



Schematic Review - Urban Design and Architecture Advisory Panel

About Design Review:

Design Review is required per ART. 32 Zoning Code, §4 and is conducted with Planning Staff and / or the Urban Design and Architectural Advisory Panel (UDAAP). Certain aspects of the review process are governed by the Baltimore City Design Manual and Article 32 Zoning Code, while other aspects are more nuanced and site- or project-specific. The Design Manual and Zoning Code cannot regulate every aspect of a development project and are considered the baseline standards for architectural and urban design. Improved outcomes occur from nuanced site- and context-specific conversations during the design review process at both planning staff and UDAAP level.

Schematic Review Format:

Following the Pre-Development Meeting, the Planning Director or Land Use and Urban Design staff will determine whether a project is required to have staff or UDAAP review.

- Development projects required to have a UDAAP review must present their concept to the panel with a **visual and verbal presentation**.
- Presentations are limited to approximately **20 minutes** unless prior approval is given for a longer presentation.
- Reviews are scheduled on **Thursdays, approximately once per month**, and held virtually via Webex.
- Project teams must **submit a draft presentation eight (8) business days prior to UDAAP**. When the presentation has been reviewed and approved, staff will confirm the agenda.
- Staff may hold the date for a given project; however, **Planning is not able to hold specific time slots on the agenda**.
- Following the public UDAAP review, teams are expected to provide design responses to the Panel's comments and either return for a follow up UDAAP presentation or work with Planning staff on next steps.

Schematic Presentations to UDAAP:

Reviews are held virtually via Webex and are open to the public. Planning staff will introduce the project to the Panel to begin the presentation. It is important for the development team to provide adequate information about the development program and design concept(s). The following is required:

- Completion of the *New Project Information sheet* available on the UDAAP website (see helpful links section on reverse);**
- Location map and site plan that includes adjacent properties, buildings, context, landscape;**
- Photographs that illustrate existing site conditions and surrounding context;**
- Diagrams to show how existing urban fabric, circulation patterns, site considerations, topography, views, etc. impacted the massing and/or placement of elements;**
- Conceptual elevations, floor plans, sections and landscape plan as developed that include the context through streets to adjacent structures in the drawings;**
- Indication of topography on sites where grades are an issue;**
- Alternative studies for site layout and building massing that have been considered; and**
- Simple site and/or massing models – site is required when topography is an issue.**

Baltimore City Department of Planning

Development Factsheet: Design Review Topics

Design Review - Schematic Review to UDAAP



Preparing for a Schematic Review:

This is the most important presentation a development team will make to the Panel. It is an introduction of the team players, the project program, the design rationale, and the site itself. A Schematic presentation should be made early enough in the design process to afford the possibilities of significant urban design and public realm changes as advised by the Panel. Site context should be clearly illustrated to the Panel through rendered area plans, scaled site plan and massing studies that portray building bulk, height, and setbacks. Photographs or images of the site and surrounding context must be included with this presentation.

Alternative site plans or massing concepts must be incorporated into the overall presentation at the first review with UDAAP. The Panel will evaluate the concept plans using the described Urban Design Goals for the project as well as the following general guidelines:

1. *How does the project relate in scale (height, bulk, and density) with the surrounding context? If it is substantially different, how is it justified or contextually based?*
2. *How is the pedestrian realm defined and connected with existing street, sidewalk patterns, landscape design?*
3. *Are surrounding frontage and setback patterns appropriate?*
4. *Is the front entrance or major points of entry clearly defined?*
5. *Is the site in or near a Historic District? Are there landmark properties nearby? How does the mass and program respond to these?*
6. *Where is the parking and loading located on the site? Are they effectively screened? Is the parking and circulation pattern similar to those of neighboring properties?*
7. *Is the site located within walking distance of public transit and, if so, are the front entrances or major points of entry oriented toward the transit?*
8. *Are the concept elevations well composed and proportioned? How do they relate to adjacent buildings?*
9. *Is the landscape concept appropriate for the surrounding conditions and proposed uses?*
10. *Does the design incorporate environmentally sensitive building practices?*

The Panel will provide comments and make recommendations for consideration during the presentation. Written comments will be provided following the presentation. The Director of Planning will determine if the project must return for another Schematic review, or if it may move forward to Design Development. Additionally, projects may be required to have interim meetings with Planning Staff, or complete a combination of the actions listed above. When the Director determines that the Development team has addressed the comments and concerns, another presentation will be scheduled, and the project will be resubmitted to the Panel.

Helpful Links and More Information:

UDAAP Webpage: <https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/commissions-review-panels/udaap>

Development Projects Webpage: <https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/urban-design-architecture-advisory-panel-udaap/development-projects>

Department of Planning Resources Webpage: <https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/planning-resources>