

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE AND NOMINATION STATEMENT

GORDON RICHARDS, MAIBC

I have been a member of the AIBC since 1982, and a certified professional since 1984. I have practised architecture in a variety of different venues and with a number of building types. Most recently in my career, I have specialized in building code consulting and CP work, and am now a principal at Gage - Babcock and Associates Ltd.

Why am I seeking another term on Council?

I have been on Council for several years now, and have served as Registrar from November, 2005 to May 2009, and as Vice President since May of 2009. In addition, I have been a member of the Registration Board, the Illegal Practice Committee, and the Qualifications Committee. I have been on the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB) since June of 2006, have been president of that organization since November of 2008, and will serve on the board until November of 2012. Involvement in some of the processes of the Institute by way of participation in working committees, oral reviews, and other basic functions of the AIBC has increasingly informed my participation in Council meetings. I think I am a better Council member as a result, and have more to offer the AIBC now than I did as a new council member.

What do I hope to accomplish if elected?

For the past several months, Council has been involved with a member engagement initiative which will involve more member forums, and also meetings with small groups of MAIBCs in order to get a broad range of input and opinion on issues facing the AIBC. As part of this initiative I have met with several groups, usually with another council member. These groups have included some of the intermediate sized architectural firms, some of the AIBC committees, and several ad hoc small gatherings. I find that I enjoy these smaller sessions. They have without exception been respectful, interesting, and fun. In these smaller venues, we can have complete conversations, and find common ground, or agree to disagree. I hope that those who participate can know they have been heard, and can feel that they have had a chance to express themselves completely. This work is intense and rewarding, and if re-elected, I hope to continue it in my next term. Council needs this feedback.

Volunteer committee members and the AIBC Registration Department have been working hard to consolidate the ground-breaking work of recent years in the area of performance based competency for architects. It has been my deep pleasure to participate with them in this endeavour, and it is gratifying to see the other Canadian jurisdictions asking for the assistance of the AIBC to set up a national program for broadly experienced foreign architects. My participation in the CACB gives me an opportunity to further these initiatives on the national level, and to participate in the exchange of these same ideas and issues on Council.

Registered architects, with their unique exposure to liability and level of responsibility, must be in a position to operate competently in a market that has included non-registered and unregulated designers. The AIBC now includes associates who are not architects, but who are regulated by the AIBC and who are providing services directly to the public within the exclusions of the Architects Act. I will support initiatives that will help to clarify to the public the distinct difference between architects and other kinds of associates. Further, I believe the AIBC has an obligation to require a specified level and range of competencies for any associate who provides services directly to the public, and that credentials involving minimum educational, experience, and examination requirements must be in place. This is work in progress at the AIBC requiring fairness, rigour and discipline, and as a council member, I hope to continue to participate in it.

What is my vision for the profession of architecture?

I would like to see the profession of architecture evolve in such a way that I could be enthusiastic about the possibility that one of my children might wish to pursue it. I hope to see the day when most architects are appropriately respected and compensated for their knowledge, skills and efforts. It is my intent to work towards a professional environment where this is possible, and where all players involved in the design of the built environment are expected to meet high ethical and regulatory standards.

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