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London
CANADA

Dear Colleagues,

As everyone is aware, our community, our province, and our country is in the midst of a housing crisis like nothing experienced before.

Municipalities have been challenged by both the provincial and the federal governments to work to find ways to speed up and streamline processes and get approvals in place to allow builders to get shovels in the ground.

To that end, we have identified the Urban Design Peer Review Panel as a significant contributor to time delays and cost increases. But more importantly the Urban Design Peer Review Panel represents a redundancy that can be easily eliminated, as it truly is a hold over from a time prior to having expertise in-house, or in having design expectations and guidelines embedded in our Official Plan. The UDPRP was implemented at a time when the 1989 Official Plan was in force and effect to address components not embedded in that plan. Today, with appeals completed and the London Plan in full force and effect, and staff in the Planning Department with Urban Design expertise, the UDPRP is now redundant.

The Urban Design Peer Review Panel is not a legislated requirement for cities and having it review planning applications in addition to the work of our staff can add weeks or even months to an application's timeline, and none of the work is binding on our staff recommendations, on the applicant, or on Council.

Therefore, we are asking your support for the following:

That the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to take the necessary steps to provide for the immediate dissolution of the Urban Design Peer Review Panel and provide a related information report to the Planning and Environment Committee outlining the actions undertaken with respect to this matter.

Sincerely,

Shawn Lewis
Deputy Mayor
Ward 2 Councillor

Steve Lehman
PEC Chair
Ward 8 Councillor