

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date	April 22, 2020	
Time	1:00	
Panel Members	Present Chad Russill (Chair) Beverly Sandalack Michael Sydenham Noorullah Hussain Zada Terry Klassen Ben Bailey Jeff Lyness	Distribution Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Gary Mundy Ryan Agrey Jack Vanstone Glen Pardoe Colin Friesen
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	PE2020-00577	
Municipal address	1410 Olympic Way SE	
Community	Beltline	
Project description	Calgary BMO Centre Expansion	
Review	first	
File Manager	Gareth Webster	
City Wide Urban Design	Sonny Tomic	
Applicant	Stantec Architecture	

*Based on the applicant's response to the Panel's comments, the Chief Urban Designer will determine if further review will include the Panel or be completed internally only by City Wide Urban Design.

Summary

The BMO Centre Expansion is a critical catalyst development for Stampede Park and the greater Rivers District Master Plan. The Panel acknowledges the early engagement by the Applicant team and appreciates the opportunity for initial review of this important city-building project. The Panel is generally supportive of the design vision shared at the pre-application stage, noting a strong presentation of the key concepts and architectural design intent; however, the south west building interface with the 17 Avenue SE extension is a key concern.

This application is critical in linking Stampede Park with the Beltline and vital to the success of the entire area – a welcoming active use on this corner is justified not only by its urban design merit, but in the \$60M spent to open up the CTrain station and Stampede Park to pedestrians. The intent of this work is to forge a pedestrian and vehicular link that will increase connectivity and create an attractive right of way for new retail and commercial development along 4th Street SE/Stampede Trail. As such, UDRP recommends the Applicant revisit and develop the following aspects:

- The south west building interface fronting the 17 Avenue SE extension is setback significantly from the future road right-of-way and devoid of active uses. Design refinement is recommended to improve this gateway interface with greater building porosity and retail uses.
- The building program appears to embrace the future context of a vibrant Stampede Trail main street/retail experience; however, this development is cued to set the bar for upcoming developments in the Rivers District Master Plan and as such should demonstrate greater creativity in the narrative/thesis that a Convention Centre is a monolithic use.

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Urban Design Element	
<p>Creativity <i>Encourage innovation; model best practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall project approach as it relates to original ideas or innovation 	
UDRP Commentary	The Application exhibits creativity in the building form and architectural character that speaks to the unique Calgary context and spirit of the Stampede.
Applicant Response	Noted
<p>Context <i>Optimize built form with respect to mass and spacing of buildings, placement on site, response to adjacent uses, heights and densities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massing relationship to context, distribution on site, and orientation to street edges Shade impact on public realm and adjacent sites 	
UDRP Commentary	In general, the massing responds well to the future context of the Rivers District Master Plan. Special consideration should be given to the sense of arrival being created along Stampede Trail, which is not yet fully resolved. The south west edge fronting 17 AV SE requires enhancement and is an area of concern elaborated in the Urban Design Elements to follow.
Applicant Response	The southwest façade facing 17 th avenue has been enhanced with angled window openings to provide additional interest, transparency and safety along that edge. Landscaping along that edge has also been enhanced.
<p>Human Scale <i>Defines street edges, ensures height and mass respect context; pay attention to scale</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massing contribution to public realm at grade 	
UDRP Commentary	Proposed landscape design and public realm treatments – described as a cumulation of spaces – adequately responds to the needs of the building and public realm, creating a number of distinct spaces for gathering and experiencing the site. Consideration of consistent street edge, with street trees along 17 AV SE and the west side of Stampede Trail SE, should be explored. The building scale appears appropriate in the future context of the Rivers District Master Plan.
Applicant Response	A consistent line of street trees along the west side of Stampede Trail SE is now proposed. The design intent along the 17 th Ave extension is to create a curving ‘track’ so the trees are designed to follow this curve.
<p>Integration <i>The conjunction of land-use, built form, landscaping and public realm design</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 integration of land-use, built-form and public realm design is adequately met along 3 building edges, with particularly good attention given to the screening of the back-off house/loading areas along the north façade. Integration along the south west façade is currently poor, with an over-emphasis on landscape design to counterpose a predominantly blank ground-floor with no active uses.
Applicant Response	Openings and windows are added to the southwest façade to give more animation to pedestrian experience along this edge.
<p>Connectivity <i>Achieve visual and functional connections between buildings and places; ensure connection to existing and future networks.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Keys to crafting sustainable urbanism here should be to view this connection as an integrated, mixed-use, complex place rather than a singular and isolated use. Formulating a connective link and a gateway needs to achieve a unifying, functional, mixed-use ambiance for the 17 Avenue SE extension leading to the anchoring corner at 4 Street SE introducing the future Stampede Trail main street. The effectively illustrated placemaking effort should not be diluted by the connectivity gap currently proposed at this interface.
Applicant Response	Connections through the site is designed to interact with the pedestrian with multiple opportunities for people to flow through, relax or take part in the activities. This experience

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	follows a spine called 'The Track' with a design aesthetic that unifies and identifies the site as a whole
Animation <i>Incorporate active uses; pay attention to details; add colour, wit and fun</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building form contributes to an active pedestrian realm • Residential units provided at-grade • Elevations are interesting and enhance the streetscape 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>The design proposes a number of public spaces that will require fulsome 365-day-a-year structured programming in order to activate and animate its spaces. The Panel reiterates the need for small active retail uses to ensure a vibrant people-friendly destination. The pavilion area and south west façade are particularly well suited for small active retail uses.</p> <p>While composed of high-quality materials, the ground-level south west façade is sterile with low animation. The Panel recommends adjusting the setback width to be more appropriate for the year-round condition outside of peak events and to create greater visual permeability and building articulation for a more active pedestrian realm on this important corner.</p>
Applicant Response	It is a high priority to have a variety of uses and activities within the plaza and building to draw people into and through the spaces. This includes food and retail options within the addition that would be open to the public. A pavilion that is open year-round is planned to host concerts and a range of pop-up type activities. Each pathway and space carefully consider the experience of those moving through and those staying to enjoy the spaces.
Accessibility <i>Ensure clear and simple access for all types of users</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier free design • Entry definition, legibility, and natural wayfinding 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>Applicant to review and provide diagrams of vehicle turning movements and identified pedestrian crossings.</p> <p>Further review to the number of building entrances should be given considering the large scale of the building.</p>
Applicant Response	Vehicle turning movements and pedestrian crossings are included in the Development Permit submission. Building entrances have been studied in depth and placed to best balance wayfinding, flow of pedestrian traffic, accessibility, exiting and building security.
Diversity <i>Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces • Corner treatments and project porosity 	
UDRP Commentary	The diversity of uses and users appears to be limited. The Panel recommends improving the destination appeal of this development by incorporating active uses for a composite of experiences that would draw people year-round at all hours of the day.
Applicant Response	The amount and type of uses is limited due to the operations of the Calgary Stampede. Food and retail is desired and an open market has been placed at the main entrance off Stampede Trail SE to continue the future commercial development along that street. Outdoor activities are envisioned year-round along 'The Track' and Plaza with accommodations incorporated into the landscape and building design.
Flexibility <i>Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approach relating to market and/or context changes 	
UDRP Commentary	The Panel notes the potential to reduce some areas of landscaping for increased programming flexibility (i.e. outdoor trade-shows). Alternatively, more attention could be given to defining the street edge (i.e. street trees) while opening up areas for larger gatherings interior to the site.
Applicant Response	The balance of landscaped and hardscaped area has been studied in depth. Large grassed areas are provided to host a variety of group sizes and events. The street furniture along the hardscaping is moveable to allow vehicle access to accommodate different events. The Pavilion is left intentionally open to allow for a variety of functions. Flexibility of the space is key to the success of the project.
Safety <i>Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Night time design 	
UDRP Commentary	Many aspects of the design are still to be determined. No significant safety concerns were identified by the Panel, however special consideration to be given to the back of house area.
Applicant Response	The design team has incorporated CPTED principles throughout and have reduced areas of concern to the best of our ability. Site lighting is specifically designed to eliminate hidden areas

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	around the site. Views through the site and out of the building are maximized and carefully considered to keep eyes on the street and provide a constant level of energy to the site.
Orientation <i>Provide clear and consistent directional clues for urban navigation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance natural views and vistas 	
UDRP Commentary	Natural views, cues for urban navigation, and directional orientation are appropriate and meet the expectations of the Panel.
Applicant Response	Noted
Sustainability <i>Be aware of lifecycle costs; incorporate sustainable practices and materials</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site/solar orientation and passive heating/cooling Material selection and sustainable products 	
UDRP Commentary	NA
Applicant Response	The design is aiming to exceed sustainable standards with an advanced building envelope and efficiencies in mechanical and electrical systems.
Durability <i>Incorporate long-lasting materials and details that will provide a legacy rather than a liability</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of low maintenance materials and/or sustainable products Project detailed to avoid maintenance issues 	
UDRP Commentary	Building materials are of high quality, in line with a high-profile, highly visible project of this caliber. Vegetative ground cover to reviewed for year-round function and visual aesthetic (i.e. brown seasons).
Applicant Response	Noted. All materials selected are to obtain a high-level of durability due to the high-use and visibility that this building will receive.