

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date:	March 21, 2018	
Time:	2:45 pm	
Panel Members:	Present: Chad Russill (chair) Bruce Nelligan Jack Vanstone	Absent: Janice Liebe Chris Hardwicke Glen Pardoe Robert Leblond Terry Klassen Gary Mundy Yogeshwar Navagrah Eric Toker
Advisor:	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number:	DP2018-0750	
Municipal address:	8607, 8825 52 St NE	
Community:	Saddleridge	
Project description:	New: Multi-Residential Development (8 buildings), Office, Retail and Consumer Service	
Review:	first	
File Manager:	Michael Davis	
City Wide Urban Design:	Lothar Wiwjorra	
Applicant:	Seika Architecture	
Architect:	Seika Architecture	
Owner:	Sahara Development	
Ranking:	Further Review Recommended	

Summary

The Urban Design Review Panel appreciates the application in terms of density near future LRT stations. There are several design elements that could be amended or enhanced to support the public realm and to add to the vitality of the neighbourhood fabric.

The primary aspects of development requiring additional study largely focus on the edge conditions. By placing building D to the west, it creates a parking cell pushed against 52nd street, interrupting pedestrian circulation and street wall effect. If pursued, documentation and analysis of sightlines as it relates to pathways and the sense of enclosure is encouraged to exhibit the proposed quality of space. Review of the intended retail entry points and proposed seating areas (such as in the middle of the parking field) are to be reviewed further. Also, the south park interface is currently treated like a side yard condition, with no intentional interface being proposed to this feature adjacency.

For future submissions, it is recommended that the applicant carefully review the new UDRP submission requirements to ensure all the requested information is provided to allow the Panel members to conduct a thorough review. While the presentation package is extensive in overall size, the DP drawings forms the bulk of the content. Information specific to UDRP is to be elaborated upon, including adjacent relationships to better evaluate the successfulness of the proposed urban design components.

Applicant Response

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response

Urban Vitality			
	Topic	Best Practice	Ranking
1	Retail street diversity	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.	Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	The development proposes a significant amount of commercial retail units along 52 Street NE, promoting pedestrian traffic. Space for patio and café seating is concentrated in the area underneath the +15-pedestrian crossing, within the parking lot and a smaller space adjacent to Building E. UDRP recommends that the applicant review the location of these seating areas to maximize the potential for public use. The Panel is also concerned the east frontage along 52 Street NE will appear like retail frontage but function as 'back of house' for retail units, due to location of parking area.		
	Applicant Response		
	See revised site plan. Outdoor café and at building C facing to 52 street. Public sitting area at near the 88 th Ave but facing to the 52 street.		
2	Retail street transparency, porosity	Retail street maximizes glazing - 70% and more. Maintains view into and out of retail, avoids display-only windows.	Support
	UDRP Commentary		
	Applicant Response		
3	Pedestrian-first design	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.	Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	The deceleration lane on southbound 52 nd Street adjacent to Building C and the southbound right-turn lane to 85 th Avenue detract from the pedestrian realm and appear to place higher priority to vehicular traffic over pedestrians and cyclists. This appears inconsistent with the urban environment the applicant is trying to create along the street as well as City policies. Eliminating the deceleration and right-turn lane is strongly encouraged.		
	Applicant response		
	Deceleration lane is the requirement of the city of Calgary transportation department.		
4	Entry definition / legibility	Entry points are clear and legible	Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	It is unclear if main retail entry points are proposed to be from 52 nd edge or internal to development from main parking fields.		
	Applicant Response		
	Entry points are clear and legible for all the retail units facing to 52 nd street, refer to building elevations. A hierarchical design response has been provided to the public realm for the entry points to the site. These are demonstrated and detailed on the site plan.		
5	Residential multi-level units at grade	Inclusion 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.	NA
	UDRP Commentary		

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response

	Applicant Response		
6	At grade parking	At grade parking is concealed behind building frontages along public streets.	Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	In general, majority of parking is concealed behind buildings however the at-grade parking between Buildings C and E is pushed towards and exposed to 52 nd Street. This area of the plan to be reviewed further including potential relocation of surface parking to another area within the development.		
	Applicant Response		
	Between building C and E we have created a public park. The park includes community seating, and public art. It will provide a strong connection and functional space with 3 meter wide multi-use pathway located on the East side of the property (between project site boundary and 52nd street we have developed a 3 meter wide multi use pathway). This has resulted in a much better relationship between the parking area and the park.		
7	Parking entrances	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.	Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	Entrance to surface parking on south end of Building G to be reviewed. Given adjacency to park, potential for emergency access only, promoting a plaza type interface is an approach of interest.		
	Applicant Response		
	Based on the site limitations, the access location was finalized by the CPAG team and team of consultants at the outline plan stage. Access in and out has been finalized and approved in the outline plan. Parking ram entrances have been dictated by traffic however the design integration has now been managed with pedestrian safety first and Plaza first principles		
8	Other		
	Applicant Response		
	Urban Connectivity <i>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.</i>		
	Topic	Best Practice	Ranking
9	LRT station connections	Supports LRT use via legible, dedicated pedestrian pathways to stations with direct routes. Avoids desire lines / shortcutting through parking areas.	Support
	UDRP Commentary		
	There are two LRT stations that are within walking distance of the subject site. Multi-use pathways and sidewalks are provided around the development to help connect it to these stations.		
	Applicant Response		
	The pathways through this site have been designed to facilitate access to the LRT stations. The pedestrian environment through and around the site has been carefully thought through to create optimized interface.		
10	Regional pathway connections	Supports LRT use via legible, dedicated pedestrian pathways to stations with direct routes. Avoids desire lines / shortcutting through parking areas.	Support
	UDRP Commentary		
	See comment for item #9		

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response

Applicant Response		
The regional pathway system for the City of Calgary in the context of the 10 minute walkshed to the LRT stations has been examined and all of the pathways through the site have been designed to accommodate and enhance the pedestrian environment relative to the LRT		
11	Cycle path connections	Supports cycling via intentional, safe urban design connections to pathway systems and ease of access to bicycle storage at grade.
		Further Review Recommended
UDRP Commentary		
The multi-use pathway that wraps Phase 1 of the development will help to encourage walking and cycling around the site. At-grade bike parking facilities were not apparent from the set of drawings provided but should be provided at convenient locations throughout the development.		
Applicant Response		
Revised site plan has included bicycle parking class two stalls was based on the land use bylaw requirements.		
12	Walkability - connection to adjacent neighbourhoods / districts / key urban features	Extend existing and provide continuous pedestrian pathways. Extend pedestrian pathway materials across driveways and lanes to emphasize pedestrian use.
		Further Review Recommended
UDRP Commentary		
UDRP notes that a neighbourhood activity center is planned in the area, immediately west of the subject site. It is further noted that Building A is quite long and represents a barrier to pedestrian flow between the subject site and the future NAC to the west. UDRP recommends an east/west pedestrian connection along Building A. Also, the nature of the 'access in only no exit' condition between Building A and B along the west property line is unclear. True understanding of immediately adjacent future context is not evident in the materials presented.		
Applicant Response		
Building A is not opposite to the neighbourhood activity center. Revised site plan has indicated Crosswalks and walkable connections within the development to the Park and neighbourhood activity center.		
Internal walkways emphasize arrival and are designed for accessibility and visual clarity		
13	Pathways through site	Provide pathways through the site along desire lines to connect amenities within and beyond the site boundaries.
		Further Review Recommended
UDRP Commentary		
The Panel questioned the placement and alignment of Building D due to an evident interruption of vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Applicant described a philosophy specific to creating a sense of place and enclosure, however it is not evident in the material presented and therefore not easily determined if the environment proposed will adequately address pathway sightlines.		
Applicant Response		
See revised site plan. Building "D" orientation has changed. The improvements to the Street crossings and internal crosswalks have been designed to strengthen the connection between the park and neighbourhood activity center buildings with proposed development, through the regional pathways system located immediately adjacent to south side of phase one development.		
14	Open space networks and park systems	Connects and extends existing systems and patterns.
		Further Review Recommended
UDRP Commentary		

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response

	UDRP notes that there is an opportunity to better interface the subject site with the public park on the south side of the proposed development. The articulation of the south end of Buildings G and H should be reviewed to capitalize on park adjacency. Furthermore, the vehicular access on the south side of Building G to be reconsidered as it detracts from the public park, or at a minimum surface treatment to integrate a plaza quality to promote the edge condition in this area.		
	Applicant Response		
	Revised site plan has indicated new walkways , sitting areas and canopies for the buildings next to the proposed park.		
	The park location accessible to the community and achieves a higher profile place within the system.		
15	Views and vistas	Designed to enhance views to natural areas and urban landmarks.	Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	See comment for item #14		
	Applicant Response		
	The permeable passageways between the buildings have been designed to enhance the community and interaction experience.		
16	Vehicular interface		Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	See comment for item #3		
	Applicant Response		
	Deceleration lane is the requirement of the city of Calgary transportation department.		
17	Other		
	Applicant Response		
	Contextual Response <i>Optimize built form with respect to mass, spacing and placement on site in consideration to adjacent uses, heights and densities</i>		
	Topic	Best Practice	Ranking
18	Massing relationship to context	Relationship to adjacent properties is sympathetic	Support
	UDRP Commentary		
	The 3D concept showing massing distribution (drawing A-06) is extremely basic in the information and for better understanding, higher quality images should be presented. Notwithstanding that comment, as it appears the massing relationship to the future context as shown is supported.		
	Applicant Response		
	No shadow impact on public realm		
19	Massing impacts on sun shade	Sun shade impacts minimized on public realm and adjacent sites	TBD
	UDRP Commentary		
	No information reviewed.		
	Applicant Response		
	No shadow impact on public realm.		
20	Massing orientation to street edges	Building form relates / is oriented to the streets on which it fronts.	Further Review Recommended
	UDRP Commentary		

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response

	Much of the development is noted as providing a pedestrian friendly-commercial oriented street retail experience along 52 nd Street. To this end, UDRP questions the rationale for pushing Building D back from 52 nd Street. Also see comment for item #14.	
	Applicant Response	
	Refer to revised site plan. Building D has been re- arrange in the site and connects with 85 th ave NE	
21	Massing distribution on site	Support
	UDRP Commentary	
	The 3D concept showing massing distribution (drawing A-06) is extremely basic in the information and for better understanding, higher quality images should be presented. Notwithstanding that comment, as it appears the general distribution on site and to edge conditions is supported.	
	Applicant Response	
	The building mass considers the sun path, edge conditions, winter wind condition and avoids the wind tunnel effect.	
22	Massing contribution to public realm at grade	Support
	UDRP Commentary	
	See comment for item #21	
	Applicant Response	
	The building mass considers the sun path, edge conditions, winter wind condition and avoids the wind tunnel effect. Pedestrian scaled built form will contributes to a comfortable pedestrian realm at grade	
23	Other	
	Applicant Response	
	Safety and Diversity <i>Promote design that accommodates the broadest range of users and uses. Achieve a sense of comfort and security at all times.</i>	
	Topic	Best Practice
24	Safety and security	CPTED principles are to be employed - good overlook, appropriate lighting, good view lines, glazing in lobbies and entrances.
	UDRP Commentary	
	Applicant Response	
	The community gathering locations, parks have building interface. Buildings have been designed to accommodate CPTED principles and eyes on the above locations.	
25	Pedestrian level comfort - wind	TBD
	UDRP Commentary	
	To avoid the effect of winter wind, we have arrange the long building along the west side of the property. Entrance canopy, continues tree canopy along the internal side walk will reduce the block the winter wind.	
	Applicant Response	

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response

26	Pedestrian level comfort - snow	Incorporate strategies to prevent snow drifting. Test assumptions and responses via Snow Drifting Analysis. Particular attention to winter conditions.	TBD
UDRP Commentary			
Applicant Response			
Although the Panel generally endorses massing distribution, pedestrian level comfort -snow information was not provided at this preliminary stage of design development			
27	Weather protection	Weather protection is encouraged at principal entrances. Continuous weather protection is encouraged along retail / mixed used frontages.	TBD
UDRP Commentary			
Applicant Response			
Canopies have been added to the principal entrances of the buildings to provide weather protection.			
28	Night time design		TBD
UDRP Commentary			
Applicant Response			
29	Barrier free design	Site access to be equal for able and disabled individuals. Provide sloped surfaces 5% grade or less vs ramps.	TBD
UDRP Commentary			
Applicant Response			
30	Winter city	Maximize exposure to sunshine for public areas through orientation, massing. Design public realm that supports winter activity.	TBD
UDRP Commentary			
Applicant Response			
31	Other		
Applicant Response			
Service / Utility Design <i>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.</i>			
Topic		Commentary	Ranking
32	(specify)		TBD

Urban Design Review Panel Comments and Applicant Response