

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date	Jul 21, 2021	
Time	1:00	
Panel Members	Present Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Gary Mundy Beverly Sandalack Glen Pardoe Jack Vanstone Noorullah Hussain Zada	Distribution Chad Russill (Chair) Ben Bailey Anna Lawrence Jeff Lyness Katherine Robinson Doug Little
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	DP2021-4158	
Municipal address	10310 Eamon Rd NW	
Community	Rocky Ridge	
Project description	New: Multi-Residential Development (1 Building)	
Review	first	
File Manager	Coleen Auld	
City Wide Urban Design	Chad Oberg	
Applicant	S2Architecture	

*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 Panel appreciates the opportunity to review the proposed application. The subject site is located in a prominent position in a transit-oriented location. It is a unique site with particular constraints which include the triangular property, the LRT parking lot and a steep grade change across the site. The Panel supports the additional density and high-quality of design and materiality proposed for the site. Below is a summary of the main aspects of the application that are of the greatest significance to the Panel.

Urban street edge definition: the three-sided star form of the building, although an efficient and attractive urban form, fails to define a street edge condition on any of its three sides.

Accessibility: the applicant noted during the panel session that the accessible entrance was through the parking garage. The primary entrance of the project should be universally accessible.

Mixed use: given the proximity to the LRT Station, park and ride, and the bridge across Crowchild, the Panel would expect some commercial use to be included in the building program.

Applicant Response

May 19, 2022

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 proposed design, although architecturally attractive, is inward focused and fails to contribute to the public realm.
Applicant Response	<p><i>The building form has been designed so that all residential suites face outward towards the street and public realm.</i></p> <p><i>In response to comments, we have revised the south podium elevation to be better respond to the adjacent street condition. Revisions include refining the massing to more integrate with the residential tower, stepping of materials, utilization of high quality materials from the principal building, developing a rhythm of glazing. The south elevation design improvement continue at the identified important south-east corner where the podium is stepped, glazing is increased and active program has been added to this portion of the podium. The south-east corner has been further articulated with an outdoor terrace at a lower elevation in order to provide opportunities for active engagement between tenants and pedestrians at grade.</i></p> <p><i>Continuing north from the south-east corner, the east interface with the street has been reconceived through revising the landscape design to bring to public realm into the site by creating an engaging public space.</i></p>
<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	The application does not meet the Panel's expectations for street definition, active frontage and mixed use given its proximity to a transit station.
Applicant Response	<p><i>See above response.</i></p> <p><i>Further, The South elevation has been redesigned in response to this comment to provide improved street definition and active frontage. This elevation has been developed with a rhythm of glazing and a public sidewalk that extends from the south-east corner of the site to an access point along the south elevation. The street scape has been enhanced with landscape which include a rhythm of trees.</i></p> <p><i>An active edge has been developed along the south-east corner as noted above that engages the street through frontage, transparency, and terraces.</i></p> <p><i>The east street interface has been revised to bring the public realm into the site, creating a shared public space. The east elevation of the building has been updated</i></p>

	<i>with revised main level materials to create a pedestrian scale and to actively engages this new public space.</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	Although residential units are provided at grade they are disconnected from the public sidewalk. Street trees should be provided on all streets to create a better interface.
Applicant Response	<p><i>An engaging public space has been integrated on the east side of the site to create an area where the public and residence can interact. This space has been designed to become an extension of the public realm. Walkways that connect via the city sidewalks to the adjacent LRT stations have been provided that link a significant pedestrian entrance to the building along with individual at grade suite entrances. Major and suite entrances are now directly connected to the public space.</i></p> <p><i>The plaza includes a variety of seating and gathering opportunities to encourage gathering and activation.</i></p> <p><i>Although limited by existing overhead power lines along Rocky Ridge Road, trees have been placed according to Enmax guidelines. The trees are offset at 4.5m from the overhead line as required.</i></p> <p><i>Large elm trees in the boulevard along Eamon Road reflect the context of the adjacent storm pond, creating a park like atmosphere on the west</i></p>
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	The height and mass of the building is appropriate to its context. As noted above the building setbacks do not contribute to the public realm at grade. The building appears to be sitting on a platform and doesn't take advantage of the sloped site. This effectively creates a wall between the TOD parking and the neighbourhood. The proposal shows three identical wings on a site with very different contextual aspects. The building should respond differently to each of the three different contexts.
Applicant Response	<p><i>The building setback on the west side of the site responds to vehicular access and drop off requirements. We have selected this side of the site for the vehicular access point in response to previous City comments which stated that vehicular access off of Rocky Ridge Road NW would not be supported. We are improving this interface by providing low level landscaping to further screen the proposed surface parking stalls. As noted above this interface is also improved with the inclusion of large elm trees.</i></p> <p><i>On the south portion of the site, the podium is sited just off the easement line with the Park N Ride area. This building face has been redesigned in response to comments to directly engages the public realm at grade. Further a sidewalk and landscaping has been provided along this edge to encourage pedestrian movement.</i></p> <p><i>As noted above, on the east portion of the site the public space has been redesigned to bring the public realm onto the site to afford a more direct interface</i></p>

	<p><i>with the building. The southeast corner has been redesigned in response to comments to create an engaging active edge. The above noted retaining walls have been removed from the design and replaced with an extension of the building which responds to the on site grades creating a pedestrian scale mass at the south-east corner that gradually steps up towards the residential tower.</i></p> <p><i>The building has been designed to take advantage of the sloped site by minimizing the required cut and fill. Our client is interested in providing below grade parking in order to provide an overall high-quality response to the site. However, our client also requires that the associated cut and fill meet economic requirements so that the project is feasible to construct. In response, we developed the proposed solution that minimizes the required excavation on site by partially exposing the parkade. This solution proved to be economical by also removing the need for ramps between parking levels. As noted above further design revisions have been incorporated to create an active edge and to incorporate the building mass into the contours of the site.</i></p> <p><i>In response to this comment and comments from CWUD the “ends” of the building have also been redesigned and further articulated through stepping the massing to be more engaging.</i></p> <p><i>The resulting building form addresses each contextual site interface differently. Vehicle arrival to the west, the interface with the LTR park and ride to the south, and public pedestrian space to the east are each considered and addressed.</i></p>
<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	<p>The parking entrances are appropriately integrated into the building. More planting should be provided along the south edge of the parkade. The site feels introverted as the landscape has been designed more for the residents than the street.</p>
Applicant Response	<p><i>The south interface has been revised to include articulation and architectural detailing on the parkade face. The planting design revision provides layered planting of trees, shrubs, and grasses to highlight the architectural detailing. Plants with year-round interest have been selected.</i></p>
<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	<p>For able bodied people the site has been designed to connect to the LRT stations. Providing visual hierarchy to the entrances would improve wayfinding. A pedestrian route should be added along the parking lot.</p>
Applicant Response	<p><i>The east side of the building contains a significant common pedestrian access point to the lobby that provides direct access from the site to the LRT station along Rocky Ridge Road NW. This access path previously contained stairs. The revised design has the primary arrival point on the site as identified through scale and landscaping</i></p>

	<p><i>wayfinding elements as barrier free. A secondary access path, that runs along the east side of the building remains with stairs in response to grades to provide a more direct access route from individual units to the common public space.</i></p> <p><i>As noted above the primary access point is through an articulated amenity plaza. Wayfinding planting has been incorporated into the design to enhance this important approach to the building. Efforts have also been made through site design to provide wayfinding cues. Architecturally these cues have been emphasized using a pedestrian scale canopy that projects from the building entrance.</i></p> <p><i>As requested, secondary pedestrian route has been incorporated along the south elevation. This pathway connects to city sidewalks along rocky ridge road and includes planting to visually enhance the pedestrian experience.</i></p>
<p>Accessibility <i>Ensure clear and simple access for all types of users</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier free design • Entry definition, legibility, and natural wayfinding 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>The proposed accessible entrance is through the parking garage. This is not an acceptable solution. The primary entrance of the project has to be universally accessible. The LRT parking lot has not been designed with a safe accessible route across the parking lot to the proposed building. As the parking lot is outside the control of the applicant the project should include an accessible route on its own property or secure an agreement to provide an accessible route with the adjacent property owner.</p>
Applicant Response	<p><i>The above comment is not correct. The principal entrance to the building, which is located on the west side of the site, is universally accessible. This entrance area includes a surface barrier free parking stall for visitors. There is also a barrier free connection to this entrance from adjacent City sidewalks.</i></p> <p><i>A second pedestrian entrance to the building, located on the east side of the site, has been designed to afford convenient barrier free pedestrian access to adjacent city sidewalks and the LRT station. This entrance has been revised as a barrier free point of entry.</i></p> <p><i>A third barrier free access point for residence has also been provided along the south side of the building. This entrance is accessed from a pedestrian walk that extends along the south edge of the property and connects to city sidewalks along Rocky Ridge Road NW.</i></p>
<p>Diversity <i>Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces • Corner treatments and project porosity 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>A mixed-use building would be more of an asset to the site given its proximity to the park and ride, LRT station and the bridge across Crowchild. The applicant should consider providing retail, access on ends of the building. Commercial will become more valuable over time as the area densifies.</p>
Applicant Response	<p><i>Our client is a commercial developer and has reviewed this site extensively for its commercial opportunities. His team has deemed that this site is not suitable for commercial development for the following reasons:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Adjacent uses include a place of worship, a storm water retention pond,</i>

	<p><i>and acreage single family lots. This density is not sufficient to support commercial development.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>2. Commercial tenants require dedicated, immediately adjacent surface parking, which this site cannot accommodate.</i> <i>3. The road infrastructure dead ends at this site and does not benefit from passing through vehicular traffic.</i> <i>4. The walk across the pedestrian bridge is extensive and requires pedestrians to cross two Park and Ride Lots, seven lanes of vehicular traffic, and two LRT tracks. Note, that the bridge over Crowchild Trail is uncovered and is considerably exposed to high winds. Residents from Tuscany cannot realistically be considered part of the commercial catchment area for this site.</i> <i>5. The site is downhill from an existing and established commercial development that benefits from a connected vehicular intersection.</i>
<p>Flexibility <i>Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approach relating to market and/or context changes 	
UDRP Commentary	The project should allow for flexibility in the parkade design to convert to retail.
Applicant Response	<p><i>See above response. The immediately adjacent Park N Ride surface parking area limits the opportunity for future retail uses.</i></p> <p><i>Future flexibility for retail uses could be achieved by converting the surface parking area on the south portion of the site that is currently being leased as Park-N-Ride stalls.</i></p>
<p>Safety <i>Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Night time design 	
UDRP Commentary	There is no passive surveillance on the LRT parking lot. Providing uses at grade along the parking lot would improve the project significantly.
Applicant Response	<p><i>Many of the Park N Ride parking lots are designed without passive surveillance in mind. This comment should be directed at the design of the Park N Ride parking lots and should not be left to be resolved by neighboring property owners.</i></p> <p><i>Providing residential or commercial uses at grade facing onto the Park N Ride parking lot was considered and has been reject as this was not seen as a viable solution for this project. It is not desirable for at grade residential uses to interface directly with parking stalls that they cannot use. Similarly, retail uses require direct convenient access to parking. Developing a retail unit that faces onto a parking lot that the retail use does not have access to creates considerable challenges and would be extremely challenging to lease.</i></p> <p><i>Note: we have provided a parkade entrance through the Park N Ride parking area and are now receiving push back regarding the number of existing Park N Ride parking stalls we have proposed removing. We understand there is minimal flexibility with the existing lease and use.</i></p> <p><i>The site has been designed with all residential units facing outward towards the street and the provided outdoor amenity spaces. Further, at grade residential units</i></p>

	<i>have been provided with direct access to the street. The site has been designed with CPTED principals in mind and provides passive surveillance.</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	The project provides directional cues to the entrances at the upper level. Intuitive wayfinding from the LRT parking lot could be improved.
Applicant Response	<p><i>As noted above, the project design includes a second common pedestrian entrance on the east side of the building with connections via public sidewalks to the adjacent LRT station. The legibility to these entrances have been reviewed and improved.</i></p> <p><i>The redesign of the exterior public amenity space on the east side of the site has been developed considering the opportunities to incorporate wayfinding cues. Architecturally these cues have been emphasized using a pedestrian scale canopy that projects from the east building entrance.</i></p> <p><i>Boulevard trees carried over from the LRT plaza lead pedestrians up Rocky Ridge Road. The paving pattern from the LRT plaza has been duplicated in the east plaza to cue the public realm function of the plaza. Opportunities for address signage/building naming has been provided on exposed retaining walls facing pedestrians coming from the LRT.</i></p>
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	Insufficient information was provided to comment.
Applicant Response	<i>The project was designed with sustainable principles in mind and includes a significant geothermal heating and cooling system. It also include a care share program to reduce the reliance on building tenants to have a single or multiple vehicles.</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	The south edge landscape might be high maintenance. Otherwise it is a beautiful building with a good choice of materials.
Applicant Response	<i>Plant material selected will be Chinook hardy, drought tolerant, and planted within a mulch planting bed. The layout of the planting bed has been simplified for maintenance. Sodded area has been increased and will be sodded with fescue sod which will reduce water consumption and mowing requirements.</i>