



Waterfront Design Review Panel Terms of Reference

Background

Toronto's revitalized waterfront must be characterized by excellence in urban design. What is built on the waterfront, from buildings to streets to parks and public art, will set new standards for architecture and public space across the city. To help achieve and uphold these standards, the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation is creating the Waterfront Design Review Panel.

The panel will provide objective, professional advice and contribute to a culture of quality by signaling to developers and designers that high quality design is a critical consideration for the development of Toronto's waterfront. The panel will be advisory and in no way replace the City of Toronto's regulatory approvals process.

The City of Vancouver, the City of Niagara Falls and the National Capital Commission in Ottawa have established, well respected design review panels. The City of Ottawa also recently approved the creation of an urban design review panel.

Roles

The role of the Waterfront Design Review Panel will be to provide advice primarily in six areas.

- 1. *Review of Responses to TWRC Development Requests for Proposals***
The panel will review and provide advice to TWRC on the design component of development requests for proposals as part of the RFP evaluation process.
- 2. *Review of Development Applications as they are circulated by the City of Toronto***
TWRC is a commenting agency to the City of Toronto on development applications in the Central Waterfront. As applications are circulated to TWRC, TWRC will ask the panel to review them. The advice of the panel will be submitted to the City of Toronto as part of TWRC's comments.

3. ***Review of Projects in the Public Realm***
The panel will review and make recommendations to TWRC regarding plans for the public realm including parks, streets and public art.
4. ***Design Competitions***
The panel will review and provide advice to TWRC as part of the evaluation process for park and public spaces design competitions as required.
5. ***Precinct Plans***
The panel will review and provide advice to TWRC on waterfront precinct plans as required.
6. ***As Needed Design Advice***
From time to time, the panel will provide design advice to TWRC on a variety of design matters.

The panel will carry out its work within the framework of the City of Toronto's Official Plan, the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, TWRC Precinct Plans, relevant urban design guidelines and zoning by-laws. Sustainability will be a critical factor in the review process.

Procedures

The panel's recommendations are advisory. The panel will provide recommendations to TWRC and, when appropriate, to the City of Toronto. The relationship to the city's internal Site Plan review process will evolve over time.

The panel will meet every six to eight weeks. In most instances, the panel will operate in public. Scheduled meetings will be posted on the TWRC website.

The panel will be made up of 11 members as identified in the membership section below. Generally, the panel will operate by consensus. If consensus is not reached, majority and minority reports will be issued.

The projects that the panel reviews will be presented to the panel by the responsible designer or design team. If this is not possible, TWRC's VP Planning and/or the City of Toronto's Director of Urban Design will present the projects.

When required, staff from the City of Toronto may also make presentations to the panel to ensure that the panel is aware of critical issues surrounding a particular application. The City of Toronto's Chief Planner will advise when such presentations are required.

TWRC will provide administrative support for the panel. TWRC will ensure that panel minutes and reports are drafted and circulated in a timely manner. Panel minutes and reports will be publicly available on the TWRC website.

Timeframe for Review

Meetings of the Design Review Panel will be scheduled every six to eight weeks. An agenda will be finalized one week prior to meeting dates. A “Design Review Panel Meeting Report” will be issued within two weeks of the meeting date. This report will be sent to TWRC’s CEO and when appropriate, to the City of Toronto’s Chief Planner. It will also be posted on the TWRC website.

Membership

The panel will be made up of a chair and ten professionals who are recognized experts in their fields. Panel membership will be structured as follows:

- Six members of the Toronto Society of Architects and/or the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada
- Two members of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects and/or the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects
- One member of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute
- One member of the Professional Engineers of Ontario or the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers
- The chair who is a member of one of the above professional organizations

TWRC’s VP Planning and the City of Toronto’s Director of Urban Design will attend panel meetings but will not be members of the panel. Other City of Toronto staff may attend the meetings as required.

Panel members will not be excluded from bidding on and carrying out work on waterfront projects. In such circumstances, panel members will be required to declare a conflict and not participate in the review.

Duration of Appointment

Members will be appointed for a term of up to three years. Members can be reappointed. The terms of the initial members will be staggered to ensure an orderly transition to new members.

Selection of Members

Working with the relevant professional associations, TWRC will seek applications from qualified individuals. TWRC will appoint the panel’s first chair. Other panel members will be selected by TWRC in partnership with the City of Toronto and the inaugural chair.

