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J. Smolarek

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	CITY OF LONDON URBAN DESIGN AWARDS POLICY MEETING ON MAY 28, 2013

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the attached proposed by-law (appendix 2) **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting held on June 11, 2013 to amend Council Policy 19(35) and 19(35A) related to the City of London Urban Design Awards in order for the program to align with the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada's (RAIC) National Urban Design Awards program.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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June 19, 2006 – City of London Urban Design Awards, Updating Council Policy regarding the Urban Design Awards Program

PURPOSE

1. To correct minor typographical and formatting errors and changes
2. To add a new category (Buildings (Small Scale Residential))
3. To change the title of two categories
4. To change the composition of the Urban Design Awards Jury
5. To change the timing of the awards to coincide with the National Urban Design Awards
6. To allow local submissions to also be entered into the National Urban Design Awards

BACKGROUND

Following the previous update of the London Urban Design Awards Program in 2006 and the subsequent awards ceremonies that followed in 2006, 2008, and 2010 it was important for the Planning Division to reflect on and review the current model of the Urban Design Awards Program and how it can further evolve in order to help progress its goal of recognizing, celebrating and inspiring design excellence in the City of London.

There are three intentions of this review of the Awards Program. Firstly, to explore the possibility of including the winning submissions from the London Urban Design Awards Program in the

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RAIC's (Royal Architectural Institute of Canada) National Urban Design Awards Program in order to create an opportunity for individuals, organizations, firms and projects located in London to showcase their developments and compete for Urban Design Awards at the national level. Secondly, validate the awards categories that currently exist and ensure they are compatible with the categories identifies in the National Urban Design Awards Program. And thirdly to review the composition of the Urban Design Awards Jury and explore options of being less prescriptive with the who sits on the Jury as with the existing terms of reference it has proven to be a challenge include the proper individuals and meet also meet the set limitations.

Inclusion into the RAIC National Urban Design Awards

The National Urban Design Awards Program has been established by the RAIC, the Canadian Institute of Planners and the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects in order to recognize individuals, organizations, firms and projects located Canada that have contributed to the quality of life in Canadian cities and their sustainability. Other municipalities that participate in the National Urban Design Awards include Richmond B.C., Edmonton, Calgary, Hamilton, Toronto, Mississauga, Ottawa, and Halifax.

In order for the London Urban Design Awards winning submission(s) to be included into the National Urban Design Awards, the 2012 London Urban Design Awards were postponed by one year to allow for the timing of both Awards programs to be in sync. As the next National Urban Design Awards have been set for 2014, the next London Urban Design Awards will be held in 2013 and biennially after that.

Staff completed a detailed review of the model terms of reference provided by the RAIC for Tier 1 – Municipal Level RAIC Urban Design and found that they are congruent with most sections of the existing City of London Urban Design Awards program terms of reference found under Council Policy 19(35A).

Urban Design Awards Categories

Staff reviewed how the existing four categories (Buildings, Elements, Open Space and Landscapes, and Large Places and Neighbourhoods) fit within the National Urban Design Awards categories. All existing categories can be nested within one of the six categories(Urban Design Plans, Urban Architecture, Civic Design Projects, Urban Fragments, Community Initiatives Award, and Student Projects) found at the national level. At this time three changes are proposed to the City's existing categories. The Buildings category will be split in two in order to include the distinction between small residential buildings and all other buildings, the Elements category will become the Public Realm Enhancements category with minor revisions to the eligibility of projects, and finally the Open Spaces and Landscape category will become Public Spaces and Landscapes.

In the future, two more categories will be proposed in the City's awards program (a People's Choice Award and Student Projects). Although these categories would be beneficial to raising the profile of Urban Design in London as well as nationally, due to the resources required to facilitate the inclusion of these categories it is not feasible to include them at this time. The addition of these categories will be part of a subsequent report within the next 2-4 years.

Urban Design Awards Jury Composition

Currently the London Urban Design Awards Program Jury consists of 7 members. Due to the limited pool of candidates in London it is recommended that the Jury be composed of 5 members with the possibility of appointing designates in case there are any conflicts of interest. The RAIC recommends a jury made up of 3, 5, or 7 jurors with minimum two jurors being members of the RAIC. The proposed composition would fall in line with RAIC guidelines for Municipal Urban Design Awards Programs.

Cost

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The proposed changes to the London's Urban Design Awards Program have no effect on the cost of running the program.

CONCLUSION

Staff believe the proposed changes to the City Urban Design Awards policy, which are necessary for London to participate in the National Urban Design Awards program, are consistent with the intent of the City's award program and a positive means of recognising London's urban design achievement at the national level. A copy of the revised policy is attached as Appendix 1 showing the proposed changes to the program.

PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
JERZY SMOLAREK URBAN DESIGNER	JIM YANCHULA MANAGER, COMMUNITY PLANNING & DESIGN
RECOMMENDED BY:	
J.M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER	

May 8, 2013

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APPENDIX 1

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PROPOSED CHANGES TO POLICY 19(35) AND 19(35a)

19(35) Urban Design Awards

The City of London Urban Design Awards Program is intended to recognize, celebrate and inspire design excellence in the City of London. Design Awards will be granted for exceptional projects that represent visionary thinking and “raise the bar” for design excellence in London. Urban Design Awards will be granted once every two years. The Department of Planning and Development will be responsible for administering this program in accordance with the Terms of Reference in Appendix 19(35A).

At the conclusion of the Design Awards process, a ceremony will be held for the purpose of recognizing and celebrating winners of the Urban Design Awards and for promoting the urban design agenda in the community as a whole.

The winning submission(s) of the London Urban Design Awards will be automatically submitted into the RAIC (Royal Architectural Institute of Canada) National Urban Design Awards program, which are held in the year between of the biennial London Urban Design Awards. This will be an opportunity for local developers, architects, urban designers, as well as the City to showcase their developments and compete for Urban Design Awards at the national level.

19(35A) Appendix to Urban Design Awards Program Policy

1. PURPOSE

The Urban Design Awards Program is intended to recognize, celebrate and inspire excellence in Urban Design in the City of London. Design Awards will be granted for exceptional projects that represent visionary thinking and “raise the bar” for design excellence in London. Award winning projects will compete for Urban Design Awards at the national level through the RAIC National Urban Design Awards Program.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Projects are eligible for an urban design award where they are developed developed up to 5 years prior to the awards year. Submissions for awards can be submitted by a project owner, a member of the team that is associated with the project, a member of Council, a member of municipal staff, or a member of the general public. To be eligible for an award, submissions must be received by the City of London Planning Division within the prescribed deadline date and all entries must meet submission requirements. It should be clear that public projects, including those developed by the City of London, are eligible for awards.

3. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions will only be accepted where they meet the following requirements:

- An abstract of the project is provided to explain its design qualities and how this project significantly adds to the quality of the public realm in London. The abstract should also touch on those items that are outlined in the relevant awards category descriptions below (Section 7). This abstract is to be provided in the electronic format specified by the City.
- Two display boards maximum (sizes will be specified).
- A photo slide show, not exceeding 50 photographs, illustrating the design qualities of the project described in the abstract. This slide show is to be provided in the electronic format specified by the City.

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These submissions will allow for submissions to be presented on the City's web site, and also allow for innovative display techniques for the awards ceremony and circulation of the awards.

All materials submitted to the City of London become property of the City of London and will not be returned to the applicant. Furthermore, submission of materials implies consent for the City of London to disseminate such materials at the sole discretion of the City.

4. AWARDS PROCESS

A call for submissions will be issued in June/July of an awards year. The Planning Division will engage in a rigorous process to raise awareness in the community that the City has issued a call for Urban Design Awards submissions. This may include, but is not limited to, advertising in newspapers, use of the City's web site, mail-outs to members of the design, architecture, landscape architecture, planning, and development industry. It may also include other vehicles, such as the preparation of a poster or other such materials, to raise awareness of the Awards, and the agenda for urban design excellence in London.

Judging of the projects will occur in September of the Awards year. This will allow for judges to view projects including vegetation in a state of full bloom. The jury which will compile a short list of projects from amongst the entries submitted. The Planning Division will arrange for the jury to visit the sites of the projects on the short list. Thereafter the jury will reconvene, in camera, to make its awards decisions and will submit its recommendations thereon, in camera, to the Municipal Council for final approval.

It shall be at the sole discretion of the Jury to determine whether or not Awards will be recommended in any or all of the awards categories in a given year. A maximum of 4 urban design awards will be granted, except in exceptional circumstances. Awards will be granted in October/November of the Awards year.

The Planning Division will disseminate information relating to the award winning projects through the use of various mediums, including, but not limited to: web site posting, posters or other publications relating to the next design awards call for submissions, displays in prominent public spaces, etc.

5. AWARDS PRESENTATION

Awards will be presented to the Urban Design Award winners at a ceremony, which may combine other activities intended to advance the agenda for urban design excellence in London. Those earning honourable mention will also be congratulated at this ceremony. Two awards will be given to each award winning team. Additional awards can be ordered by winners for additional members of the team, at a cost to the winners which covers the expense of the City purchasing these awards.

6. URBAN DESIGN AWARDS JURY

An Urban Design Awards Jury, made up as follows, will be established annually by the City the Society.

Voting Members:

- The Chair of the Planning Committee of Council or an appointed designate
- The President of the London Society of Architects or an appointed designate
- The Chair of the Southwestern Ontario District of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute or an appointed designate
- The President of the London Branch of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects or an appointed designate
- ~~The Chair of the London Arts Council~~
- ~~A member of Planning Staff, appointed by the GM of Planning and Development~~
- An Urban Designer from outside the community (who is not involved with any projects under consideration)

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Limitations:

- No member of the Jury shall serve for more than 3 consecutive design award terms.
- No member of the jury shall be related, in any substantive way, to any projects under consideration.

Chair:

- The jury will elect from amongst its Members a Chair and a Vice-Chair at its first meeting each year.

Designates:

- Designates from any of the above groups will be accepted where jurors disqualify themselves from serving on the jury, where a jury member has already served three consecutive awards terms, or where the above-identified person cannot make himself/herself available for serving on the jury.

7. AWARDS CATEGORIES

The following Awards Categories and Awards are hereby established:

1. Buildings

An individual building, or a composition of buildings, which achieves urban design excellence through its relationship to the public realm, its massing, detailing and pedestrian amenity. Entrants should document and highlight how the building, or group of buildings, contributes to the quality of place. All types of buildings are eligible whether "landmark" or "background," new construction or a restoration/transformation. Building types could include: Main Street Mixed Use, Residential (detached, attached, multi-unit), Commercial, Institutional or Industrial.

The primary criteria for assessing the merit of entries in this category will be:

- Positive contribution to the public realm/quality of place;
- Architectural excellence;
- Demonstration of fulfilling a clearly articulated urban design intent.

2. Buildings (Small Scale Residential)

A residential building, which achieves urban design excellence through its relationship to the surrounding neighbourhood, it's massing, siting and detailing. Entrants should document and highlight how the building, contributes to the overall character as well as to the quality of place in the neighbourhood in which it is located. All types of small scale non-apartment residential buildings are eligible whether new construction or restoration/transformation. Building types could include single detached residential, townhouses, semi's, 2-, 3-, or 4-plexes.

The primary criteria for assessing the merit of entries in this category will be:

- Positive contribution to the character of the existing neighbourhood/quality of place;
- Architectural excellence;
- Demonstration of fulfilling a clearly articulated urban design intent.

~~2. Elements~~

3. Public Realm Enhancements

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Elements can be defined as a stand-alone object, ~~or landscape element or small-scale piece of a building~~ which contributes significantly to the quality of the public realm. It should provide a memorable image, reinforce the human scale and enhance the character of the surrounding area.

Examples include:

- Benches
- ~~Doorways~~
- ~~Canopies or colonnades~~
- Gateways
- Light fixtures
- Walkways
- Fences
- Work of art

4. ~~Open spaces and landscapes~~ Public Spaces and Landscapes

An ~~open~~ **Public** space - generally related to, and defined by, adjacent buildings or natural/manmade elements -- which provides an extension to the public realm in an exemplary way.

Examples are:

- Courtyards
- Plazas
- Forecourts
- Gardens
- Trails
- Mews
- Parks

5. Large places and neighbourhoods

This includes designs for a new or renovated large-scale areas of the city. The project must be completed to such extent to allow the jury to clearly understand and evaluate the plan.

The submissions in this category should clearly state the existing conditions and demonstrate how the plan creatively resolves and addresses multiple objectives and competing interests. The submission should also provide evidence of community involvement and acceptance.

Examples are:

- Area plans
- Subdivisions
- Industrial parks
- Campus plans
- Streetscapes

It should be clear that these categories ARE INTENDED TO:

- Explain what types of projects are eligible for an Urban Design Award;
- Describe, in very general terms, how these projects will be evaluated; and
- Help to encourage submissions that are of a very high quality.

It should be equally clear that these categories ARE NOT INTENDED TO:

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- Limit the number of awards that can be granted within a single category;
- Require that an award be granted in every category where there is not a submission that warrants an award; and
- Limit a submission to competing only against those projects that are within their category.

Where the Jury deems it to be appropriate, honourable mention will be given to those projects that did not win an award, but exhibited many excellent design traits worthy of recognition.

8. National Urban Design Awards (Hosted by Royal Architectural Institute of Canada)

Following the Urban Design Awards ceremony the winning submissions will be given instructions as to how their projects can be submitted to the National Urban Design Awards program. The Submission requirements for the National Urban Design Awards can be found on the RAIC website.

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APPENDIX 2

Bill No.
2013

By-law No. A.- _____

A by-law to amend Council Policy 19(35) and 19(35A) entitled “Urban Design Awards” and “Appendix to Urban Design Awards Program Policy”

WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation of the City of London wishes to amend Council Policy 19(35) and 19(35A), being the Urban Design Awards and the Appendix to Urban Design Awards Program Policy;

AND WHEREAS section 5(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, provides that a municipal power shall be exercised by by-law;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. Council Policy 19(35) and 19(35A) entitled “Urban Design Awards” and “Appendix to Urban Design Awards Program Policy” is amended by deleting it and replacing in its entirety as attached on Schedule 1.

2. This by-law comes into force on the date it is passed.

PASSED in Open Council on June 11, 2013.

Joe Fontana
Mayor

Catharine Saunders
City Clerk

First Reading – June 11, 2013
Second Reading – June 11, 2013
Third Reading – June 11, 2013

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SCHEDULE 1

19(35) Urban Design Awards

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