

Calgary



Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development  
Urban Design Review Panel  
Terms of Reference and Implementation Plan

PUD2017-0528

June 14 2017





# Council direction

**March 20, 2017**

**Council directed Administration to:**

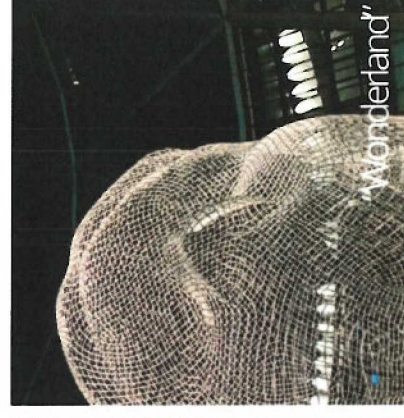
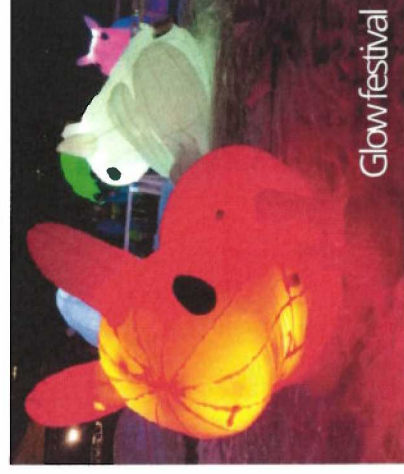
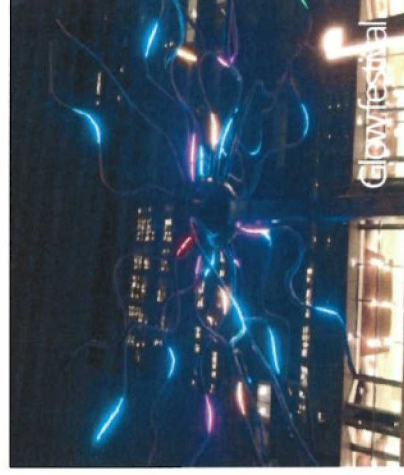
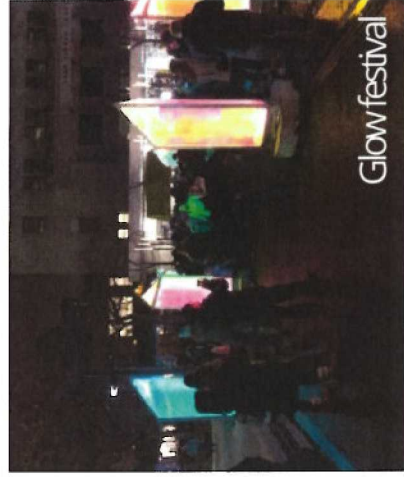
- revise the **Terms of Reference** for the Urban Design Review Panel;
- provide a more **detailed implementation plan**
- with **stakeholder input**, including the Industry/City Process Improvement Working Group

and return through the SPC on Planning and Development to Council no later than July 2017.

# terms of reference

revised

1. scope: increased to include design advice at schematic design phase, and city-wide on sites with significant public realm impact
2. size and composition: expanded with addition of one architect, one landscape architect, one engineer, and heritage conservation specialist (adjunct)
3. duties: clarifies duties of Panel members
4. assessment process: provides opportunity for multiple reviews

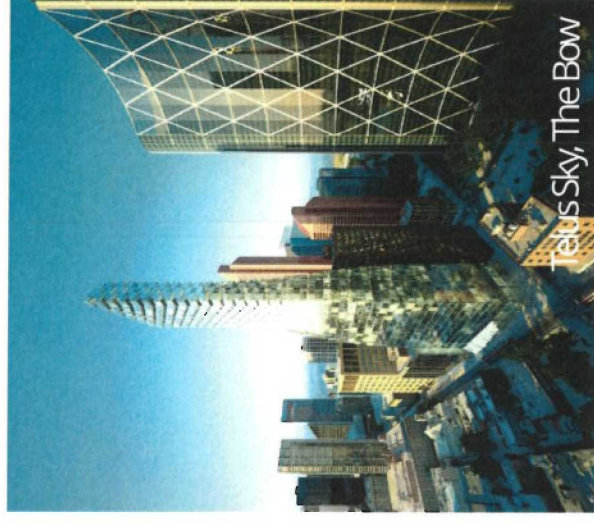
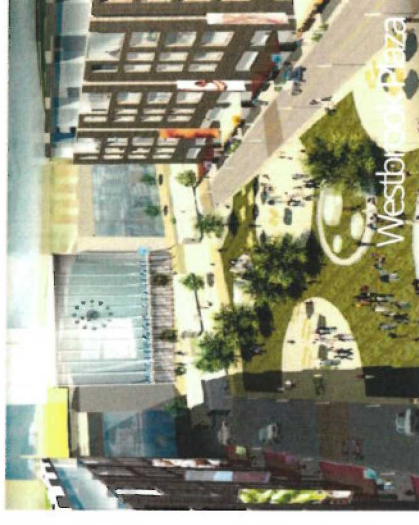
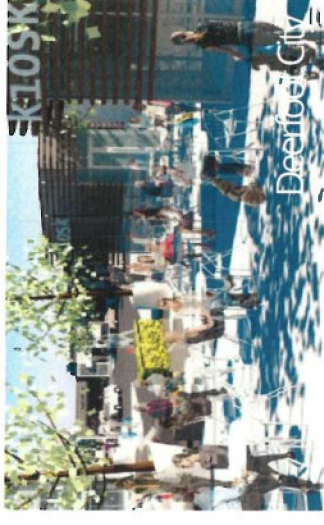




# urban design review protocol

administrative

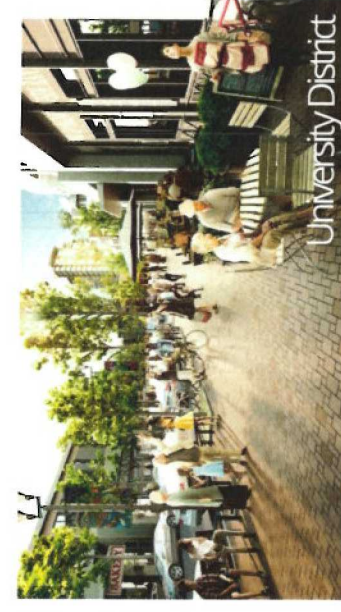
1. background: benefits of urban design review
2. MDP and policy awareness: Thirteen Elements of Urban Design
3. scope: application types for review by UDRP
4. UDRP and City Wide Urban Design: roles & responsibilities
5. procedures: conduct of Panel meetings



# implementation plan

strategy

1. implementation: stage 1: Q3/Q4 – voluntary implementation  
stage 2: Q1 2018 – full implementation  
progress report: Q1 2019
2. alignment with CPAG processes: detailed description by phase
3. reporting: describing the “design narrative”
4. communication: staff training and stakeholder outreach
5. metrics and monitoring





# stakeholder engagement

who and what

## working group

City Wide Urban Design  
 Calgary Approvals Coordination  
 Urban Design Review Panel  
 Calgary Planning Commission  
 Community Planning/CPAG experts  
 BILD Calgary

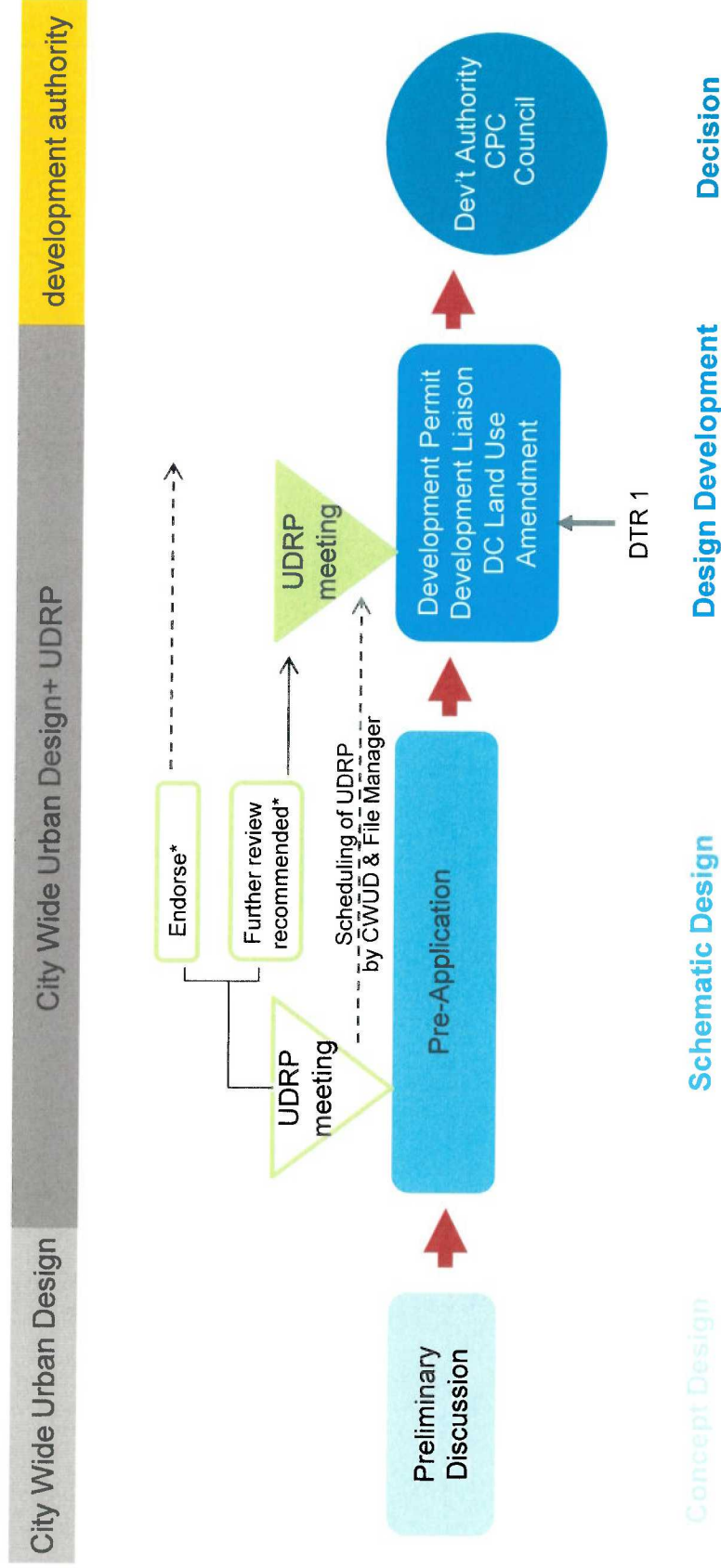
## workshop stakeholders

Internal / External Experts  
 Urban Design Review Panel  
 Calgary Planning Commission  
 Industry/City Process Improvement Working Groups



# urban design review path

timeline: implementation through CPAG processes



\*An application that has been discussed with UDRP during pre-application may or may not be requested to return for review during the subsequent application phase, depending on the merits of the project as proposed.

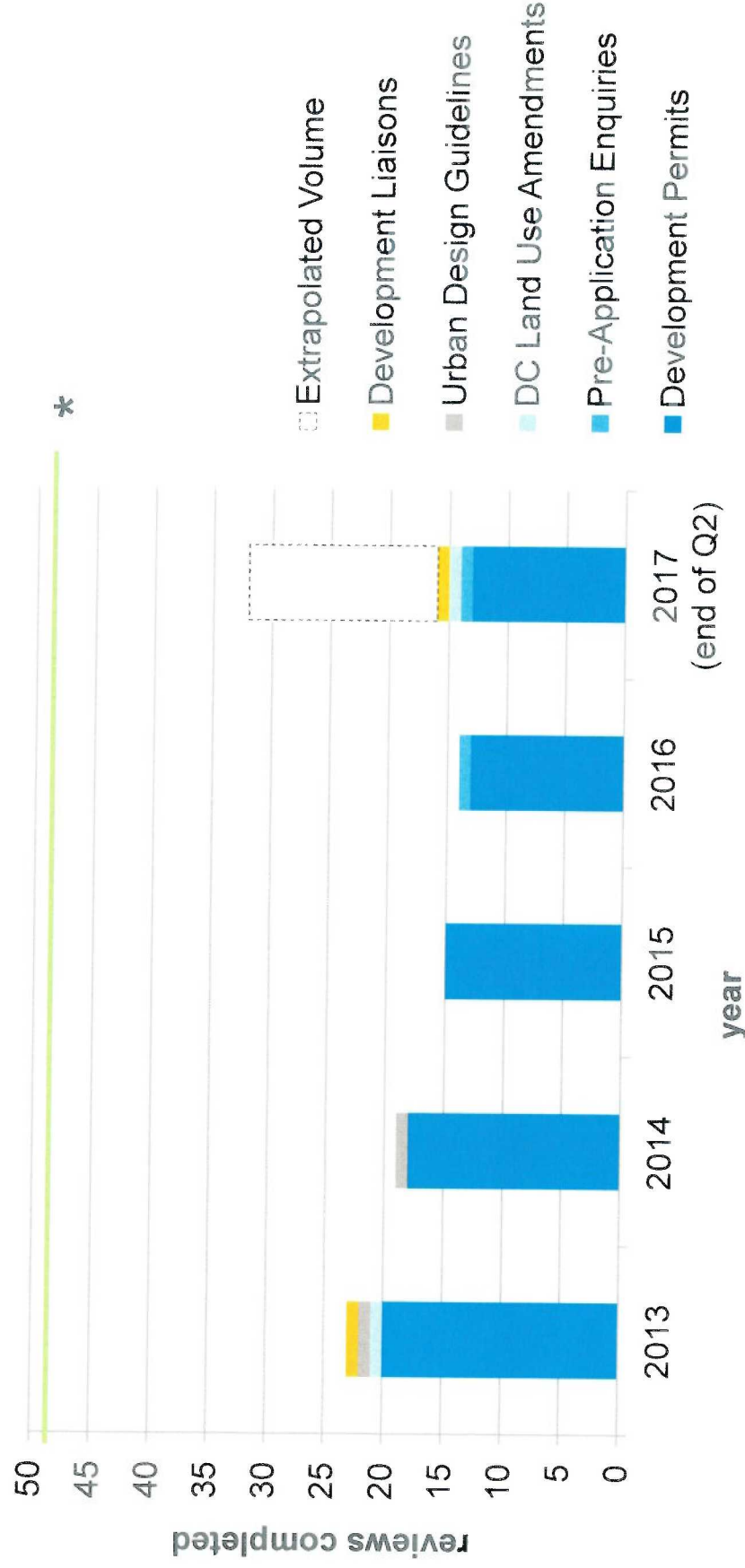
▽ Early UDRP advice is strongly encouraged.

▽ UDRP review at formal application may be required based on circulation criteria.



# UDRP reviews and capacity

by application type



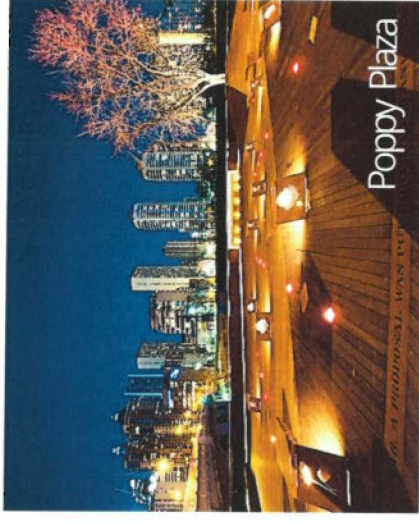
\* 48 reviews if meeting bi-weekly, discussing 2 applications per meeting



# administration recommendations

That the SPC on Planning & Urban Development recommend that Council:

1. Approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Urban Design Review Panel; and
2. Receive the Urban Design Review Protocol and Implementation Plan for information.





City of Calgary, Planning & Urban Development  
The City of Calgary  
PO Box 2100, Station M  
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5



June 12, 2017

Attention: Mr. David Down, City-Wide Urban Design – Community Planning

**Re: SPC for PUD – June 14, 2017 | PUD 2017-0528:**  
**Urban Design Review Panel Terms of Reference and Implementation Plan**

BILD Calgary Region (BILD CR) thanks Administration for their work on this initiative. Our association recognizes the significance of good urban design, and supports a process whereby design discussions can occur earlier in the approval process.

We wish to see this project succeed in its undertaking, and observations/feedback from our members indicate 3 key areas of focus to enable its success:

- A. Better communication of the process
- B. Experience with the process
- C. Monitoring and reporting process to measure/track success and outcomes

#### **A. Communication**

BILD Calgary Region will work with Administration to communicate this process to both experienced and new users of UDRP. Comments and suggested communication items are included in Attachment 1.

While not fully in scope for this project, we would like to note that distinction is required for the roles, responsibility and purpose for UDRP, CWUD and CPC through the approval process. Confusion remains on how these function together through the process as a whole.

#### **B. Process experience**

Smoother adoption of the process, less frustration and better outcomes could be achieved by the following. These changes would be needed in the Terms of Reference document, in addition to the administrative Protocol and Implementation documents.

##### **1. Better connection between UDRP and applicant**

- a. Allow for UDRP comments to be communicated directly to the applicant rather than streaming them through Administration. This would be particularly effective during the pre-application process and help reinforce the role of UDRP as an independent, 3<sup>rd</sup> party assessor. Comments would still be copied verbatim to Administration and kept on file.
- b. Remove the 'in camera' portion of the UDRP discussion. UDRP comments are voluntary, the service provided by UDRP is supplemental to the work done between the applicant and Administration, and is not a decision-making body. Work done by bodies such as CPC, Council and Committees follow a principle of transparency and openness - we believe this same principle should apply to UDRP. Variance in creative opinion and full open debate would be beneficial in design-related discussions.

##### **2. More ownership and accountability for applications and/or their representatives**

- a. No UDRP assessment without the attendance of the applicant or their representative;
- b. The applicant should be expected to present and speak to the urban design story behind their project.



### **C. Implementation Plan and Monitoring/Reporting:**

BILD Calgary Region suggests that these items be included in the Implementation Plan, as they will help provide indicators of success or identify areas for improvement.

1. Implementation Plan – Section 2.3.1 “Stakeholder outreach - development industry, “what they need”:
  - a. The differentiated value, roles and responsibilities of UDRP/CWUD/CPC as they go through the process;
  - b. The selection criteria (what applications get selected for UDRP and why)
  - c. The process (what happens when selected, expectations of each group within that process)
  - d. How to successfully get through to an approval
  - e. The cumulative value/impact to industry (through monitoring and reporting)
2. Implementation plan – Section 3 “Metrics & Monitoring”:
  - a. Impact of UDRP on decisions/revisions made by applicant;
  - b. How often the pre-app option is utilized by an applicant;
  - c. Impact on timelines, (with/without pre-app, with/without UDRP review, which targets are being met)
  - d. How many applications get ‘endorsed’ in the pre-app, vs. ‘endorsed with conditions’, vs. ‘another UDRP review required’.

BILD Calgary Region supports the decision of Administration to exclude outline plans from this process. While we understand that there is a desire to explore urban design considerations for outline plans, we agree that this is not the place for that exploration.

BILD Calgary Region is supportive of a process that can effectively deliver well-designed projects and agree that design discussions earlier in the approval process can be beneficial.

We request that the changes listed in “B. Process Experience” be made in the Terms of Reference, and that the remaining suggested changes are acted on by Administration. The suggestions offered in this letter are provided to promote successful implementation, helping our members better understand the process, adopt the process, and work jointly with administration, design experts and CPC members towards better design outcomes.

Our thanks again to Administration and the City for including us in this process.

Yours Truly



Guy Huntingford  
CEO, BILD Calgary Region

- c.c.     Stuart Dalgleish, General Manager Planning & Development, City of Calgary  
         Matthias Tita, Director Community Planning  
         Members of the SPC on Planning & Urban Development
- Councilor A. Chabot (Chair)
  - Councilor J. Magliocca (Vice-chair)
  - Councilor P. Demong
  - Councilor D. Farrell
  - Councilor R. Jones
  - Councilor B. Pincott
  - Councilor W. Sutherland
  - Mayor N. Nenshi, Chair (Ex-officio)



June 12, 2017

**SPC for PUD – June 14, 2017 | PUD 2017-0528:**

**Urban Design Review Panel Terms of Reference and Implementation Plan Letter– ATTACHMENT 1**

## **Communication**

Communication is critical to supporting this initiative and to ensuring a positive experience for applicants. A few examples are provided below where concerns were specifically noted:

- Variation in defining process benefit: Members heard that the process was set up to incentivize an 'endorse' outcome through the pre-application process (to achieve only one UDRP meeting) when Administration's intent was to offer UDRP resources in the pre-application process to streamline design comments through the process;
- Written comments from an independent, 3<sup>rd</sup> party review of the UDRP getting streamed through the City (CWUD) confuses the respective role and value of each;
- The audience included both members with and without experience with UDRP – consideration of these as separate audiences did not occur and likely contributed to greater confusion through the engagement process;
- Some members who were initially engaged and enthusiastic at the start of the process felt a link was missed when promoting better urban design became equated to an Urban Design Panel Process – some fell away from engagement as a result;
- Other members continued to stay engaged through the process but indicated disappointment in not feeling heard, or felt their comments were not genuinely considered (did not see their perspectives reflected in the 'what we heard' documents, did not get a response on questions raised, felt dismissed);
- That the process as proposed appears to 'penalize' good builders by creating more cost and red tape for everyone, which discourages good behavior through regulation.

BILD Calgary Region would like to offer a few considerations that may help alleviate some industry concerns as the UDRP process is rolled out, and offers any assistance that Administration may require to support implementation.

1. Clarify that policy-related urban review is carried out by CWUD, and independent review is carried out by UDRP. Currently wording found in the Terms of Reference, Protocol and Implementation documents link UDRP considerations with policy, even though they are removed from the approval process. This would promote the distinct differences and value of each group;
2. Communicate that the posted timelines are 'maximum', not standard or minimum;
3. Secure feedback from Industry on the UDRP comment template;
4. Ensure that the monitoring and metrics reports include items of value to both Administration and industry, and are well-distributed and widely available;
5. Communicate any changes made to the system in response to the monitoring process.



## Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP)

Thank you for accepting this paper on my comments of the Terms of Reference for UDRP. I cannot be there in person to present these thoughts. The consultation process in arriving at the document for review and approval has been great. While I have not attended all the meetings, through my role on Calgary Planning Commission, I feel well informed on the process and recommendations.

There are two areas of concern that I would like to share with PUD:

Firstly, the make-up of the board does not include an active industry representation. I believe other similar board such as in Vancouver have at least one industry representative on their boards. The benefits and selection details etc. are:

- Provide an “on the ground” perspective for the review of projects. While architects and planners may have feel they have that perspective, it is my experience the design of buildings is a collaborative effort with the developer/owner outlining what is needed and the consultants designing to meet those needs. There are many details that must be considered in designing a project such as loading, access preferences, amount and location of windows, and building design to reflect the tenant branding.
- Budget considerations are key when designing a project. The developer establishes budgets and must make choices to fit the budget. Without a developer on the UDRP, recommendations may be made without consideration of cost and provide significant budget problems.
- Any organization such as NAIOP, BOMA, UDI or ULI could nominate a candidate
- The person nominated should have the following qualifications:
  - Work as an active developer or an employee of an active developer in residential or commercial development
  - Have several years of experience in the industry

Secondly, I am concerned that the UDRP review process will add time to an already time consuming Development Permit Process. I recognize the concept that UDRP will review and supply comments in a timely manner (and my experience has been that to date) however it is an additional step that has the potential of adding time.

Thank you for your consideration.

