

Applicant Response to Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

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| Date | February 5, 2025 | |
| Time | 3:00 | |
| Panel Members | Present Jeff Lyness (chair) Rasool Ghodoosi Dehnavi Andrea Kennedy Maria Landry Ryan Martinson Bao-Nghi Nhan | Distribution Kathy Oberg (chair) Rick Gendron (conflict) Noorullah Hussain Zada Boris Karn Ben Klumper Brendan Stevenson |
| Advisor | David Down, Chief Urban Designer | |
| Application number | DP2024-09004 | |
| Municipal address | 10 11A St NE | |
| Community | Bridgeland / Riverside | |
| Project description | New: Dwelling unit, retail and consumer services (2 buildings): CNIB | |
| Review | Second | |
| File Manager | Ben Bailey | |
| Urban Design | Hardy Huang | |
| Applicant | S2 Architecture | |

*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 Urban Design.

Summary

The proposed development site integrates well with the surrounding local context, particularly by addressing the needs of the community, including those who will use the adjacent support services, such as the CNIB. The project's design incorporates a shared street as a central feature, though the Panel noted that the design of future phases, especially around the interface where infrastructure is missing, should be clarified further, particularly regarding the lack of a sidewalk on the west side of the shared street. Additionally, while the scale of the development, with its point towers and surrounding podium, is conventional, the podium as a single-storey element should be re-considered to integrate with the at-grade or amenity aspects of the development.

The Panel expressed concerns regarding several key aspects of the design, including but not limited to:

1. The location of the parkade entrance, which currently detracts from the vibrancy of the shared street and impacts neighboring townhomes and contradicts the applicants' notion of the shared street. The Panel recommends relocating the parkade entrance to align with other service activities on the site and improving the interface between private and public spaces.
2. The Panel also highlighted the need for the shared street design to better accommodate the needs of the vision loss community, ensuring accessibility and legibility, especially if this street serves as a training facility.
3. Another significant point is the missed opportunity for a rooftop amenity, given the prominent views available from the towers.
4. Although the overall aesthetic of the building facades is appreciated for its simplicity, the Panel emphasized that high-quality detailing and materials will be critical for the success of the design. This information and confirmation from the applicant is missing as part of the materials provided.

Applicant Response

February 24, 2025

1. The single access point to the parkade has been relocated to have an entry for Phase 1 in the southwest corner of the phase and a separate entry for Phase located in the northeast corner of the building where the loading is presently shown. By doing this, the shared street will no longer have parkade users utilizing the shared street.
2. The shared street will be designed to accommodate the needs of the visually impaired community and will have less conflict with vehicular traffic.
3. The opportunity for rooftop amenities on the rooftops of the towers were explored but given the fact that a large open, at-grade plaza has been designed for use for all the residents it was felt that this opportunity was not required.
4. The towers were intentionally designed to be simplistic in form to highlight this simplicity. The exterior skin will be designed to with high-quality materials and detailing to emphasize the simplicity.

| Urban Design Element | |
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| Place 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 | The site incorporates the local context well, particularly the people in the area that will call this place home or use the adjacent facilities for support services (e.g. CNIB). The Panel would appreciate seeing the future design phases of the site in relation to the proposed development; particularly, at the location where the shared street serves as the interface between future phases and infrastructure is missing (i.e. sidewalk on west side of shared street). Any active focus towards Memorial Drive is not supported by the Panel as this primary vehicular corridor competes with the ability of the proposed development to interact with the existing sensory garden and CNIB building as well as the greater community beyond. |
| Applicant Response | <p>For this application, we are only applying for Phases 1 and 2 with Phase 3 being a separate application in the future. At this time, CNIB have not yet completed their programming of their requirements and as such it is not possible to show specifically what Phase 3 will be. At this time, the proposed Phase 3 will look as it did for the Land Use application. This block massing has been indicated on the site plan for reference. There will not be any active frontage along the Memorial Drive edge, as this edge will be for the services of Phase 3 which will include parkade entry, loading, waste and recycling. With Phase 3 not being fully determined at this time, the requested sidewalk along the west edge of the shared street cannot be included, however once Phase 3 is determined, this edge will be designed to respond accordingly. Not sure if the existing CNIB building will remain or if it is being replaced.</p> <p>Site: The site has been designed to address any site constraints and challenges and does respect existing site topography, landscape and archeology of the lands. The site is to be designed to accommodate people of all abilities.</p> <p>Architecture: We understand that this site is a gateway site to the Bridgeland community as well as a visual entry to the city. The buildings have been purposely designed to be simplistic in form and through architectural detailing and color will create a strong statement for this entry. Features on the building have been incorporated to highlight the site, firstly through the creation of a graphic 'C' on the prominent corner of the south tower, high up to give a subtle reference to the CNIB with an abstract 'C' indicated, as well as a reference to the CNIB through the braille representation of CNIB on the façade of the building.</p> <p>The site is respecting the existing Fragrant Garden which presently exists in the northwest corner of the site and will be preserved for the users of both the community as well as the residents of the development. This garden is key to the community in that, they have volunteer committees who maintain this garden and will continue to do so.</p> <p>Public Realm: The project has been designed to contribute to the creation of a high quality, connected realm through both the preservation of the Fragrant Garden as well as designing the open spaces for the development to connect to this garden as well as connection to the surrounding public walkways and park linkages.</p> |
| Scale 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? |

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| | 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 scale of the development is conventional, and arrangement of buildings onsite logical, with highest point towers to the south and surrounded by a podium. The Panel notes that a 1-storey podium should be re-considered especially as the applicant noted the rooftop of the podium is only envisioned for mechanical equipment and no activation.</p> <p>The Panel appreciates the location of townhouse units on the shared street and the inclusion of 3-bedroom units here, units would be significantly improved with relocation of parkade ramp. The Panel feels the current podium design and lack of consideration for the podium roof-scape is a missed opportunity for this site.</p> |
| Applicant Response | <p>The podium has been specifically designed to be lower, two storey in height, to respond to a pedestrian scale development for the pedestrian. On the third level of both phases of development, there are units that front onto the roof areas, both indoor and outdoor amenities have been provide for the development with approximately 50% of the at-grade spaces being open and accessible to both the residents and public. With the central parkade entry being removed, this adds additional open space at grade as well as creating a more inviting entry to the central plaza between both Phase 1 and 2. Any mechanical equipment will be screened from the residents on the third floor of each phase of development.</p> <p>Site: The design of the site does respect the street edges the uses that front onto the shared street include at-grade townhomes on Phae 1 and the main entry to Phase 1 along this street. Servicing for both phases has been located on faces that are not fronting onto street fronts. Phase 1 has the servicing components located on the south edge which faces Memorial Drive, a high-speed road. In Phase 1 the indoor amenity areas face onto the south and west edges of the site for greater "eye" on the street for security. For Phase 2, the service areas are located on the north face and moved to the east edge of the building to remove the service areas away from the pedestrian circulation. This edge is designed to integrate with the building architecture and with landscaping will be screened, where possible.</p> <p>Architecture: The building towers have been pushed back from the front edges of the street to create a stepping of the massing which will reduce the impact of the towers on the pedestrian. The entries along these frontages have been recessed by 1 metre and we have added canopies over these entries to respond to potential wind conditions. The podium levels have been scaled to be appropriate to the scale of the street. The townhomes are designed with sufficient detail to address character and scale of the street fronts , thereby enhancing the street character.</p> <p>Public Realm: The public and private spaces along the street fronts are detailed to respect the street character and scale of the street edges.</p> |
| Amenity <i>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.</i> | |
| 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? |
| 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? |

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| | Do the public spaces meet or exceed expectations for universal access design? |
| UDRP Commentary | <p>The location of the parkade entrance was a significant point of discussion with the majority of Panel members. Currently, the location of the parkade entrance detracts from the shared street and the vibrancy of the site. Additionally, this parkade entrance negates the opportunity for the multi-room townhomes neighbouring it to have additional windows and is incongruent with the adjacent street activations that are provided. The Panel recommends that the applicant reconsider the location of the parkade and explore a south access location near Memorial Drive and other appropriate servicing accesses. In addition, the large blank wall on the north side of the site could be configured for a parkade access given that service activities are also intended in this area.</p> <p>The Panel recommends that the applicant explore the significant opportunity to provide a rooftop amenity on the towers given their prominent views they will have of key Calgary landmarks and the striking landscape to the west. This is in direct relation to the comment made during the applicant's presentation that the rooftop will have mechanical and there was no further discussion of amenity space on the rooftop.</p> |
| Applicant Response | <p>The central parkade entrance to parking has been removed and there are now two parkade entries, one for Phase 1 and one for Phase 2. In Phase 1, the entrance has been relocated to the southwest corner of the building to alleviate traffic conflicts with the shared street. Similarly, the Phase 2 parking entrance has been relocated to the north side of Phase 2 where the servicing components exist for the building. Access to the parking will be along the service road along the north edge of the building. This will eliminate the need for cars to have to utilize the shared street for access and free up the shared street for the pedestrians. Rooftop amenities for the towers were explored, but we felt it would not be utilized since the winds on the roof would be prohibitive.</p> <p>Site: By separating the parking entries to the site, the shared street is now more responsive to the pedestrians for the project allowing greater use for pedestrians of all ages. The tower locations were carefully considered and located to provide the least amount of shadowing on the public areas of the plaza as well as the surrounding community. The site plan is designed to accommodate all users as well as visually impaired pedestrians. Service and utility requirements have been reviewed and designed to lessen visual impacts.</p> <p>Architecture: The buildings are to be designed to satisfy CMHC requirements for Universal design requirements and the street frontages have been designed to create a pleasant street edge as well as be safe for all pedestrians and users.</p> <p>Public Realm: The public realm has been designed to respond to all users and specifically to separate the pedestrians from the vehicle, thereby reducing any potential conflict. All public spaces are to be designed to meet or exceed universal access.</p> |
| Legibility 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 | The Panel feels that the location of the parkade entrance has an impact on the use of the streets in the area and the ability for the shared street and intersecting streets in future phases to provide distinctive and memorable moments. The southwest and northeast corners of the site have site servicing features that would, intuitively, be suitable for a parkade access. |

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| | <p>The Panel recommends that a gateway-type feature be provided at the east of the site at the regional pathway connection.</p> <p>The Panel strongly recommends that the remainder of the development site be shadow planned. The Panel understands that the existing CNIB building may or may not be replaced. Regardless, the entirety of the site should be considered in either configuration to ensure the aspirations of the project can be fully envisioned.</p> <p>The shared street has an opportunity to be a significant amenity in the site and contribute to the legibility of the area. The Panel recommends that the design of this space should incorporate the insights of the vision loss community that was engaged with nation-wide, especially if this is to be a training facility for this type of street section. As such, the location of the planted furnishing zone, use of tactile walking surface indicators, diagonal pavement details, and provision of a mirrored facility on the west side of the shared street needs to be further developed.</p> |
| Applicant Response | <p>The parking entries have been relocated to the southwest and northeast portions of the site to free up the shared street for the primary use of pedestrians rather than both pedestrians and vehicles. A new pedestrian easement of 5.0 metres is being provided along the east and south portions of the site to meet City of Calgary standards for regional pathways. A gateway feature could be incorporated, but is not located on this parcel of land, but rather on City of Calgary lands and would be the responsibility of the Parks Department, however, we are not against a gateway feature.</p> <p>Phase 3 of the development is not part of this application and has not been developed yet. CNIB is still in the process of determining the program they wish to see on these lands, as such, we have included the block plan of Phase 3 as per the land use application. Once the program has been resolved these lands can be designed and will respond accordingly. The shared street and plaza design is to be designed in concert with the CNIB to make sure that the shared street and public plaza areas respond to the needs of all, including the visually impaired, which will include materials, textures and visual clues.</p> <p>Site: With the removal of the central parking entry, this opens the central plaza more to the pedestrian making it more permeable both physically and visually. Pedestrian and vehicular circulation has been designed to respond not only to what is required on site but also to the surrounding connections. The pedestrian linkages tie into existing sidewalk infrastructures.</p> <p>Architecture: All entries to the building are designed to be clearly marked and will indicate differentiation of these entries.</p> <p>Public Realm: The public routes and spaces have been configured and designed to facilitate easy and safe navigation with clear paths and appropriate wayfinding elements. Wayfinding elements will be designed with CNIB to make sure clarity is achieved for the visually impaired.</p> |
| Vibrancy Ensure that new developments are configured and designed to animate streets and public spaces with varied sizes and types of grade-oriented uses. | |
| Site | <p>Will the building placement and orientation together with the arrangement and variety of uses activate the adjacent streets and public spaces?</p> <p>Will the project contribute to creating greater economic, employment and/or residential diversity in the neighbourhood?</p> |
| Architecture | <p>Does the building articulation, materials and details contribute to the vibrancy of the streets and public spaces?</p> <p>Is there a variety of residential and/or commercial unit types and sizes?</p> |
| Public Realm | Do outdoor spaces provide varied experiences and accommodate people with diverse abilities? |
| UDRP Commentary | <p>The Panel feels the location of the parkade access on the shared street will be at the detriment to the vibrancy of the street and an alternative location should be considered which aligns with other servicing activity.</p> <p>The Panel was happy to see 3-bedroom townhomes in the development, although, these should not be adjacent to a parking ramp. Additionally, the townhomes that face the shared street appear to have an abrupt transition between public and private space, which could be</p> |

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| | <p>mitigated through landscaping or architectural details This is a lost opportunity and arguably will isolate the interior courtyard of the proposal from future development phases.</p> <p>In addition, refinement of massing along the shared street as well as relocation of the parkade access should be explored to strengthen the connection and flow through the 'public' realm – development courtyard/shared street/sensory gardens/future east-west connector.</p> <p>The facades on the buildings were simple and the Panel appreciates this aesthetic. High quality materials are encouraged, and the Panel notes that the success of the aesthetic of the development will be about quality detailing that maintains simplicity.</p> |
| Applicant Response | <p>The parking access to the underground parking has been relocated, there are now two separate entries, one in the southwest and one in the northeast which allowed the shared street to have reduced traffic on the street.</p> <p>With the parking entrance being relocated this allows the three-bedroom units to not conflict with the parking entrance and by removing the parking entry, the plaza entry has been increased in size which makes it more inviting for users of the plaza areas.</p> <p>The public realm is now better served with the parking entry relocated and careful design considerations have been made for the townhomes which front onto the shared street. Materials for the facades of the podium buildings are to be of high quality and well detailed, respecting the simplicity of the overall design.</p> <p>Site:</p> <p>The shared street and on-site pedestrian paths have been designed to integrate with the existing surrounding neighborhood.</p> <p>This project does contribute to creating greater economic and residential diversity as there is a good mix of units including studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three bedroom unit types. There is no commercial uses anticipated for this first stage of development on the lands.</p> <p>Architecture:</p> <p>The use of high quality, well detailed will contribute to the vibrancy of both the streets and public areas. The shared street is located on private lands and is not considered a public street.</p> <p>Unit types are indicated in the previous answer.</p> <p>Public Realm:</p> <p>The outdoor spaces do provide varied experiences and will accommodate people with diverse abilities. These spaces will be designed in concert with the CNIB to reflect the requirements of the visually impaired.</p> |
| <p>Resilience 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.</p> | |
| 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 | This was not discussed in the package or in the presentation. |
| Applicant Response | <p>Site:</p> <p>The project has been designed to respond to demographic changes through the provision of various unit types and sizes, thereby trying to address future tenants.</p> <p>The plan does meet climate resilience and sustainable design expectations as is required by CMHC.</p> |

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| | <p>Active lifestyle choices are encouraged, and the provision of both indoor and outdoor amenity spaces address those requirements. travel modes have been considered and addressed in the design, provision to link into the existing surrounding infrastructure from both a vehicular and pedestrian point of view.</p> <p>Architecture:</p> <p>The project is designed to with sustainable and quality materials to stand the test of time.</p> <p>The project is designed specifically for residential use, however, there are spaces located at grade which could be converted to other uses in the future if necessitated.</p> <p>The buildings are to be owned and maintained by the owner and as such are being designed with maintenance in mind to minimize future issues.</p> <p>Public Realm:</p> <p>The public spaces are being designed for multiple uses and activities to allow for flexibility.</p> <p>The public realm is to be designed to respond to climate resiliency as well as sustainability expectations.</p> |
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