



# TOWN OF NEW TECUMSETH

## Manual for the Preparation of an Urban Design Report

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## Manual for the Preparation of an Urban Design Report

### 1. Introduction to the Manual

The purpose of the manual is to provide direction to applicants to assist them in completing an Urban Design Report (UDR) submission and to expedite the approval process.

The complete review of urban design matters in relation to proposed development is made available to municipalities through the *Planning Act* and Urban Design Report submissions are an integral part of the review process. Urban design aspects of the planning process contribute to the shape and form of communities, neighbourhoods, and downtown, commercial and industrial areas in the Town and they are concerned with the experience that people have as they move through the Town.

Urban Design Reports provide a design framework for new development that is realized through the creation of an overall vision and implementing objectives. The Urban Design Report should be supportive, but is recognized as being separate from the detailed engineering design review and approval process, which should be discussed with the Town's Engineering Department. The engineering design process will supercede the Urban Design Report in the areas of design and construction of rights-of-way and municipal infrastructure.

This manual acknowledges applicable legislative parameters and policies of the Town and describes the steps and information needed in completing a UDR. In addition, insight is provided on the Town's interests as they relate to the associated zoning and in particular residential building design for plans of subdivisions.

### 2. Policy Framework

Urban Design Reports are provided in accordance with the following existing hierarchy of policy:

2.1 *The Planning Act* provides planning tools for the comprehensive review of urban design by a municipality for development applications, subject to Official Plan policy and passing of a Site Plan By-law. Sections 41 and 51 of the *Planning Act* allow the Town to review and require urban design elements such as building massing, the relationship between the building and the street, provision of public access to interior walkways and stairs, exterior building design, sustainable design and facility accessibility for persons with disabilities.

2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides land use planning and development policy for the creation and management of the built environment in relation to the Provincial vision to maintain strong sustainable communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy. With the influence of the PPS on the overall shape, form and pattern of municipalities, the fundamental principals of the PPS must be complied with for an UDR submission.

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- 2.3 The Town of New Tecumseth Official Plan requires Urban Design Report submissions along with setting out policy on urban design in the Town including policy for maintaining the existing urban design character of the Town. Section 7.7 on Urban Design sets out a list of policies that apply to all development requiring planning approval, while additional policies are located within specific land use designations. Urban Design objectives address the public, semi-public and private realms in relation to design elements such as site and building design, streetscape, roads and utilities with respect to the landscape design of the public sector and not the design and construction of the right of way and municipal infrastructure.
- 2.4 The Town of New Tecumseth Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) dated April 2002 prepared by Brook Mcilroy Planning + Urban Design and adopted by Council, promotes a framework for high quality development in the Town that is intended to be incorporated in the preparation of Urban Design Reports.
- 2.5 The Town's Commercial/Industrial Landscape Guidelines and Drive-thru Guidelines also adopted by Council, provide urban and landscape design objectives in relation to site plans that shall be incorporated where appropriate in the preparation of Urban Design Reports.
- 2.6 The Urban Design Manual provides direction on the Town's expectations for Urban Design Report submissions helping to facilitate submissions through the development application review and approval process.

### **3. Purpose of Urban Design Reports**

An Urban Design Report is a policy document that must be approved by Council in relation to a specific development and its purpose is two fold.

First, it identifies an overall design vision for the proposed development that is unique to the site and complements, enhances and fits within the context of the site and its surroundings. The vision and how it will be created should be fully described in the UDR. For instance, the vision may draw from the character of existing housing and



Figure 1: Photos of existing housing from established residential neighbourhoods within New Tecumseth

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Figure 2: View of main collector street from an established residential neighbourhood within New Tecumseth.



Second, an UDR indicates clearly how the vision will be achieved in detail by the proposed development, such as by providing home model details that promote historic contextual design, in accordance with principles, objectives and standards set out in the report. The UDR should be written to provide clear direction that can be implemented and monitored in the final design and development stages (i.e. Engineering Drawing Submissions).

#### 4. Urban Design Report Approval Process

The Planning Department is responsible for coordinating the review and approval of Urban Design Reports. Where UDRs are submitted for plans of subdivision the Planning Department Development Unit Planner assigned to the application circulates UDR submissions to appropriate Town departments and agencies. Upon receipt of comments from the circulation, a comprehensive set of comments is forwarded to the Owner's consultant and/or applicant for implementation. Revised submission(s) are re-circulated until there is a consensus for approval, at which time planning staff report to Council with recommendations. Council is responsible for making the final decision on Urban Design Reports. Once approved the report is included as a schedule to the subdivision agreement and recommendations are implemented through: the zoning, the design of the Engineering Drawings, and are considered as building permit applications are received. For an overview on the process, please see Appendix 1, Urban Design Report, Approval Process.

With regard to site plan development applications, the Engineering Department coordinates the site plan approval process and information should be submitted to the Engineering Department for circulation. Planning staff complete reviews and provide comments on the site plan drawings, studies and reports including urban design information, through the site plan application review process. Once the site plan submission is found satisfactory, the Engineering Department prepares a site plan agreement and circulates it for review, and an Engineering Report with recommendations is taken to Council for decision. Site plans are implemented by a Site Plan Agreement being registered on the land title of the property by the Town's Solicitor.

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### 5. Initiation, Research and Preliminary Meetings

Urban Design Reports are generally prepared at the early stages of design of the development and submitted in accordance with the Official Plan and/or Secondary Plan(s), and/or as an approved condition of Draft Plan of Subdivision or Plan of Condominium. Larger site plan applications may require full UDR submissions, where coloured rendered architectural elevation drawings maybe sufficient for smaller site plans. Necessary Urban Design information can be confirmed by Town staff in a pre-consultation meeting or at the time of the first circulation comments.

In the preparation of an Urban Design Report we recommend consultants have a good understanding of the Town of New Tecumseth, the proposed development site and features that are available in the context of the site. In addition to completing a community tour and site context inspections, we recommend a thorough review of the Town's website ([www.town.newtecumseth.on.ca](http://www.town.newtecumseth.on.ca)), which provides the Town's Strategic Vision, Site Plan Submission Guidelines, departmental policies, by-laws, current activities, and other relevant information that will help in developing ideas and the vision for the proposed development. For instance, in its Strategic Plan: Building on the Foundation, the Town of New Tecumseth recognizes the unique rural and small town character of the Town, which is precious to its residents and requires that it be maintained. As an example the photos in Figure 3 are intended to illustrate some of this special character you find in the Town.



Figure 3: New Tecumseth Character photos

Pre-consultation meetings with staff are encouraged as they present an opportunity for applicants to discuss ideas, share information and/or ask questions. Where appropriate Town staff can assist with site specific background information and advise on specific requirements. Special site enhancements are encouraged and may be reviewed in working meetings with appropriate staff.

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### 6. Essential Design Elements

Consideration should be given in the preparation of Urban Design Reports to the following list of items as is necessary:

- The *principles, objectives and standards* in the UDR should be written so that they are specific to the proposed development, can be implemented and/or are measurable in nature. A principle to place pedestrians first for instance can be part of a community vision for an uninterrupted parks and open space system, where the public realm is interconnected with a plethora of trails, sidewalks and pathways identified and described in the UDR. This system may be implemented along with other objectives, such as to provide complete access to all individuals through the provision continuous hard top surfaces, gentle slopes, and access ramps to main entrances of houses and buildings.
- The Urban Design Report should focus on the proposed development clarifying from a design perspective *what is special* and/or *distinct* about the design and what the developer will build/plant/establish to achieve the vision. Examples of proposed enhancements that are consistent with the vision should be included. These may include design elements such as meeting places with kiosks, decorative street edge treatments with special fencing and landscaping, enhanced retaining wall fence designs and streets with a double row of trees and/or paving improvements (as shown in Figure 4 below), along with information on how they will be incorporated into the final engineering design drawings.



Figure 4: Enhancement Photos

- *Figures* including plans, elevations, sections, 3-dimensionals, and axonometrics should be conceptual yet realistic and proportionally reflective of what is being proposed. These concepts will be utilized in the final detailed architectural, engineering and landscape plan drawings that are approved in the next steps of the development approval process.

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- Housing design standards demonstrating the implementation of an interesting and varied streetscape should be included. In this regard we provide the following list of items that are intended to demonstrate design elements that need to be addressed in the UDR.
  - ◇ Total number of units, unit types (i.e. singles, semis, detached etc.) and number of each;
  - ◇ Total number of models and model/elevations including illustrations demonstrating distinctly different models/elevation;
  - ◇ Maximum percentage of each model's elevation type;
  - ◇ Model/elevation placement standards (e.g. no same model/elevation side by side or on opposite sides of the street or at same intersections or used more than 10% of the time, etc.);
  - ◇ Building Height and Massing standards (e.g.. bungalows located beside 2 storey houses will be grouped in twos at a minimum, etc.);
  - ◇ Varying setbacks to fronts of houses ( e.g. staggering setbacks every two to three houses a minimum of 0.5m);
  - ◇ Proposed Materials and application standard (i.e. all brick or minimum % brick, % stone veneer, and/or % combinations, etc.);
  - ◇ Features and application standards (e.g. all houses contain porches of varying sizes, key stones, brick quoining, etc.);
  - ◇ Elevation standards and application (i.e. upgraded side yard and/or rear yard elevations to be equal with front elevations on corner lots and/or at certain locations, etc.);
  - ◇ Material types, styles and colours and maximum percentage application including illustrations and colour palate ( i.e. front doors, garage doors, shingles, etc.);
  - ◇ Garage location standards (e.g. no projection beyond the front face of the house elevation, staggering garage locations at certain intervals, etc.);
  - ◇ Garage width standards (e.g. Garage width outside wall to outside wall will not occupy more than 50% of the total main wall frontage);
  - ◇ Agree to the provision of a schedule identifying the colour scheme, building location, and models and elevations chosen for each lot to the Town at regular intervals to be determined according to the size of the development for review of compliance.
- Model designs of houses are not required for the preparation of Urban Design Reports.
- The proposed community or site design visualized in the Urban Design Report shall support the *proposed zoning*. In the event reductions/changes are proposed in relation to zones set out in the Town of New Tecumseth Consolidated Zoning By-Law 96-103, the changes/reductions should be clearly identified and illustrated in the typical illustrations throughout the Urban Design Report.

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- Include a section on the proposed zoning in the Urban Design Report and express how the proposed zoning varies by including a comparison chart in the report showing current zoning provisions and proposed zoning changes. To keep things simple, only those zone provisions being changed should be outlined as shown in the example chart below:

#### Example Chart :

<b>Zone Provisions</b>	<b>Current Zoning (Zone)</b>	<b>Proposed Zoning Changes</b>
Ext. Side Yard Set-back	4.2 m	2.4 m
Rear Yard Setback	7.5 m	5.5 m
Height	11 m	13 m

- In addition it should be noted that Urban Design Reports are not specific enough in nature to detail the circumstances associated with every lot. Therefore the provisions included/ proposed will serve as a general guideline and do not guarantee that such zoning provisions will be included within any relevant zoning by-law.

## 7. Format of the Urban Design Report

Generally the Urban Design Report should be organized for easy review and reference and include the following components:

Title Page

Executive Summary Table of Contents:

- Introduction
- Background
- Urban Design Vision and Implementation Strategy
- List of Figures (Maps, Plans, Sections, Elevations, Photo's, Illustrations, etc.)
- Appendices

All figures should be numbered and referenced in the text of the body of the document and preferably placed in close proximity to the text description.

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In order to help with the organization of information, attached is a sample Table of Contents for reference purposes (Appendix 2). This example relates best to a proposed plan of subdivision. An Urban Design Report that is related to a site plan may not need to follow this example nor include all of the sections identified. Each application may tailor the Urban Design Report to the specifics of the proposed development.

#### **8. Length of the Urban Design Report**

The length of the UDR will vary based on the urban design elements and the size and complexity of the development. We recommend that efforts be made to focus on the unique design vision by clearly demonstrating what the vision is and how the vision will be achieved by the developer/owner. Given the visionary nature of the UDR, the approach to illustrating the vision is left to the consultant with a general expectation that typical conditions illustrated in the Report are representative of what will be built.

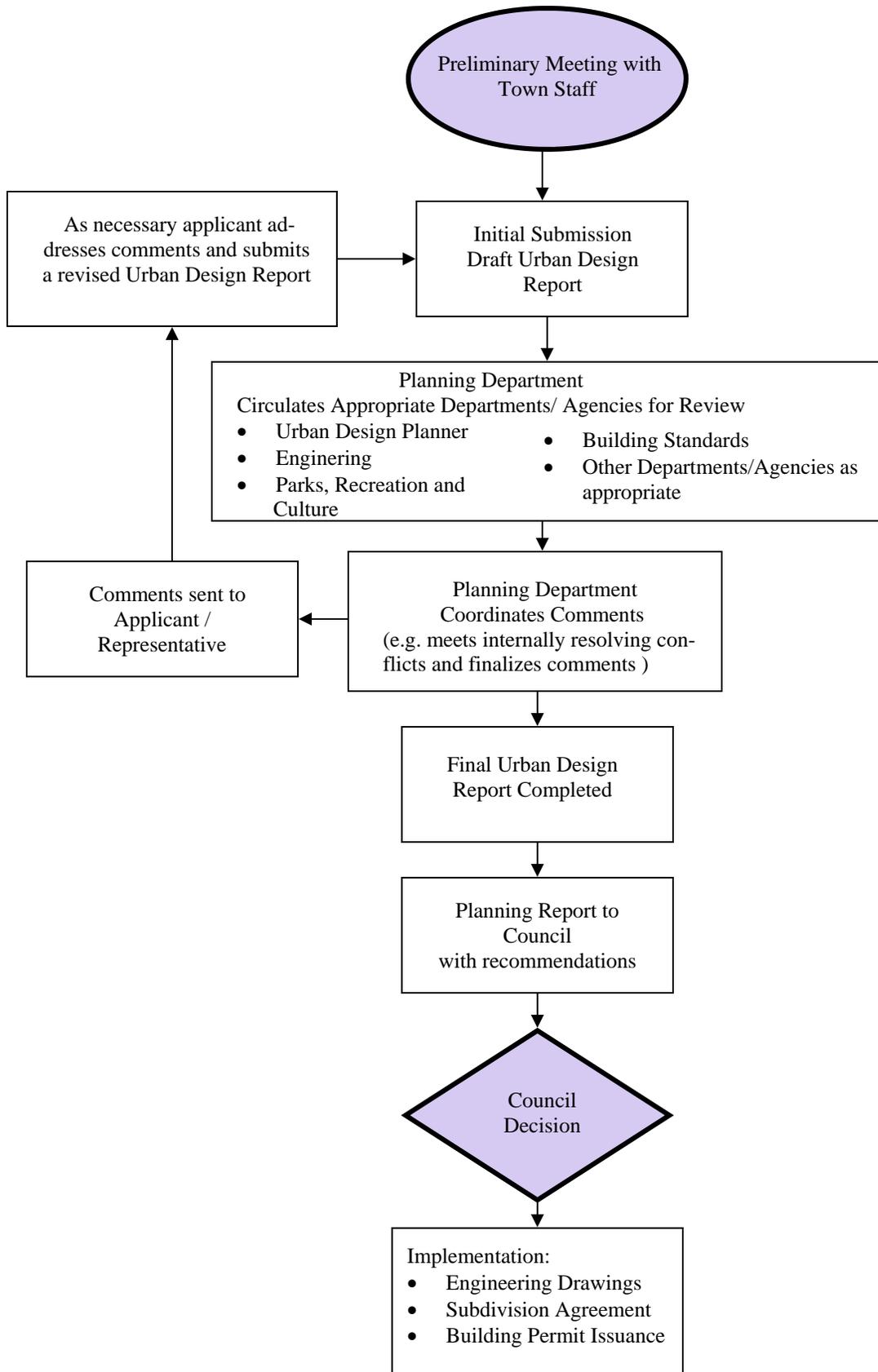
#### **9. Applicable By-laws, Codes and Regulations**

Approval of the Urban Design Report does not exempt developer/owners from conformity with all applicable approvals including existing By-laws, Codes and Regulations. Although every effort will be made to coordinate recommendations of the UDR with applicable requirements, the developer/owner is responsible for ensuring that the development meets existing all requirements or propose amendments accordingly.

#### **10. Conclusion**

Urban Design Reports play an important role early in the planning process creating a design vision for a development that is unique, interesting, and is in accordance with the urban design character desired by the Town of New Tecumseth. The vision is achieved through the provision of implementing objectives and standards intended to guide the next steps of final design.

Innovation and comprehensive design are key aspects in the preparation of an UDR and new ideas for development sites are expected to be emphasized. This Manual provides applicants and their consultants with necessary information on the Town's expectations allowing for the submission of complete Urban Design Report proposals.



## Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
  - 1.1 Site Location
  - 1.2 Site Description and Surrounding Context
- 2.0 Background
  - 2.1 Planning Basis
  - 2.2 Subdivision/Condominium/Site Plan Development Proposal
  - 2.3 Existing Features and Opportunities for Enhancement (as applicable)
    - 2.4.1 Site Topography
    - 2.4.2 Natural Open Space
    - 2.4.3 Pedestrian trails
    - 2.4.4 Schools, Parks and Institutions
    - 2.4.5 Commercial Uses
    - 2.4.6 Other Uses
- 3.0 Urban Design Vision and Implementation Strategy
  - 3.1 Subdivision/Condominium/Site Plan Urban Design Vision
  - 3.2 Implementing Principles
    - 3.2.1 Variety of the Streetscape
    - 3.2.2 Design Diversity
    - 3.2.3 Pedestrian Movement and Natural Surveillance
    - 3.2.4 Other (as is applicable to the subdivision)
  - 3.3 Landscape Elements (Objectives and Standards)
    - 3.3.1 Street Network
      - 3.3.1.1 Street Hierarchy
      - 3.3.1.2 Priority Lots
      - 3.3.1.3 Street Tree Planting
      - 3.3.1.4 Additional Planting
    - 3.3.2 Gateways and Entry Features
    - 3.3.3 Public Amenity Enhancements
      - 3.3.3.1 Community Mailboxes
      - 3.3.3.2 Utilities Screening/ Landscaping
      - 3.3.3.3 Street Furnishings (e.g. benches, garbage receptacles, bike racks etc.)
      - 3.3.3.4 Pedestrian Lighting (e.g. decorative standard)
      - 3.3.3.4 On-street Parking
    - 3.3.4 Fencing Design
    - 3.3.5 Pedestrian Network (Walkways, Trails & Paths)
    - 3.3.6 Bicycle Routes
    - 3.3.7 Other (as is applicable to the subdivision)
  - 3.4 Building Design (Objectives and Standards)
    - 3.4.1 Building Type, Style and Design
    - 3.4.2 Variety of Housing Types
    - 3.4.3 Building Siting and variety of Streetscapes
    - 3.4.4 Building Treatment along community edges
    - 3.4.5 Building Enhancements

3.4.6 Exterior Design Materials and Colours

3.4.7 Roof Details

3.5 Proposed Zoning to Support Design

3.5.1 Zoning Comparison with relevant Town Standards

3.5.2 Exception Provisions (as applicable)

List of Possible Figures:

- Key Location Plan
- Community Context Plan
- Draft Plan of Subdivision / Condominium/Site Plan
- Zoning Demonstration Plans
- Existing Features Plan
- Photos and/or illustrations demonstrating:
  - Vision and Principles
  - Proposed Landscape Features
  - Architectural Design Concepts
  - Fences and street furnishings
- Streetscape Planting Plan
- Existing and Proposed Pedestrian Walkway, trails and Bicycle Lane Plan
- On-Street Parking/Mailbox Plan
- Fences and street furnishings

Potential Appendices

1. Building Material and Colour Scheme / Palette
2. Design Standard Illustrations (may be incorporated into the document or as a appendix) :
  - Typical streetscape illustrations demonstrating variety and diversity provided in the proposed standards
  - Models /elevation or example elevations, minimum number required to meet targeted percentages
  - Materials - Type, Style and Colour pallette (e.g. brick, stone veneer, shingles, front doors, garage doors etc.)
  - Varied garage setbacks and setbacks to fronts of houses
  - Building Massing
3. Proposed Zoning Standards

Note: The engineering design process will supercede the Urban Design Report in the areas of design and construction of road rights-of-way and municipal infrastructure.