

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date	June 23, 2021	
Time	2:00	
Panel Members	Present Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Doug Little Gary Mundy Jack Vanstone Beverly Sandalack	Distribution Chad Russill (Chair) Ben Bailey Anna Lawrence Jeff Lyness Glen Pardoe (conflict) Katherine Robinson Noorullah Hussain Zada
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	PE2021-01609	
Municipal address	8620 Canada Olympic Dr SW	
Community	Medicine Hill	
Project description	Commercial and residential development (5 buildings)	
Review	first	
File Manager	Renaë Demolitor	
City Wide Urban Design	Sonny Tomic	
Applicant	Devereaux Developments	

*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 project at an early stage in its development. The comments are based on the drawing package presented and the description given in the presentation. Urban design elements that have not yet been addressed have been left without comment. Detailed comments have been included within the element structure. Below is a summary of the major urban design considerations expressed by the Panel:

- The project is located on an important gateway site. It will be highly visible from the TransCanada highway. Essential to the success of the project will be the image of the project from the north. The norther face of the project will need to ensure that the effect of the retaining walls, parking and rear buildings are treated with as much care as the front of the buildings. The parking should be minimized and screened.
- The project should address Canada Olympic Drive as the primary streetscape as that is the public connection across the site. The internal main street currently is shown as a dead end. Internal streets, plazas and parking lots should be connected back to Olympic Drive in a legible manner.
- The Panel has reviewed a number of developments in this area. The challenge will be the elevation gain across the site. Two levels of parking sitting on a hill that is an exposed gateway site will have to be carefully considered. The current plans are drawn as if the site is flat. The building typologies will have to adjust to the slope to create a successful place.

Applicant Responses (IN BLUE)

- We appreciate and acknowledge the committee for reviewing our project in the early phases of design. Feedback from the Urban Design Review Panel has been carefully considered by ownership and the consulting team to create a high-quality western gateway project for the City of Calgary. We have incorporated the majority of the feedback received to ensure we can meet the City and URDP's priorities along with ensuring our business case for the site is feasible and acceptable.

- The development draws inspiration from the area's land formations, cultural and indigenous history, and neighboring Winsport recreation area.
- The northern edge of the site has been lowered to minimize the scale of any retaining walls required. The retaining walls necessary to ensure the site is accessible and safe, are further screened from the Trans-Canada Highway with enhanced landscaping and high-quality planting.
- Aligning with the purpose of the Gateway District, the urban design of the project will provide a pleasant visitor experience, featuring a main street and a variety of public outdoor spaces that can be activated with cafes, restaurants and retail outlets. The uses proposed on the site form a mixed-use development with residential units and smaller scale commercial lease spaces on the ground level.
- Canada Olympic Drive has been addressed as the primary entry to the site, with the architecture of Buildings A + C framing the main entry to the site – a pedestrian-oriented Main Street, described above.
- The revised and elaborated design successfully contemplates the elevation gain across the site. The building typologies and scale have been further developed. Our development is human-scale and comfortable, with broad, clear circulation spaces and high-quality urban furnishing. An integrated palette of materials reinforces the human-scaled nature of the space, while architectural canopies, signage, and tree canopy provide comfort and interest that enhance the pedestrian experience. Together these elements will create a successful place.

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	It is too early in the design development to assess creativity. The drawings presented seem to be more of a test fit than an expression of a design idea. The Panel recommends exploring the grade issues with creative solutions.
Applicant Response	<p>Based on feedback from UDRP, we have developed and refined the design of all residential buildings on site along with addressing grading concerns.</p> <p>Creativity is exemplified by integrating themes throughout the development that are inspired by the natural landscape, as well as highlighting the indigenous history of the land through public art and placemaking. We creatively solved the technical challenges of the site by creating a slope adaptive design, which results in two tiers to the site, avoiding the need for excessive walls. To accomplish this, we have sloped our main roadways to the north to create a lower bench which required a private stormwater lift station on site to ensure our Slope Adaptive Design elements are feasible.</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 massing shown in the drawings preference a highly internalized street over the public roads that connect through the site. Solutions to the grade changes do not seem to have been explored at this point.
Applicant Response	The urban design and landscape concept is inspired by the nearby Paskapoo Slopes. The powers of glacial activity have crafted a dramatic benched topography with natural springs and forested ravines—a unique and distinctive landscape of grassland slopes, aspen groves, and giant boulders. These elements have been integrated as key, character-defining elements within the site design – supporting the vision to create a public realm that is not only unique and distinctive, but is pedestrian- forward, welcoming and connected, and supports the range of public, semi-public, and private uses. We have also reviewed the grading in detail as requested by UDRP and have developed a solution that meets the requirements of the City of Calgary Urban Design.
<p>Animation <i>Incorporate active uses; pay attention to details; add colour, wit and fun</i></p> <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	Insufficient information was provided at this stage. As the design develops consider looking to COP for connections for people going back and forth. The buildings should be focused on the action of the ski hill.
Applicant Response	We have incorporated this feedback into ensuring a pedestrian crossing ensures connectivity from COP directly to our main street. Our main street is a pedestrian-centric tree-lined point of entry with commercial spaces along it is the hub of the development. Public plazas to the west and southeast are interconnected by generous sidewalks and traffic calmed streets to create vibrant urban spaces for the residents and visitors
<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	As stated above the scheme internalizes the public realm.
Applicant Response	<p>We have revised the streetscape to ensure it is human-scale and comfortable, with broad, clear circulation spaces, a variety of urban furnishings and space to support healthy urban trees.</p> <p>The public realm has been studied to ensure that our main street, plazas, and pedestrian connectivity is well thought out and brings a pleasant user experience.</p> <p>An integrated palette of materials reinforces the human-scaled nature of the space, while architectural canopies, signage, and tree canopy provide comfort and interest that enhance the pedestrian experience. Overhead catenary lights add further dimension, warmth, and delight, especially in the evening and during winter months.</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	The location of the secondary street along the perimeter does not seem to have been worked out. The Panel notes that the master plan shows a bridge across Canada Olympic Dr SW but the package does not address the bridge. Parking relaxations should be negotiated in order to reduce above ground parking. Connection to transit will be important on this site.
Applicant Response	<p>This has been reviewed in detail and confirmed by the previous developer and the City of Calgary administration that a pedestrian bridge is not required. The previous developer has addressed the master plan and this item is not required under our application.</p> <p>In order to achieve the desired objectives by all parties, we have reduced the surface parking to the lowest we can, to ensure our development's architectural objectives, green initiatives & indigenous acknowledgments, can be achieved while balancing our business case for the site.</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	Although precedents were shown that suggest a type of shared space arrangement, it was not clear whether the parking lots were intended to be plazas or whether the street was to be a shared space. Further definition will be required to provide comment.
Applicant Response	<p>UDRP feedback has been incorporated into our design by ensuring pedestrian connectivity has been of the highest focus.</p> <p>The southeast corner provides connection for all to the existing sidewalks and the regional bicycle pathway network and provides a connection to the existing commercial development to the east.</p> <p>Similarly, the main street plaza, on the west side of the site, connects to existing transit infrastructure, existing sidewalks/shared-use pathways and creates a bicycle network connection to Winsport</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	Insufficient information was provided at this stage.
Applicant Response	We have ensured accessibility throughout our development. Barrier-free parking has been provided to all buildings above minimum requirements, and the site design allows those with mobility challenges access throughout all major pedestrian routes and all commercial spaces in the development.
Diversity Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces • Corner treatments and project porosity 	
UDRP Commentary	At this stage little diversity was shown in the building type massing.
Applicant Response	<p>The development has ensured a primary main retail street with various gathering spaces at grade, creating a livable and walkable community.</p> <p>The six buildings are split into pairs: A & C, B & E, and D & F. Each pair has a unique architectural character with a unique combination of rooflines, 6th floor step-backs, color patterning, and tower types.</p> <p>Towers on the building facades act as wayfinding guides throughout the site, and variations are achieved by changing the amount of glazing, angling the roofs, and varying their height. Within each building pair, the towers framing residential entrances are treated differently from other towers, to help distinguish each building's access point. These designs have also been reviewed in conjunction with our indigenous consultant.</p>
Flexibility Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approach relating to market and/or context changes 	
UDRP Commentary	Insufficient information was provided at this stage.
Applicant Response	<p>As developer-builder and long-term owner/operator of the ultimate product, Deveraux is steadfast in ensuring that our projects will meet the needs of today, as well as the design needs of tomorrow.</p> <p>Deveraux maintains internal standards which include EV charging targets of 10% of all stalls, solar panel incorporation, air sourced heat pumps, high-efficiency appliances and mechanical systems, heat recovery units, etc. We also design with intent to ensure future technologies can be incorporated as we operate these developments for their lifetime.</p>
Safety Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Night time design 	
UDRP Commentary	Insufficient information was provided at this stage.
Applicant Response	<p>We have reviewed and further developed our designs to ensure safety of all users.</p> <p>The site is well-lit and active, with many residents and visitors providing natural surveillance to the ultimate finished urban space. Pedestrian routes are open and comfortable, and highly visible. Safety and security of commercial buildings and residential buildings is of utmost importance to Deveraux, and the entire site will have access controls and security cameras at full build out.</p>

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 internalization of the plan, street hierarchy and location of parking lots presents a wayfinding challenge as the project develops. Navigation across and through the site should be clearly legible.
Applicant Response	We have incorporated the feedback from UDRP by ensuring roadways and site wayfinding is designed with intent. Wayfinding through signage and greater sight distances by slope adaptive design will ensure adequate site circulation and navigation.
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 at this stage.
Applicant Response	<p>A core value for our company is to ensure we can not only design for today, but also design for tomorrow with appropriate environmental and social awareness.</p> <p>Along with Deveraux's internal sustainable targets, we believe we are fully aligned with UDRP and the City of Calgary by incorporating the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% of all site parking stalls to be EV charging stations and an additional 5% of stalls to be EV ready/energized. Solar panels generating power for all buildings air sourced heat pumps to providing heating and cooling to all residential suites, heat recovery units to ensure fresh air while retaining energy, high efficiency appliances and mechanical 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	Insufficient information was provided at this stage.
Applicant Response	As developer-builder and long-term owner/operator of the ultimate product, Deveraux requires that all of our projects to be constructed with high-quality, durable finishes. For this project we have proposed all exterior materials in our finishing palette to be resilient and long-lasting.