

# J 2019 - TOWN OF AURORA DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1.0 Introduction

The Town of Aurora Design Review Panel (“Panel”) is an advisory body that is being established to assist in the review of development and redevelopment applications to ensure community compatibility and the protection of the Town’s character through high quality urban design. The Panel will review projects in order to ensure appropriate design within the context of the area. It is a fundamental principle of the Town’s Official Plan to ensure excellence in community design.

### 2.0 Purpose

The Panel is strictly an advisory body, and makes recommendations only. It does not have the authority to approve or refuse projects or make policy decisions. The Panel is not intended to replace the development approval process or role of Council, but instead provides an additional level of consultation and review to enhance the development approval process.

### 3.0 Duties

3.1 The primary duty of the Panel is to give independent design advice and make recommendations to staff, the applicant and their consultants with respect to development and redevelopment applications on:

- a) Properties located within the Town’s Heritage Resource Areas, including properties which are Designated under *Part IV* or *Part V* of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, as identified in Schedule ‘D’ of the Town’s Official Plan;
- b) ‘Listed’ properties in the Town’s Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and properties adjacent to designated heritage properties;
- c) Properties located within the Aurora Promenade, as identified in Schedule ‘B1’ of the Town’s Official Plan; and
- d) Other non-heritage properties or those located outside of the Aurora Promenade where the development is determined to have potential physical/aesthetic impact on the streetscape and community public realm.

### 4.0 Scope of Work

4.1 The Director of Planning & Development Services or his/her designate (Director) has the discretionary authority to waive projects for the review of the Panel based

on the development application being deemed minor in nature and not having any physical/aesthetic impact on the streetscape and community public realm.

- 4.2 Projects which are not required to appear before the Town's Heritage Advisory Committee or Council for approval (such as projects which only require Building Permit issuance from the Town's Building Division) may not be reviewed by the Panel or be discussed at their meetings.
- 4.3 The Panel shall advise and comment with respect to the potential physical and aesthetic impact of the proposed development application on the character of the surrounding properties, neighbourhood, and streetscape.
- 4.4 The Panel may advise and comment with respect to design matters including building design, style, materials and colour.

## **5.0 Panel Membership**

- 5.1 Individuals qualified to sit on the Panel include: Urban & Regional Planners, Urban Designers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Civil, Structural and Transportation Engineers. The Town will issue a Request for Expression of Interest for Panel members, and selection criteria will ensure an appropriate mix of professionals with relevant experience.
- 5.2 Individuals appointed to the Panel will normally be a resident of Aurora or a business owner in Aurora. Notwithstanding this provision, and to ensure appropriate professional representation, Council may appoint non-residents or business owners of Aurora to the Panel.
- 5.3 The Panel shall consist of between 3 to 6 members.
- 5.4 Members will be Council appointed based on Staff recommendation.
- 5.5 Panel members will be appointed for the term of Council. Council may reappoint a Panel member for one additional term.
- 5.6 Membership on the Panel is a non-paid position.
- 5.7 Panel membership may be revoked upon being absent from 3 consecutive meetings without prior authorization from the Town Clerk.
- 5.8 No Members of Council, Town staff or members of other Town Boards or Committees shall be appointed to the Design Review Panel.

## **6.0 Panel Nomination Criteria**

- 6.1 Design Review Panel members shall be a mix of qualified professionals who have membership in a professional organization including:

- a) Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI)
  - b) Professional Engineers of Ontario (PEO)
  - c) Ontario Association of Architects (OAA)
  - d) Ontario Association of Landscape Architects (OALA)
  - e) Any other relevant urban design association
- 6.2 The Panel membership shall have a wide range of relevant professional experience including:
- a) High quality design work in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, heritage design, urban planning and transportation engineering;
  - b) a mix of local, provincial and international practice;
  - c) a mix of project scales;
  - d) a mix of project types for a variety of land uses;
  - e) knowledge and practice of sustainable design and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles; and
  - f) professional research and academic involvement.

## **7.0 Conflict of Interest**

- 7.1 Each member has a duty to advise Town staff and the Chair of the Panel of any conflict of interest prior to project review.
- 7.2 If a conflict of interest arises, the Panel member shall not participate in the project review and shall remove themselves from the meeting.
- 7.3 A Conflict of Interest is defined as a Panel member having financial, personal or business interest in a project being reviewed by the Panel; or where multiple interests, one of which could influence, corrupt or exploit a decision, or where the appearance of a conflict exists. Any declared conflicts shall be recorded by the Director.

## **8.0 Meeting Protocol**

- 8.1 The Town's Procedural By-law and Policy for Ad Hoc/Advisory Committees and Local Boards does not apply to the Panel.
- 8.2 Panel meetings shall normally be held on a bi-monthly basis, as scheduled by the Director in consultation with Panel members. In the event that there are no applications to review, the meeting shall be cancelled.

- 8.3 The Panel members shall select from among themselves a Chair and Vice Chair at the first meeting where all the panel members are in attendance.
- 8.4 Quorum for the Panel shall be 3 members, inclusive of the Chair or Vice Chair.
- 8.5 A maximum of 3 projects shall be scheduled for each meeting.
- 8.6 Staff or the applicant will make a brief presentation to describe the project and design objectives, and the Panel will have the opportunity to ask questions of the applicant and their design team on any aspect of their design proposal.
- 8.7 The Panel will review the presentation material, followed by a discussion on the merits of the design of the project. The Panel will formulate their comments and recommendations for the project through the Chair. The Chair, with the assistance of the Director, will summarize the comments and recommendations of the Panel members.
- 8.8 The Panel's advice and comments will be based on approved design criteria, such as The Aurora Promenade Urban Design Strategy, Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District Plan and urban design policies in the Town's Official Plan.
- 8.9 Following the meeting, the Director and Staff will summarize the comments and recommendations made from the Panel for each project, and then will forward the comments to the members for their approval within ten (10) business days before being sent to the applicant.
- 8.10 Design Review Panel Meeting Notes are the official record of all Panel meetings. The Meeting Notes are comprised of two parts. The first part includes a summary of the Panel's key points by the Panel Chair. The second part is a summary of the full discussion. The Meeting Notes are not intended to be a verbatim representation of the discussion of proceedings.
- 8.11 The Meeting Notes are confirmed at the following Design Review Panel meeting, provided there are sufficient members to form quorum. In adopting the Meeting Notes, the Panel is providing an indication that the document is representative of the discussion which took place at the meeting. Proponents do not have the opportunity to request any changes to the Meeting Notes.
- 8.12 Once the Meeting Notes have been confirmed, they are considered a public document and can be distributed to interested parties. Details of recent meetings are posted to the Meeting Schedule section of the Town's Design Review Panel webpage.

## **9.0 Project Review**

9.1 Complex projects subject to the Design Review Panel process may, depending on the scale and impact of the proposal, be reviewed twice in accordance with the following procedures:

- a) **Conceptual Review:** This first review shall take place at the pre-consultation stage, prior to the submission of a formal application and after the Planning Act requirement for pre-consultation with the Town or at the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment stage. This is to afford the opportunity for significant changes prior to the detailed design of the project.
- b) **Detailed Review:** This second review shall take place once detailed plans and a formal application that incorporates revisions made from the Conceptual Review stage is submitted. This review is intended to contribute to the detailed design process of the project before the development application is subject to Council's final approval.

9.2 At the discretion of the Director, development applications may be reviewed just once, at the Conceptual Review or Detailed Review stage.

## **10.0 Required Materials**

10.1 The onus is on the applicant to ensure that the presentation materials provided at the Design Review Panel meeting are legible, displayed in a functional fashion, and contain sufficient information for the members to make comments and recommendations on.

10.2 For the Conceptual Review stage, this may consist of the following (if provided as part of a complete application submission):

- Photos of the Site and surrounding Streetscape/Neighbourhood
- Conceptual Site Plan
- Conceptual Landscape Plan with Conceptual Streetscape design
- Conceptual Building Elevations
- Coloured Renderings
- Urban Design Brief
- Planning Justification Report
- Any other information as requested by the Director

10.3 For the Detailed Review stage, this shall consist of materials that were submitted as part of a Planning & Development or Building Permit Application (i.e Site Plan Application), which would assist in providing the Panel information regarding the

detailed design of the project. These materials may include the following (if provided as part of a complete application submission):

- Site Plan
- Landscape Plan with Streetscape information or a separate Streetscape Plan
- Planting Plan
- Grading Plan
- Building Elevations
- Building Sections
- Building Materials Samples
- Building Height/Massing Analysis
- Urban Design Brief
- Sun/Shadow Analysis
- Wind Impact Study (Pedestrian Level Wind Study)
- Any other information as requested by the Director

10.4 The applicant shall provide 10 copies of the materials described in Sections 10.2 and 10.3 at a measurement of 11 x 17 inches.

10.5 The applicant shall also provide one digital copy of the materials to the Town.

### **11.0 Information Reporting**

11.1 The comments and recommendations of the Panel will be summarized by the Panel Chair and Director for the relevant Committees and Staff to assist in making recommendations on a project to Council.

11.2 When reporting to Council on an application, Staff's recommendation report will ensure that the comments and recommendations of the Panel are summarized and included.