

Urban Design Brief

Terms of Reference

1. Description

An Urban Design Brief is intended to illustrate how a development proposal represents high-quality and context sensitive design that implements policies of the Official Plan, relevant secondary plans, and Council approved plans and guidelines. The Urban Design Brief should not replace or replicate the Planning Rationale, it is intended to be a highly graphic document that is complimentary to the Planning Rationale. The purpose of this Terms of Reference is to assist the applicant to organize and substantiate the design approach and considerations in support of the proposed development and to assist in the review of the proposal.

2. Authority To Request / When Required

An Urban Design Brief will be required for the following development applications:

Official Plan Amendments:

Per *Planning Act*, Section 22 (4) and (5) for information or materials required by the City to review an Official Plan Amendment Application if the official plan contains provisions relating to requirements under this subsection, which propose increases in height or density.

Zoning By-law Amendments:

Per *Planning Act*, Section 34 (10.2) for information or materials required by the City to review a Zoning By-law Amendment Application to permit the extension or enlargement of any land, building or structure used for any purpose prohibited by the by-law, which propose increases in height or density.

Site Plan Control Applications:

Per *Planning Act*, Section 41 (3.4) for information or materials required by the City to review a Site Plan Control Application and Section 41 (4) and 41 (4.1.1) for elements, facilities and works where the appearance impacts matters of health, safety, accessibility, sustainable design or the protection of adjoining lands.

An Urban Design Brief is a requirement for all Site Plan Control Application thresholds in accordance with the City of Ottawa Site Plan Control By-law as amended; with the exception of a “Rural Small” Site Plan Control application.



For residential buildings with 25 or more residential units, the City has authority under Section 41 (4) paragraph 2 to require. For residential buildings with less than 25 residential units, the City has authority to require for such buildings based on 11.1 (3) of the Official Plan and 41 (5) of the *Planning Act* if the units are within the Urban area or the High-performance Development Standard threshold in the rural area, as per the Site Plan Control By-law.

For all other uses (non-residential and mixed-use) the City has authority under Section 41 (4) paragraph 2 to require.

Plan of Subdivision

Per *Planning Act*, Section 51 (18) for information or materials required by the City to review Plan of Subdivision applications, which include multiple blocks of development planned for medium and/or high-rise development and a mix of land uses.

3. Content

The content for an Urban Design Brief is itemized in the following checklist. Each required item must be discussed and/or illustrated to the appropriate level of detail, commensurate with the complexity of the proposal. Required item(s) are determined by the lead City Urban Designer at the pre-consultation meeting and will be selected from the checklist below:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Brief description of the design intent behind the development proposal. This description should be more design detailed, and not replicate the description within the Planning Rationale.
- Project statistics, including gross floor area, the breakdown of floor area for different uses, total number and detailed breakdown of units, total number and detailed breakdown of vehicle and bike parking, building heights, lot coverage, etc. Project statistics should be illustrated in a table.
- Rendering of the proposal.

DESIGN DIRECTIVE(S)

- A concise summary and response to the applicable City's design policies, including from the Official Plan, and City urban design guidelines. A more



detailed response shall be provided for any applicable urban design criteria that are not being met by the proposal.

- A response to urban design directions provided at the various pre-consultation meetings with City staff.

SITE, CONTEXT, AND ANALYSIS

Photographs, maps, diagrams, and images may be utilized along with brief explanatory text to document and analyze condition and context of the site. The requested information should cover area within a 100 metre radius of a development site. A larger radius may be requested for larger / more complex projects.

- Photographs of existing site conditions and surrounding area, including a numbered map pinpointing where each photo is taken. Correspond these numbers with the site photos and include arrows illustrating the direction of the photograph.
- Perspective images to and / or from the site.
- Protected view corridors or views of interest that may be impacted by the proposed development.
- Built and natural heritage assets on site and adjacent area.
- Microclimate conditions of the site.
- Key uses, destinations, and spatial elements in the surrounding area such as focal points/nodes, gateways, parks/open spaces, and public arts.
- Urban pattern (streets, blocks).
- Characteristics of adjacent streets and public realm.
- Mobility networks, such as transit stations, street networks, cycling facilities, pedestrian routes and connections, and parking.
- Future and current development proposals on adjacent properties.
- The planned functions of the adjacent properties, such as the permitted building envelope under current zoning.

DESIGN RESEARCH

Diagrams, 3D images and other tools may be utilized to explain and illustrate design aspirations, alternatives and proposed outcomes.



- Parti diagrams, sketches, and precedent images.
- Alternative site plan options.
- Alternative massing options.
- Design evolution.
- Massing of the proposed development in the existing context.
- Massing of the proposed development in the planned context. The planned context may be represented by the current zoning permissions OR policy criteria if zoning is not in keeping with Official Plan direction.
- Block Plan illustrating potential future development in the area in which the proposed site is situated.
- Built form transition between the proposed development and the surrounding area.
- Response to abutting public realm conditions beyond the boundaries of the site.
- Street cross sections that show the building wall to building wall conditions of the adjacent streets.
- Approach to sustainable design as it relates to the City's High-performance Development Standards or any other accredited system such as LEED.
- Approach to bird-safe design as it relates to the City's Bird-Safe Design Guidelines

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS – APPENDIX

The following appendix of additional materials is only required when an application is subject to review by the City's Urban Design Review Panel as the Urban Design Brief will be used as the Urban Design Review Panel Presentation. The requirement for the submission of the following drawing(s) and studies are made separately at the pre-consultation by the Lead Planner and are the subject of other Terms of Reference. The lead City Urban Designer will indicate the required item(s) from the checklist below to be provided as an appendix to the Urban Design Brief.

- Site Plan
- Landscape Plan



- Plan of Subdivision
- Grading and Drainage Plan
- Site Servicing Plan
- Building elevation(s) of the proposed building(s). Conceptual drawings may suffice in support of a Zoning By-law and/or Official Plan Amendment.
- Floor Plan(s) of the proposed building(s). Conceptual drawings may suffice in support of a Zoning By-law and/or Official Plan Amendment
- Wind Analysis
- Shadow Analysis
- High-performance Development Standards Checklist
- Heritage Impact Statement

4. Roles and Responsibilities / Qualifications

The Urban Design Brief is required to be signed by a member holding a professional membership with the OAA, OALA, OPPI, and/or CIP, or equivalent professional organization; and should include materials prepared by urban designer(s), licensed architect(s), licensed landscape architect(s), and registered planner(s).

5. Submission Requirements

- 8.5x11 or 11x17 package (landscape orientation preferred)
- Electronic copies of all required studies and plans must be supplied in Adobe .PDF format and are to be unlocked and flattened.
- Supporting Georeferenced Digital CAD/BIM/GIS files for 3D Building Massing Model (in accordance with the City's [3D Massing Submission Requirements](#)) is required for all development applications associated with a mid-rise and/or high-rise building where a design brief is a requirement of a complete application.

