

Permanent Recognition of Architect Required on Buildings in the City of Toronto

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Summary

This Practice Tip has been prepared by the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) to alert members to a particular requirement of the Site Plan Approval process within the City of Toronto regarding architectural recognition.

Background

In June 2011, a Council member on the Planning and Growth Management Committee of the City of Toronto requested an amendment to the Site Plan Approval process (see below), which was approved at the Committee and forwarded on to City Council for consideration.

The rationale behind the amendment cited a number of benefits, including public recognition for architects, an opportunity to better engage the public in the debate about architecture, and the economic benefit resulting from architectural tourism.

In July 2011, City Council subsequently approved the motion originating at the Planning and Growth Management Committee by a margin of 30 to 5:

“City Council request the Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning to require as a standard condition of Site Plan Approval for any new building of 1,000 square metres or greater in Gross Floor Area, that recognition of the Architect of Record, or primary Design Architect of the building be affixed or inscribed on the building at a location near the main entry or prominent façade of the structure; and that the lettering for this recognition cover an area of at least 0.2 m by 0.3 m, or 0.06 square metres.”

Although the requirement was approved in 2011, it has not been widely enforced. The City, supported by the OAA, will now be requiring architectural recognition as part of the elevation drawings found on a Site Plan Application. As an application not fulfilling this requirement will be returned with comments from Planning staff, architects should make sure that all future applications for buildings meeting the 1,000 square metre criteria contain an appropriate architectural recognition within the design.

Suggested Procedure

The City of Toronto now requires that a permanent architectural recognition meeting the requirements of the Council motion be clearly marked on the 1:50 scale drawings submitted as part of the Site Plan Application. These requirements detail both the size and location of the architectural recognition.

There may be instances where buildings submitted for Site Plan Approval may not include a requirement of 1:50 scale drawings. In these instances, the architect should include the information in a manner and at a scale that is appropriate so that the requirements are included in the Site Plan Application documents.

There will only be a small cost impact as a result of this City requirement, but architects may encounter questions or concerns from clients. Architects are advised to direct clients to the City Council motion [PG6.4: Acknowledging the role of Architects in the building of the City](#). Alternately, clients can contact the Planning Department directly.

Note that language regarding building inscriptions exists within the standard client/architect contract OAA 600-2021 under GC17 Miscellaneous Conditions. Architects practicing outside of the City of Toronto are encouraged to request an architectural inscription under standard contracts, and can cite the City of Toronto requirement for extra support where necessary.

Architects using OAA 600 for new buildings 1,000 square metres or greater in gross floor area (GFA) within the City of Toronto should add the following to GC18 Other Terms of Contract:

- “Delete GC17.3 and replace with:

17.3 Within the design, the *Architect* shall provide recognition of the Architect of Record by inscription, or otherwise, on a permanent, suitable and reasonably visible part of the building as required by the City of Toronto (City Council Item 2011.PG.6.4). The *Architect* shall obtain the *Client’s* approval of the format and location of any such sign, which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.”

For clarification on recognition of the Architect of Record, please see the OAA Regulatory Notice [RN.05 - Credit for Authorship](#)

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