

What We've Heard

In March 2005 City Staff and Ivanhoe Cambridge hosted an open house that explored very general concept directions for the redevelopment of the Oakridge Centre site. Feedback on general directions for built form and massing was mixed. Some people supported mixed uses and residential development on the shopping centre site at a scale consistent with the mid-rise 5 to 6 storey form of recent development around the centre.

Some people thought it would be an appropriate site for higher building forms such as towers to open up more park space, preserve views and place more people close to transit, shopping and work. Others did not think that taller buildings were appropriate for the area.



Draft Concept

Transforming the site into a new, more livable, pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood centre is a costly endeavour. Moving surface parking underground and demolishing and redeveloping the mall in phases is complicated and expensive. The form of development shown in this draft concept reflects the "order of magnitude" of retail, residential and other uses the owners feel is required make a viable project.

The City will review the economic pro-forma, but accommodating this program would mean that some residential area would be in towers. Building forms in the draft concept range from 3 level rowhouses to 21 level high rises that could accommodate a variety of family types. The massing model and view panorama are tools to help us understand the relationship between building forms, heights, and views.



Existing Policy

Broad regional and city planning policies support intensification of uses on large sites adjacent to rapid transit.

The 1995 Oakridge Langara Policy Statement anticipated the development of rapid transit on Cambie Street and supports a rethinking of the Oakridge Centre site as a municipal centre with a mix of commercial, residential, and recreational uses with the goal of achieving a balance between residential and commercial development.

At the time of the of the Oakridge Langara Policy Statement, the extent of redevelopment now proposed by Ivanhoe Cambridge was not contemplated. The policy referred to a modest amount of residential uses with consideration of building forms ranging from 40 feet to about 100 feet, with consideration of views and commensurate public benefits.



Views: Establishing view corridors is difficult because existing residences looking over the Oakridge Centre site do not all share the same views. Existing buildings at the Centre already block most street end views. Development of 6 to 8 storeys would likely block all or most views across the site from surrounding developments of similar height. Slim towers, well placed, could preserve some views by opening up view corridors at lower levels.

Questions

- What is your opinion of the built form and heights shown in the draft concept?
- Are the built form, densities and heights shown appropriate for a mixed-use, transit-oriented development?
- Should densities and heights be reduced, varied or reconfigured to improve views and fit with the surrounding community?

Please see the survey for more questions.

