

UDRP Comments 2018 June 13 (including applicant response)



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January 14th 2019

City of Calgary
Community Planning – Mail code #8073
P.O. Box 2100, Stn. Mfa
Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2M5

Attention: Angelique Dean
Senior Planner
angelique.dean@calgary.ca

Dear Angie,

Re: **SOUTH MACLEOD CENTRE CALGARY
OUR PROJECT #216065 – 6.1
RESPONSE TO UDRP COMMENTS – LOT 7
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NUMBER: DP2018-2164**



Please accept the following as our response to the City of Calgary (CoC) UDRP comments.

Note to the reviewer

The comments in this letter respond to the initial comments by the City of Calgary to our development permit application and offer a new proposed site plan for consideration and review. We trust this revised and improved site plan addresses and exceeds expectations by the City of Calgary and makes Lot 7 a complement to our applications for Lots 3 and 6 and to this exciting development as outlined and anticipated by the South MacLeod Area Structure Plan.

The enclosed revised and improved set of documents is reflecting and documenting the outcome of several meetings held with various departments of the City of Calgary therefore we trust it would be acceptable in response to the comments below. We have added commentary to each item below as an introduction to the enclosed set of documents.

Summary

As a long-term vision and full buildout design, the project presents itself as a unique opportunity to create something unique and meaningful. In the current application, this quadrant needs to compliment the overall vision being pursued by the applicant as a critical first step for the development.



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In general, the current layout is relatively expected for a suburban commercial shopping centre with a centralized parking field and perimeter building placement. The applicant is commended for their intent to create a pedestrian network of pathways, connecting each building, and gathering space. However, if the applicant's desire is to create something that is 'not a shopping centre, but a community' such as a Town Centre, UDRP urges further review as to ensure site design is complementary and compatible with the character of the Core Commercial area and reinforces a less auto-centric placemaking concept.

Adjustments to building siting and massing are to be studied. Building interactions with internal streets should create a strong urban edge that animates the pedestrian network. Building massing as it relates to open space interaction requires further evaluation. Additional study on sightlines as one approaches the site and the sense of entry to the development is encouraged. UDRP strongly suggests, in the next submission, a revised overall Master Plan of the complete development, illustrating the pathway system connectivity and nodes throughout the development.

Applicant Response

Please see our response to more specific items included in your summary in the following pages.

Urban Vitality

1. Retail street diversity

Best Practice

Retail streets encourage pedestrians along sidewalk with a mix and diversity of smaller retail uses. Retail wraps corners of streets. Space for patios and cafe seating is provided.

UDRP Commentary

The retail streets are typical of a traditional suburban development model with respect to building placement and size, with medium to larger format commercial focused towards the central parking areas. As a result, retail streets do not offer much diversity and interest from a pedestrian perspective, particularly along "Street F".

Applicant to consider revisiting the built-form interface by re-siting buildings to better frame internal streets and break up large surface parking areas. Framing of vehicular intersections through place making of street corners is suggested either through open gathering space or building placement.

Applicant Response

The site plan and building location responds to a specific format and size of a typical grocery store which is the main tenant anticipated for this site as outlined by the South MacLeod Area Structure Plan. The grocery is complemented by smaller format retail along the corner of Legacy Village Link SE and 210th Ave. and with a tenant mix that creates a connection between Lot 7 and 6 for the targeted demographics.

The site plan is almost a result of the large parking requirement by the Grocery store and non-build restrictions imposed by such type of tenants and other tenancies requirements. Nevertheless the design team made all efforts to incorporate improved urban design concepts to offset such design constraints.

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Landscape is being used to “break-up” the large surface parking areas in addition to generous pedestrian circulation network which creates connections north-south as well as to and from the future core commercial

To enhance pedestrian experience, here is a combination of hard and soft landscape elements, including seating, low walls, feature wayfinding elements, and pedestrian scale lighting proposed along Hartell Way SE (street F), beside building Q-01.

2. Retail street transparency, porosity

Best Practice

Retail street maximizes glazing - 70% and more. Maintains view into and out of retail, avoids display-only windows.

UDRP Commentary

Glazing on the site is typical of similar developments with respect to frontages that address the parking lots. Additional treatment of the side and rear facades which face the public realm to be emphasized.

Applicant Response

The site is surrounded by high speed streets with four or more lanes to the north and east. These flanking arterial streets do not have parallel parking which does not promote a retail environment and public interaction with the rear of the buildings. The design team improved the back of the buildings and enhanced the pedestrian access points from streets and adjacent sites in order to respond to the “street porosity” issue referred to in the comment above.

A minimum of 70% of glazing is being provided on façades facing the internal parking, plazas and any other spaces which are intended to be animated as public amenities and promoting any interaction between these spaces and the retail spaces.

The large format retail (Supermarket) is a lot more difficult to respond to such requirement however the design team is proposing a large amount of spandrel glazing within a façade which is broken-down by a number of different architectural elements and cladding materials and textures

3. Pedestrian-first design

Best Practice

Sidewalks are continuous on all relevant edges. Materials span driveway entries and parking access points. No drop offs or lay-bys in the pedestrian realm. Street furnishings support the pedestrian experience.

UDRP Commentary

Perimeter sidewalks generally support good pedestrian circulation with boulevard areas buffering vehicle traffic for greater pedestrian comfort. Internal pedestrian circulation is generally good with uninterrupted connections provided throughout the site. Special consideration is given to material differentiation across parking surfaces and the use of landscaping enhancements – a plus.

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The built form interface with the pedestrian network needs reconsideration. Visual interest, a core ingredient of walkability, has not been achieved (see item #1). Key considerations are re-orienting buildings to provide a stronger urban edge and providing secondary entrances to buildings which front sidewalk and plaza areas.

Applicant Response

Buildings have been relocated within the site in order to improve permeability and pedestrian access to the site as well as internal circulation which is also more organized and "landing" on more active places as well as better connected with parking and buildings.
For that reason we don't see the benefit of secondary entrances fronting the adjacent streets (Urban edge) however building elevations and landscape around those edges have been significantly improved to promote a more active use of those spaces.

4. Entry definition / legibility

Best Practice

Entry points are clear and legible

UDRP Commentary

Entry points are clear and legible through secondary free-standing signage, though revisions to strengthen the sense of entry to the site are encouraged. This could be revising the drive through location at the northern entry location and exploring the proposed supermarket's architectural features at the south entry location.

Applicant Response

The drive-through have been relocated together with the stand alone building which creates the opportunity for a more relevant gateway into the site with opportunities for free-standing signage, pedestrian and visual porosity both on North-west and North-east corners of the site.

The Grocery large retail main entrance was enlarged and other Architectural elements were created in order to provide more legibility from various viewpoints.

5. Residential multi-level units at grade

Best Practice

Inclusions of two or three storey units are encouraged, particularly at street level. Private outdoor patios with access to the sidewalk are ideal. Patios are large enough to permit furnishing and active use.

Applicant Response

We appreciate the comments by the panel. However, the inclusion of residential uses on General Commercial zones of the development, although supported by the ASP, was discussed with planning department and during the UDRP meeting, and was never anticipated to take place at Lot 7 subject to this application.

Multi-use residential uses are expected to be implemented on phase 2 of this project within the Core Commercial zone in multi-level buildings with retail at the ground level as outlined by the Table 2 of section 4.3 in the ASP.



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6. At grade parking

Best Practice

At grade parking is concealed behind building frontages along public streets.

UDRP Commentary

At grade parking internal to the site is generally consistent with the guidelines and policy. Given the large centralized parking area, landscaping enhancements including trees of a substantial caliper will be integral to breaking up the parking into smaller clusters.

Similar to items #1 and #3, the panel strongly recommends providing a stronger urban edge on the west boundary to conceal parking and be compatible and complimentary with the character of the core commercial area proposed. Future tenant preference for maintaining view corridors to an individual building is not an advisable urban design rationale.

Applicant Response

The design team improved upon the placemaking and seating/active spaces along the sidewalks, entry points to the site and other opportunities.

Although not ideal in terms of Urban Design, the Supermarket tenant required a dedicated parking area and has non-build restriction which makes it almost impossible to animate the west boundary of this site. The retail on future core commercial will also benefit from the large surface parking being proposed since Street F (Hartell Way SE) doesn't supply enough parking spaces.

7. Parking entrances

Best Practice

Ramps are concealed as much as possible. Entrances to parking are located in discrete locations. Driveways to garage entries are minimized, place pedestrian environment and safety first.

UDRP Commentary

No underground parking is proposed.

Applicant Response

Acknowledged

8. Other

Urban Connectivity

Provide visual and functional connectivity between buildings and places, ensure connection to existing and future networks. Promote walkability, cycle networks, transit use, pedestrian-first environments.

9. LRT station connections

Best Practice

Supports LRT use via legible, dedicated pedestrian pathways to stations with direct routes. Avoids desire lines / shortcutting through parking areas.

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Applicant Response

The project site is within a 400m Transit Stop Catchment Area and will in future benefit from the LRT Red Line extension.

10. Regional pathway connections

Best Practice

Supports walkability via intentional urban design connections to pathway systems.

UDRP Commentary

Pathway connections to the site and along the primary entry road provide adequate connection.

Applicant Response

Not required

11. Cycle path connections

Best Practice

Supports cycling via intentional, safe urban design connections to pathway systems and ease of access to bicycle storage at grade.

UDRP Commentary

Pathway connections to the site and along the primary entry road provide adequate connection.

Applicant Response

Please refer to L0.03 pedestrian and bicycle network diagram for further information.

12. Walkability - connection to adjacent neighbourhoods / districts / key urban features

Best Practice

Extend existing and provide continuous pedestrian pathways. Extend pedestrian pathway materials across driveways and lanes to emphasize pedestrian use.

UDRP Commentary

The panel supports the use of different pathway materials across the parking areas, though the same 'concrete type 4' treatment is encouraged across vehicle access points from 'Street F' in order to minimize vehicle-pedestrian conflicts.

Applicant Response

Crosswalks with patterning are provided in the parking areas, as well as the vehicle access points from Hartell Way SE (street F). Pedestrian crossings along Hartell Way SE (street F) shown in landscape drawings are for reference only. The actual design of the crosswalk at that location will be included in off-site package (Line Assignment) submitted by the project civil engineer.



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13. Pathways through site

Best Practice

Provide pathways through the site along desire lines to connect amenities within and beyond the site boundaries.

UDRP Commentary

Pathway connections throughout the site provide adequate connection and address desire lines to site amenities in an upgraded format.

Building N (drive thru) requires further study in the placement of the building as it does not adequately support the general site circulation. While the applicant spoke to study of joining this building to Building O (reverse drive thru configuration) and difficulty achieving a desired result, this arrangement can be executed successfully and may assist in strengthening the pathways through site. Alternative configurations are to be studied to assist improving this interface with the rest of the development.

Applicant Response

Please see our response above on items #2 and #3 and our revised and improved site plan enclosed with this resubmission. We strongly believe the new building placement offers a significant overall improvement to the site.



14. Open space networks and park systems

Best Practice

Connects and extend existing systems and patterns.

UDRP Commentary

The planned open spaces could benefit from additional building interaction to prevent dead spaces from developing. Building entrances, glazing, and hardscape as opposed to soft landscaping ground surface treatments should be explored to create more porosity and incite more active use.

Applicant Response

Please see above responses to Items 2, 3 and 4 and our revised and improved site plan enclosed with this resubmission. We strongly believe the new building placement offers a significant overall improvement to the site.

15. Views and vistas

Best Practice

Designed to enhance views to natural areas and urban landmarks.

UDRP Commentary

The site plan places emphasis on an individual future tenant's desire for driver visibility. The panel strongly encourages thorough analysis and revisions to strengthen landmark views and vistas. See item #4.

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Applicant Response

We believe this is not applicable to Lot 7 and will only be an issue on Phase 2 of the development on the area south of the development looking into the Environmental Reserve subject to a few discussions during ASP review and where we anticipate having viewpoints.

16. Vehicular interface

UDRP Commentary

Vehicle circulation generally responds to the site and adjacent uses, however should be developed in a less traditional commercial suburban format as indicated in the Applicant's vision for the overall masterplan. See comments #3 and 6 for related information.

Applicant Response

Again, unfortunately not ideal as far as urban design concepts the major tenant (Grocery Store) have very stringent requirements for the number, arrangement and size of their dedicated parking and very little deviation or improvements were allowed during extensive conversations with the tenant design team.

17. Other

Contextual Response

Optimize built form with respect to mass, spacing and placement on site in consideration to adjacent uses, heights and densities

18. Massing relationship to context

Best Practice

Relationship to adjacent properties is sympathetic

UDRP Commentary

The Panel recognizes the variety in urban form and architecture contemplated on the site. Variation in roofline, floorplate and façade treatments for internal frontage is indicative of good design.

Applicant Response

Thank you for the positive feedback

19. Massing impacts on sun shade

Best Practice

Sun shade impacts minimized on public realm and adjacent sites

UDRP Commentary

Information on this item is not included for review. The panel advises that special consideration be given to sunlight access and shading affecting the proposed public open spaces internal to the subject parcel.

Applicant Response

Please see attached sun shade studies.



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20. Massing orientation to street edges

Best Practice

Building form relates / is oriented to the streets on which it fronts.

UDRP Commentary

The proposed design avoids long monotonous building walls by introducing generally high quality façades with significant modulation and articulation. The panel recommends particular sensitivity to the design detail of rear facades facing the future development site adjacent the community corridor, as envisioned in the ASP.

Applicant Response

We appreciate the comments and agree. Please find enclosed a revised set of drawings indicating very articulated and rich volume of all buildings facing Legacy Village Link SE and 210th Avenue SE.

The open spaces around the sides of the project have been landscaped with large pockets of planting in lawn. The shape and layout of these planted areas are derived from the overall landscape theme and concept of the project. Care has been taken to ensure clear site lines into and through these spaces even though they are intended to be for visual relief and are not intended to be occupied. Full planting plans have been provided for review.



21. Massing distribution on site

UDRP Commentary

The panel notes a dramatic jump in building height and massing from Lot 7 to the planned high street commercial area directly adjacent. The panel suggests the applicant consider exploring a more transitional scale relative to the rest of the site, and adjacent future development areas.

Further, Building Q appears pushed into the corner with potential future 'back of house' implications on the future development immediately adjacent. UDRP suggests a future schematic of this future development be shown conceptually, to better evaluate the interface that is being proposed at this location.

Applicant Response

Please find enclosed revised and improved site plan addressing your concerns. Buildings have been redistributed within the site and offer a much more "balanced" massing and opportunities to address many other items as outlined on your comments above.

At this point the developer doesn't have a firm tenant or approach to the remaining site to be developed in the future. We do recognize that the back-of-house of the Grocery Store poses a constraint and requires a comprehensive assessment of the opportunities for this site. The developer and MCM will be involved on all phases of the future proposed development in order to make sure that any mitigating strategies are taken in order to guarantee a successful outcome.

22. Massing contribution to public realm at grade

Best Practice

Building form contributes to a comfortable pedestrian realm at grade

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UDRP Commentary

The Panel recognizes the scale and setbacks of buildings with respect to the perimeter conditions, and interface with the adjacent roadways and pedestrian connections. Internal pedestrian realm is typical of suburban retail and commercial development, and not aligned with the vision and theming identified in the introductory section of the submission. The Panel understands that future phases may include a high street concept and encourages consideration of enhanced walkways and pedestrian oriented pedestrian realm that complements the architecture and massing in quality and scale. Buildings located adjacent to the Internal Streets should be complementary and compatible with the character of the Core Commercial area and the Transitional area.

Applicant Response

Please refer to our answers to items #2 and #3 above.

23. Other

Safety and Diversity

Promote design that accommodates the broadest range of users and uses. Achieve a sense of comfort and security at all times.

24. Safety and security

Best Practice

CPTED principles are to be employed - good overlook, appropriate lighting, good view lines, glazing in lobbies and entrances.

UDRP Commentary

Areas of concern include loading areas and the 45-degree wedge formed by the massing along the site edges. Provide appropriate design interventions to improve safety and security of the site.

Applicant Response

CPTED is a proactive development philosophy whereby the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the incidence of crime. This is accomplished by thoughtfully employing natural forms of surveillance, access control, and territorial reinforcement to present a psychological deterrent to criminal behavior.

The design of Township utilizes natural surveillance, natural access control, and territorial reinforcement through the following design principals:

- Orienting access roads and pathways towards natural forms of surveillance such as building entrances and windows.
- Increasing visual permeability at main building entrances.
- Strategically lighting public areas and potential problem areas such as narrow pedestrian links and secondary building accesses.
- Providing clear sight lines and visual permeability.
- Limiting uncontrolled access to buildings and private spaces.
- Adding dense or thorny landscaping as a natural barrier to discourage unwanted entry.
- Providing amenities in public areas that encourage activity and use.
- Avoiding the creation of "no-man's land" by ensuring that all spaces have an assigned use.



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- Creating clearly marked transitional zones as people move between public and private spaces.

With these thoughtfully employed natural barriers, we are encouraging positive social interactions while reducing the opportunities for criminal activity.

25. Pedestrian level comfort - wind

Best Practice

Incorporate strategies to block wind, particularly prevailing wind and downdrafts. Test assumptions and responses via Pedestrian Level Wind Analysis. Particular attention to winter conditions.

UDRP Commentary

Information on this item is not included for review.

Applicant Response

The development has been thoughtfully designed to take into consideration the wide variety of environmental conditions that are experienced in Calgary. It is the Applicant's opinion that the current design does not have any significant wind conditions worthy of detailed analysis.

26. Pedestrian level comfort - snow

Best Practice

Incorporate strategies to prevent snow drifting. Test assumptions and responses via Snow Drifting Analysis. Particular attention to winter conditions.

UDRP Commentary

Information on this item is not included for review.

Applicant Response

The Applicant has developed, owned, and actively managed its commercial properties for over forty years. This site will be maintained in a first class manner with the utmost priority placed on the safety and comfort of every visitor.

27. Weather protection

Best Practice

Weather protection is encouraged at principal entrances. Continuous weather protection is encouraged along retail / mixed used frontages.

UDRP Commentary

Information on this item is not included for review.

Applicant Response

The design team worked towards improving weather protection along the retail frontages also respecting the Architectural expression of buildings and tenant requirements.



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28. Night time design

UDRP Commentary

Information on this item is not included for review.

Applicant Response

We will prepare renderings showing night time for review during UDRP upcoming meeting. These will not be included with the DP resubmission package.

29. Barrier free design

Best Practice

Site access to be equal for able and disabled individuals. Provide sloped surfaces 5% grade or less vs ramps.

UDRP Commentary

Information on this item is not included for review.

Applicant Response

The design of the development has incorporated best practices in barrier free design.



30. Winter city

Best Practice

Maximize exposure to sunshine for public areas through orientation, massing. Design public realm that supports winter activity.

UDRP Commentary

Information on this item is not included for review.

Applicant Response

The orientation of the buildings and gathering spaces respect sun orientation and landscape/hardscape treatment supports winter activity. Please find enclosed sun study.

31. Other

Service / Utility Design

Promote design that accommodates service uses in functional and unobtrusive manner. Place service uses away from and out of sight of pedestrian areas where possible. Screening elements to be substantive and sympathetic to the building architecture.

Applicant Response

Noted.

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32. (specify)

Commentary

Loading areas are integrated into the overall site plan, between buildings in many cases. The locations and proximity to the pedestrian realm suggest that design interventions of architecturally designed gates or moveable screens to provide an integrated urban edge and provide a visual screen to loading areas, waste collection and other associated back of house facilities and amenities.

Applicant Response

Loading areas have been screened by Architectural elements as well as landscape as much as possible without compromising the safety (visual) aspect of those facilities and pedestrians walking by.

We trust the above and attached addresses your concerns. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours truly

MUSSON CATTELL MACKEY PARTNERSHIP
ARCHITECTS DESIGNERS PLANNERS

Celso Stifelmann
ARCHITECT AIBC, M. ARCH, MRAIC
Celso Stifelmann Architect Inc., Partner

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