

Response to UDP Comments

IBI Group presented to the Urban Design Panel on August 24, 2016. The following is our response to the UDP comments from August 24, 2016.

	Comments	Proposal Response
Massing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, the site massing and layout does not fit together well based on past guidelines, and does not appear to be generated from the context of the site. The Panel had mixed support for the overall massing. One Panel member thought the office and residential building were too close to each other, although one panel member felt they should be closer because it would be less 'homogeneous' spacing than other areas. It is creating a lot of diversity, but is not a good fit for the future context that is emerging. One panel member thought that the office and hotel buildings should be merged into one building to create a greater variety of building scale. Some panel members thought there should be a signature building on the corner that could be a hotel with a high profile, a better view, and adjacent park proximity. One panel member thought the massing creates dead ends in the way it leads pedestrians through the site. Another panel member noted the proximity to the Skytrain should affect and better inform the concept and massing of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The massing is consistent with the Great Northern Way Structure Plan and the original CD-1 document. The number of buildings is consistent with the rezoning design (1998). We reviewed the possibility of combining the office and hotel in initial stages but were discouraged to pursue this further by Planning Dept since it was inconsistent with the old CD zoning. The Live/Work building and office building are now separated from each other by an average of 23m. The Live/Work building on the corner incorporates a prominent design element at the street intersection (cube). The placement of similar design elements on adjacent buildings help draw your eye to the corner in a way that is dynamic. The Skytrain connection is addressed in the Great Northern Way Structure Plan hence the generous setback at 1st Ave (8m). Pedestrian routes have been redesigned so that there are no longer dead ends while maintaining circulation that meets the requirements of the structural plan.
Architectural Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pixel / voxel articulation is a superficial applied expression and is not 3 dimensional enough, for example the unit planning and how it relates to the massing and expression of the building are not integrated. The layering and materiality could be further developed. The architectural expression was supported by some members of the panel. However some other panel members were concerned that the design concept is too literally expressed. The office building was seen to be merely extruded and unarticulated. It needs more design development, especially in relation to other office buildings recently reviewed in the area. A few panel members mentioned the typology could have been revisited within the live /work concept in order to make it more 3 dimensional. The voxel expression was too arbitrary according to some panel members and its large scale expression was unsuccessful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some disagreed with the Voxel's Rubiks Cube expression and pointed out that it was too literal. The design has evolved to further respond to the context of the site and surrounding area. The concept is no longer only about voxels, but about framing and infill. Lot P now reflects the neighborhood by combining themes of industrial tech, art, and corporate tech found in nearby buildings (refer to collage). The office building has been refined to respond to office buildings in the area and the other three buildings on Lot P. The result is a more dynamic design that combines the smooth and linear style of the area with the 3 dimensional frames of Lot P.
Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The landscaping is too commercial and corporate and doesn't take into consideration the live-work residential uses. One panel member thought that the change in grade created along E 1st Avenue created a problem for pedestrian movement. With respect to the landscaping design, the shadowing needs to inform the design and use of the open spaces. The demographic of the project should inform the open spaces of the project according to panel members. The children's play area is not currently in the right location in relation to hotel according to some of the panel. One panel member thought there is a lack of wayfinding opportunities on the site, and drop off places. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design has developed to be more 3 dimensional through the development of a series of art-landscape elements. A framed cube is moved so that it juts out from the rest of the form; e.g. large red stair in the north west corner. The pedestrian network has been revised follow simple and clear routes. Dead ends have been eliminated and stairs leading from one level to another are large visible elements on the site. P1 level has been redesigned to accommodate a drop-off area by the hotel. This area is light and open to the sky. Amenity space now fronts the children's play area so that it is not as isolated. Landscaping design includes more outdoor amenities to inform the use of spaces.
Amenity Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be more amenity space for the live/work residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall amenity space has increased. Meeting rooms have been added for the live/work residents and the amenity area under hotel has expanded. P1 Amenity: Business center, Gym L1 Amenity: Art Gallery, Lounge, Play Area L2 Amenity: Meeting room (1 per live/work building) Roof Amenity: Outdoor cooking and dining, planting, putting, ping pong.
Public Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a lot of opportunity for public art at the site, but it "should be brought to the edge" and integrated into the landscape, which would make it more interactive and dynamic. A panel member noted that the hotel wall should not be used for public art. The art students in the school adjacent to the site could be involved in creating some of the public art. The Rubik's Cube idea could be added to the public art as well, and one panel member mentioned the art should reference music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public art remains on the hotel as a visual device to draw people in from the street. Artistic elements have been added to various locations near the edges of the site (on stair, live/work building 2, and parking entrance) to make the landscape more interactive and dynamic. Refer to page on interactivity.
Unit Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be a more credible separation between the live work/space evident in the unit plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit layouts designed with the flexibility for live and work spaces to be well defined and separated or to flow into one another - sometimes with use of sliding doors within the unit.
Solar Shading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be stronger more robust shading elements, especially on the office or hotel buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevalent vertical shading devices remain on the hotel. Shading devices are more robust and highlighted in colour.