

# Canada's Productivity Initiative

Investment, Economic Growth &  
Long-Term Prosperity



## Riaz Kara

**Vice-President, Policy, Public Policy Forum**

Riaz J. Kara is an accomplished senior executive with nearly two decades of experience in the public sector, having worked within the federal public service and the BC provincial government, as well as at a federal crown corporation. He has held senior policy leadership roles in housing, labour, and employment, and has experiences that span strategic policy, regulatory management, as well as business transformation.

Riaz joined the Public Policy Forum (PPF) in fall 2024 as Vice-President of Policy, where he leads the organization's efforts to catalyze difficult policy conversations and develop ideas that inform policymakers to better tackle tomorrow's challenges on behalf of Canadians. His work includes a focus on economic growth and competitiveness, Canada-US relations, energy futures, life sciences and emerging technologies.

Before joining PPF, Riaz was Director General, Housing Policy & Partnerships at Housing, Infrastructure & Communities Canada, where he had stewardship of Solving the Housing Crisis: Canada's Housing Plan, which launched in April 2024. In this role he was also responsible for several key mandates, including federal-provincial-territorial relations, stakeholder engagement, social policy files as well as forerunning leadership on integrating housing with federal immigration, employment, health, and industrial policy. He was formerly Vice-President, Social Policy & Equity at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, where he was focused on creating new housing supply nationwide and led policy work to stand up the Co-Operative Housing Development Program, as well as enact significant changes to the Affordable Housing Fund and the Apartment Construction Loan Program.

Prior, Riaz held executive roles at Employment and Social Development Canada, including leading the federal government's review of the Employment Equity Act as well as acting as Director General of federal labour programs, including in Employment Equity and Federal Workers' Compensation. Riaz was also the labour regulator for the federal public sector in Ontario, where he led regulatory oversight of the banking, telecommunications, trucking, airlines, and airports sectors, as well as the federal public service. In this work, he also led day 1 responses for these sectors during COVID-19, including policy and program work related to 'safe restart'.

Riaz holds a master's degree in economic history from the London School of Economics and a bachelor's degree in business administration from Trent University. In 2019, he completed the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government's Executive Certificate in Public Sector Leadership. Riaz is also proudly a Board director of Christie Lake Kids, a 100-year-old non-profit focused on improving outcomes for children and youth and serves as Chair of its Governance and Human Resources Committee.

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