Urban Design Report/Brief

PURPOSE:

This document explains the guidelines for the preparation of an Urban Design Report/Brief which may be required for the submission of an application under the *Planning Act*. All Urban Design Reports/Briefs shall follow the guidelines referenced in this document.

An Urban Design Report is also sometimes referred to as an Urban Design Brief.

The purpose of an Urban Design Report/Brief is to demonstrate how a proposed development complies with urban design policies from the Urban and Rural Hamilton Official Plans and other applicable design guideline documents. An Urban Design Brief should provide the urban design rationale for the urban design components of a development. It cannot simply be a reflection of, or argument for a preferred development scheme. Additionally, it is not intended to replace a Planning Justification Report but instead should explain why the proposed development represents the optimum design solution.

An Urban Design Report/Brief may be needed for a Zoning By-law Amendment or Site Plan Control application. In addition, if the subject property is located within a Design Priority Area, the applicant may be required to consult with the City's Design Review Panel prior to submitting a formal application. The requirement to consult with the Design Review Panel will be confirmed at the Formal Consultation stage. The need to consult with the Design Review Panel is a proposal-based submission requirement in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan and Rural Hamilton Official Plan checklists for the submission of an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Plan of Subdivision, and Site Plan Control Application. A summary of the Design Review Panel's comments and the design response to those comments will be required as part of an Urban Design Report.

PREPARED BY:

Urban Design Reports must be prepared by a qualified design professional such as a Registered Architect, Landscape Architect, or Registered Professional Planner.

CONTENTS:

An Urban Design Report will typically apply to individual sites proposed for development or re-development with one or more buildings and related site features such as parking, landscaping and loading / storage spaces or facilities. The Report should provide the information needed to review the location and design of buildings, compatibility and fit within the context, vehicular (including emergency vehicles), cyclist and pedestrian circulation systems, parking, buffers, site landscaping, streetscaping, servicing areas, and any other relevant components. The contents of an Urban Design Report may be scoped through the formal consultation process. A pre-study consultation with staff may be required to confirm a terms of reference prior to initiating a Sun Shadow Study.

An Urban Design Report/Brief must include the following sections of text:

- Table of Contents
- Background and Context
    - Description of existing on-site attributes and considerations;
    - Description of existing topography and vegetation;
    - Description of existing building(s) and/or structures(s), including architectural style, design, massing, size and materials; and,
    - Description of context within community, neighbourhood, streetscape and site.
- Design Requirements
    - Description of applicable design policies and guidelines.
- Proposal Site Design
    - Description of the proposal;
    - Description of site design and specific site design components such as building location(s), building entrance(s), vehicular (including emergency vehicles), cyclist and pedestrian circulation, waste management collection, loading, storage and utility areas, proposed grading, stormwater management items, noise attenuation, lighting, signage, etc.;
    - Description of proposed built form (design, proportions, heights, roofline, massing, façade treatments, materials, etc.);
    - Description of functional landscape requirements; and,
    - Description of design constraints such as lot size, grading, natural and

heritage impacts

- Analysis of Proposal and Recommendations
    - Describe how the proposal is guided and informed by applicable design requirements;
    - Analyze how the proposal fits into the existing context;
    - Analyze how the proposed building is designed to be sensitive to the existing and planned neighbourhood;
    - Analyze how the proposed landscape design enhances the aesthetics and function of both the site and neighbourhood;
    - Describe any other considerations, such as (but not limited to): public realm upgrades, accessibility, safety, heritage resources and natural heritage;
    - Provide professional recommendations that will ensure the general intent of the applicable urban design policies and guidelines are achieved; and,
    - If applicable, provide draft zone provisions and conditions of approval.

The following plans, drawings, images, and other information must also be included in the Urban Design Report where applicable:

- Contextual mapping and photographs illustrating existing site conditions and surrounding context. The photographs' location should be referenced on the contextual map. Include an area of approximately 500m radius;
- Illustration of the proposal:
    - Contextual Site Plan that shows the proposal in the context of abutting properties, key destinations, and linkages within a 100m radius (a larger radius may be requested for larger/more complex projects). Contextual elements illustrated on the Contextual Site Plan should include:
        - transportation networks for cars, cyclists, and pedestrians;
        - focal points/nodes;
        - gateways;
        - parks/open spaces;
        - topography;
        - views towards the site;
        - the urban pattern (streets, blocks);
        - future and current proposals;
        - public art;
        - heritage resources; and,
        - height analysis of the surrounding context for all tall building proposals;
    - Detailed Site Plan, Floor Plans, and coloured Elevation Drawings;
    - Conceptual Landscape Plan;
    - Section Plans; and,
    - Elevation Drawings in context, showing proposed facades alongside facades of important or relevant buildings adjacent to the subject site'
- 3D Model Renderings in context placing particular emphasis on the first few

storeys and how the project responds and relates to its urban context. Perspective drawings should be set within the existing streetscape, illustrating how the proposed development's design and scale relate to the existing context;
- Angular Plane Diagrams, as prescribed through applicable City guidelines or requirements;
- Results and discussion of any Shadow Study as it relates to the proposed design solution and its contextual fit;
- Block Context Plan to illustrate and analyze the development proposal in both existing and planned context within the surrounding block. The plan should contemplate what is the existing and/or potential development/redevelopment pattern for the block, such as vehicular (including emergency vehicles), cyclists and pedestrian routes, orientation and organization of massing, location of open spaces, relationships with adjacent streets, and how the proposed development will fit in and support these patterns, where desirable;
- Phasing of development;
- Summary of the Design Review Panel commentary (where applicable); and,
- Response to the Design Review Panel comments (where applicable) and identify where the proposal may have changed in response to comments.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Official Plans

Official Plan | City of Hamilton

Urban Design Reports Information Page

Guidelines for Urban Design Reports | City of Hamilton

Urban Design Guidelines

Urban Design Guidelines | City of Hamilton

Design Review Panel

Design Review Panel | City of Hamilton

Sites located within Design Priority Areas will be required to be reviewed by the City's Design Review Panel. Design Priority Areas include:

- Downtown Hamilton Secondary Plan Area
- Areas of major change and corridors of gradual change within the West Harbour Secondary Plan Area
- Primary corridors as shown on Schedule E of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan
- Any other large scale project across the City selected by the Director of Planning.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY:

Urban Design, Planning and Economic Development Department

CONTACT:

Urban Design, Planning and Economic Development Department
Urban.Design@hamilton.ca