

Business Improvement Area Response



October 5, 2023

Morgan Huber, RPP, MCIP
 Senior Planner, Greater Downtown Team
 Community Planning | Planning & Development Services
 The City of Calgary | Mail code: #8075

RE: DP2022-08536

Dear Morgan, The Victoria Park BIA would like to offer the following comments on DP2022-08536.

- **Overall impression.** We were pleased to see a proposal for a significant development that will bring new residents, enhance the neighbourhood with expanded commercial offerings, address long standing issues with the SRO uses in the current building, and ultimately attract visitors to our community.
- **Public realm gestures and enhancements.** Given the gateway location of the building, we feel it should contribute more to the public realm. While the amount of permeability at grade is appreciated, its social functioning and visual impact is contingent on the use inside. The current vision relies heavily what we presume to be a restaurant use, begging the question of what happens when that critical interior corner space is not active/vacant? We encourage developing functional elements and design gestures that enhance the public realm while not being dependent on a narrowly defined future tenant type. This street corner should attract pedestrians regardless of the uses/tenants inside. If pursuing the amount of glazing at grade is essential to the project, we would suggest the use of transparent LED walls to mask the interior when not active, allowing curated pop-up uses when the space isn't occupied, or considering stand-alone features of a more universal use and appeal. The 1st Street underpass is the most heavily used pedestrian underpass in the Beltline and as such, we feel that there needs to be a much more in terms of a welcoming "gateway" gesture as you transit south from the underpass. We would point to the UpTen building as a good example of how pedestrians are greeted and how a gateway gesture(s), can be executed.
- **Urban context presence.** We observed that while a strong open corner gesture sets the tone of grandeur, in comparison other aspects of the building as currently shown, appear rather timid and "confusing". It is almost like three building types merged into one. The entire building could become more of an outstanding gateway gesture (while maintaining the commercial – residential scale distinction). Perhaps designing a strong lighting scheme for the full height of the structure, while emphasizing the ground level, or allowing much larger perpendicular signage along the streets could contribute to making the building an icon for the neighbourhood. We also noted that the renderings show a very large lit sign "Western Block" that is recessed from the building edges, while it would become a powerful identifying feature of the building and its immediate neighbourhood if its street visibility was assured as much as possible.

- **Staging area and heavy vehicle management during construction.** The daily deliveries and removals of material, construction staging, and activities schedule will seriously affect the business owners and operators in the vicinity. As their representatives, we request that we be involved with planning of the construction logistics when they begin to take shape. At this time, we suggest considering an arrangement with the owners of the parking lot across 10th Avenue and engaging the Greenline design team to ensure the construction schedules don't conflict.
- **Bicycle and scooter parking.** We note and appreciate the generous number of bicycle stalls however their placement is less than ideal. Pedestrians and person powered modes of transport should be at the top of the transportation hierarchy and treated with priority. We would encourage a higher level of quality, security, and protection in the bicycle parking design. We also note no provision for scooters and would suggest those be accommodated for in the design.
- **Parking.** We would encourage dedicated rideshare parking areas along with parking that maximizes the trip generation potential for the commercial uses. We would also encourage considering a dedicated loading/parking zone for individual delivery services.
- **Back lane.** The back lane has long been "abused" as temporary parking and there have been many access issues encountered since 11th Ave Place became operational. This development is an opportunity to resolve many of these issues in consultation with existing businesses. A traffic impact assessment of the lane between 10th and 11th Ave especially in the context of this and the Greenline development would be truly helpful.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this application.

Sincerely,



David Low
Executive Director
Victoria Park Business Improvement Area