

# Urban Design Review Panel Comments

## Summary

The Panel understands the prominent and urban nature of this site on the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Street SW and appreciates the opportunity to review the design in a pre-application stage. Given the early stages of this project, the Panel appreciates the detail provided in the package showing building articulation, proposed materiality, landscaping strategy and approach to unit mix. The Panel supports the scale, approach to building form, approach to public realm and diversity of unit mix including 3-bedroom units.

Based on the review of the design package, the Panel strongly recommends that further review be undertaken for the following items:

- The at-grade interface along 5<sup>th</sup> Street requires further development as it lacks activation with the public realm. Considerations could include adding at-grade retail along that east face.
- The podium rooftop, which is shown as “non-accessible” to residents, is an opportunity to provide amenity space to residents. With half of the suites facing down onto this area, consideration should be made to activate this space into usable amenity such a playground or larger podium balconies for the adjacent units.

Please refer the element section for more detailed commentary.

Comment	Response
<b>Place</b>	
The Panel appreciates the clear massing strategy put forth by the applicant. It would be beneficial to see a similar strategy as it relates to the public realm and surrounding context. Further development on the 5th Street interface is recommended as it currently does not provide much interaction with the public realm. One recommendation could be to add more retail on the podium level of the 5th street face. The gesture of creating a generous public space on the northeast corner of the site is appreciated; however, the articulation of the building's main entry and scale requires further consideration.	<b>It is directed by our client not to have excess of retail on the ground floor; however, facing 5th Street we will have the large space destined for the entry lobby which will also serve as a large lounge/amenity for residents, so it will most likely be animated for longer hours and will also be visible from the exterior as the whole frontage is storefront glazing. The main residential entrance was located on the corner as it needed presence from both thoroughfares. There has been some additional refinement on its design to improve scale and presence.</b>
<b>Scale</b>	
The Panel appreciates the proposed massing strategy. Given the large tower footprint, the articulation of the building form and materiality appears to be well-considered and have a balanced relationship with the surrounding context.	<b>Noted, this was a goal of the design; the comment is very much appreciated.</b>

**Amenity**

The Panel understands that there is a proposed, large at-grade lounge on the 5th Street side. Further development is required to understand the impact on the street interface. In its current form, the design is lacking at-grade street activation on the east side of the building.

In its U-shape configuration, half of the suites are looking down to a podium rooftop space which is noted to be "non-accessible" and will receive "decorative / low maintenance treatment." The Panel recommends reconsidering the design of this podium rooftop into usable amenity such as a playground or larger podium balconies for the adjacent units, especially for the 3-bed units. The Panel appreciates and is supportive of the suite mix, including the 3-bed units.

The Panel appreciates the at-grade bike parking and parking stall count. Consideration for access to the bike room from the lane side should be explored. The applicant could also consider more stalls in proximity to river pathway.

**The at-grade tenant lounge is intended to promote an increase in activity by the tenants by offering a larger gathering space. The use of glazing to 5<sup>th</sup> Street SW will create a more activated space than a retail unit. Providing a dynamic connection between inside and outside spaces. The inclusion of a +15 connection on 5<sup>th</sup> Street SW will further provide an increase in activity along this façade.**

**Consideration was given to utilising the L2 rooftop space in such a way during early design discussions. However, the consensus was that due to the excessive shadowing, the space was not overly conducive in providing a comfortable environment to promote activity. Furthermore, concern was raised over the possibility of noise emanating from this space and reverberating within the U-shaped plan. The proposal countered this by introducing several other common amenity spaces, both indoor and outdoor, in addition to the private amenity spaces.**

**In an effort to minimise the need to control several access points into the building, it was considered better security to provide access to the bicycle parking room in the manner shown on the application drawings.**

**Legibility**

Overall, the design is successful in its articulation and legibility; however, the design of the residential entry on the corner of 4th Avenue and 5th Street SW requires further development. Although the entry is pushed in, the design of the main entry uses the same language as the commercial units, which makes it blend in and lack clarity.

**Further refinement of the tenant entrance at the corner has been provided to differentiate it from the adjacent retail units.**

**Vibrancy**

The public streets appear to be animated through a well-considered landscape approach that includes street trees and planters. Further consideration should be given to signage and materiality at-grade. Although the Panel appreciates the plaza on the northeast corner, the design is too bare, especially with its connection to the main residential entry.

**As noted above, further architectural and landscape design refinements have been made to this area.**

**Resilience**

N/A – Not addressed by the Applicant at this stage.

**Please refer to the submitted Climate Resiliency Inventory Form for more detail on how the proposal aims to respond to this criterion.**