

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday, April 8, 2026

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Teams Meeting

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Tony Osborn (Chair)
Allyse Li
Nic Besseling
Bob Lilly
Ana Maria Llanos
Tracey Mactavish
Scott Mitchell
Aidan Shirley

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING
1. 5027-5053 Boundary Rd

1. Address: 5027-5053 Boundary Rd
Permit No.: RZ-2025-00092
Description: To rezone the subject site from CD-1 (241) (Comprehensive Development) District to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. The proposal is to allow for the development of a 21-storey mixed-use residential building with a four-storey podium and includes: 216 social housing units; a private childcare centre in a commercial space; commercial and retail use on the ground floor; a floor space ratio (FSR) of 7.98; and a building height of 70.2 m (230 ft.) with a rooftop amenity space. This application is being considered under the Transit-Oriented Areas Rezoning Policy.

Application Status: Rezoning Application
Architect: Formosis Architecture
Delegation: Adam Gruchala, Architect, Formosis Architecture
Caelan Griffiths, Landscape Architect, PMG
Staff: Sailen Black & Andrew Misiak

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (7/1)

Planner's Introduction:

Andrew Misiak, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project with a description of the existing site context, followed by an overview of the existing policy framework as well as the anticipated policy context being considered under Transit-Oriented Areas Rezoning Policy. The site is located at Joyce Collingwood TOA Tier 3 area where development is generally permitted up to 8 storeys, density up to 3 FSR, with height exceptions for social housing on a case-by-case basis. Andrew concluded with a description of the site and a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, described projects as proposed, noting that there is currently limited guidance regarding built form for proposals exceeding the prescribed TOA height limits. He indicated that Urban Design Panel input is being sought to inform appropriate built-form considerations for this specific context. Sailen concluded with a series of questions to the Panel.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the proposed height, density, and overall massing with particular attention to:

1. Does the Panel support the proposed height and density at this location?
2. If so, can the Panel comment on the design of the:
 - a. Public realm interface along Boundary Road
 - b. Interface with adjacent neighbours to the north and south
 - c. Lane interface, including commercial access

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Adam Gruchala, Formosis Architecture, noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project. Caelan Griffiths, landscape architect from PMG, gave an overview of the landscape strategy.

Applicant and staff took questions from Panel.**Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **MR. Aidan Shirley** and seconded by **MS. Ana Maria Llanos** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel Recommend **Support with recommendations** to the project with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

1. That the applicant team reconsider the appropriateness of the commercial space on Boundary Road and consider moving the primary pedestrian experience to the lane.
2. That, through design development, greater consideration be given to the laneway interface, including refinement to either activate that interface or soften it through features like landscaping and other design features.
3. That the architectural expression of the north and south elevations be further studied to achieve better alignment with the east and west elevations.
4. That all residential units be provided with a connection to outdoor space, either through Juliet balconies or full balconies, and that these amenities be equally provided across unit types.
5. That daycare drop-off design be further studied to accommodate parents arriving by bicycle, in addition to vehicular access.
6. That the design team study the inclusion of some three-bedroom units, keeping in mind the housing mix policy for rezoning projects.
7. That diagrams be developed to further study the development potential of the north and south sites relative to tower separations.

Summary of Panel Commentary:

There was general support from the panel.

The panel recommended shifting the urban design emphasis away from Boundary Road toward the laneway, citing traffic speed and limited pedestrian comfort. Increased laneway setbacks and improved public-realm design were encouraged.

The proposed building height is generally supported by the panel. One panelist recommended a 20-storey height threshold in the context of social housing, while another noted the presence of nearby

30-storey buildings and supported the proposed 21-storey height, with potential for additional height to achieve a better interface at the rear of the site.

Further refinement is recommended in the relationship between the tower and podium. Panelists noted inconsistent podium articulation between the front and rear elevations and requested clearer architectural continuity.

Additional study was recommended on tower placement, podium articulation, and the project's relationship to adjacent potential developments on north and south, including tower separation, massing transitions, and overlook considerations.

Façade design would benefit from simplification. Concerns were raised regarding solar gain leading to overheating, with encouragement to use balconies and shading elements to improve livability and energy performance.

The residential unit mix requires improvement. The panel encouraged more family-sized and three-bedroom units, clarity on balcony requirements, and outdoor access for all units, including Juliet balconies for studios.

Childcare design was a primary concern. The panel noted that the proposed drop-off functionality is inadequate and that the provision of 6–8 childcare parking spaces is insufficient. The overhang canopy serving the childcare space was also noted as undersized. Panelists recommended that childcare and commercial elevator access be combined, clearly legible, and more accessible, and suggested consideration of a bicycle elevator from the street. Additional concerns included the need for wind mitigation, increased privacy, and improved outlook for the rooftop play area. Clearer guidance on daycare-to-unit ratio policy and improved overall circulation were also recommended.

Increased privacy and mitigation measures between the childcare spaces and neighboring low-rise residential buildings was recommended, with particular emphasis on acoustic mitigation measures to reduce potential noise impacts.

Public-realm and landscape design was encouraged to extend to the curb line.

Mixed opinions were expressed on commercial space along Boundary Road, with some panelists supporting CRUs and others recommending their reduction or removal to improve childcare, circulation, and residential functionality.

Inter-municipal coordination with the City of Burnaby was recommended to inform planning on lands adjacent to the site.

Inconsistencies between glazing shown on the floor plans and that shown in the renderings and elevations undermined confidence in the proposal.

Overall, the panel emphasized the need to improve project clarity, coherence, and functional integration, and the panel expressed hope to see these issues corrected in the next design development stage.

Applicant's Response: The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.