

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date	April 21, 2021	
Time	3:00	
Panel Members	Present Chad Russill (Chair) Katherine Robinson Anna Lawrence Jeff Lyness Glen Pardoe	Distribution Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Ben Bailey Gary Mundy Beverly Sandalack Michael Sydenham Jack Vanstone Noorullah Hussain Zada
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	LOC2020-0079	
Municipal address	15 11A St NE	
Community	Bridgeland	
Project description	Land Use Amendment and Outline Plan	
Review	first	
File Manager	Wallace Leung	
City Wide Urban Design	Jihad Bitar	
Applicant	Ground Cubed	

Summary

The proposal is located in Bridgeland on a site that is currently occupied by a number of residential uses. The proposal would redevelop the bulk of the site and provide a considerable increase in urban residential density with a considerable amount of green space and mobility corridors. The site is located close to the Bridgeland LRT Station and is adjacent to a number of existing seniors and other forms of subsidized housing, including other developments associated with the applicant. The CNIB is also located nearby. The development is intended to aid in building out the East Riverside areas as a complete community. The Panel applauds this intent and supports the overall program as presented. No active Development Permit application is in process as of yet, and so the review completed by the Panel necessarily focused on the Land Use application, build form and overall vibe inasmuch as continuity with the ARP and the current community was concerned.

The Panel endorses the proposal and is supportive of the proposed increase in density and also the proposed reduction in surface parking provided for the site. The Panel further supports the notion of providing hard-surface areas that could be accounted for as part of the parking supply but utilized for alternative purposes during non-peak periods when the office uses in the area do not require the parking supply. The notion of expanding the open space to incorporate parts of the parking areas in this manner is therefore worthy of consideration. Other commonalities in questions and ideas raised by the Panel included the following:

- **Continuity of Build Out:** It is recognized that the ultimate build-out of the site may include multiple developers that may or may not share the full vision exhibited on the plan. Assurances should therefore be built into the design and process to protect key features

such as the north/south connectivity, perimeter midblock treatments (parkade access and ped crossings etc.), designated loading and surface parking locations as well as other features of the plan.

- Strengthen the North/South active modes connectivity: The east/west active modes corridor and greenway is strong and represents a defining feature of the plan. However, the north/south connectivity was less well developed, and shown as a dashed line on the plans suggesting a less committed feature. The Panel would encourage the applicant to strengthen this feature.
- Density Location: The plan as proposed focusses density on the corners. There may be merit in varying the heights of the corner towers and also consideration of transferring additional density to the corners to perhaps eliminate the SW leg of the NE building (for example). This would serve to open up the courtyard for that building and make it more contiguous with the larger open area to the south.
- User Groups: The Panel noted the propensity for the green space to be used by the adjacent CNIB and the need to consider visually impaired users and the potential conflicts/safety issues related to bike passage through the strong east/west active modes corridor. Attention to CPTED, lighting and sight lines will need to be given due consideration.

Urban Design Element	
Creativity <i>Encourage innovation; model best practices</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall project approach as it relates to original ideas or innovation 	
UDRP Commentary	Panel supports the good use of the site and inclusion of multiple positive aspects of design. Consider usage of parking as a contiguous element of the open space to facilitate alternate use during non-peak periods.
Applicant Response	<i>We have proposed a policy addition to the ARP to encourage the use of surface parking areas for other purposes during non-peak periods.</i>
Context <i>Optimize built form with respect to mass and spacing of buildings, placement on site, response to adjacent uses, heights and densities</i>	
<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	Consideration should be given to varying tower heights and transferring density to gain height or street wall density to reduce low-rise intrusions into the open space.
Applicant Response	<i>Acknowledged. This is an idea that can be explored further at the Development Permit stage, and we welcome the inclusion of such an idea within policy.</i>
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	Generally, the land use concept is received as being very well done, but requires attention to north/south internal site active modes connectivity.
Applicant Response	<i>Acknowledged. We welcome an addition to the policy to encourage/require a defined north-south pedestrian connection through the site.</i>
Human Scale <i>Defines street edges, ensures height and mass respect context; pay attention to scale</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massing contribution to public realm at grade 	

UDRP Commentary	While difficult to fully evaluate at this point in the process, the massing and scale features are consistent with meeting expectations.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>
Integration <i>The conjunction of land-use, built form, landscaping and public realm design</i> <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	Care will need to be taken at the DP stage of the development of various parcels to ensure a contiguous and non-intrusive treatment of parkade access and loading access, with a minimization of at-grade parking.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>
Connectivity <i>Achieve visual and functional connections between buildings and places; ensure connection to existing and future networks.</i> <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	Obvious and strengthened east/west connectivity, but attention is required to north/south connectivity to maintain a similar experience.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged. Again, we welcome a policy addition to address north-south connectivity at the Development Permit stage.</i>
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	As application is at LOC stage, it is difficult to fully comment on this element, however, generally appears to meet Panel expectations.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>
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	While significant portions of this project will be hinged on the detail included within future Development Permit applications, the overall application appears to both diversity and densify the area. It is anticipated that future study will strengthen these aspects and is well suited to support a broad range of uses.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>
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 project is positioned well to adapt to changing uses and should serve project residents and surrounding community with a much needed additional 'hub' to the area.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>
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	Safety considerations not fully described, making commentary on this element difficult to evaluate at this time.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Safety concerns have been shared anecdotally by community residents and are thought to originate from a lack of activity in the area. The proposed future development is anticipated to vastly improve the situation.</i>
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	Well laid out and intuitive site plan, but plans require further enhancement of north/south connectivity. Consider varying tower heights and transferring density away from low-rise intrusions into the open space to increase the open space
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>
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	There is still much that is unknown, as this is an LOC, but the project is very well located and the proposed concepts are promoting active modes and TOD, therefore serving as a positive example of further densifying inner city sites.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>
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	Materials not fully described, making commentary on durability not relevant at this time.
<i>Applicant Response</i>	<i>Acknowledged.</i>