



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED
Confidential Attachment**

Design Review Panel Pilot Project – Panel Membership

| | |
|---|---|
| Date: | March 15, 2007 |
| To: | Planning and Growth Management Committee |
| From: | Ted Tyndorf, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning |
| Wards: | All |
| Reason for Confidential Information: | This report deals with personal matters about identifiable persons. |
| Reference Number: | |

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend approval of Panel membership for the two year, Design Review Panel Pilot Project. The Pilot Project was approved for implementation by City Council (June 27-29, 2006).

Research of other Canadian and international cities with Design Review Panels shows that this tool is being used successfully to improve the design quality of the public realm. City Council's direction to implement the Design Review Panel Pilot Project for Toronto addressed the goals of the Official Plan and the Beautiful City initiative. This direction recognized the significance of good design in city building and its role in fostering a high quality of life for Toronto's citizens and enhancing the City's economic competitiveness. Toronto is experiencing an unprecedented public interest in the design quality of the public realm. Implementation of the Pilot Project is a timely step to strengthen the development approvals process to contribute to building a dynamic, vital and beautiful City. Panel membership nomination was carried out according to Council's approved procedures and principles for the Pilot Project. Nomination criteria is further detailed in this report. Approval of the Panel membership will allow the Pilot Project to commence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Council approve the membership for the Design Review Panel Pilot Project outlined in Attachment 1; and
2. Council approve the public release of the confidential information in Attachment 1.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

The recommendations are to be implemented according to the procedures approved by City Council (June 27-29, 2006) which are available for viewing at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/committees/plt/plt060601/it004.pdf>

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

Following public consultation with key stakeholders and City Divisions, City Planning reported on the results of the consultation with recommended procedures to establish the two year Pilot Project. City Council (June 27-29, 2006) directed City Planning to implement the Design Review Panel Pilot Project according to the recommended procedures. Procedures included that staff would report back to City Council with recommendations for Panel membership.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The following Panel makeup for citizen volunteers who are members of professional design associations was approved (City Council June 2006) for implementation:

“The panel will be composed of twelve members including one chair, and seven members will constitute quorum. The mix of design professionals will include six architects, three landscape architects, two professional planners, architects or landscape architects with expertise in urban design and one structural engineer. Once sustainability policies are developed by the City and approved by Council, criteria for the structural engineer Panel member will include specialization in sustainability. Requests for expression of interest for Panel members will include criteria to ensure an appropriate mix of professionals including those with an expertise in construction of large scale projects to ensure that the Panel’s deliberations will have a basis in practical and economic considerations in addition to high calibre design expertise.”

COMMENTS

Nomination Process

The nomination process was carried out according to the approved (City Council, June 2006) Panel member nomination procedures. The procedures are based on those of other Canadian cities with Design Review Panels, such as Ottawa and Vancouver and are in keeping with the City's Policy for Citizen Appointments for Program Advisory Bodies. The City's 'Call for Members' was advertised by the design professional associations (Ontario Association of Architects, Ontario Association of Landscape Architects, Ontario Professional Planners Institute, Professional Engineers Ontario) as well as the Toronto Society of Architects to their members. Professional associations collected expressions of interest and, in their role as regulating bodies, ensured that interested candidates were in good standing. City staff from City Planning, Facilities and Real Estate, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Transportation and Technical Services who represent the types of professions on the Panel and are responsible for the design and building of municipal projects and review of private development, carried out the approved nominations procedures using the criteria described below.

Nomination Criteria

The criteria for Panel membership nomination was developed based on best practices research of other cities with Design Review Panels and tailored to Toronto's local needs which were expressed through consultation with stakeholders undertaken to develop the Pilot Project. An emphasis was placed on qualified design professionals who are well respected among their peers. An important criteria is the inclusion of professionals with a broad range of expertise including experience with large scale development and municipal projects.

The following criteria was used to nominate members of the Design Review Panel Pilot Project to achieve the approved Panel makeup:

1. Membership in a professional design association:
 - Ontario Association of Architects,
 - Ontario Association of Landscape Architects,
 - Ontario Professional Planners Institute, or
 - Professional Engineers of Ontario
2. Level of experience as indicated by a minimum of 15 years of practice in the respective design profession,
3. Broad range of relevant professional experience across the Panel including:
 - High quality design in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and engineering,
 - Range of local and international practice,

- Range of project scales including large scale development,
 - Range of project types including residential, commercial, institutional, parks and public space design,
 - Knowledge of the City,
 - Sustainable design practice,
 - Professional research and academic involvement, and
 - Sitting on or having projects reviewed by other Design Review Panels
4. Well respected among peers as recognized by awards, publications and teaching appointments.

Conclusion

The Official Plan recognizes that high quality design of the City's built environment is an important public interest. Good design of buildings, public spaces and their relationships to each other is fundamental to Toronto's economic success, competitive advantage and the quality of life of its citizens. City Council's direction in to implement the Design Review Panel Pilot Project for Toronto recognized the significance of good design in city building. Implementation of the Pilot Project is a timely step to strengthen the development approvals process to contribute to building a dynamic, vital and beautiful City. Approval of the Panel membership will allow the Pilot Project to commence.

CONTACT

Robert Freedman
Director, Urban Design
City Planning Division
Tel: 416-392-1126
Fax: 416-392-1744
rfreedm@toronto.ca

Ted Tyndorf, Chief Planner and Executive Director

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Confidential Information
Design Review Panel Pilot Project – Recommended Panel Membership