

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday, June 17, 2026

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Teams Meeting

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Aya Abdelfatah (Co-chair item 2 only)

Allyse Li (Co-chair item 1 only)

Grant Brumpton

Ana Maria Llanos

Tracey Mactavish

Aidan Shirley

Parisa Seyed-Hoseini

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING
1. 929-989 W 41st Ave, 5670 Oak St, 988 W 38th Ave, and 5469-5507 Willow St (former Oakridge Transit Centre) 2. 605-695 SE Marine Drive ODP Amendment and Text Amendment

Co-Chair Allyse Li called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

Address	929-989 W 41st Ave, 5670 Oak St, 988 W 38th Ave, and 5469-5507 Willow St (former Oakridge Transit Centre)
Permit No.:	RZ-2025-00098
Description:	To rezone the subject site from R1-1 (Residential Inclusive) District to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. The proposal is to allow for a mixed-use development consisting of 16 buildings ranging from 6-storeys to 33-storeys, and includes: 1,231 strata units; 1,238 market-rental units; 158 below-market rental units; transferring a dirt site to the city for approximately 361 social housing units; a 1.9-acre public park; a 69-space childcare facility; 4,922 sq m (52,975 sq. ft) of commercial space; and a total floor area of 230,565.5 sq. m (2,481,787 sq. ft.). This application is being considered under the Oakridge Transit Centre Policy Statement.
Zoning	R1-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Architect:	Hariri Pontarini Architects
Delegation:	Michael Attard, Architect, Hariri Pontarini Architects Louise Houston, Developer Project Lead, Grosvenor Property Canada Lin Lin, Landscape Architect, PFS Studios
Staff:	Omar Aljebouri, Development Planner Simon Jay, Rezoning Planner

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (5/1)

Planner's Introduction:

Simon Jay, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project with a description of the existing site context, followed by an overview of the existing policy framework. The presentation reviewed the Oakridge Transit Centre and Adjacent Sites Policy Statement (2015), the Cambie Corridor Plan, and the Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA) Rezoning Policy. Staff noted that while the site falls within the TOA area permitting up to 8 storeys, the site-specific policy framework envisions greater height and density, and the surrounding area has evolved considerably with several nearby high-rise developments and pre-zoned tower sites. Simon also summarized the previously approved 2020 rezoning application, which was subsequently withdrawn, before outlining the current rezoning proposal, including the proposed density, height, land uses, housing tenures, park, childcare facility, and public benefits.

Omar Aljebouri, Development Planner, introduced the project vision and urban design principles, highlighting a mixed-use residential community centered around a public park, with strong pedestrian and cycling connections, sustainability objectives, and an enhanced public realm. He concluded by seeking Panel feedback on the proposed density, height, massing, transitions, public realm, open spaces, and overall response to policy objectives.

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

1. The proposed height, density, and the overall response to the vision and evolving context (permeability, livability, contextual fit and form diversity).
2. The massing, building orientation, shadowing and transitions.
3. The ground plane and interface in particular public, private and semi-private open spaces.
4. Other suggestions for future design development (e.g. themes like sustainability and memory).

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Michael Attard, Hariri Pontarini Architects, noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project, including the landscape strategy.

Applicant and staff took questions from Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Including Those Needing Improvement:

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

THAT the Panel Recommends **Support with recommendations** for the project. The following recommendations are to be further reviewed by City Staff:

1. Design development to achieve a softer transition to adjacent areas on the site edges with low density properties, which can be achieved through redistribution of heights closer to West 41st Avenue.
2. The Panel would like to see further design consideration given to the public realm and plaza at the gateway from West 41st Avenue into the park, with a focus on creating a more intentional and welcoming arrival experience that enhances both visual openness and connection to the park, for both visual and physical accessibility.
3. Engaging in earlier and more detailed consultation with the Park Board to inform early-stage design intent, goal setting, and park programming. Ensure adequate urban amenities are planned accordingly with architectural design for better alignment of urban utility.

4. The project currently has not considered meaningful integration of Indigenous culture and values. Considering reflecting the First Nations history and transit past in the next design iteration of the project with values in alignment with site-specific cultural contexts.

Summary of Panel Commentary:

The Panel generally supported the proposal's overall density, massing, housing mix, and site organization, recognizing the site's evolving context and the significant contribution of housing, including rental and social housing. The project context and proposed height distribution across the site are considered responsive to the Policy Statement.

The proposed heights were generally supported; however, the Panel recommended concentrating additional height and density closer to West 41st Avenue and reducing scale toward the north, east, and west edges to create more sensitive transitions to adjacent townhouses, residential developments, and existing houses.

The central park was viewed as the defining element of the project. The Panel encouraged maximizing size and quality of the park and ensuring it functions as a public destination for the wider community rather than feeling like a private courtyard for residents.

Strong support was expressed for the site's permeability, pedestrian connections, mews network, and open-space framework. However, further consideration should be given to strengthening visual and physical connections between 38th Avenue, Parcel H, and the park.

Parcel H was identified as an important focal point within the development. The Panel encouraged consideration of more public-oriented ground-floor uses, such as community-serving amenities, childcare, retail, or other active uses, together with greater transparency and accessibility along the park edge.

The public gateway from West 41st Avenue into the park was identified as a key design opportunity. The Panel felt the entry plaza currently appears constrained and should provide a stronger visual connection to the park, with a more intentional sequence of public spaces and a clearer sense of arrival.

Views into the park from West 41st Avenue were considered limited, and opportunities to increase openness and visibility should be explored.

Early consultation with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation was strongly encouraged to inform park programming, design intent, functionality, and long-term public use.

The Panel encouraged additional consideration of retail and community-serving amenities to support the future resident population and improve walkability throughout the neighborhood.

Concerns were raised regarding the proximity of Towers B2 and C1, and further review of tower separation and livability impacts was recommended.

Panel noted that some units may not have balconies and recommended either providing more equitable access to private outdoor space or ensuring high-quality access to shared amenity spaces. The Panel recommended reducing hardscape and increasing landscaping within the mews connection

extending from 39th Avenue, while providing more generous patio widths for ground-oriented residential units and adequate frontage space for retail uses, particularly to accommodate future restaurant and café patios.

The Panel encouraged further study of childcare operations, including the location, accessibility, and vehicle pick-up/drop-off strategy associated with Building E2.

Consideration should be given to parking demand, family-oriented needs, and access to schools, community facilities, and daily amenities given the scale of the proposed population increase.

The Panel recommended further refinement of all site edges and points of entry to reduce the perception of a superblock and better accommodate interactions among pedestrians, cyclists, scooters, and vehicles.

Members noted that Indigenous design considerations are currently underdeveloped and encouraged early and meaningful Indigenous engagement to inform planning, landscape design, public realm, and placemaking.

The Panel also supported integrating the site's transit history more thoroughly into the project through landscape design, public art, materials, wayfinding, and public realm elements to create a stronger and more distinctive sense of place.

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

The meeting recessed at 4:50 p.m. Upon reconvening the meeting at 4:55 p.m., Co-Chair Aya Abdelfatah resumed proceedings, and the Panel proceeded to consider the second application scheduled for presentation.

Address	605-695 SE Marine Drive ODP Amendment and Text Amendment
Permit No.:	RZ-2025-00024
Description:	To amend the Vancouver ODP from 'Multiplex' to 'Mixed-Use High-Rise 2' and amend CD-1 (99) for an increase in height from 7.3 m (30 ft.) to 119 m (391 ft.), an increase in floor space ratio (FSR) from 1.4 to 9.2, to include 23% of the residential floor area for below-market rental units, and amend the permitted uses on the site. The proposal is for a 34-storey (east tower) and a 29-storey (west tower) mixed-use rental building which includes: 652 units with 23% of the floor area for below-market rental units; commercial-retail space on the ground floor; private 37-space space childcare facility; an FSR of 9.2; and a height of 119 m (391 ft.) (east tower), and 103 m (339 ft.) (west tower). This application is being considered under the Interim Rezoning Policy for Social Housing, Institutional, Cultural and Recreational Uses in Former Community Visions Areas. This application is not consistent with Council-adopted policies.
Zoning	CD-1(99)
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Architect:	Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership
Delegation:	Peter Odegaard, Architect, Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership, Mike Enns, Landscape Architect, Loci Design
Staff:	Karen Kallweit-Graham, Development Planner, Sarah Cranston, Rezoning Planner

EVALUATION: Non-Support / Resubmission Recommendations (5/1)

Planner's Introduction:

Sarah Cranston, Rezoning Planner, and Karen Kallweit-Graham, Development Planner, presented rezoning application for 605-695 SE Marine Drive that is currently zoned CD-1 (99) and is occupied with a three-storey mixed-use development with 120 rental units. The surrounding context is primarily single detached homes, with one high-rise development (Fraser Commons) nearby, on the east side of Fraser Street. The Vancouver Official Development Plan generally envisions this area as low-rise. The proposal is not consistent with land uses which can be considered under the rezoning enabling policy, and the site is outside of a Transit-Oriented Area (TOA).

Applicant's Introduction:

Peter Odegaard, MCM Partnership and Mike Enns, Loci Design presented the design for two towers (34 and 29 stories) atop five-and six-story podiums, totaling about 652 rental units (23% below market), a 37-space private daycare, and ground-level commercial space. The design features a mid-block plaza/paseo, slender tower forms, and podium amenities, with a focus on activating the public realm and managing the site's significant slope.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought in the following:

1. Advice on height, density, and overall form of development.
2. Transition to residential low-rise context.
3. Treatment of public realm interface with SE Marine Drive and Fraser Street
4. Any additional considerations.

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

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **TRACEY MACTAVISH** and seconded by **ANA MARIA LLANOS** and the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel Recommends **Non-Support/ Resubmission** of the project with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

1. THAT the applicant team reconsiders the scale, density, and height of the East and West towers.
2. THAT the applicant explores a form of development that better aligns with the area's character and anticipates future growth, rather than relying on a high-rise typology that is unsupported by policy.
3. THAT the applicant reconsider location of the daycare entrance to improve accessibility and pedestrian experience from the lane to the mid-block plaza/paseo.
4. THAT the applicant rethinks the public realm strategy, particularly the design and purpose of the mid-block plaza or paseo.

Summary of Panel Commentary

The Panel expressed significant concerns about the proposed height and density, noting lack of supporting policy, insufficient transit infrastructure, and contrast with the surrounding low-rise context. Panelists questioned whether the west tower should be included in the proposal, particularly with respect to its shadowing impact on George Park, the existing single family homes to the north of the proposal and perceived scale.

The Panel also discussed the public realm interface, observing whether the proposed commercial spaces along SW Marine Drive are appropriate for cafes, restaurants, or outdoor seating, given the site's location on a busy arterial street and major vehicular corridor. Consider larger scale commercial.

The mid-block plaza/ paseo was described as underperforming in its current configuration, with concerns that its shape and orientation would draw pedestrians towards the service lane rather than toward meaningful destination. The shape, orientation, purpose of the plaza was seen as unclear, and the Panel encouraged a more thoughtful approach to creating an inviting, active, and contextually appropriate public space.

The location of daycare entrance at the rear lane was a recurring issue. The Panel recommended relocating the entrance to the plaza or paseo to improve safety, visibility, and user experience. Concerns were also raised about the adequacy and configuration to the outdoor play areas, including whether they meet licensing requirements and whether the vertical separation between indoor and outdoor spaces is appropriate.

Livability considerations were also highlighted. Panel members noted the need to ensure equitable access to balconies or shared outdoor spaces for all units and encouraged a review of unit layouts to support long-term livability, particularly for families.

The grading along Fraser Street was identified as an area requiring further attention to ensure a coherent and accessible pedestrian overall experience.

Panel has no concerns with POPs percentage/area proposed.

Overall, the Panel concluded that the proposal requires significant revision to address issues to scale, context, public realm, daycare functionality, and livability. The Panel recommended that the applicant resubmit the application with these concerns addressed.

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