

## **Oakridge Urban Design Vision:**

The architecture of Oakridge is a response to a myriad of functional, poetic and visionary aspirations set in motion by this unique opportunity to build Vancouver's only municipal town centre outside of the downtown core.

The architectural expression is both urban and topographical, combining multiple positive attributes found in the history of cities. Fundamental principals were distilled from disparate planning movements from Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to Le Corbusier's Radiant City. Poetic inspirations range from Italian hilltop towns to the urban street walls of Europe. Each of these precedents addressed the relationship between nature and the urban fabric.

The resulting concept is a modern street-oriented urban experience that reconnects the site to the surrounding urban context while integrating nature and topography to create an organic expression of architecture emerging from the landscape. The genesis of the design narrative begins by reintroducing the lost forest displaced by the original mall and then sculpts new retail street walls to define the perimeter of the site and the High Street within, knitting together the surrounding urban fabric. Into this new landscape are sculpted retail gallerias and public rooms which emerge and define the edges of the park above. From this foundation of parks and plazas, office and residential buildings terrace upward out of the landscape and are capped by iconic towers marking gateways capturing views in all directions.

Oakridge visitors will be citizens in a new organic micro-city connected to both downtown to the north and the airport to the south by rapid transit; inhabiting one of the most meaningful sustainable models of suburban mall redevelopments in the world.

## **Oakridge DP2 Design Rationale**

The architectural expression of the DP-2 scope of the project reflects the metaphor of the buildings emerging organically from the site through terracing forms while simultaneously defining strong urban streetwalls.

The DP-2 phase consists of a retail podium topped by: office and residential program in buildings 6 & 7 along Cambie Street and residential program in building 8 at the south east corner facing 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the High Street. Grocery and liquor store uses are placed below grade adjacent to parking allowing for convenient access.

The landscaped topography starts at grade at 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue, rises up to the rooftop park, then terraces up from the podium to define towers 6 and 8. Tower 7 sits atop the podium as a gateway marker.

The Cambie Street streetscape reflects the scale and formality of this major traffic corridor in the city. The north end of the street is defined by a major mall entry as well as entries into retail both above and below grade. Entry lobbies for building 6 & 7 residential and office components also occur in within this typology.

The 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue streetscape softens the relationship to the residential neighbourhood to the south by consisting mainly of park space and landscaped steps and terraces up into the park.

## **Building 6 & 7**

### **Skin & Bones Concept**

The metaphor of skin and bone is the ordering principal for the architectural tectonic for buildings here and elsewhere in the project. It is derived from the idea of draping the mall with a landscaped park. The acts of wrapping and revealing are used to help define the relationship between the landscape and buildings, as an approach to break down the mass of the buildings, as a passive solar strategy to have the buildings respond to their environment, and for providing way finding and programmatic identity.

The skin, or veil, is expressed architecturally as a plane of curtain wall that extends past the building itself in vertical and horizontal fly-bys, its glazed membrane emphasized by using 4 sided SSG, grey sealant and gaskets, and only horizontal spandrel.

The extent of the wrapping of the veil is related to the building's orientation. The veil opens toward the south, allowing the recessed terracing of the bones to shade the spaces within.

The bones are differentiated from the skin by the horizontality of the slab edge. While the veil is a single vertical plane, the bones consist of horizontal terraces. Built-in planters in the lower terraces and in the reveal between the skin and bones reinforce the effect of pulling the landscaping from the park up into the building, blurring the distinction between topography and building.

### **Animating the Veil**

Sculptural pods are hung from the face of the veil to provide special balcony sanctuaries for the residents and to break down the scale of the Tower façade.

### **Lifting the Veil**

Just as the veil wraps the building as a protective unifying element, it also lifts like a billowing fabric at the street and park to provide visual and physical permeability of the transparent retail edge and to provide weather protection for pedestrians. The amplitude of the lift responds to the tenants, the parkade entry, and the residential and office lobbies, providing wayfinding clues. In order to achieve the complex geometries the curtain wall is triangulated, providing added relief to the scale of the podium façade. The exposed retail edge is highly transparent structural glass that is purposely differentiated from the curtain wall veil above.

## **Building 8**

### **Mountain Concept**

While much of the Oakridge project is conceived as a topographical emergence of architecture from landscape, Building 8 is more geologically expressive as if smoothed by eons of wind and water as it terraces up from the Woodland Park. The building seen as a newly formed mountain, we can analyze its parts: the forested valley floor at its base, the spur ascending to the summit, and the precipitous east and west faces.

The Woodlands are situated in the valley between buildings 6, 7, & 8 with a path running through it connecting down to 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Pocket Park. It is heavily forested in places and settled where there is less planting.

The building Spur rises from 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue in a series of terracing floors providing large decks for residents while built-in planters pull the landscaping from the Park up the tower. Slab extensions branch out from the spur in organically shaped horizontal planes providing balcony space. The terracing spur and slab extensions are similar to the “Bones” of Buildings 3, 4, 6 & 7 in their tectonic expression and environmental performance.

### **Animating the Face**

Hanging from the East and West faces of Building 8 are sanctuaries analogous to a portaledge deployable tent used by rock climbers to hang from a mountain face. Akin to the pods of Buildings 3, 4, 6 & 7, these sculptural elements are special balcony environments for residents. Their stacked “vertebrae-like” form also breaks down the scale of the Tower façade.

### **Summer House**

#### **Pavilion Concept**

The Summer House is conceived as a glazed minimalist pavilion in the park that defines a key vertical circulation location and acts as a backdrop for events in the park space above. The pavilion is composed of a series of horizontal planes with punched rectangular skylights. The rectilinear shape is consistent with the comprehensive design strategy that differentiates between the organic tectonic of the residential towers and the rectilinear vocabulary of the retail. Continuous glazing around the perimeter is recessed from the slab edge to emphasize the horizontal planes and allow for views through to the surrounding park spaces.

The pavilion will act as a stage for performances facing the Commons and outdoor restaurants to the north. A 600mm high raised platform wraps around the north and west edges of the pavilion to serve daily recreational uses as well as a stage for performances throughout the year. The stage will include provisions for power, lighting, and sound.

#### **Mixing Chamber**

A multi-storey atrium allows for views and natural light up and down through the four interconnected levels. Elevators and escalators extend from the Park level down to the main mall, continuing to the two public parking levels below. The chamber’s presence in the parkades will act as a forecourt for retail below grade and serve as one of the main entry points into the mall from the parking levels.