Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant's Response

Date	February 12, 2020	
Time	3:00	
Panel Members	**Present** Chad Russill (Chair) Terry Klassen Colin Friesen Chris Hardwicke	**Distribution** Gary Mundy Ben Bailey Beverly Sandalack Ryan Agrey Jack Vanstone Michael Sydenham Glen Pardoe
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	**LOC2019-0188**	
Municipal address	1230, 1234 9 Av SE	
Community	Inglewood	
Project description	Land Use Amendments to accommodate DC/MU-2	
Review	first	
File Manager	Breanne Harder	
City Wide Urban Design	Lothar Wiwjorra	
Applicant	Civicworks Planning + Design / 5468796 Architecture	

Summary

This is a review based on an application for a change in land use. The review is informed by the knowledge that a development permit application has been submitted which is essentially the same as what the Panel reviewed. The project represents a high-quality response to the site which is at an important intersection in the inner city. It included the preservation and repurposing of a heritage building which attaches to the new building, but which allows a unifying sense of place and unique identity on the site.

Identity here resides at the intersection of old and new – a proposed new building embraces an old building, a new main street (12 Street) intersects an old, if not oldest, main street (9 Avenue). In this context, the Panel discussed the destination-class place-based potential of optimizing the interface of land use, transportation and built form. The inside outside public realm relationships extend plaza to street. Contextually, the interactions with the intersection are dynamic – as should be, the approach and arrival experience in the street crossing itself.

Some of the main aspects of the project that were noted by the Panel are as follows:

- The design is based on a repeating structural matrix which is manipulated to create bold geometric forms. This is an approach to architecture which is very contemporary with little reference to historic styles but which in this case is implemented with integrity and enthusiasm.
- The architectural vocabulary of the new building is in stark contrast to the heritage building at one corner of the site which allows the older building its own more historic expression. There are some dimensional references to the old building front elevation in the new design, but these are limited and serve legitimate urban design goals.
- This is landmark design at a key location in the inner city but a design this strong will be faced with predictable problems. The design will be difficult for some to appreciate since it has little reference to common precedent styles. Technical problems regarding structure, exterior finish, energy, rain, wind and snow, etc. where solutions are known for ordinary buildings will have to be reconsidered for this design.
- This project sets a high standard for contemporary design of market driven projects that the Panel supports and applauds.

Applicant Response

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March 31, 2020

Urban Design Element	
Creativity *Encourage innovation; model best practices* • Overall project approach as it relates to original ideas or innovation	
UDRP Commentary	A high-quality contemporary design solution on a key site which also incorporates an existing historic building in a community undergoing redevelopment. The proposed application sets a desirable standard for the immediate area and the city at large.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged.**
Context *Optimize built form with respect to mass and spacing of buildings, placement on site, response to adjacent uses, heights and densities* • Massing relationship to context, distribution on site, and orientation to street edges • Shade impact on public realm and adjacent sites	
UDRP Commentary	The building will be a significant presence on an important site. Proposed mixed use is similar to existing uses While the scale of the repeated structural grid may help break down the perceived scale of the building and the building face on 9th respects adjacent building heights, the overall mass of the building is less responsive to adjacent buildings. The 12th St. elevation is particularly difficult with regard to scale being full height to the street level.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged.** **The massing of the building has been carefully shaped and considered as a cohesive composition that creates a landmark design at a key intersection. Details at the ground floor such as recessed entries, signage, landscape, and heritage reference cues come together to create a unique pedestrian experience on three sides of the building.** **The heritage street wall reference has been given priority along 9th Ave to respect the community character as well as highlight the heritage building on the South West corner of the site. Equal emphasis to the heritage wall reference has been given along the lane towards the Lawn Bowling to promote vibrancy, animation, shadow reduction and good passive surveillance to the Lawn Bowling Club. The emphasis of the massing at the heritage street wall reference along these two streets creates the twist and angled step back that form striking massing of the building.** **As a result of the angled stepback from the back lane towards 9 AV, the West elevation has an angled wall starting at the heritage streetwall reference height along the north edge. This angle reduces the width of the East wall along 12 ST. This results in a stepback of ±19m [±62'] from the north property line for the building's upper floors. The shape of the building therefore reduces the size of the East wall and the impact it may have along the 12 ST sidewalk.** **The two building corners along 12th St angle up and back, creating prominent building entries as well as extension to the sidewalk public realm. The top point of the triangular openings reflect the heritage reference line.** **In addition, a new recessed building entry has been included along 12 ST, activating the sidewalk and public realm further. The entry has been designed to be flexible and be able to accommodate various uses that compliment the interior commercial unit(s) [ie. as patio] or exterior public realm [as extension of sidewalk through site furnishing] as required.** **The quality of the public realm design at the sidewalk and public plaza around the building, including 12 ST, exemplifies high quality human oriented design. The sidewalk and public** **realm are designed as an extension of the building. The building does not sit in contrast to or from the sidewalk, rather it becomes part of the cohesive pedestrian experience. Through elements such as ground floor textures, site furnishings, tree canopies, lighting, signage, active commercial spaces and window displays the pedestrian experience will be human scaled. (Please refer to 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 - East Elevation, and 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 - Site Plan).**

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Human Scale *Defines street edges, ensures height and mass respect context; pay attention to scale* • Massing contribution to public realm at grade	
UDRP Commentary	The building is a large mass which may benefit from the smaller scale repeated surface grid but still represents a challenge. Smaller scale openings and sheltered plaza areas are included and are encouraged to respond to at grade human experience. Signage, lighting and street furniture should be used to further connect the building mass to a human at-grade context.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. Signage, lighting and street furniture details will be further explored througDP2020-01716. (Please refer to 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 - East Elevation, and 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 - Site Plan, and 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 UDRP - Signage Options).**
Integration *The conjunction of land-use, built form, landscaping and public realm design* • Parking entrances and at-grade parking areas are concealed • Weather protection at entrances and solar exposure for outdoor public areas • Winter city response	
UDRP Commentary	The 9th Ave elevation is more resolved regarding at-grade amenities, entrances and plazas. The 12th St face needs further consideration to better connect with the street scape. The heritage building is well integrated and allowed its own expression.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. An additional entrance consisting of a recessed triangle has been added along 12 ST. The new entry provides animation and breaks up the continuous wall along the at-grade environment to better connect with the streetscape. The new pocket of space created can be designed as an extension of the public realm with additional seating and soft landscape, an outdoor extension of the commercial space [ie. patio space], or entry into a commercial unit at the ground floor. (Please refer to 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 – East Elevation, and 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 - Site Plan).**
Connectivity *Achieve visual and functional connections between buildings and places; ensure connection to existing and future networks.* • Pedestrian first design, walkability, pathways through site • Connections to LRT stations, regional pathways and cycle paths • Pedestrian pathway materials extend across driveways and lanes	
UDRP Commentary	The building will be a significant landmark designating a central intersection in the community. Numerous transit lines, pathways and LRT are adjacent or within walking distance. As discussed with a question, the Panel feels a crisscross scramble crossing should be given due consideration. The main street(s) intersection represents a landmark wayfinding moment. Navigating between heritage and new, the orientation to mixed-mode main streets, BRT, Bow River Pathway and Green Line point to big picture urban initiatives that good design can help define.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged**.
Animation *Incorporate active uses; pay attention to details; add colour, wit and fun* • Building form contributes to an active pedestrian realm • Residential units provided at-grade • Elevations are interesting and enhance the streetscape	
UDRP Commentary	The street level has some permeability to add interest. This could be enhanced with well-considered, integrated signage and lighting. Street furniture and at- grade landscaping must also be considered further. Although trendy, the solid sculptural massing of the staircase design (connecting street level to second and third floors) lands in an awkward, heavy, obstacle-like manner; not permeable in an otherwise permeable street level.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. Various signage strategies that will improve wayfinding, add texture, and provide interest at pedestrian scale are being explored and will be finalized through DP2020-0716. Please refer to project images showing two developing signage strategies under this cover: 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 UDRP - Signage Options. Lighting is a critical part of all good design. Given the large extent of commercial space along the ground floor, there will be a significant amount of light spill out onto the street. A careful balancing of site/landscape integrated, building accent, signage, and interior spill out lighting will be considered and developed at the DP stage.**

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	The quality of design of the public realm including street furniture is critical to the pedestrian experience and public realm success of the project. Further considerations to the landscape design have been made 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 - Site Plan and will continue to evolve through the DP2020-0716. **The staircase is a sculptural element that provides easy connection between the ground floor / public realm and the office floor areas. It acts as a balancing focal point to the heritage building on the other side of the public plaza. The integrated BRT stop in front and angle of the entry wall minimize its impact and presence from the street and sidewalk. The staircase design, location, and street permeability can be further explored through DP2020-0716.**
Accessibility *Ensure clear and simple access for all types of users* • Barrier free design • Entry definition, legibility, and natural wayfinding	
UDRP Commentary	Accessibility is generally good with many entrance options and a well-defined entry court between the old and new buildings. Safety under sloped sections regarding snow, ice and rain must be considered. Access to the heritage building roof terrace is through an office space. This roof terrace would be better used if more general public access was included.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. Snow, ice, and water management on the sloped surfaces will be addressed through DP2020-0716 and the construction drawing stage of the project. Access to the heritage building roof terrace could be integrated with the commercial space within the heritage building based on use and market needs to be explored further through DP2020-0716.**
Diversity *Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses* • Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces • Corner treatments and project porosity	
UDRP Commentary	The project includes a good diversity of uses reflecting the adjacent district. This is not proposed through at-grade residential, however does provide good retail opportunities, visibility and entrances.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged.**
Flexibility *Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies* • Project approach relating to market and/or context changes	
UDRP Commentary	The retail spaces have opportunities for changes to partitioning but with a building geometry this pure, additions to the building mass would likely present design challenges. To optimize flexibility, consider replacing the plaza planting bed area with moveable planters.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. The planting bed at the plaza has been adjusted to reduce its impact on public plaza to further optimize flexibility (Please refer to 20.03.31 LOC2019-0188 – Site Plan). The planting bed at the south east corner of the plaza delineates the plaza from the pedestrian access to the building lobby. This will be particularly useful if the plaza was to be fully occupied with flexible furniture or a patio. Moveable planters are not the preferred solution due to difficulties with climate and insulating the growing medium from temperature changes. The built-in recessed planting area reduces site maintenance and promotes healthy long lasting plants. Programming of the plaza space to be further explored through DP2020-0716.**
Safety *Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times* • Safety and security • Night time design	
UDRP Commentary	The building is multi-sided and animates the rear lane with good surveillance. Ice/snow studies are recommended for the ground plane and sloped surfaces above. Lighting design has not been completed at the time of review.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. Snow, ice, and water management on the sloped surfaces will be addressed at the construction drawing stage of the project. Lighting strategy will be developed further through DP2020-0716.**
Orientation *Provide clear and consistent directional clues for urban navigation* • Enhance natural views and vistas	
UDRP Commentary	A landmark building that will provide community orientation to a central intersection. The building itself has numerous well defined penetrations. Signage will be a challenging opportunity to enhance wayfinding.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. Various signage strategies that will improve wayfinding, add texture, and provide interest at pedestrian scale are being explored and will be finalized during the DP stage. Please refer to project images showing two signage strategies, 20.03.31**

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	LOC2019-0188 UDRP - Signage Options).
Sustainability *Be aware of lifecycle costs; incorporate sustainable practices and materials* • Site/solar orientation and passive heating/cooling • Material selection and sustainable products	
UDRP Commentary	Extensive glass and the lack of response in the building surface design to sun orientation will present energy modelling challenges. Ground level plaza does respond to desirable south exposure.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. Several strategies to meet required energy standards have been explored and will be further developed in conjunction with mechanical and energy consultants through DP2020-0716.** **Through the use of solid panels on a large portion of the West wall, a small reduction of glazing between units and balconies, and the insulated wood structure a solid to glazed ratio close to the required prescriptive energy requirements is achieved. Energy modeling in combination with further design considerations and efficient mechanical systems will allow the building to meet the building energy requirements. To be further explored through DP2020-0716.**
Durability *Incorporate long-lasting materials and details that will provide a legacy rather than a liability* • Use of low maintenance materials and/or sustainable products • Project detailed to avoid maintenance issues	
UDRP Commentary	What is essentially a glass covered building should be durable. The suggested inclusion of wood structure will present interesting opportunities and challenges.
Applicant Response	**Acknowledged. The wood structure and building envelope details will be finalized during the construction document and building permit stage.**