



The City of Vaughan is recruiting members for a newly established Design Review Panel

Design excellence will play a key role in meeting future challenges for city development and intensification, and will serve as a basis for creating a more liveable and beautiful city. High quality design of the buildings in which we live and work and the public realm in which we gather, move about and recreate is important in order to help Vaughan achieve its cultural, social, economic and environmental objectives. The Design Review Panel, a 2 year pilot project, will establish a valuable voice for design and a leadership role for design professionals within the development approvals process to promote the creation of a wonderful public realm, an attractive and pedestrian-oriented built form and sustainable and green buildings.

Role

In its advising role, the Panel will provide expert, professional advice to City Planning staff on proposed high density and/or complex public and private developments. The Panel will act as an independent advisory body to the Planning Department, in order to assist in achieving high quality architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, and environmental sustainability in development.

Panel

The Panel will consist of twelve members including the chair. The mix of design professionals will include: six architects; two landscape architects; one urban designer (architect, landscape architect or planner); one engineer with sustainability expertise; and, two other individuals with expertise in planning, urban design, architecture or landscape architecture.

Qualifications

All Panel members must be registered members in good standing with their respective professional associations: Ontario Association of Architects; Ontario Association of Landscape Architects and /or the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects; Ontario Professional Planners Institute; and the Professional Engineers of Ontario or Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. Panel members should be recognized experts in their fields with a minimum of 15 years of practice. LEED certification is an asset. Expertise in the following is encouraged:

- architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, planning and sustainability
- range of project scales and types, including large scale development; local and international
- master planning
- peer review
- professional research and academic involvement

Timeframe

City Council has approved a 2-year Pilot Project during which time, significant public and private projects will be reviewed across the City. Members of the Design Review Panel will participate for a 2 year term, at the discretion of Council. The Panel is scheduled to begin in September 2011 and will meet every 3 to 5 weeks depending on the number of applications.

Conflict of Interest

Panel members will not be excluded from bidding and carrying out work on projects in the City of Vaughan which are reviewed by the Panel. Where a conflict exists, Panel members will be required to declare the conflict and not participate in the review of that project.

The Panel's **Terms of Reference** are available on the page below.

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and CV by July 29, 2011 to:

Rob Bayley, Manager of Urban Design
City of Vaughan, Development Planning Department
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TERMS OF REFERENCE DESIGN REVIEW PANEL PILOT PROJECT

1.0 Purpose of Design Review Panel

The Design Review Panel is strictly an advisory body and makes recommendations only. It does not have authority to approve or refuse projects or make policy decisions. It is an independent design advisory body to the Planning Department and is not intended to replace the development approval process, or the role of Council. It is an additional stream of consultation to enhance the development approval process.

2.0 Duties of the Panel:

- to provide independent advice to staff, applicants, and their consultants, prior to and following the submission of relevant development applications in order to aid development proponents in delivering projects which contribute good quality design in the public realm;
- to promote the understanding of design quality, and provide advice on other mechanisms and initiatives in achieving high quality design, and
- to foster an effective working relationship with the development industry.

3.0 Scope of Work

The Panel will evaluate development applications brought forward to it, and provide professional objective advice to the Commissioner of Planning, at the site plan pre-application and application stages, on matters of design that affect the public realm, including the design of proposed buildings, site plans, structures, open spaces, and associated streetscapes in order to promote and uphold standards of design excellence.

Whenever possible, it is recommended that perspective applicants be required to undertake pre-application consultation with Staff and the Design Reviews Panel. The mechanism for accomplishing this requirement, is a component of the Bill 51 conformity process which was approved by City Council on December 14, 2009.

Design Review Panel Membership

- (i) The Design Review Panel will consist of 12 volunteer members with not less than seven (7) members for any given meeting, who have been appointed for a period of two years. The Panel will comprise at least six (6) architects, two (2) landscape architects, one (1) engineer, one (1) urban designer and two (2) other individuals with experience in planning, design or engineering.
- (ii) The City will issue a request for Expressions of Interest for Panel members and will include criteria to ensure an appropriate mix of professionals with appropriate expertise.
- (iii) The criteria for Panel membership nomination will be developed on best practices research of other municipalities with Design Review Panels and tailored to Vaughan's local needs. Emphasis will be placed on qualified design professionals who are well respected among their peers.

- (i) City staff will nominate panel members from expressions of interest to ensure appropriate panel membership mix, and make recommendations for approval by City Council.
- (ii) Panel members will serve a two year term.
- (iii) The Panel members are to be non-paid positions. Traveling expenses to Panel meetings will be covered by the City.
- (iv) Each member of the Panel has the duty to advise of any conflict of interest with respect to development applications being reviewed by the Panel. In this regard the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act will apply and the Panel member shall decline to participate in the review of that application.
- (v) No City staff or members of Council shall be appointed to the Design Review Panel.

4.0 Panel Nomination Criteria

Emphasis will be placed on qualified design professionals who are well respected among their peers, who have a broad range of experience.

The following criteria will be employed to nominate members of the Design Review Panel:

- (i) Membership in a professional design association:
 - a. Ontario Association of Architects,
 - b. Ontario Association of Landscape Architects,
 - c. Ontario Professional Planners Institute, or
 - d. Professional Engineers of Ontario,
 - e. Toronto, Society of Architects.
- (ii) Minimum 15 years of practice in their respective field.
- (ii) The Panel shall have a wide range of relevant professional experience including:
 - a. High quality design in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, planning and engineering,
 - b. Mix of local and international practice
 - c. Mix of project scales
 - d. Mix of project types (commercial, residential, institutional, parks and public space design)
 - e. Knowledge and practice of sustainable design, and
 - f. Professional research and academic involvement.
- (iv) Respected among peers as recognized by awards, publications and teaching appointments.

5.0 Meeting Schedule

- (i) The Commissioner of Planning or his designate(s) will be responsible for the management/operation of the Design Review Panel.
- (ii) The Design Review Panel will meet on a monthly basis as required, during regular work hours.

- (iii) The members of the Design Review Panel shall appoint, from their members, a Chairperson, who will preside over discussions to ensure matters brought forward for discussion are fairly considered.
- (iii) Lobbying of the Design Review Panel members by applicants or others is strictly prohibited.
- (iv) Minutes of the meeting and the recording of the Panel Recommendations will be the responsibility of the Development Planning Department.
- (v) Individual Panel Members should not be identified in the minutes; however, individual specific comments can be recorded without attribution.
- (vi) The Minutes will be reviewed by relevant staff and the Chair prior to distribution to the Panel Members and Applicant in final form.
- (vii) Minutes will be forwarded to the Panel Members, staff and applicant as soon as possible after the meeting, in order to provide timely written summaries of the review.
- (viii) Panel Members will be asked to approve the minutes at the next Panel meeting and will have opportunity to comment on the minutes at that time.
- (ix) Applicants will not have the opportunity or ability to request any changes to the minutes.

6.0 Meeting Procedures

- (i) Panel meetings will be attended by appropriate City staff as required. Planning staff will make a brief presentation to provide the Panel with an understanding of the planning and technical analysis of the project outlining its context, background, scope, related policies, design policies or guidelines and to reiterate the design concerns which staff would like the panel to address.
- (ii) The applicant and their design consultant will be given an opportunity to make a brief presentation to explain the project objectives and how it responds to the City's policies.
- (iii) Subsequent to staff and proponent presentation the panel will have the opportunity to ask questions of the project team on any aspect of their development proposal.
- (iv) The Panel will then review the presentation material, followed by a discussion on the merits of the design of the project. With the guidance of the Chairperson, the Panel will formulate their recommendations for the project at the end of the Design Review Panel meeting.
- (v) The Panel's comments will be based on Council approved land use and urban design policies. The role of the Panel is to help interpret the policy for specific sites and projects and point out areas of concern that need to be resolved respecting proposed developments.
- (vi) Following the meeting, the Development Planning Department will undertake a review of the recommendations and determine the appropriate actions to be taken by the applicant.
- (vii) The Development Planning Department will advise the Panel on actions taken, as a result of the Panel's recommendation, prior to the following Design Review Panel meeting.

7.0 Presentation Materials

- (i) Presentation materials for projects for review must be submitted not less than three (3) weeks prior to the meeting.
- (ii) Presentation material should contain the following information:
 - Key Plan;
 - Colour copies of the site plan, building elevations and landscape plan;
 - Photographs of surrounding lands and streetscape;
 - Coloured renderings, digital perspectives or a physical massing model showing the proposed development and its relationship to surrounding lands;
 - Building elevations and materials used;
 - Floor plans of ground floors
 - Brief project description.
- (iii) All presentation material should be mounted on panels not greater than 0.9m x 1.2m (3' x 4') in size.

In addition, twenty (20) copies of the presentation material in a bound booklet Form being no larger than 28 cm x 43 cm (11" x 17" landscape format) shall also be provided by the applicant to the Development Planning Department.
- (iv) The applicant may choose to prepare a Power Point Presentation with the above information to further describe the proposal to the Panel at the Design Review Panel meeting.
- (v) Meeting agendas along with copies of the presentation material and Development Planning Department information will be forwarded to the Design Review Panel members and the applicant, not less than two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting.

8.0 Integration of Development Approvals

To ensure that the Design Review Panel process is appropriately matched with the development approvals process, meeting will be held on a monthly basis. The meeting schedules will be coordinated with Council meeting to ensure that projects are moved through the approvals process in a timely manner. Meeting schedules will be monitored and adjusted if required.

9.0 Monitoring

A significant aspect of the Design Review Panel Pilot Project is the continual refinement of the Panel's process and evaluation of its function during the trial period. Accordingly, it will be necessary to monitor the Panel's function by collecting feedback from applicants and design consultants whose projects have been reviewed and to evaluate any necessary changes that may be needed to the procedures. Planning Staff will evaluate the pilot project and provide an interim report to Council after the first year with a further report at the end of the second year of the project.