

# Urban Design Review Panel Comments

## Urban Design Review Panel Comments

<b>Date</b>	June 15, 2022	
<b>Time</b>	1:00	
<b>Panel Members</b>	<b>Present</b> Chad Russill (Chair) Gary Mundy Kathy Oberg Glen Pardoe Jack Vanstone	<b>Distribution</b> Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Jadwiga Kroman Jeff Lyness Katherine Robinson Beverly Sandalack Noorullah Hussain Zada Rick Gendron
<b>Advisor</b>	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
<b>Application number</b>	PE2021-02776	
<b>Municipal address</b>	106 14 Av SE	
<b>Community</b>	Beltline	
<b>Project description</b>	Development	
<b>Review</b>	First	
<b>File Manager</b>	Joshua de Jong	
<b>City Wide Urban Design</b>	Sonny Tomic	
<b>Applicant</b>	Bill Chomik	

\*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 proposed development is for a new 11 storey condominium building with 18 five-bedroom units. The developer intends to retain ownership of six units for leasing purposes. The site is 50 feet wide by 140 feet deep and laneless, so all pedestrian and vehicular access is off 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The east property line abuts a three-storey residential building that appears to be 1.2m setback from the property line, a single detached dwelling on a similar sized lot to the west, and a parking lot to the north. The properties to the west and north will likely be redeveloped to higher densities at some point in the future.

The long narrow site is challenging to develop, and these challenges are exacerbated by the lack of a lane. As this is a unique development in the area, it will become a precedent for how similar lot types in the Beltline may be developed in the future. Because of this, design decisions should be considered, as this project will inform future streetscapes in the area. These considerations should include:

- Treatment of adjacent lots at grade regarding zero lot line on three sides for two storeys (consider in terms of abutting occupiable roof parapets, and sensitivity to scale and type of existing adjacent uses for example)
- The proportion of street frontage given to vehicular access
- Number of parking stalls on site considering the proximity to transit
- Universal accessibility
- Quality of the remaining pedestrian realm
- Quality and materiality of facades not facing the front street

The applicant identified that the design was originally intended to be operated as a hostel, and this approach was since changed to condominium housing. While the applicants' intentions are to sell units that allow multi-generational families to live together in the inner city, the floorplans appear to be designed to still accommodate a hostel rather than large family accommodations. The panel strongly recommends that the applicant investigate unit layouts that generate more common family spaces within the units in lieu of private hotel-like bedrooms (each unit has five bedrooms, five ensuite bathrooms, and a single small living / kitchen / dining space). While this consideration is internal to the suite and often not a primary concern of the panel, the use does not seem aligned in design and directly relates to amenity space being provided by the project.

### Applicant Response

August 21, 2022

Kasian has been in discussions with the Development Applications Review Team (DART) over the past seven weeks regarding various aspects of the proposed development (NOMI). A number of changes centered on improving the design and addressing both the concerns of the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) and DART are in process. These will be reflected in the DTR2 submission to DART within the next week or two.

As for the UDRP concerns expressed above, we respond as follows:

- City of Calgary River Engineering has approved a Main Floor geodetic elevation of 1046.4 metres, a level which will be above the 1:100 flood elevation. This approval, which essentially places NOMI's Main Level at city sidewalk level, improves the overall design by i) eliminating the stair/ramp condition at the front entrance; ii) increasing the soft landscaping component against the front façade; iii) bringing down the overall building height including the second floor setback against the adjacent properties by 720 mm; and, iv) eliminating built form from the sidewalk to the front façade against the adjacent properties (all front yards are aligned topographically).
- DART is currently reviewing a proposal to allow single-lane driveway access to NOMI's grade-level Parking Garage. This will reduce the proportion of street frontage given to vehicular access. Additional landscaping will now be introduced into the front yard to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment and a more attractive entrance into NOMI's vestibule leading to the second-floor Lobby.
- Due to the proximity of LRT (two blocks away), proximity to many bus stops/routes, the walkability distance to the downtown, and access to the dedicated bicycle path system, we are proposing a reduction of three (3) parking stalls in the development from a bylaw-required 16 (to 13). The developer's proforma requires at least 13 stalls, particularly since the multi-generational families being targeted as NOMI's residents will likely be composed of, within a single-family unit, children, adults and seniors who will collectively likely require vehicular access for practical reasons.
- Universal accessibility is provided. Now that there are no ramps and stairs, people requiring a barrier-free path to their dwelling units are accommodated. An elevator takes people from the Vestibule to the Lobby located on the second floor and, from there, a separate set of elevators serves each residential floor.
- The 4.18-metre podium will be a smooth, cementitious painted finish on the west, north, and east facades. The podium will be gridded (utilizing architectural reveals) to break down its mass, and will be painted a reflective white colour on the east façade to enhance the reflection of light back into the neighbouring property. Above this podium level, the building facades take on various shapes, forms and materials including gridded cementitious, porcelain tile, prefinished metal, and clear glass. The wall planes undulate significantly to break down the building massing. In addition, the foremost bedroom blocks, for their entire height, will be painted white as against the charcoal colour of the receding blocks. Horizontal architectural reveals are designed into the foremost blocks, again further helping to break down the massing and provide visual interest.
- The unit designs provide for individual private spaces for inter-generational family living. Personal privacy will be a necessity as part of this living paradigm. Each bedroom is equipped with its own bathroom, sitting area and desk space, in addition to the traditional elements of a bedroom. The dining room is designed to accommodate up to six people in a single sitting. The unit's balcony is

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very large with an area of 20 SM or 215 SF. This is significantly larger than most balconies in multi-residential buildings, but necessary to reduce congestion when large families are together.

- In addition to the above, there are many other communal services and amenity spaces available to residents. A covered amenity space with a fireplace and casual seating is located on the second floor; a fitness room, library and laundry room are located on the second floor; an outdoor amenity space containing a barbeque and seating area will be added on the second floor at the building's north end; and, a large rooftop terrace with tables/table umbrellas, casual seating, fire pits (Dortala or similar), overhead heaters and tree/shrub planters is planned for the rooftop which will be accessible by both stairs and elevators.

END

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Urban Design Element	
<b>Place</b> Recognize and enhance the unique and emerging identity of a place by responding to surrounding context, local policy, and community objectives through the contribution of innovative architecture and public realm.	
Site	Does the site planning show innovation in addressing site constraints and challenges?
	Does the design respect existing topography, landscape, and archaeology?
	Does the site design accommodate people of all abilities?
Architecture	Is the project visually interesting and unique?
	Does the architecture respond to landmark and gateway opportunities presented by the site?
	Does the design reflect any distinctive social, cultural or historical aspects of the site and community?
Public Realm	Does the project contribute to the creation of a high quality, connected public realm?
UDRP Commentary	<p>The solar panels on the south façade contribute to a unique point of interest, but the building does little else to create a sense of place in the neighbourhood. As above, the project should consider its role as a precedent-setting development in the neighbourhood, particularly for those considerations listed in the summary.</p> <p>The relationship between the building and the sidewalk needs to be strengthened. This could be accomplished through any number of devices, including but not limited to narrowing of the driveway, lowering the lobby to the sidewalk level by calling level 2 the 'main floor', or making the grade change from the street in the lobby so that the pedestrian entry and the driveway can remain at a contiguous elevation with the sidewalk. Currently, there is a significant disconnect between the public realm and the project.</p>
Applicant Response	<p>We don not understand what you mean by "sense of place". This is a multi-residential development. As with most multi-residential developments, there is a landscaped front yard, canopied entrance, two-story glass lobby, access to parking, bicycle parking, feature lighting, feature wall with signage, etc. In addition, we have placed a large, outdoor amenity area with clear glass guardrails overlooking the street. All residential units have floor-to-glass living rooms and very large balconies overlooking the street. This provides significant "eyes on the street", and people activity to animate the street.</p> <p>The "Applicant Response" section above addresses the matter of street connectivity.</p>
<b>Scale</b> Ensure appropriate transitions between building masses and adjacent places and spaces; define street and open space edges and bring human scale through articulation, materials, details and landscaping.	
Site	Does the arrangement of buildings and spaces on the site address street edges well?
	Is the scale and placement of buildings and structures appropriate for the street and public space size and type?
	Are large service and surface parking areas modulated and screened by structures and landscaping?
Architecture	Are design strategies employed to reduce the impact of building height and bulk?
	Are street walls well defined and of appropriate height to street width and type?
	Are human scaled elements and details included to enhance street character?
Public Realm	Are public spaces well edged and framed by structures and/or landscaping?
	Does the design include detail which will enhance street character and encourage use of the public realm?
UDRP Commentary	<p>The podium of the building does not consider the current or future uses of the adjacent properties, and the applicant is asked to consider what the experience of the street and the building itself would be like if all the adjacent properties developed in the same manner.</p> <p>As with place, the entry to the building is small and understated. The project would benefit greatly from the considerations listed above under 'place'.</p>
Applicant Response	The "Applicant Response" section above addresses the matter of scale and materiality.
<b>Amenity</b> Ensure that public sidewalks and gathering spaces are generously proportioned, comfortable, safe, fully accessible, and framed by permeable facades which allow for activation throughout the year.	
Site	Are equitable, inviting access and varied movement options provided for all ages and abilities?
	Does the design work with sun orientation and seasonal climate variation?
	Does the site plan safely accommodate all travel modes?
	Are service and utility requirements located appropriately to lessen visual impact?

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Architecture	Does the building(s) meet or exceed expectations for universal access design?
	Does the architecture create a pleasant street edge which feels safe to users?
Public Realm	Does the public realm design prioritize pedestrians and cyclists over vehicle access?
	Is the public realm visually interesting, comfortable, and safe during all seasons?
	Are the public spaces designed for people of all abilities and ages?
	Do the public spaces meet or exceed expectations for universal access design?
UDRP Commentary	For the proposed 'multigenerational family' concept and within the units, the applicant should consider providing more family amenity space over private hotel-like bedrooms. In the outdoor shared amenity spaces, the applicant is asked to provide more detailed plans for the design and programming of these spaces. Consideration should also be given to increasing the extent of the outdoor shared amenity spaces.  As noted elsewhere in this document, the applicant is encouraged to investigate narrowing of the driveway, lowering the lobby to the sidewalk level by calling level 2 the 'main floor', or making the grade change from the street in the lobby so that the pedestrian entry and the driveway can remain at a contiguous elevation with the sidewalk.
Applicant Response	The "Applicant Response" section above addresses the matter of amenity space and driveway width/street connection.
<b>Legibility</b> Create logical, permeable networks of streets and pathways that connect within and between neighbourhoods and public places; design well-defined community and building entrances with distinctive, memorable attributes.	
Site	Does the project provide a permeable, fine-grained and functional urban structure of blocks and streets?
	Does the project provide legible, accessible, continuous walking and cycling connections within the site that connect to adjacent systems and destinations?
	Does the proposed network consider future expansion into surrounding areas?
	Are large parking areas designed with clear, safe, direct pedestrian connections?
Architecture	Are buildings designed with clearly marked and differentiated entries to facilitate wayfinding?
Public Realm	Are the public routes and spaces configured to facilitate easy and safe navigation with clear paths and appropriately placed wayfinding elements?
UDRP Commentary	It is acknowledged that the site is long and narrow and challenging. The introduction of the solar panel wall contributes to the uniqueness of the development, and will see it as a stand-out in years to come. This noted, the quality and materiality of the other three facades should be considered as siblings to the south façade rather than poor cousins, contributing to more of a holistic recognizable approach to the design. These other three facades are highly visible and limited information was provided on the exact materiality being proposed; based on the information provided, the quality of material does not appear to meet expectation for a prominent high rise building in the Beltline.
Applicant Response	The "Applicant Response" section above addresses the matter of legibility.
<b>Vibrancy</b> Ensure that new developments are configured and designed to animate streets and public spaces with varied sizes and types of grade-oriented uses.	
Site	Will the building placement and orientation together with the arrangement and variety of uses activate the adjacent streets and public spaces?
	Will the project contribute to creating greater economic, employment and/or residential diversity in the neighbourhood?
Architecture	Does the building articulation, materials and details contribute to the vibrancy of the streets and public spaces?
	Is there a variety of residential and/or commercial unit types and sizes?
Public Realm	Do outdoor spaces provide varied experiences and accommodate people with diverse abilities?
UDRP Commentary	Again, the applicant is asked to investigate narrowing of the driveway, lowering the lobby to the sidewalk level by calling level 2 the 'main floor', or making the grade change from the street in the lobby so that the pedestrian entry and the driveway can remain at a contiguous elevation with the sidewalk. These are only examples of methods that could be used to better integrate the public realm with the building entry. Additionally, the second floor outdoor amenity space could be programmed to have a better relationship to the street below to share in and contribute to its vibrancy.
Applicant Response	The "Applicant Response" section above addresses the matter of vibrancy. In addition, it should be noted that the second-floor outdoor amenity space is designed to overlook the

	street and animate the street as the guardrails are constructed of clear glass. It will be easy for the public to see the activity at that level.
<b>Resilience</b> <i>Ensure that projects provide opportunities, through their site layout, spatial configuration, materials, and sustainable design features for responsible operation and continuous adaptation to change over time.</i>	
Site	Is the project designed to respond to change (economic, social, demographic or other) over time?
	Does the plan meet/exceed climate resilience/sustainable design expectations?
	Are active travel modes prioritized, and active lifestyle choices encouraged?
Architecture	Does the building show indication of sustainable design practices and materials?
	Is a range of uses accommodated; does the design anticipate future change?
	Is the building designed to endure over time with reasonable maintenance?
Public Realm	Are public spaces adaptable for multiple uses over short and medium term?
	Does the public realm design respond to climate resilience / sustainability expectations?
UDRP Commentary	<p>The south solar panel wall is a good gesture and possible trend setter for the use of alternate energy sources in the inner city, and the applicant is commended for its inclusion. The panel feels that the project could go farther in embracing its location relative to transit by further reducing the amount of parking and/or narrowing the drive, which takes up a disproportionate amount of the street frontage. The number of stalls and the width of the driveway (vehicular requirements) appear to be driving the relationship between this development and the street, rather than allowing a more pedestrian-friendly form to develop.</p> <p>Lastly, it appears that painted cementitious board is proposed extensively on the east, west, and north facades – the panel is concerned that this product does not age well, and will appear deteriorated (and require maintenance) much more quickly and frequently than the south façade. Given building prominence, improved materiality is recommended for these facades. It should also be noted that images provided did not adequately show project views from angles other than the front (looking north).</p>
Applicant Response	The "Applicant Response" section above addresses, in part, the matter of resiliency. Further, we are proposing a smooth finish similar to concrete, but with a significant number of horizontal reveals embedded into the material to provide visual interest. We also plan to use a high-quality coating on the cementitious finish so that it will not deteriorate over time.