



■ □ New Zealand Urban Design Protocol – Appointing an Urban Design Champion

WHAT IS AN URBAN DESIGN CHAMPION?

As a signatory to the Urban Design Protocol you have committed to helping make the Protocol work in practice by setting out a series of actions. The only thing you **must** do is appoint an Urban Design Champion within your organisation.

An Urban Design Champion is a senior, influential person who can promote quality urban design in all areas of your organisation. They are critical in making New Zealand towns and cities more successful through increasing awareness and demonstrating the values of quality urban design.

WHY ARE URBAN DESIGN CHAMPIONS IMPORTANT?

Successful towns and cities do not just happen by chance. They require good planning based on a long term vision and co-ordinated implementation.

To be successful, quality urban design needs to be an integral part of the everyday actions of your organisation, not just something reserved for visible, glossy, front page projects. The place of urban design within your organisation will need to be strengthened on all projects, with clear messages communicated to all relevant staff.

The Urban Design Champion will provide the strong leadership needed to put and keep urban design on the agenda.

WHAT DO URBAN DESIGN CHAMPIONS CONTRIBUTE?

Your Urban Design Champion should be promoting quality urban design within your organisation, and ensuring that urban design issues are considered in all relevant decisions. This could include:

- identifying opportunities and encouraging pro-active action to improve urban design outcomes
- promoting the value of quality urban design, persuading and influencing key decision-makers
- sharing knowledge and learning across the organisation and with other partners
- helping build a common vision for the projects or programmes they are responsible for or how they see the quality of the urban environment improving through your organisation's actions
- ensuring the urban design implications of any strategy, policy or project are considered at an early stage
- developing a multi-disciplinary approach across professions, departments, teams or groups within your organisation
- working jointly with other organisations and sectors to improve urban design outcomes
- encouraging early and pro-active consultation on major urban projects
- ensuring access to sufficient design skills within the organisation, including providing ongoing urban design training for all relevant staff
- becoming a visible central point of contact both within and outside of the organisation
- developing ways to encourage innovation and creativity within your organisation
- developing 'partnering' approaches with other organisations.



■ □ WHO SHOULD BE AN URBAN DESIGN CHAMPION?

Your Urban Design Champion should be a senior and influential person within your organisation, someone with responsibility to oversee many of your organisation's key functions.

An Urban Design Champion could be a:

- local authority councillor
- board member
- chief executive
- senior manager
- principal consultant
- head of department
- president.

It is not necessary for the Urban Design Champion to have technical skills in urban design. However, they will need a reasonable understanding of built environment and urban issues, and be willing to learn. In addition they will need to be supported by urban design and other related professionals either inside or outside of your organisation.

An Urban Design Champion needs to be:

- passionate about achieving a quality urban environment
- able to influence people to make urban design changes within your organisation
- respected for their opinion
- a good communicator with links inside and outside the organisation
- able to call upon urban design technical and professional support from within or outside the organisation
- prepared to promote the long term picture and develop an urban design vision within your organisation.

There is no single model suitable for all organisations. The right Urban Design Champion for your organisation may vary depending on size, the availability of design expertise, the role and structure of your organisation, as well as individual personalities. For the largest organisations it may be necessary to have more than one Urban Design Champion. However, care should be taken not to dilute the role.

WHAT IS THE CHAMPIONS NETWORK?

Urban Design Champions will form a key role in linking across different organisations and sectors, through the Champions Network that will be developed by the Ministry for the Environment. This will be an important platform for sharing information, learning from others, and benefiting from training opportunities.

EXAMPLES OF AN URBAN DESIGN CHAMPION

Ministry for the Environment

Within the Ministry for the Environment Lindsay Gow has been appointed as the Urban Design Champion. Lindsay is the Deputy Chief Executive at the Ministry. He also works to champion urban design across other government departments.

"I see my role as the Ministry's Urban Design Champion as critical to ensuring the successful implementation of the Urban Design Protocol. I intend to promote the importance of urban design across the Ministry, and most importantly, across other government agencies with critical roles in achieving a quality urban environment for New Zealand."

For more information on the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol please contact the Urban Team at the Ministry for the Environment:

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Published in May 2005 by the
Ministry for the Environment
PO Box 10362
Wellington

ME number: 598

This document is available on the Ministry for the Environment's website: www.mfe.govt.nz

