Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections

CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF
THE SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTIONS

Record Number: **3036043-LU**

Applicant: **Hank Robson**

Address of Proposal: **2616 Western Ave**

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Land Use application to allow a 19-story, 182-unit apartment building. Parking for 130 vehicles proposed. Existing building to be demolished. This project is participating in the Living Building Pilot Program. Early Design Guidance done under 3034374-EG.

The following approval is required:

Design Review with Departures (Seattle Municipal Code 23.41)*
**Departures are listed near the end of the Design Review Analysis in this document*

SITE AND VICINITY

Site Zone: Downtown Mixed Residential/Commercial (DMR/C 145/75)

Zoning Pattern:
(North) Downtown Mixed Residential/Residential (DMR/R 145/65)
(South) DMR/C 145/75
(East) DMR/R 145/65
(West) DMR/C 145/75

Lot Area: 14,398 sq. ft.

The top of this image is North.
This map is for illustrative purposes only. In the event of omissions, errors or differences, the documents in SDCI's files will control.

Environmentally Critical Areas: There are no mapped environmentally critical areas located on the subject site.

Current and Surrounding Development, Neighborhood Character:

The subject site is comprised of two existing tax parcels currently developed with two structures built in 1910 and 1947. The site slopes downward approximately 17' from northeast to southwest.

The subject site is located at the east corner of Cedar St and Western Ave in the Downtown Urban Center. Adjacent to the site are mixed-use residential structures to the northeast, southeast, and southwest, and a multifamily residential structure to the northwest. The vicinity is primarily comprised of mixed-use residential, multifamily residential, and commercial uses, with religious institutions, parking, and green spaces throughout. Nearby, the Olympic Sculpture Park, Myrtle Edwards Park, and Bell Street Park provide recreational opportunities. Western Ave is a principal arterial. Cedar St is a designated Green Street. Notable buildings in the vicinity include historic City Landmark structures Latona Hotel, Hull Building, and Belltown Cottages. Multiple projects in the vicinity are currently in review or under construction for proposed development, including 2407 1st Ave.

Situated in the established fabric of the Belltown neighborhood, the site is near the Seattle Center campus and South Lake Union to the north and the Central Business District to the southeast. The immediate vicinity maintains a residential character with consistent patterns replicated throughout the built environment. Structures range from mid- to highrise up to twelve stories in height and typically have one- to two-story podiums. Projecting bays and balconies offer occasional deviation from boxy massing forms. At the pedestrian level, structures meet the ground with a strong street wall and heavy glazing. Linear window patterns are consistently present. The vicinity includes a mix of old and new construction and materials, including masonry, metal, and fiber cement. The streetscape is adorned by a regular pattern of street trees which are supplemented by landscaped planting strips along sloped rights-of-way leading downhill to Elliott Bay two blocks to the southwest. Newer developments respond to the steep hill condition by providing pedestrian comforts, including stairs, handrails, textured façade materials, and art at the pedestrian level.

BACKGROUND

The project is participating in the Living Building Pilot Program allowing more height and floor area in exchange for meeting the Living Building Challenge (LBC) or Petal certification. The Living Building Challenge (LBC) is a certification program, advocacy tool, and philosophy defining the most advanced measure of sustainability in the built environment. The project will need to achieve LBC Petal certification and will provide features to address Beauty, Health + Happiness, and Energy. The project will meet the Energy petal which means the building will meet 105% of its annual energy demand. Energy use will be measured after occupancy to confirm achievement of this goal. Aggressive conservation measures and on-site solar panels will be used, and renewable energy will be purchased off-site in order to meet the net zero energy goal.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comment period ended on September 2, 2020. Comments were received and carefully considered, to the extent that they raised issues within the scope of this review. Comments were also received that are beyond the scope of this review and analysis, including a number regarding the height of the project and compliance with and appropriateness of the Zoning Code.

I. ANALYSIS – DESIGN REVIEW

The design review packets include information presented at the meetings, submitted for staff review and are available online by entering the record numbers at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx.

The meeting/staff reports and any recordings of the Design Review Board meetings are available in the project file. The meeting reports summarize the meetings and are not transcripts.

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE March 3, 2020

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Noted the changing character of Western Ave and its development as a pedestrian connection between the Market and the Sculpture Garden. Expressed concerned about the negative impact of a curb cut for vehicle access on the pedestrian environment at Western Ave.
- Noted the positive community building character of The Park apartments to the North and encouraged this project to strive for a similar character, citing guidelines A-1, B-1 and B-2
- Concerned that the height bulk and scale of this project is out of character with the existing neighborhood and expressed skepticism regarding the incentives that would provide this extra height.
- Pointed out that the Belltown guidelines direct new projects to fit with the existing context and that this project will be 55 feet taller than the existing context.
- Noted that nearby buildings were 125 feet tall and at the height of this project should be capped at 145 feet.
- Questioned the viability of meeting the Living Building criteria on this site and the exception that allows offsite energy production to be included in the calculation.
- Supported option 3 For the additional erosion and modulation provided in that massing, versus the boxier options 1 and 2.
- Noted that the Living Building Challenge (LBC) petals require projects to take cues from the neighborhood but this project is 45% larger than the context. Noted the petal encouraging psychological health but asked for whom?
- Expressed concern about how this very large project will affect existing neighbors and those displaced from the affordable units that will be demolished.
- Questioned the efficacy of the LBC informational area and whether this would really be an effective way to encourage other developers to pursue a similarly sustainable path in the development of new projects.
- Asked why the Belltown P-Patch with its long history was not included in the context analysis for the neighborhood.
- Questioned the validity of the pedestrian use data provided in the packet and noted that as a 15-year resident of the neighborhood, pedestrian traffic on Western Ave was growing at a steady rate.
- Noted Belltown guidelines regarding the provision of sunlight and air and views and noted that the provision of these for the residents of the proposed building would diminish those qualities for existing neighbors.

- Supported the proposed departures as a means to highlight the exceptional design quality of the adjacent Banner Building.
- Noted the increasing importance of Western Ave for both pedestrian and vehicle traffic in the neighborhood and discouraged allowing vehicle access from this street.
- Noted the potential negative public safety impacts and discouraged vehicle access from Western Ave.

SDCI staff also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Opposed to the proposed development.
- Supported the proposed development.
- Requested the proposed height be lowered to a maximum of 145 feet.
- Stated the proposed structure is out of scale with the local Belltown neighborhood.
- Concerned about reduced sunlight to adjacent buildings.
- Concerned about the creation of a wind canyon on Western Ave and on Cedar St.
- Noted the plans do not address any required street trees along Western or Cedar.
- Felt the new building will be a significant boost to the aesthetics and overall feel of the neighborhood.
- Supported the proposed 18-story height.
- Stated that most high-rise buildings in the area have setbacks above floor two or three, which should be included in the design of this building on both streets.
- Requested the street vegetation along Cedar should continue the walkable/green street design features included in the neighborhood and include art and community assets that welcome community and neighborhood activity. Native and habitat friendly plantings should be used.
- Felt the building design should mitigate the loss of diversity it brings to the neighborhood.
- Appreciated how the design steps and carves the building back at Level 9. (Belltown Urban Center Design Guidelines B-1, B-2, and B-3)
- Felt the overall massing of the project is appropriate for the context. (Belltown Urban Center Design Guideline A-1)
- Stated the parking garage entry should be moved from Western Ave to the alley. (Belltown Urban Center Design Guidelines C-1, D-1)

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning housing affordability, parking, density, unit size, Living Building Program compliance, construction impacts, views, loss of existing tenants, out of state real estate investors, and transportation.

The Seattle Department of transportation offered the following comments:

- Supported vehicle access and solid waste collection from the alley.
- Unsupportive of new curb cuts on arterial streets downtown.
- Conceptually supported voluntary improvements to Cedar St that could include expanding and standardizing the existing curb bulb; amenities including seating, lighting, and GSI in the widened landscape zone; and a two-foot bioretention landscaped area on the backside of the sidewalk.
- Supported sidewalks wider than the six-foot minimum on Cedar St.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with building height calculations, parking requirements, and compliance with the Living Building Program requirements are addressed as part of the Master Use Permit process and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

1. **Process**
    a. The Board commended the public both for their large number of comments and their consistently design-related comments.
    b. The Board agreed that there were many positive aspects of the proposed design but that a number of issues had not yet been sufficiently addressed and unanimously agreed that the project should return for a second Early Design Guidance meeting to address the issues raised below.

2. **Massing and the Three Schemes**
    a. The Board expressed qualified support for Option 3, agreeing that the combination of voluntary setbacks and canted tower geometry had the potential to mitigate the scale of this large project, but noted the need for further development of the interlocking forms and a clear rationale for how this massing responds to the existing context. (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-2.3)
    b. The Board noted that a substantial solar array was part of previous LBC projects and that if included in this project, its design and configuration would be a significant element in the composition. That information should be clarified at the next EDG meeting. (A-1, A-2, B-4)

3. **Site Planning, Ground Floor and Vehicle Access**
    a. The Board, echoing public comment and guidance from the Seattle Department of Transportation, did not support vehicle access from Western Avenue, citing the negative impacts on streetscape quality, human interaction and pedestrian safety. (C-1, D-6, E-1)
    b. The Board supported the programming of the street edges with active uses that would engage pedestrians and did not support the proposed ground floor residential uses, agreeing that they were less likely to foster human interaction. (C-1, C-1.e)
    c. The Board recognized the utility and efficiency of locating the transformer and electrical rooms at the street edge (as shown in Figure 3 on page 81), but did not support the proposed location of these uses due to negative impacts to street level activation and transparency. The Board gave guidance to locate these uses below

grade and cited previous projects that were able to locate these uses on a below-grade level. (C-1, C-3, E-3)

d. The Board agreed that the large elevation difference between the sidewalk and interior spaces shown on Cedar Street in the preferred option would significantly compromise the visual connection between the sidewalk and interior activity, and therefore did not support this configuration. (C-1, C-1.e, C-3)
e. The Board supported the setbacks provided on Cedar Street and the schematically robust landscape design, agreeing that these were an appropriate response to the Green Street condition. (C-1, D-2)

4. Design Concept

a. The Board supported the corner location, entry plaza, and strong expression of the entry in the preferred scheme (p. 77 and sim.) but noted that the planter may require revision to facilitate pedestrian movement. (C-1.d, C-4, C-4.2)
b. The Board supported the development of the three-part massing parti in recognition of three distinct conditions and relationships: to the city skyline, to the highly regarded Banner Building, and to the Green Street (Cedar). The Board supported the different expressions of the three parts but agreed that they should be developed as a connected, unified whole rather than as discrete parts. (A-2, B-1, B-2, B-4)
c. The Board agreed that the weaving together of the three massing elements was of critical importance and encouraged the design team to integrate the corner entry as part of that solution. (B-4, C-1.d)
d. The Board agreed that the angle of the tower was a good response to context and could be strengthened by bringing that expression to the base. (A-2, B-4, C-2)
e. The Board agreed that it was not possible to make a complete evaluation of the proposal at the first EDG meeting, particularly the expression of the base along Cedar and Western, without a more complete documentation and analysis of the existing context. The Board specified that the information provided for the second EDG meeting should include massing and elevations extending from 2nd Avenue to Elliot and from Broad Street to Battery, and should include datum lines, window patterns and sizes, massing elements and scales, architectural character and design cues. (B-1, B-2, B-3)
f. The Board supported the façade depth and shadow shown in the design precedents and the sketches of the preferred option, noting the importance of depth and shadow as a response to context and providing human scale. (C-2, B-1.c)
g. The Board supported the intent to respond to the Banner Building with the design of the base and asked to have this approach more completely explained for the next meeting. (B-1, B-2, B-2.2)

SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE (ADMINISTRATIVE) July 10, 2020**

**On April 27, 2020, the Seattle City Council passed emergency legislation Council Bill 119769 which allows projects subject to full design review to opt into Administrative Design Review temporarily. As one of the projects impacted by Design Review Board meeting cancellations, this project has elected to make this change.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following design-related comments were received:

- Suggested the proposed structure be no taller than adjacent neighboring structures in order to maintain the Belltown skyline (A-2).
- Stated that the proposed height is taller than most of the other buildings in a two-block radius of the project site.
- Stated that as the proposed building is closer to the waterfront, it should be shorter than the buildings farther from the waterfront.
- Supported the project's involvement in the Living Building Pilot program.
- Encouraged replacing some of the cultural space, such as practice rooms, that will be displaced by demolishing this building.
- Multiple comments opposed the increase in height over the current 145' zoning limit.
- Supported the building modulation and the setback from Cedar St of Option 3.
- Stated that the dual courtyard "step down" in Option 3 does not appear as forgiving to the view corridor as the single courtyard level presented in Option 2.
- Multiple comments concerned blocked views of the water from neighboring buildings (A-1).
- Stated that the size and mass of the building will not create a transition to nearby existing buildings, especially those to the north (B-2).
- Encouraged locating garage access in the alley and not on Western.
- Concerned about reduced access to light and air.
- Requested the terrace on the proposed building be at the same height as the terrace on the adjacent Parc building to respect privacy.
- Suggested reducing a canyon effect by stepping back from the alley at the terrace level or below.
- Stated the proposed structure does not relate to the scale, character, or orientation of surrounding buildings (B-1, B-2, B-3).
- Stated the garage entry off Western does not promote a safe and welcoming pedestrian experience.
- Encouraged including characteristics found in the neighborhood including balconies, terraces, unique arches, and geometric shapes in the design to be more aligned to the surroundings and design guidelines.
- Emphasized the need for adequate waste storage and loading berth space.
- Suggested a 10-12' minimum setback of the first floor from the sidewalk, a 2nd floor setback if possible, and a 20-30' setback of floors three and above from the lower floors, like a reverse wedding cake pattern.
- Requested street-level landscaping, street trees, and public art.
- Encouraged open or green space terraces on the 3rd or 4th floors.
- Suggested incorporating loading zones that don't impact traffic along Western, Cedar, or Vine.
- Requested more information about accommodating bike share parking that doesn't impede pedestrian flow.
- Opposed to signage and lighting that may impact residents of neighboring buildings.
- Requested a designated pet relief area.

SDCI also received non design-related comments concerning property values, the Living Building Pilot program, housing affordability, community meeting opportunities, housing availability, and parking.

The Seattle Department of transportation offered the following comments:

- Conceptually supported voluntary improvements to Cedar St that could include expanding and standardizing the existing curb bulb; amenities including seating, lighting, and GSI in the widened landscape zone; and a two-foot bioretention landscaped area on the backside of the sidewalk.
- Supported sidewalks wider than the six-foot minimum on Cedar St.

One purpose of the design review process is for the City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with building height calculations, parking requirements, and compliance with the Living Building Program requirements are addressed as part of the Master Use Permit process and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, considering past direction by the Downtown Design Review Board and considering public comment, SDCI provided the following siting and design guidance.

1. **Massing and Design Concept**: Staff notes the significant volume of public comment offered at the first EDG meeting and in writing since expressing concern about the large size of this project and how it will fit in the existing neighborhood context. This issue has now been recognized by the Board, the public, and Staff as critical to the success of the project, with the following Guidelines identified as of the highest priority: A-1 Respond to the Physical Environment, B-1 Respond to the Neighborhood Context, B-2 Create a Transition in Bulk & Scale, and B-3 Reinforce the Positive Urban Form & Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-3)
    a. At that first EDG meeting the Board supported the proposed three-part massing scheme in response to three distinct site conditions (the skyline, the neighboring buildings and Cedar Street) and agreed that the combination of voluntary setbacks and canted tower geometry had the potential to mitigate the scale of this large project and connect it to the existing context. (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-3)
    b. Staff concurs with the Board's guidance but notes that the current iteration of the design will need further development in the next review phase to achieve the scale mitigation and compositional coherence identified as critical components by the Board, per the guidance that follows. (B-4, A-1, B-1, B-2, B-3)

2. Design Concept Development

a. Staff recognizes the Board's previous guidance that the three massing elements be organized as a connected, unified whole and notes that the current design lacks the distinct contrast in expression of these elements required to make the design concept legible. The diagrammatic drawings provided on page 69 of the EDG packet and page 12 of this packet are helpful in demonstrating intent, but the contrast indicated by the different colors does not seem to exist without that highlighting. Staff notes that the small changes in angle and very limited changes in plane make the creation of this contrast particularly important to the design concept. (B-4, A-1, B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4.1)

b. Staff recognizes the schematic level of development but notes that the character and composition of elements demonstrated in the drawings on pages 22 and 24 are the most successful in articulating the design concept and encourages their use as drivers in the further development of the design. (B-4)

c. At the first EDG meeting the Board agreed that the angle of the tower could be an appropriate response to context and could be strengthened by bringing that expression to the base. Staff recognizes the intent to achieve this with the angled planes along Cedar Street. However, the undistinguished and uniform application of this treatment is not yet recognizably connected to the larger design concept or existing context. (A-2, B-4, C-2)

d. At EDG, The Board supported the façade articulation shown in the design precedents and sketches of the preferred option, noting the importance of depth and shadow as a response to context and to provide human scale. Staff notes that this depth and shadow is not evident in the current drawings and that its development will be required in the next review phase. (B-4, B-2, C-2, B-1.c, B-2)

e. Staff notes that a smoother less-textured exterior expression for one of the elements would likely be acceptable if it were part of a strategy to create visual contrast between the elements as previously supported by the Board. (C-2, B-1.c, B-2)

3. Site Planning, Ground Floor and Street Edges

a. Staff appreciates the building entrances added at Cedar Street in response to the Board's guidance. However, the street edge requires further development, ideally as a hierarchically organized composition of elements that create human scale and connect this edge to neighboring context. (B-3.c, B-1.d, C-1, B-1, C-2)

b. Staff concurs with the Board's earlier guidance to program the ground floors with active uses that will engage the street. Staff supports the high level of glazing currently proposed along both Cedar and Western Avenue and encourages the continued development of these edges with a well-organized hierarchy of elements and entrances that respond to context, create human scale and are tied to interior programming. (C-1, C-2, C-4, C-3, E-3, B-3.c, B-1.d)

c. At EDG the Board was concerned by the large elevation difference between the sidewalk and interior spaces shown on Cedar Street. For the next phase provide section drawings, details and programming information demonstrating how these concerns are resolved. (C-1, C-1.e, C-3)

d. It is not clear from these drawings how privacy impacts with adjacent buildings are mitigated, particularly with reference to the outdoor amenity and the relationship between the notch at the south property line and the adjacent Banner Building. Clarify this aspect of the design with the MUP application. (D-1, A-1, B-3, B-4)

4. **Building Entrance**
    a. At EDG the Board supported the strong expression of the entry and the associated corner plaza. Staff recognizes the revision to facilitate pedestrian movement at this corner requested by the Board but notes that these changes have diminished both the prominence of the entry and the sense of place that was emerging. The strong expression, placemaking, and clear legibility as the principal residential entrance of this element should be reestablished as the design of the Cedar Street base evolves in response to guidance. (C-1.d, C-4, C-4.2)

5. **Living Building Notes**
    a. Future packets need to show the rooftop solar array and how it "will provide distinctive visual interest for the skyline" as noted on page 14. Also, further attention to the systems and space needs to meet the pilot program should be clearly shown on the floor plans, e.g., bike rooms, greywater mechanical room, cisterns, electrical rooms which are typically larger than what is normally required and should be anticipated. (A-1, A-2, B-4)

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION November 17, 2020

PUBLIC COMMENT
The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Noted that the Beauty Petal requires the project to meaningfully integrate art and elements that delight and expressed concern that although they were mentioned in the presentation, they were not apparent in the proposal.
- Stated that allowing high rise buildings to select Energy as one of the Petals and satisfy its requirements with off-site solar did not meet the intent of the Living Building Challenge and should not be accepted.
- Noted that the project did not meet criteria in the Code for the provision of family size units and therefore was not entitled to the additional height allowed.
- Cited the Seattle City Municipal Code requirement that the Board synthesize community input on design concerns and recommend to the Director specific conditions of approval which are consistent with the design guidelines applicable to the development. Noted that guideline B1 requires a compatible design that should respect the scale and massing of adjacent buildings and that B2 states that new buildings should be compatible with the scale of development surrounding the project site and that the objective of this guideline is to discourage overly massive structures that are unsympathetic to the surrounding context.
- Concerned about the negative impact this project will have on the character of the neighborhood and the loss of existing affordable housing units onsite.
- Concerned that affordable housing units in the existing building will be replaced by luxury units and requested that the project provide affordable units in the project.
- Concerned that the current health crisis had limited neighborhood involvement and by the negative impact on existing views.
- Cited the Belltown Neighborhood Guidelines and noted that a Living Building Challenge (LBC) project did not meet its criteria and concerned that fit in this neighborhood and concerned that LBC criteria was superseding the neighborhood guidelines.

- Concerned that the bulk and size of this project did not seem to meet criteria in the Guidelines or LBC. Concerned that context analysis in the packet seemed to indicate the existence of other similarly scaled projects in the neighborhood when there were not. Noted that a square blocky building built to the existing height limit would fit the context far better than this massive tower.
- Noted the very large number of public comments objecting to the height of the project and what seemed to be a complete lack of response.
- Concerned that the amount of time for public comment had been constrained when the applicant had been given additional time to present the project.

SDCI staff also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Majority of comments opposed to the proposed 19-story height.
- Observed that the neighborhood is comprised of buildings 13-stories in height and lower.
- Requested protecting the existing architectural integrity of Belltown.
- Many comments were opposed to the proposed development.
- Questioned if Belltown is an appropriate location for a Living Building, citing equity, housing affordability, building height, and connection to light concerns.
- Noted the proposed building height will change the existing skyline and urban fabric which currently slopes downward from the Space Needle to Elliott Bay.
- Felt the proposed design doesn't satisfy the Living Building Challenge petals for energy, health and happiness, or beauty.
- Concerned the proposed design does not meet Downtown Design Guidelines A-1 Site Planning and Massing and B-1 Architectural Expression.
- Concerned the proposed design does not meet Belltown Design Guideline B-2 Architectural Expression.
- Concerned about shade impacts to adjacent properties.
- Requested the proposed building be confined to the current zoning code for Belltown which is a maximum of 145 feet tall.
- Concerned the height, bulk, and scale disregard the Belltown Design Guidelines articulating that new development should have a compatible design respecting the scale and massing of adjacent buildings. (B1, B2)
- Stated the project doesn't meet the minimum required dimensions for an amenity area and consequently doesn't qualify for the 10-foot height bonus.
- Opposed to zoning departure request #5.
- Several comments noted that the proposed design is 50% taller than the surrounding buildings.
- Stated the proposed design doesn't meet design guidelines A1.d (access to direct sunlight), A1.e (views), A-2 (enhance the skyline), or B-2 d (effect of site size and shape).
- Noted this project will serve as a precedent for future development.
- Concerns regarding compliance with the zoning code and compliance with the Living Building Challenge criteria
- Concerned about the height bulk and scale of this project relative to existing context. Cited the Seattle City Municipal Code requirement that the Board synthesize community input on design concerns and recommend to the Director specific conditions of approval

which are consistent with the design guidelines applicable to the development; and ensure fair and consistent application of neighborhood-specific design guidelines.

- Noted that guideline B1 requires a compatible design that should respect the scale and massing of adjacent buildings and that B2 states that New buildings should be compatible with the scale of development surrounding the project site and that the objective of this guideline is to discourage overly massive structures that are unsympathetic to the surrounding context.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning views; density; property values; housing affordability; demolishing the existing structure; zoning; public comment period, notice, and outreach; unit size; and parking.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with building height calculations are addressed under the City's zoning code and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS
After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following recommendations.

1. Proposed Massing, Height, Bulk, and Scale

a. The Board considered public comment opposed to the height, bulk and scale of the proposed project and noted the specific references made to Guideline criteria, both in the Downtown Guidelines and the Belltown Neighborhood Guidelines, and agreed that this was a critically important issue for the project. The Board also noted that the Guidelines direct them to consider the scale and character of the neighborhood both as it is now and as it will evolve with future development. (A-1, B-1, B-1.a, B-2, B-2.a, B-4)

b. The Board continued to support the preferred massing strategy identified at EDG, noting that the slenderness of the tower and the shaping of its compositional elements could help mitigate its scale and result in a well-proportioned and unified design. (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-4)

c. The Board concurred with previous guidance from staff regarding the importance of legible distinction between massing elements in realizing the potential of the scheme they supported at EDG, both compositionally and, echoing public comment, for scale mitigation. The Board also recognized previous SDCI staff guidance to create clear contrast between the massing elements, in particular by using depth, shadow and texture and agreed that the uniformity of the exterior expression shown in the proposed design was not an effective response. (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-4)

2. Design Concept, Scale Mitigation and Execution

a. The Board noted that the legibility of this design concept and its associated potential to mitigate the scale of this large project had been diminished by the uniformity of the proposed enclosure system. The Board agreed that the success of this scheme in responding to the Design Guidelines and previous guidance would require the development of significant legible contrast between the massing elements. The Board noted that this contrast could be achieved in a number of ways, reiterating earlier guidance to create depth and shadow and texture in the facade, and urged caution with respect to the use of color. (A-1, B-1, B-4)

b. The Board noted that although the 'carving' of the mass described in the presentation could be seen in plan, it was not legible in the corresponding volumes, where the use of similar materials and assemblies in differing arrangements failed to make those volumes distinct. (A-1, B-1, B-4, C-2)

c. The Board was concerned that there was very little depth or texture in the 'wrapper' facade assembly and that the potential contrast that could be developed with the smoother 'mast' would be limited by the projecting elements required for the mast's cladding system. (A-1, to B-1, B-3)

d. The Board expressed appreciation for the design precedents provided in the packet but noted that the uniformity of expression in the proposed design did not seem to meet the standard invoked by the precedents. (B-4)

e. The Board noted the alignment between the Design Guidelines and Living Building Challenge *Petals* with regard to Beauty, and that the current design did not yet achieve this. (A-1, D-3)

3. Context

a. The Board identified examples in the existing neighborhood where a contrast in expression had been developed, including the project directly across Cedar Street and the adjacent Banner Building, where the introduction of higher levels of opacity for some of the compositional elements had created recognizable differentiation, and suggested they be studied as precedents. (A-1, B-1, B-3, B-4)

b. The Board reiterated their previous support for the development of a 'gasket' component between the proposed project and the Banner Building to the south but noted that its success as a transitional element was compromised by the same lack of distinct expression noted previously. The Board agreed that the resolution of those issues would likely lead to a similar resolution for this element. (A-1, B-1, B-3.a., B-4)

4. The Streetscape

a. The Board agreed that the podium at Cedar Street had evolved positively in response to previous guidance but expressed some concern regarding the articulation of the angled bays, noting their previous guidance regarding the weaving that should connect the different elements, and that the manner in which this expression was connected to the tower and the podium was not yet clear. (C-1, C-4)

b. The Board noted earlier guidance to activate the lobby and street edges and agreed that relocation and increased distinction of the Cedar Street entrance was responsive to that guidance and had strengthened the connection to the street. (A-1, B-1, B-4)

5. Entry

a. The Board expressed general support for the revised entry location, noting that the introduction of the biophilic stormwater system was an engaging and appropriate response to the corner, particularly given the continuity of that water-treatment system from exterior to interior, and recognized the associated logic of moving the primary entrance to Western Avenue. (C-1, C-4)
b. The Board expressed concern regarding the design of this entrance, including the pattern of circulation, location and character of structural columns and the level of distinction and character in its appearance when seen from the street. (C-1, C-4)
c. The Board noted an apparent disconnection between the pattern of circulation and the location, size, and shape of the structural columns and suggested a reevaluation of how these two systems interact at the entrance that would result in a more harmonious design. (C-4, B-4)
d. The Board noted that the large rectilinear shape of the column seemed to compete with the similar rectilinearity of the proposed fins and weaken their ability to clearly mark this primary residential entrance. (C-4, B-4)

6. Recommendation: At the conclusion of their deliberation the Board unanimously agreed that the project should return for a further review to address the issues identified above.

a. For the next review the Board also requested inclusion of sections, elevations and other drawings documenting potential privacy impacts at the alley, and diagrams and documents showing the logistics and patterns of movement for pedestrians and vehicles and solid waste collection at the alley. (C-6, D-6, E-3)

SECOND RECOMMENDATION February 16, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported the provision of three-bedroom units and noted they are very hard to find. Supported the sustainability aspects of the proposal and would prefer to see more units and an even larger project.
- Expressed concern that the zoning code would not allow such a big project on this small site.
- Concerned about the offsite generation of electrical power versus the clear intent of the code that it be generated on site.
- Concerned about parking and congestion.
- Excited by the large size and affordability of the project and looking forward to meeting new neighbors.
- Supported the project, calling it an excellent addition to the neighborhood for its sustainability and larger unit sizes.
- Supported the density and three-bedroom units of the project. Noted the current lack of family size units downtown and the deleterious effect this has had on diversity.
- Supported the sustainability elements incorporated into the design to satisfy the Living Building criteria.
- Noted that the height bulk and scale of the project had many benefits and was not out of character for the neighborhood.

- Stated that allowing high rise buildings to select Energy as one of the Petals and satisfy its requirements with off-site solar did not meet the intent of the Living Building Challenge and should not be accepted.
- Noted the requirement that the Board synthesize community input on design concerns and recommend to the Director specific conditions of approval which are consistent with the design guidelines applicable to the development.
- Noted that guideline B1 requires a compatible design that should respect the scale and massing of adjacent buildings and that B2 states that new buildings should be compatible with the scale of development surrounding the project site and that the objective of this guideline is to discourage overly massive structures that are unsympathetic to the surrounding context. Stated that this building is almost 50-percent taller than the context and therefore does not meet the Belltown Design Guidelines and encouraged the Board to require the height to be limited to 145 feet.
- Supported the design of the project.
- Supported the project and departures, noting that it will be a great addition to the neighborhood.
- Supported the project and expressed concern regarding neighborhood opposition to the project.
- Supported the project and opposed the consideration of preservation of views and noted the importance of adding more affordable housing. Demanded approval of the project by the Board.
- Noted the strength of the diagram on page 14 and the necessity of increasing the degree of contrast in the three massing elements to achieve this intent.
- Supported and was very excited about the design and sustainability aspects of the project.
- Supported the size of the project and the sustainability aspects.
- Supported the project for the additional density and sustainability elements tied to its participation in the Living Building program.
- Supported the design of the project and Living Building and biophilia aspects.
- Noted the way money, greed and private interests had hijacked the process of developing housing at the behest of the privileged and entitled white people of Seattle.
- Stated they were happy to lose their view and supported approval to build this desperately needed housing project.

SDCI staff also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Opposed to the height of the proposed development.
- Opposed to the proposed height exceeding the established height restrictions.
- Observed that the development would be nine stories taller than surrounding buildings.
- Concerned about insufficient space for a loading berth or solid waste storage and collection in the shared alley.
- Requested limiting the building height.
- Staff also note the large number of comments with concerns about the height bulk and scale of this proposal relative to the existing neighborhood from previous review cycles. Those comments can be found in the Reports for the previous meetings, above.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning traffic congestion and infrastructure capacity.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with building height calculations are addressed under the City's zoning code and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS
After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following recommendations.

1. **Proposed Massing, Height, Bulk, and Scale**
    a. The Board considered public comment regarding the height and bulk of the proposed project relative to existing context and continued to support the preferred massing strategy in which the slenderness of the tower and the shaping of the compositional massing elements help mitigate its scale and better fit the existing neighborhood. In their deliberation the Board focused on how the project had changed in response to their guidance at the previous meeting. (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-4)

2. **Design Concept, Scale Mitigation and Execution**
    a. The Board revisited their earlier guidance to increase the legibility of the design concept and its associated potential to mitigate the scale of this large project by developing a higher degree of contrast in the exterior expression of the massing elements. The Board agreed that the design should be revised to a create greater distinction between the mast and wrapper elements than what has been provided at the last two meetings and that this should be done in a manner that creates two distinct massing features. (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-4)
    b. The Board supported the changes to the cladding system made in response to that guidance, including the additional opacity at the punched opening expression of the 'mast,' but agreed that additional strengthening would be required, particularly given their earlier guidance regarding the importance of this issue and their earlier provisional support for the proposed departures from development standards. (A-2, B-1, B-2, B-4)
    c. Echoing public comment, the Board noted the clarity of the previously supported design concept as shown on page 14 of the REC2 packet, agreed that the current design lacked its legibility, and recommended a Condition to revise the project to make the design concept and scale mitigation strategy they had previously supported clearly legible by creating greater distinction and contrast in the architectural expression of the principal massing elements. (A-2, B-1, B-2, B-4)
    d. The Board noted that this direction was not given prescriptively and they were interested in providing as much flexibility as possible to the design team in satisfying this condition. The Board reiterated their earlier guidance that this additional contrast

could be created in a number of ways, including with variation between the elements in: opaque wall percentage, material types, material color, details, the size of windows, texture, depth and shadow, decoupling the floor plate expressions, and other architectural features. (B-1, B-4, A-2, B-2)

3. Cedar Street

a. The Board supported the Cedar Street podium expression and the location and increased distinction of the Cedar Street entrance, noting the strengthened connection to the street, and recommended approval of this aspect of the design. (A-1, B-1, B-4, C-1, C-4)

4. Entry

a. The Board continued to support the entry location on Western, biophilic stormwater system, and the clear connections between the lobby and the street. (C-1, C-4)
b. The Board agreed that the revisions to the entry were responsive to their earlier guidance to reconcile the structural system and pattern of circulation and to strengthen and reinforce the entry's expression, and recommended approval of this aspect of the design. (C-1, C-4, B-4)

5. Building Top

a. The Board recalled their support for the canopy design at the building top as shown at the previous Recommendation meeting, noting its compositional strength and scale mitigating effect as a horizontal termination to the verticality of the tower and its unique appearance from the street. The Board recommended a condition to revise the building top in a manner that restores the scale mitigation, compositional order and architectural effect that led the Board to support the design of this element in the previous review phase. (A-1, B-1, B-2, B-4)

6. Gasket

a. The Board reiterated their previous support for the 'gasket' between the proposed project and the Banner Building to the south as well as their concern that its success as a transitional element was compromised by its lack of distinction. The Board supported an increase in opaque wall percentage for this element to strengthen this distinction but declined to recommend it as a Condition. (A-1, B-1, B-3.a, B-4)

7. Materials

a. The Board supported and recommended approval of the exterior materials shown in the second Recommendation packet and recommended a Condition to specify an assembly and material thickness for the metal panel siding that will prevent bowing, bending, oil-canning or other visible deformation for the reasonable life of the building. (A-2, B-4)
b. The Board supported the warm colors specified for the metal panels and recommended a Condition that if any change is made to the color of the exterior metal cladding, the new colors shall be similarly warm (undertones of red, orange and yellow, versus cool colors with undertones of blue, green and purple). (A-2, B-4)

FINAL RECOMMENDATION September 14, 2021

After the February 16, 2021 Recommendation meeting, the applicant identified an additional design review departure as necessary for the proposed design. An additional Design Recommendation meeting was required for Board consideration of this departure.

PUBLIC COMMENT
The following design-related public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Noted that the design under review had already been recommended for approval by the Design Review Board and that the departure under consideration was minor.
- A representative of the Belltown Livability Coalition noted their objection to the height bulk and scale of the project relative to existing context.
- Support for the departure as it is in the spirit if the original design and helps strengthen the design concept.
- Support for the project as the design fits the context and uses high quality materials.

Comments were also offered on non-design-related issues including housing affordability (multiple), sustainability, density, climate change, and issues related to zoning review.

SDCI staff summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Objected to the 19-story building height.
- Opinioned the height should be no greater than other buildings in the vicinity, a maximum of 11 to 12-stories.
- Supported the project's participation in the Living Building Pilot Program.
- Believed the proposed 19-story building height is neither oversized nor inappropriate for the neighborhood.
- Encouraged a sufficient building setback at the street level to improve pedestrian circulation and pleasing landscaping such as a tunnel of shade trees.
- Stated that design, sculptural, or architectural elements of visual interest at the street level will enhance the neighborhood.
- Suggested capturing rain runoff and using rain gardens in the landscape design.
- Encouraged nighttime security lighting and design elements which discourage sidewalk camping.
- Suggested artful corrals to hold street scooters.
- Commented that the calculations used to justify departures 1 and 2 were erroneous and the offset is much less than the additional floor area they are seeking.
- Stated that the application doesn't comply with the Green Street Setback Program regarding departure 1 as the current design would reduce daylight access on Cedar St by 25%.
- Observed that the proposed tower is taller than allowed on a lot of this size.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning property values, zoning review issues such as calculation of height, Living Building program administration, and the permitting process.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify

applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with building height calculations are addressed under the City's zoning code and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS
After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following recommendations.

1. **Façade composition and response to context**
    a. The Board noted that the continuity of expression along the west elevation had been shown in the design since EDG and had been consistently supported, both as part of a unified composition and as a response to context. The Board acknowledged that this aspect of the design now requires a departure. The Board continued to recommend approval of the design of the west elevation as shown. The Board recommended approval of the related departure, as summarized in the Development Standard Departures section below. (A-1, B-1, B-4)
    b. The Board continued to recommend approval of this element of the design as an appropriate response to the strong geometry of the adjacent Banner Building. The Board specifically noted that the simplicity of the proposed design solution was an appropriate response to the strong presence and simple geometry of the Banner Building, and that the consistent facade proportions of the west elevation strengthened and helped clarify the compositional role of the vertical gasket. (A-1, B-1.a, B-3)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES
The Board's recommendation on the requested departures was based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departures.

At the time of **Final** Recommendation the following departures were requested. The Board first considered and recommended approval of Departures 1 through 5 at the February 16, 2021 Recommendation meeting.

1. **Green Street Setbacks (SMC 23.49.166.B.1):** The Code requires setbacks that increase in depth by one foot for every five feet of height exceeding 85 feet, resulting in a 29-foot setback at 180 feet. The applicant proposes a continuous 24'8" setback above 65 feet.

    The Board recognized the value of the voluntary setbacks at lower levels and the net positive increase in area set back from the street and recommended approval of this departure, as it helps the project better meet Guideline B-1: Respond to the Neighborhood Context, C-1-c: Public Realm Elements and D-2-1: Landscape Enhancements. The Board continued to recommend approval of this departure at the final Recommendation meeting.

2. **Coverage and Floor Size Limits (SMC 23.49.158.B):** The Code limits floor sizes above 145 feet to 8,800 square feet. The applicant proposes floor sizes of 9,201 square feet at levels 15 through 19.

   The Board recognized that this departure would allow a continuity of massing that could strengthen the design concept and recommended approval of this departure as it helps the project better meet criteria in B-4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building. The Board continued to recommend approval of this departure at the final Recommendation meeting.

3. **Green Street Setbacks (SMC 23.49.166.B.1):** The Code requires a 10-foot setback above 65 feet in height. The applicant proposes this setback to begin at 67 feet 3 inches of height.

   The Board recognized that this departure supported the design concept and recommended approval of this departure as it helps the project better meet criteria in B-1: Respond to the Neighborhood Context, and B-4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building. The Board continued to recommend approval of this departure at the final Recommendation meeting.

4. **Site Coverage (SMC 23.49.158.A.3):** The Code limits site coverage above 85' to 65%. The applicant proposes 73% coverage for a 2'-10" band of the 9th floor.

   The Board recognized the intent to respond to the existing datum line and recommended approval of this departure as it helps the project better meet criteria in Guideline B-1: Respond to the Neighborhood Context and B-3 Reinforce the Positive Urban Form & Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area. The Board continued to recommend approval of this departure at the final Recommendation meeting.

5. **Parking Aisle Width (SMC 23.49.158.A.3):** The Code requires a minimum aisle width of 22 feet for stalls 16 feet in length and 24 feet for stalls 19 feet in length. The applicant proposes a minimum aisle width of 18'3".

   The Board recommended approval of this departure, as it helps the design better meet Design Guidelines E-2 Integrate Parking Facilities and DC1-C Below Grade Parking. The Board continued to recommend approval of this departure at the final Recommendation meeting.

6. **Structure Width (SMC 23.49.164):** The Code limits the width of any portion of the structure along Western Avenue above 65 feet to 90 feet, as measured parallel to the street lot line. The applicant proposes a width of 95 feet 6 inches beginning at a height of 65 feet and ending at 90 feet 11 inches.

   This departure was identified after the February 16, 2021 Recommendation meeting.

   The Board recommended approval of this departure as it allows a unified and continuous expression of the West facade in a manner that clearly responds to existing context (The

Banner Building) and strengthens the overall composition of the west façade. This departure helps the design better meet the intent of Design Guidelines A-1 Respond to the Physical Environment, B-1 Respond to the Neighborhood Context, and B-4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines recognized by the Board as Priority Guidelines are identified above. All guidelines remain applicable and are summarized below. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

SITE PLANNING AND MASSING

A-1 Respond to the Physical Environment: Develop an architectural concept and compose the building's massing in response to geographic conditions and patterns of urban form found nearby or beyond the immediate context of the building site.

A-1.1. Response to Context: Each building site lies within a larger physical context having various and distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Develop an architectural concept and arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

a. a change in street grid alignment that yields a site having nonstandard shape;
b. a site having dramatic topography or contrasting edge conditions;
c. patterns of urban form, such as nearby buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
d. access to direct sunlight—seasonally or at particular times of day;
e. views from the site of noteworthy structures or natural features, (i.e.: the Space Needle, Smith Tower, port facilities, Puget Sound, Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains);
f. views of the site from other parts of the city or region; and
g. proximity to a regional transportation corridor (the monorail, light rail, freight rail, major arterial, state highway, ferry routes, bicycle trail, etc.).

A-1.2. Response to Planning Efforts: Some areas downtown are transitional environments, where existing development patterns are likely to change. In these areas, respond to the urban form goals of current planning efforts, being cognizant that new development will establish the context to which future development will respond.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

A-1.a. Views: Develop the architectural concept and arrange the building mass to enhance views. This includes views of the water and mountains, and noteworthy structures such as the Space Needle;

A-1.b. Street Grid: The architecture and building mass should respond to sites having nonstandard shapes. There are several changes in the street grid alignment in Belltown, resulting in triangular sites and chamfered corners. Examples of this include: 1st, Western and Elliott between Battery and Lenora, and along Denny;

A-1.c. Topography: The topography of the neighborhood lends to its unique character. Design buildings to take advantage of this condition as an opportunity, rather than a constraint. Along the streets, single entry, blank facades are discouraged. Consider providing multiple entries and windows at street level on sloping streets.

A-2 Enhance the Skyline: Design the upper portion of the building to promote visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline. Respect existing landmarks while responding to the skyline's present and planned profile.

A-2.1. Desired Architectural Treatments: Use one or more of the following architectural treatments to accomplish this goal:

a. sculpt or profile the facades;
b. specify and compose a palette of materials with distinctive texture, pattern, or color; and
c. provide or enhance a specific architectural rooftop element.

A-2.2. Rooftop Mechanical Equipment: In doing so, enclose and integrate any rooftop mechanical equipment into the design of the building as a whole.

ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

B-1 Respond to the Neighborhood Context: Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood.

B-1.1. Adjacent Features and Networks: Each building site lies within an urban neighborhood context having distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

a. a surrounding district of distinct and noteworthy character;
b. an adjacent landmark or noteworthy building;
c. a major public amenity or institution nearby;
d. neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
e. elements of the pedestrian network nearby, (i.e.: green street, hillclimb, mid-block crossing, through-block passageway); and
f. direct access to one or more components of the regional transportation system.

B-1.2. Land Uses: Also, consider the design implications of the predominant land uses in the area surrounding the site.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B-1.a. Compatible Design: Establish a harmonious transition between newer and older buildings. Compatible design should respect the scale, massing and materials of adjacent buildings and landscape.

B-1.b. Historic Style: Complement the architectural character of an adjacent historic building or area; however, imitation of historical styles is discouraged. References to period architecture should be interpreted in a contemporary manner.

B-1.c. Visual Interest: Design visually attractive buildings that add richness and variety to Belltown, including creative contemporary architectural solutions.

B-1.d. Reinforce Neighborhood Qualities: Employ design strategies and incorporate architectural elements that reinforce Belltown's unique qualities. In particular, the neighborhood's best buildings tend to support an active street life.

B-2 Create a Transition in Bulk & Scale: Compose the massing of the building to create a transition to the height, bulk, and scale of development in nearby less-intensive zones.

B-2.1. Analyzing Height, Bulk, and Scale: Factors to consider in analyzing potential height, bulk, and scale impacts include:

a. topographic relationships;
b. distance from a less intensive zone edge;
c. differences in development standards between abutting zones (allowable building height, width, lot coverage, etc.);
d. effect of site size and shape;
e. height, bulk, and scale relationships resulting from lot orientation (e.g., back lot line to back lot line vs back lot line to side lot line); and
f. type and amount of separation between lots in the different zones (e.g. , separation by only a property line, by an alley or street, or by other physical features such as grade changes);
g. street grid or platting orientations.

B-2.2. Compatibility with Nearby Buildings: In some cases, careful siting and design treatment may be sufficient to achieve reasonable transition and mitigation of height, bulk, and scale impacts. Some techniques for achieving compatibility are as follows:

h. use of architectural style, details (such as roof lines, beltcourses, cornices, or fenestration), color, or materials that derive from the less intensive zone.
i. architectural massing of building components; and
j. responding to topographic conditions in ways that minimize impacts on neighboring development, such as by stepping a project down the hillside.

B-2.3. Reduction of Bulk: In some cases, reductions in the actual bulk and scale of the proposed structure may be necessary in order to mitigate adverse impacts and achieve an acceptable level of compatibility. Some techniques which can be used in these cases include:

k. articulating the building's facades vertically or horizontally in intervals that reflect to existing structures or platting pattern;
l. increasing building setbacks from the zone edge at ground level;
m. reducing the bulk of the building's upper floors; and
n. limiting the length of, or otherwise modifying, facades.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B-2.A. Discourage Bulky Structures: The objective of this guideline is to discourage overly massive, bulky or unmodulated structures that are unsympathetic to the surrounding context.

B-3 Reinforce the Positive Urban Form & Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area: Consider the predominant attributes of the immediate neighborhood and reinforce desirable siting patterns, massing arrangements, and streetscape characteristics of nearby development.

B-3.1. Building Orientation: In general, orient the building entries and open space toward street intersections and toward street fronts with the highest pedestrian activity. Locate parking and vehicle access away from entries, open space, and street intersections considerations.

B-3.2. Features to Complement: Reinforce the desirable patterns of massing and facade composition found in the surrounding area. Pay particular attention to designated landmarks and other noteworthy buildings. Consider complementing the existing:

a. massing and setbacks,
b. scale and proportions,
c. expressed structural bays and modulations,
d. fenestration patterns and detailing,
e. exterior finish materials and detailing,
f. architectural styles, and

g. roof forms.

B-3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level: Consider setting the building back slightly to create space adjacent to the sidewalk conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, sitting, or dining. Reinforce the desirable streetscape elements found on adjacent blocks. Consider complementing existing:

h. public art installations,
i. street furniture and signage systems,
j. lighting and landscaping, and
k. overhead weather protection.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B-3.a. Regulating Lines & Rhythms: Respond to the regulating lines and rhythms of adjacent buildings that also support a street-level environment; regulating lines and rhythms include vertical and horizontal patterns as expressed by cornice lines, belt lines, doors, windows, structural bays and modulation.

B-3.b. Context: Use regulating lines to promote contextual harmony, solidify the relationship between new and old buildings, and lead the eye down the street.

B-3.c. Fenestration Patterns: Pay attention to excellent fenestration patterns and detailing in the vicinity. The use of recessed windows that create shadow lines, and suggest solidity, is encouraged.

B-4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building: Compose the massing and organize the interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.

B-4.1. Massing: When composing the massing, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

a. setbacks, projections, and open space;
b. relative sizes and shapes of distinct building volumes; and
c. roof heights and forms.

B-4.2. Coherent Interior/Exterior Design: When organizing the interior and exterior spaces and developing the architectural elements, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

d. facade modulation and articulation;
e. windows and fenestration patterns;
f. corner features;
g. streetscape and open space fixtures;
h. building and garage entries; and
i. building base and top.

B-4.3. Architectural Details: When designing the architectural details, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

j. exterior finish materials;
k. architectural lighting and signage;
l. grilles, railings, and downspouts;
m. window and entry trim and moldings;
n. shadow patterns; and
o. exterior lighting.

THE STREETSCAPE

C-1 Promote Pedestrian Interaction: Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming, and open to the general public.

C-1.1. Street Level Uses: Provide spaces for street level uses that:

a. reinforce existing retail concentrations;
b. vary in size, width, and depth;
c. enhance main pedestrian links between areas; and
d. establish new pedestrian activity where appropriate to meet area objectives. Design for uses that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity.

C-1.2. Retail Orientation: Where appropriate, consider configuring retail space to attract tenants with products or services that will "spill-out" onto the sidewalk (up to six feet where sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

C-1.3. Street Level Articulation for Pedestrian Activity: Consider setting portions of the building back slightly to create spaces conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining. Further articulate the street level facade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience via:

e. open facades (i.e., arcades and shop fronts);
f. multiple building entries;
g. windows that encourage pedestrians to look into the building interior;
h. merchandising display windows;
i. street front open space that features art work, street furniture, and landscaping;
j. exterior finish materials having texture, pattern, lending themselves to high quality detailing.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C-1.a. Retail: Reinforce existing retail concentrations;

C-1.b. Commercial Space Size: Vary in size, width, and depth of commercial spaces, accommodating for smaller businesses, where feasible;

C-1.c. Public Realm Elements: Incorporate the following elements in the adjacent public realm and in open spaces around the building: unique hardscape treatments, pedestrian-scale sidewalk lighting, accent paving (especially at corners, entries and passageways), creative landscape treatments (planting, planters, trellises, arbors), seating, gathering spaces, water features, inclusion of art elements.

C-1.d. Building/Site Corners: Building corners are places of convergence. The following considerations help reinforce site and building corners: provide meaningful setbacks/open space, if feasible, provide seating as gathering spaces, incorporate street/pedestrian amenities in these spaces, make these spaces safe (good visibility), iconic corner identifiers to create wayfinders that draw people to the site.

C-1.e. Pedestrian Attraction: Design for uses that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity. Where appropriate, consider configuring retail space to attract tenants with products or services that will "spill-out" onto the sidewalk (up to six feet where sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

C-2 Design Facades of Many Scales: Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material compositions that refer to the scale of human activities contained within. Building facades should be composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation.

C-2.1. Modulation of Facades: Consider modulating the building facades and reinforcing this modulation with the composition of:

a. the fenestration pattern;
b. exterior finish materials;
c. other architectural elements;
d. light fixtures and landscaping elements; and
e. the roofline.

C-3 Provide Active — Not Blank — Facades: Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.

C-3.1. Desirable Facade Elements: Facades which for unavoidable programmatic reasons may have few entries or windows should receive special design treatment to increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest. Enliven these facades by providing:

a. small retail spaces (as small as 50 square feet) for food bars, newsstands, and other specialized retail tenants;
b. visibility into building interiors;
c. limited lengths of blank walls;
d. a landscaped or raised bed planted with vegetation that will grow up a vertical trellis or frame installed to obscure or screen the wall's blank surface;
e. high quality public art in the form of a mosaic, mural, decorative masonry pattern, sculpture, relief, etc., installed over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface;
f. small setbacks, indentations, or other architectural means of breaking up the wall surface;
g. different textures, colors, or materials that break up the wall's surface.
h. special lighting, a canopy, awning, horizontal trellis, or other pedestrian-oriented feature to reduce the expanse of the blank surface and add visual interest;
i. seating ledges or perches (especially on sunny facades and near bus stops); and
j. merchandising display windows or regularly changing public information display cases.

C-4 Reinforce Building Entries: To promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation, reinforce building entries.

C-4.1. Entry Treatments: Reinforce the building's entry with one or more of the following architectural treatments:

a. extra-height lobby space;
b. distinctive doorways;
c. decorative lighting;
d. distinctive entry canopy;
e. projected or recessed entry bay;
f. building name and address integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
g. artwork integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
h. a change in paving material, texture, or color;
i. distinctive landscaping, including plants, water features and seating; and
j. ornamental glazing, railings, and balustrades.

C-4.2. Residential Entries: To make a residential building more approachable and to create a sense of association among neighbors, entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street and easily accessible and inviting to pedestrians. The space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors. Provide convenient and attractive access to the building's entry. To ensure comfort and security, entry areas and adjacent open space should be sufficiently lighted and protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

C-5 Encourage Overhead Weather Protection: Project applicants are encouraged to provide continuous, well-lit, overhead weather protection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.

C-5.1. Overhead Weather Protection Design Elements: Overhead weather protection should be designed with consideration given to:

a. the overall architectural concept of the building;
b. uses occurring within the building (such as entries and retail spaces) or in the adjacent streetscape environment (such as bus stops and intersections);
c. minimizing gaps in coverage;
d. a drainage strategy that keeps rain water off the street-level facade and sidewalk;
e. continuity with weather protection provided on nearby buildings;
f. relationship to architectural features and elements on adjacent development, especially if abutting a building of historic or noteworthy character;
g. the scale of the space defined by the height and depth of the weather protection;
h. use of translucent or transparent covering material to maintain a pleasant sidewalk environment with plenty of natural light; and
i. when opaque material is used, the illumination of light-colored undersides to increase security after dark.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C-5.A. Overhead Weather Protection Design Considerations: Overhead weather protection should be designed with consideration given to:

a. the overall architectural concept of the building;
b. uses occurring within the building (such as entries and retail spaces) or in the adjacent streetscape environment (such as bus stops and intersections);
c. minimizing gaps in coverage;
d. a drainage strategy that keeps rain water off the street-level facade and sidewalk;
e. continuity with weather protection provided on nearby buildings;
f. relationship to architectural features and elements on adjacent development, especially if abutting a building of historic or noteworthy character;
g. the scale of the space defined by the height and depth of the weather protection;
h. use of translucent or transparent covering material to maintain a pleasant sidewalk environment with plenty of natural light; and
i. when opaque material is used, the illumination of light-colored undersides to increase security after dark.

C-6 Develop the Alley Façade: To increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest, develop portions of the alley facade in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.

C-6.1. Alley Activation: Consider enlivening and enhancing the alley entrance by:

a. extending retail space fenestration into the alley one bay;
b. providing a niche for recycling and waste receptacles to be shared with nearby, older buildings lacking such facilities; and
c. adding effective lighting to enhance visibility and safety.

C-6.2. Alley Parking Access: Enhance the facades and surfaces in and adjacent to the alley to create parking access that is visible, safe, and welcoming for drivers and pedestrians. Consider

d. locating the alley parking garage entry and/ or exit near the entrance to the alley;
e. installing highly visible signage indicating parking rates and availability on the building facade adjacent to the alley; and
f. chamfering the building corners to enhance pedestrian visibility and safety where alley is regularly used by vehicles accessing parking and loading.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C-6.A. Services & Utilities:

a. Services and utilities, while essential to urban development, should be screened or otherwise hidden from the view of the pedestrian.
b. Exterior trash receptacles should be screened on three sides, with a gate on the fourth side that also screens the receptacles from view. Provide a niche to recess the receptacle.
c. Screen loading docks and truck parking from public view using building massing, architectural elements and/or landscaping.
d. Ensure that all utility equipment is located, sized, and designed to be as inconspicuous as possible. Consider ways to reduce the noise impacts of HVAC equipment on the alley environment.

C-6.B. Pedestrian Environment:

e. Pedestrian circulation is an integral part of the site layout. Where possible and feasible, provide elements, such as landscaping and special paving, that help define a pedestrian-friendly environment in the alley.
f. Create a comfortably scaled and thoughtfully detailed urban environment in the alley through the use of well-designed architectural forms and details, particularly at street level.

C-6.C. Architectural Concept:

g. In designing a well-proportioned and unified building, the alley facade should not be ignored. An alley facade should be treated with form, scale and materials similar to rest of the building to create a coherent architectural concept.

PUBLIC AMENITIES

D-1 Provide Inviting & Usable Open Space: Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.

D-1.1. Pedestrian Enhancements: Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the sidewalk, pedestrian enhancements should be considered in the resulting street frontage. Downtown the primary function of any open space between commercial buildings and the sidewalk is to provide access into the building and opportunities for outdoor activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining.

a. All open space elements should enhance a pedestrian oriented, urban environment that has the appearance of stability, quality, and safety.

b. Preferable open space locations are to the south and west of tower development, or where the siting of the open space would improve solar access to the sidewalk.
c. Orient public open space to receive the maximum direct sunlight possible, using trees, overhangs, and umbrellas to provide shade in the warmest months. Design such spaces to take advantage of views and solar access when available from the site.
d. The design of planters, landscaping, walls, and other street elements should allow visibility into and out of the open space.

D-1.2. Open Space Features: Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting. Examples of desirable features to include are:

a. visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk;
b. walking surfaces of attractive pavers;
c. pedestrian-scaled site lighting;
d. retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably "spill out" and enliven the open space;
e. areas for vendors in commercial areas;
f. landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;
g. pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and
h. site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks. residential open space

D-1.3. Residential Open Space: Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:

i. courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;
j. entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;
k. decks, balconies and upper level terraces;
l. play areas for children;
m. individual gardens; and
n. location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-1.A. Adjacent to Retail: Mixed-use developments are encouraged to provide usable open space adjacent to retail space, such as an outdoor cafe or restaurant seating, or a plaza with seating.

D-1.B. Street Grade: Locate plazas intended for public use at/or near street grade to promote physical and visual connection to the street; on-site plazas may serve as a well-defined transition from the street. Take views and sun exposure into account as well.

D-1.C. Define Spaces: Define and contain outdoor spaces through a combination of building and landscape, and discourage oversized spaces that lack containment.

D-1.D. Buffers: The space should be well-buffered from moving cars so that users can best enjoy the space.

D-1.E. Desirable Features: Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting. Examples of desirable features to include are:

a. attractive pavers;
b. pedestrian-scaled site lighting;

c. retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably "spill out" and enliven the open space;
d. areas for vendors in commercial areas;
e. landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;
f. pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and
g. site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks.

D-1.F. Residential Open Space: Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:

a. courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;
b. entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;
c. decks, balconies and upper level terraces;
d. play areas for children;
e. individual gardens; and
f. location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight and views.

D-2 Enhance the Building with Landscaping: Enhance the building and site with generous landscaping— which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.

D-2.1. Landscape Enhancements: Landscape enhancement of the site may include some of the approaches or features listed below:

a. emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;
b. include a special feature such as a courtyard, fountain, or pool;
c. incorporate a planter guard or low planter wall as part of the architecture;
d. distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation;
e. soften the building by screening blank walls, terracing retaining walls, etc;
f. increase privacy and security through screening and/or shading;
g. provide a framework such as a trellis or arbor for plants to grow on;
h. incorporate upper story planter boxes or roof planters;
i. provide identity and reinforce a desired feeling of intimacy and quiet;
j. provide brackets for hanging planters;
k. consider how the space will be viewed from the upper floors of nearby buildings as well as from the sidewalk; and
l. if on a designated Green Street, coordinate improvements with the local Green Street plan.

D-2.2. Consider Nearby Landscaping: Reinforce the desirable pattern of landscaping found on adjacent block faces.

m. plant street trees that match the existing planting pattern or species;
n. use similar landscape materials; and
o. extend a low wall, use paving similar to that found nearby, or employ similar stairway construction methods.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-2.a. Entries: Emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;

D-2.b. Plazas & Courtyards: Use landscaping to make plazas and courtyards comfortable for human activity and social interaction;

D-2.c. Open Areas: Distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation, such as entry courtyards;
D-2.d. Year-Round Greenery: Provide year-round greenery — drought tolerant species are encouraged to promote water conservation and reduce maintenance concerns; and
D-2.e. Art: Provide opportunities for installation of civic art in the landscape; designer/artist collaborations are encouraged (e.g., Growing Vine Street).

D-3 Provide Elements that Define the Place: Provide special elements on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable "sense of place" associated with the building.

D-3.1. Public Space Features and Amenities: Incorporate one or more of the following a appropriate:

a. public art;
b. street furniture, such as seating, newspaper boxes, and information kiosks;
c. distinctive landscaping, such as specimen trees and water features;
d. retail kiosks;
e. public restroom facilities with directional signs in a location easily accessible to all; and
f. public seating areas in the form of ledges, broad stairs, planters and the like, especially near public open spaces, bus stops, vending areas, on sunny facades, and other places where people are likely to want to pause or wait.

D-3.2. Intersection Focus: Enliven intersections by treating the corner of the building or sidewalk with public art and other elements that promote interaction (entry, tree, seating, etc.) and reinforce the distinctive character of the surrounding area.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-3.A. Art and Heritage: Art and History are vital to reinforcing a sense of place. Consider incorporating the following into the siting and design:

a. vestiges of Belltown Heritage, such as preserving existing stone sidewalks, curbs;
b. art that relates to the established or emerging theme of that area (e.g., Western, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Avenue street specific character; and
c. install plaques or other features on the building that pay tribute to Belltown history.

D-3.B. Green Streets: Green Streets are street rights-of-way that are enhanced for pedestrian circulation and activity with a variety of pedestrian-oriented features, such as sidewalk widening, landscaping, artwork, and traffic calming. Interesting street level uses and pedestrian amenities enliven the Green Street and lend special identity to the surrounding area.
D-3.C: Street Furniture/Furnishings along Specific Streets: The function and character of Belltown's streetscapes are defined street by street. In defining the streetscape for various streets, the hierarchy of streets is determined by street function, adjacent land uses, and the nature of existing streetscape improvements.

a. 1st Avenue: Any new installations between Denny Way and Virginia Street should continue the established character of the street by using unique pieces of inexpensive and salvaged materials such as the Wilkenson sandstone pieces that are currently in place. South of Virginia, new installations should reflect the character of the Pike Place Market.
b. 3rd Avenue: New installations on 3rd Avenue should continue to be "civic" and substantial and be reflective of the role the street plays as a major bus route.
c. 2nd Avenue: New installations on 2nd Avenue should continue the style of "limited edition" street art that currently exists between Cedar Street and Virginia Street.

d. 4th Avenue: Street furnishings on 4th Avenue should be "off-the-shelf"/ catalogue modern to reflect the high-rise land uses existing or permitted along that corridor.
e. 1st , 2nd and 3rd Avenues: Sidewalks should be wide and pedestrian amenities like benches, kiosks and pedestrian-scale lighting are especially important on promenade streets.
f. 5th Avenue: Installations on 5th Avenue are encouraged to have a futuristic or "googie" architectural theme to reflect the presence of the monorail as part of the streetscape.
g. Emerging Multi-Use Connector Streets: Western avenue, Elliott Avenue. These streets offer good connections between Pike Place Market and the new sculpture garden. The area is experiencing a fair amount of residential growth. Like 1st Avenue, these streets are receiving eclectic public art and varied facades, and ultimately both will become promenade-type streets.

D-3.D. Street Edge/Furnishings: Concentrate pedestrian improvements at intersections with Green Streets (Bell, Blanchard, Vine, Cedar between 1st and Elliott, Clay, Eagle, and Bay Streets). Pedestrian crossings should be "exaggerated," that is they should be marked and illuminated in a manner where they will be quickly and clearly seen by motorists.

D-4 Provide Appropriate Signage: Design signage appropriate for the scale and character of the project and immediate neighborhood. All signs should be oriented to pedestrians and/or persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood.

D-4.1. Desired Signage Elements: Signage should be designed to:
a. facilitate rapid orientation,
b. add interest to the street level environment,
c. reduce visual clutter,
d. unify the project as a whole, and
e. enhance the appearance and safety of the downtown area.

D-4.2. Unified Signage System: If the project is large, consider designing a comprehensive building and tenant signage system using one of the following or similar methods:
a. signs clustered on kiosks near other street furniture or within sidewalk zone closest to building face;
b. signs on blades attached to building facade; or
c. signs hanging underneath overhead weather protection.

D-4.3. Signage Types: Also consider providing:
d. building identification signage at two scales: small scale at the sidewalk level for pedestrians, and large scale at the street sign level for drivers;
e. sculptural features or unique street furniture to complement (or in lieu of) building and tenant signage; and
f. interpretive information about building and construction activities on the fence surrounding the construction site.

D-4.4. Discourage Upper-Level Signage: Signs on roofs and the upper floors of buildings intended primarily to be seen by motorists and others from a distance are generally discouraged.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-4.a. Human Dimension: Use signs on an individual storefront's awning, overhang, shop entrance, or building facade to add interest and give a human dimension to street-level building facades; and

D-4.b. Creative Expression: Show creativity and individual expression in the design of signs.

D-4.c. Distinguish Levels: Use signs to help distinguish the ground level of a building from the upper levels of a building; and
D-4.d. Rhythm: Establish a rhythm of elements along the street-level facade; for instance, the regular cadence of signs with storefronts enhances the pedestrian experience.

D-5 Provide Adequate Lighting: To promote a sense of security for people downtown during nighttime hours, provide appropriate levels of lighting on the building facade, on the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and on signage.

D-5.1. Lighting Strategies: Consider employing one or more of the following lighting strategies as appropriate.

a. Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest.
b. Install lighting in display windows that spills onto and illuminates the sidewalk.
c. Orient outside lighting to minimize glare within the public right-of-way.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-5.a. Illuminate Distinctive Features: Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest.
D-5.b. Illuminate the Sidewalk: Install lighting in display windows that spills onto and illuminates the sidewalk.
D-5.c. Outdoor Lighting: Orient outside lighting to minimize glare within the public right-of-way.

D-6 Design for Personal Safety & Security: Design the building and site to promote the feeling of personal safety and security in the immediate area.

D-6.1. Safety in Design Features: To help promote safety for the residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors who enter the area:

a. provide adequate lighting;
b. retain clear lines of sight into and out of entries and open spaces;
c. use semi-transparent security screening, rather than opaque walls, where appropriate;
d. avoid blank and windowless walls that attract graffiti and that do not permit residents or workers to observe the street;
e. use landscaping that maintains visibility, such as short shrubs and/or trees pruned so that all branches are above head height;
f. use ornamental grille as fencing or over ground-floor windows in some locations;
g. avoid architectural features that provide hiding places for criminal activity;
h. design parking areas to allow natural surveillance by maintaining clear lines of sight for those who park there, for pedestrians passing by, and for occupants of nearby buildings;
i. install clear directional signage;
j. encourage “eyes on the street” through the placement of windows, balconies, and street-level uses; and
k. ensure natural surveillance of children’s play areas.

VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING

E-1 Minimize Curb Cut Impacts: Minimize adverse impacts of curb cuts on the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

E-1.1. Vehicle Access Considerations: Where street access is deemed appropriate, one or more of the following design approaches should be considered for the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

a. minimize the number of curb cuts and locate them away from street intersections;
b. minimize the width of the curb cut, driveway, and garage opening;
c. provide specialty paving where the driveway crosses the sidewalk;
d. share the driveway with an adjacent property owner;
e. locate the driveway to be visually less dominant;
f. enhance the garage opening with specialty lighting, artwork, or materials having distinctive texture, pattern, or color; and
g. provide sufficient queuing space on site.

E-1.2. Vehicle Access Location: Where possible, consider locating the driveway and garage entrance to take advantage of topography in a manner that does not reduce pedestrian safety nor place the pedestrian entrance in a subordinate role.

E-2 Integrate Parking Facilities: Minimize the visual impact of parking by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development. Incorporate architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to provide for the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as those walking by.

E-2.1. Parking Structures: Minimize the visibility of at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the building and streetscape. Where appropriate consider incorporating one or more of the following treatments:

a. Incorporate pedestrian-oriented uses at street level to reduce the visual impact of parking structures. A depth of only 10 feet along the front of the building is sufficient to provide space for newsstands, ticket booths, flower shops, and other viable uses.
b. Use the site topography to help reduce the visibility of the parking facility.
c. Set the parking facility back from the sidewalk and install dense landscaping.
d. Incorporate any of the blank wall treatments listed in Guideline C-3.
e. Visually integrate the parking structure with building volumes above, below, and adjacent.
f. Incorporate artwork into the facades.
g. Provide a frieze, cornice, canopy, overhang, trellis or other device at the top of the parking level.
h. Use a portion of the top of the parking level as an outdoor deck, patio, or garden with a rail, bench, or other guard device around the perimeter.

E-3 Minimize the Presence of Service Areas: Locate service areas for trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment, and the like away from the street front where possible. Screen from view those elements which for programmatic reasons cannot be located away from the street front.

E-3.1. Methods of Integrating Service Areas: Consider incorporating one or more of the following to help minimize these impacts:

a. Plan service areas for less visible locations on the site, such as off the alley.

b. Screen service areas to be less visible.
c. Use durable screening materials that complement the building.
d. Incorporate landscaping to make the screen more effective.
e. Locate the opening to the service area away from the sidewalk.

RECOMMENDATIONS
At the conclusion of the FINAL RECOMMENDATION meeting, the Board recommended approval of the project with conditions.

The recommendation summarized above was based on the design review packet dated Tuesday, September 14, 2021, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the Tuesday, September 14, 2021 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures. The conditions that were first identified at the February 16, 2021 Recommendation meeting continue to apply to the proposal:

1. Revise the project to create greater distinction and contrast in the architectural expression of the principal massing elements. (A-2, B-1, B-2, B-4)
2. Revise the building top in a manner that restores the scale mitigation, compositional order and architectural effect that led the Board to support the design of this element in the previous review phase. (A-2, B-4)
3. Specify an assembly and material thickness for the proposed metal panel siding that will ensure that there will be no visible bowing, bending, oil-canning or other deformation for the reasonable life of the building. (A-2, B-4)
4. If any change is made to the color of the metal cladding, the new colors shall be similarly warm (undertones of red, orange and yellow, versus cool colors with undertones of blue, green and purple). (A-2, B-4)

ANALYSIS & DECISION – DESIGN REVIEW

Director's Analysis

The design review process prescribed in Section 23.41.008.F of the Seattle Municipal Code describing the content of the SDCI Director's decision reads in part as follows:

The Director's decision shall consider the recommendation of the Design Review Board, provided that, if four (4) members of the Design Review Board are in agreement in their recommendation to the Director, the Director shall issue a decision which incorporates the full substance of the recommendation of the Design Review Board, unless the Director concludes the Design Review Board:

a. Reflects inconsistent application of the design review guidelines; or
b. Exceeds the authority of the Design Review Board; or
c. Conflicts with SEPA conditions or other regulatory requirements applicable to the project, or
d. Conflicts with the requirements of local, state or federal law.

Subject to the recommended conditions, the design of the proposed project was found by the Design Review Board to adequately conform to the applicable Design Guidelines.

At the conclusion of the Recommendation meeting held on September 14, 2021, the Board recommended approval of the project with the conditions described in the summary of the Recommendation meeting above.

Four members of the Downtown Design Review Board were in attendance and provided recommendations (listed above) to the Director and identified elements of the Design Guidelines which are critical to the project's overall success. The Director must provide additional analysis of the Board's recommendations and then accept, deny or revise the Board's recommendations (SMC 23.41.008.F3).

The Director agrees with the Design Review Board's conclusion that the proposed project and conditions imposed result in a design that best meets the intent of the Design Review Guidelines and accepts the recommendations noted by the Board. The Director has reviewed the revised departures (described as Departures 1 and 2 on Sheets G-023B and G-029 in the MUP plan set uploaded on 06/14/2023) and finds that approval of these departures is consistent with the Design Review Board's recommendations.

Following the Recommendation meeting, SDCI staff worked with the applicant to update the submitted plans to include the recommendations of the Design Review Board.

Applicant response to Recommended Design Review Condition:

1. The west facade has been revised with a flush panel detail and different glass color to create greater distinction and contrast between the principal massing elements. This satisfies Condition #1.
2. The building top has been revised back to the previous design which restores the scale mitigation, compositional order and architectural effect that led the Board to support the design of this element in the previous review phase. This satisfies Condition #2.
3. The specified material thickness and assembly for the proposed metal panel siding is sufficient to ensure that there will be no visible bowing, bending, oil-canning or other deformation for the reasonable life of the building. This satisfies Condition #3.
4. The applicant acknowledged that if any change is made to the color of the metal cladding, the new colors shall be similarly warm (undertones of red, orange and yellow, versus cool colors with undertones of blue, green and purple). This satisfies Condition #4.

The applicant shall be responsible for ensuring that all construction documents, details, and specifications are shown and constructed consistent with the approved MUP drawings.

The Director of SDCI has reviewed the decision and recommendations of the Design Review Board made by the four members present at the decision meeting and finds that they are consistent with the City of Seattle Design Review Guidelines. The Director is satisfied that all the recommendations imposed by the Design Review Board have been met.

DIRECTOR'S DECISION

The Director accepts the Design Review Board's recommendations and CONDITIONALLY APPROVES the proposed design and the requested departures with the condition at the end of this Decision.

CONDITIONS – DESIGN REVIEW

For the Life of the Project

1. The building and landscape design shall be substantially consistent with the materials represented at the Recommendation meeting and in the materials submitted after the Recommendation meeting, before the MUP issuance. Any change to the proposed design, including materials or colors, shall require prior approval by the Land Use Planner.

Joseph Hurley, Land Use Planner
Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

Date: August 14, 2023