

FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Planning & Budget Committee

SPONSOR: Scott Mabury, Vice President, Operations and Real Estate Partnership, University Operations

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PRESENTER: Same as above.
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: May 7, 2025 for May 14, 2025

AGENDA ITEM: 5

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Design Review Committee: Annual Report, 2024

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Planning and Budget Committee receives reports for information.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

- 1. Planning and Budget [for information] (May 14, 2025)**

HIGHLIGHTS:

As defined in the Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects (“Policy”) dated October 28, 2021, the Design Review Committee is *‘an advisory body to the Administration appointed in accordance with the Design Review Committee Terms of Reference attached as Appendix D in the Policy, comprised of leaders in architecture, landscape design, and the design profession’*.

The Design Review Committee (“DRC”) advises the President or designate on the development of built form environments, in order to enable the University to implement its commitment to a level of excellence in this area comparable to that established for its academic activities. The mandate of the Design Review Committee is defined in the DRC Terms of Reference located on the University Planning Design and Construction website: <https://updc.utoronto.ca/university-planning/reviews-approvals/design-review-committee-drc/>.

During 2024, the Design Review Committee reviewed several major projects that individually and collectively improve the physical beauty of the University's three campuses while providing for much needed new space and functional improvements. The projects represent new construction, as well as renovation and landscape projects demonstrating that a campus is comprised of quality buildings and open space that together contribute to the student experience.

Between January and December of 2024, the DRC met to review three (3) major capital projects. Last year, the DRC Committee reviewed and significantly contributed to the evolution of the following major projects across the three campuses:

St. George Campus

- FASE EngX Building at 88 College

Scarborough Campus

- UTSC Retail and Parking Commons

In addition to the major capital project reviews, a subset of the DRC met to review three (3) minor public facing projects on the St. George & UTM Campuses:

- Academic Wood Tower Signage
- UTSC Sam Ibrahim Building (SIB) Signage
- UTM Pre-Engineered Building*

* *Projects with two (2) reviews during 2024*

Membership of the Design Review Committee throughout 2024:

Dave Lehto (Co-Chair), Chief, University Planning Design & Construction ("UPDC")

Bruce Kuwabara (Co-Chair), KPMB Architects, Partner

Christine Burke (Secretary), Assistant Vice President, University Planning, UPDC

Scott Mabury, Vice President, Operations and Real Estate Partnerships

Renée Daoust, Daoust Lestage Lizotte Stecker, Principal

Juan Du, Dean, Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design

Pat Hanson, gh3 Inc, Principal

Indi Gopinathan, VP Capital Markets & Business Development, Prime Mining, Governing Council member

Don Schmitt, Diamond Schmitt Architects, Principal

Richard Sommer, Director, Global Cities Institute, Professor of Architecture and Urbanism & Dean Emeritus, Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design
Robert Wright, Professor, Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design
Costas Catsaros, Executive Director, Project Development and Controls, UPDC
Deborah Brown, Chief Administrative Officer, University of Toronto Mississauga
Andrew Arifuzzaman, Chief Administrative Officer, University of Toronto Scarborough

Projects are normally presented by the design team to the Design Review Committee three (3) times and may require additional meetings on an as need basis. The first review occurs at the early schematic design stage. The initial presentation is the opportunity to address the overall concept of the project including relevant background and context. This is intended to establish that the proposed building and landscape concept is contextually appropriate to the site and campus, heritage context as applicable, and addresses urban design criteria and massing as outlined by the University's master plans as well as campus wide issues of parking, loading, traffic impact, accessibility and servicing. At this meeting, the DRC also reviews building design requirements such as internal functionality and floor plans, opportunities to elevate student experience, flexibility/adaptability options, sustainable design ambitions of the project with specific reference to University ambitions, and interconnectivity with other buildings.

The consultants will make a second presentation in the design development phase of the project, demonstrating how their proposal responds to the comments of the DRC at the initial presentation and how the project has developed into detailed design. A third presentation, normally the final review, occurs during the design development stage where the details of the project have been further developed. The landscape plan is reviewed for the articulation of open space within the site, opportunities for synthesis within adjacent areas and interconnectivity to the wider context. The palette of building and landscape materials is reviewed and signage may be considered. Throughout the process, the DRC review is considered within the budgetary framework of the project and the method of project delivery.

The DRC conducts reviews of the strength of ideas proposed and provides guidance to explore options that otherwise might not have developed. In its deliberations, the DRC is mindful of the difficult trade-off between expectations, budgetary reality and long-term university goals, seeking a balanced approach to the resolution of design concerns. The DRC is not tasked with the design of the project, but to work with design teams to set high expectations for design, in all aspects. Projects are reviewed with respect to sustainability and environmental concerns reflecting the University's commitment to decisive action against climate change.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

None