed me to take extended vacations to travel the world and learn about different cultures.

Mentor Name:

Robin Strang Lindsey

Current Role & Organization:

Director, Business Sustainability, Real Property Institute of Canada (RPIC)

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

- Real Property Policy
- Real Property Finance
- Human Resources, EX and non-EX staffing, classification, labour-relations and talent management
- Internal Audit Practice and Policy



Professional Background:

Robin served in the Federal Public Service for 28 years before joining RPIC through the Executive Interchange Program in March 2025. She has held executive roles for 17 years, including eight as a Director General in the Real Property Sector and Finance Branch at Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC). She also served as Executive Mental Health Champion for the Real Property Branch for nearly four years. Her previous leadership roles include Senior Director of Parliamentary Interpretation at the Translation Bureau, Director General of Security and Facilities at ISED, and Director of Practice Management in ISED's Internal Audit and Evaluation Branch.

Why I Mentor:

Throughout my career I have mentored employees at all levels, and truly value the exchange of experiences and perspectives that comes from working across disciplines, generations and cultures. Mentoring is mutually rewarding—I learn as much as I share - fresh insights, new approaches and new perceptions. I have benefited from my own mentors, who helped shape my managerial style, supported my career growth, and navigate the path along the way. I hope to offer the same guidance and encouragement to others.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

I'm a pretty good cook who loves to connect with great friends at our cottage in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. I continue to seek out all the "food movies" ever made.

Mentor Name:

Sébastien Yelle

Current Role & Organization:

Account Executive, Client relationship and Demand management, Real Property Services, Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC)

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Industry: Real property Services, Government of Canada



Areas of Expertise: Strategic planning of real property portfolio, warehouse management, project management, decontamination of contaminated sites, environmental compliance.

Professional Background:

Since joining Public Works and Government Services Canada (now PSPC) in 1998, Sébastien has held various roles in Real Property Services at both national and regional levels. His career began in Environmental Services, focusing on contaminated sites and compliance projects, before moving into Client Relations to support departments with their real property needs. Driven by a commitment to meaningful missions, he has built strong connections across stakeholders and gained deep insight into federal operations.

Sébastien is passionate about lifelong learning, holding master's degrees in Environment (Université de Sherbrooke) and Public Administration (École nationale d'administration publique), a bachelor's in Science (UQAM), and is completing a bachelor's in Finance (UQAM). He also served as Chair of the RPIC Federal Contaminated Sites Workshop for nine years.

Why I Mentor:

I like mentoring because it's an opportunity to share my experience, my knowledge, to exercise leadership and to help the next generation reflect on how they can make a difference and finally to give meaning to the work do.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

I have three children that played in competitive sports and I was involved in coaching for the three of them, I'm a huge Montreal Canadiens hockey fan, I still play hockey once a week and I love to travel, my dream is to travel the world.

Mentor Name:

Wayne Liko

Current Role & Organization:

Managing Partner, Horizant

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Real property business and technology solutions, organizational growth, resource development, and managing to stay calm in the middle of chaos.



Professional Background:

Wayne leads the strategy and direction of Horizant, a technology solutions integrator. His work over the last 30 + years includes collaborating with both small and large teams to help 100's of clients, both public and private sector, in achieving their business objectives. Managing a Small Medium Business (SMB) has allowed Wayne to develop one constant and consistent expertise, which is managing constant change.

Why I Mentor:

I have learned that my professional background demonstrates what I do, not who I am. I hope I can share this balanced perspective of work and life. Telling the story of my journey to be more present, joyful and vulnerable can hopefully have an impact on someone.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

I love kayaking, hiking, camping and cycling. Ask me whether I prefer hiking and camping in Newfoundland, Quebec or the Yukon.

Mentor Name:

Yixiong Rang

Current Role & Organization:

Director, National Project Delivery Division, Chief
Financial Officer Branch, Health Canada.

Industry & Areas of Expertise:

Federal real property management, project management
and program management.



Professional Background:

I've had the privilege of working across several federal departments including Health Canada, National Defence and PSPC, where I've contributed to real property program management and strategic project delivery. My roles have ranged from project leadership to portfolio management, and I've learned a great deal from each experience — especially the value of collaboration, adaptability, and service.

Why I Mentor:

I mentor because I believe growth is a shared journey. I've benefited from the guidance of others throughout my career, and I hope to offer the same support to those who need it — helping them build confidence, navigate challenges, and find their own leadership voice.

Fun Fact or Personal Interest:

I am proficient in English, French, and Chinese, and I'm passionate about sustainable design and architecture.