

Applicant Submission

October 8, 2021



THE CITY OF CALGARY
Planning & Building Department
P.O. Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

ATTENTION: Derek Pomreinke, File Manager

Dear Derek:

**Re: Development Permit Application for 4th Street Lofts
Our File 21026/1.2A
PE2021-01692**

On behalf of Western Securities, Gibbs Gage Architects is proud to submit the attached DP submission for the mixed use project on the corner of 4th St and 15th Ave SW. The project consists of a single tower residential building with an active mixed use lower floors consisting of the existing Williams Block (Red's Diner), residential lofts and retail frontages.

THE HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

This site has a recently approved Land Use 19D2021 approved in February of 2021. This land use supported additional bonusing to support affordable housing (up to 11 FAR) and a larger maximum floorplate size (800 sm). The site also has a local landmark of the Williams Block building or Red's Diner as more commonly known. This building, although not historically registered, has established itself as a Beltline Community node and Western Securities recognize this with great efforts to keep it intact. The location of the Williams Block created great challenges for the development to overcome in the planning of the main floor, tower placement and the underground parkade. These accommodations we hope will be recognized in the design intent and in the review of this project.

SITE AND LAND USE

The proposed development is following the 19D2021 Bylaw for a primary focus on residential housing and an active public realm. The project looks to take advantage of the bonusing available through the Affordable Housing initiatives and provide significant area dedicated to affordable housing. Western Securities has been engaging with an affordable housing provider (Horizon Housing) over the past year to create terms for this arrangement. Western Securities are ready to provide details on this upon approval of the Affordable Housing bonusing applied for in this application.

TOWER MASSING CONCEPT

The Beltline Community has some of the most unique and character defining areas of the urban fabric that makes up Calgary. Leveraging building typologies of early Calgary, this community is rich with buildings made of brick and mixed with industrial buildings of days gone by. It is also rich in mixed-use residential streets vibrant with varied housing types and unique retail offerings. Western Securities found inspiration in this and named the project 4th Street Lofts as a driver for the design team to follow. Lofts are often spaces that were once an industrial space converted to housing. The design team looked at the elements that made up a loft and followed ideas like pragmatism, volume, proportion and timeless. Through this inspiration, we worked to create a tower expression that was simple / pragmatic in its form and timeless in its window expression and colour palette. The floorplate offers a wide range in suite types while providing a unique expression on the skyline with a uniform grid and verticality on the north downtown facing façade. The rooftop is accentuated with a stepped back southern form of penthouses for the upper 2 floors.

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This step sets up the proportions of the rooftop where a south facing rooftop amenity space provides an active space with incredible views and exposure. The north verticality expression is topped off with a “graffiti wall” located at the top of the tower stretching two storeys which will be a defining element for the project. This wall is one of a few in the project that Western Securities hopes to engage with the Beltline Urban Mural Project (BUMP) in support of this community.

PODIUM DESIGN

The 4th Street Lofts site has unique facades on all edges. The west is bordered by single family homes which move to multifamily as you move further west along 15th Avenue. We acknowledge this with the primary focus of residential program along 15th avenue and human scale elements of 2 storey lofts along this façade. The 15th Avenue frontage will be active with at grade patio spaces and unique 2nd storey patios screened by permeable brick screens to create privacy for the tenants while still keeping eye’s on the street for community engagement. The residential lobby has entrances from all 3 facades (15th, 4th and laneway) and this was done to promote a permeable and active lobby experience. Western Securities had a vision of this lobby being a hub of activity and such was designed with a blurred line between a coffee shop setting and residential lobby. The Williams Block or Red’s Diner is celebrated in its form and materiality with respectful treatment of scale and material contrast. The edges of Red’s has glass abutting the existing façade allowing for the once exterior of the building to now become the interior walls of the new lobby space. Moving along 4th the program is primarily retail to support the existing context of 4th Street and this frontage was scaled to respect the Williams Block and provide a streetscape that will support human scale active spaces. A second floor balcony spills from a residential amenity space and will further support an active frontage moving north along 4th Street.

The 4th Street Loft project is celebrating ideas of how a new development can support existing conditions and build upon ideas of successful urban spaces. The laneway is where ideas of urban space begin to flourish as a multi-modal hub with flexible urban edges. This is supported in the design by a through lobby access and dedicated tenant access to the elevators and seamless materiality throughout the exterior spaces. We envision this space as an area of bicycle, pedestrian, pet owner, car share, taxi, short stay, retail patio and pop-up retail (food trucks). We look to administration to work with this idea as we can all acknowledge the incredible opportunity and intent. The development area surrounding has no available parking or access for retail or tenants with 4th street parking restrictions and 15th avenue one-way + bike lane. This multi-modal hub will create a safer and full accessible space with a flexible urban edge for pedestrians and tenants while supporting retail tenancy and vibrancy of the 4th street experience. Western Securities could have built directly to the laneway as seen by many developments in this City, creating a cavernous lane of pure utility. WSL gave up prime retail frontage along 4th to challenge ideas of what a laneway could be and support an active laneway frontage and active north building entry. We see great global examples in Europe, Australia and within Canada in Halifax of active pedestrian and vehicular shared spaces. Pulling back the frontage, opening sight lines, creating open space for seasonal activity and pedestrian safety are the design goals. This space is delineated by a planter to bring greenery along 4th, opportunities for seating and create a protective edge to pedestrians along the street edge. The design is proposing some surface stalls here to help support the retail in our variable seasons and create an active frontage of pedestrian mixed use. We live in a winter city, which presents seasonal challenges. These stalls will be critical for the success of these retail spaces during the long 6+ winter months and for the tenants/visitors to the building. This area use during these months will keep the laneway active and vibrant fostering a safe space for tenants and retail patrons. The flexibility this creates during the remaining seasons for active uses of pop up food trucks or expanded patios in addition to short stay is the benefit of this space. This flexibility is critical for the success of this space. If it were to be just a plaza it would not attract the frequency of users during the off seasons as it is north facing. The high quality of this space with the wrapping of the building and glazing down the laneway along with the proposed façade of a mural in honour of the Winston Building will continue the active legacy of the site. We understand this colours outside the lines of some planning and transportation guidelines but look to the City for support of new ideas in urban infrastructure.

AMENITIES

The 4th Street Lofts will offer a unique amenity package to its tenants and community. Support of programs like BUMP will be visible on the building façade and the integration of the iconic Williams Block will continue on as a Community landmark. The residential lobby concept of an integrated coffee shop will be a community and tenant amenity to enjoy, blurring the lines between public and private space. A second floor amenity lounge area, connected by a feature stair from the lobby will provide a dedicated space for tenants to use. The second floor will also house the Class 1 secure bike parking (bike repair located on main floor) and a private gym amenity on the NW corner of the floor. A third floor outdoor rooftop space along the west will be a dedicated pet area / dog run available to tenants 24 hours a day to provide a safe tenant pet space. The tower rooftop amenity will be available to tenants for outdoor use with available barbeques and patio furniture.

Argyle Street - Halifax



Multimodal Interaction



ACCESSIBILITY

The site grading was a design challenge for this site as it has significant rise and fall from one corner to the next. The design team worked diligently to provide fully accessible entrances on all sides of the building. There is barrier free access to all main entrances, retail and one of the main floor lofts from the 4th street frontage. Additionally there is a convenience elevator from the main floor to the second floor amenity lounge and barrier free access to the dog run and rooftop outdoor patio spaces.

MATERIALS

The Williams Block and the Beltline Community were design drivers for materiality of this development. We chose durable materials to compliment and not "copy" the heritage attributes of the neighbouring context. The 15th Avenue is primarily a mix of concrete, black steel and abstracted use of a dark coloured black brick in a screen form with opportunities for planting along the frontages with wood accented benches. Glass with steel industrial fittings will form the attachments to the Williams Block so the play of interior to exterior can be visible. Continuing along 4th the complementary dark coloured black brick and steel elements will be accented with steel planters along 4th with tactile wood benches. The ground plane will be a mix of concrete and pavers to break down the scale of the public realm. This treatment will continue into the laneway frontage and be complimented by highly visible facades to be commissioned of the Beltline Urban Mural Project. The tower will be expressed with a primary colour palette of a white grid with a black punch of windows detailed with traditional loft inspired windows. The white and black colours will be a mix of glass spandrel and composite metal panel. The tower will be expressed along the north with a vertical mass of dark coloured brick extending to the rooftop graffiti wall as another BUMP opportunity at the tower peak.

DENSITY AND BONUSING

We have provided for you comprehensive bonusing calculations included in the DP set. Highlighted in the diagrams showing the category 2.0 bonusing PAPOS. We are suggesting a few vertical surfaces as part of the PAPOS calculations however we feel these are valuable to the public space. The high quality finishes of the areas adjacent the public sidewalk will be important to the public space and contribute to the 4th street Beltline revitalization. Additionally the areas for graffiti murals (BUMP) in the active laneway and on the downtown facing tower cornice we see as incredible opportunity to celebrate the Beltline community. Lastly the repointing of the Williams Block, although not a designated heritage building, this project has made great efforts to retain this building to the benefit of the community and quality of public space. We feel support of this effort through PAPOS bonusing is an appropriate measure equaling similar project bonusing seen elsewhere. In addition we are providing category 3.0 Affordable Housing to achieve the overall density for this project with the calculations broken out for the bonusing from 5.0-9.0 FAR and 9.0-11.0 FAR as noted in the recently approved Land Use. This will be from our understanding the first implemented Affordable Housing bonusing in the City (another project was approved but it has not been built). WSL has had numerous meetings to set this framework up for the operation of the required affordable housing allocations and is confident in the discussions with the provider to fulfill the operating agreements. This project is committed to these social benefit bonusing items and how they can have a positive effect on the community as a whole.

SITE ACCESS AND LOADING

The strategy for site access and loading on the site was to activate all edges of the building frontages while respecting the surrounding context. The building will have an active back of house and this is designed with high visibility and treated as part of the urban downtown living experience. The parking was located along the laneway and pushed west to allow for any cueing that might occur in the laneway with access to both east and west directions. Garbage for the residents and for the retail tenants is provided in separate rooms and bins will be managed in the laneway. Residential move-in and move-out will be managed and scheduled with the loading stall provided and accommodated with a rear loading elevator access on the core.

PARKING

The parking for the entire development is accommodated in the 4 floors of parkade located below grade and 5 surface stalls (rationale stated in podium design). We are asking for a parking relaxation for resident parking but look to support this with an acknowledgment of the context for those who will be residing in this building and market demand (TIA / Parking Study has been provided as part of application). Bicycle parking is being provided above the minimum requirements and will be supported further with in-suite bicycle parking. This in-suite amenity is to acknowledge the significant financial commitment many tenants make with bicycles and see this as a target market amenity for tenants.

REQUESTED RELAXATIONS

- Building Setback - Resident Patio's and entry canopy along 15th avenue for levels L01 and L02
- Building Setback - Resident Amenity Patio along 4th street for level L02
- Building Setback - Gas Meter enclosure along north PL laneway at level L01
- Building Setback – North façade of tower for brick detail starting at L03
- Drive Aisle Width – Existing Laneway dimension to facilitate surface parking in laneway

SUMMARY

In summary, we are very excited to present this design as a dynamic addition to the iconic Beltline Community 4th Street context and continue this site's legacy as local landmark. We understand there may be elements of this proposal that challenge ideas of the bylaw but we will work with the City to find ways to achieve a successful outcome. This project's ownership is committed to the long-term benefits of this project for the community and looks to set a standard for how a project can integrate into an established area.

We trust this information is helpful to you as you process the application and look forward to your support.

Please let us know if you require anything further.

Yours truly,

GIBBS GAGE ARCHITECTS



Jonny Mehr, Managing Director of Design

JH:drp

Gibbs | Gage

ARCHITECTS