

Executive Summary

This revised design proposal for the Burrard Gateway project represents the continuation and improvement of the previous development scheme that was unanimously approved by the Urban Design Panel (UDP) in 2011. The new design of the office tower (Tower B), which was developed in response to suggestions from the UDP, provides a more distinctive presence for the development on Burrard Street. In addition, Tower A has been modified to mitigate shading of the plaza at the northwest corner of Burrard and Davie. These critical moves ensure the proposed towers provide high quality urban design responses to the neighborhood and city.

The site is owned by Reliance Properties Ltd. (60%) and Jim Pattison Developments Ltd. (40%). It comprises of 350 feet of frontage on Hornby Street and 225 feet of frontage on Burrard Street. The majority of the property is currently used as the Jim Pattison Downtown Toyota Dealership, and associated surface parking. Also present are two small old house structures (non-heritage) and two small commercial buildings, one of which is currently housing a Scion Dealership. As the majority of the site has been used for car storage, it has remained for the most part a very inactive block in the heart of a very active neighborhood.

Although both properties are developable in their own right, either under existing zoning or as independent rezonings, the owners felt that the best overall result for both the City and themselves would be found by consolidating and rezoning a comprehensive and phased mixed-use development. This development will serve as a residential and commercial anchor for this important gateway into the downtown.

The major components of this mixed-use development are:

- Two residential towers with a total of 810 units; one tower is immediately at the Hornby and Drake corner and the other is mid-block.
- A 7-storey podium on Hornby Street including retail at grade; office uses on level 2 through 4 and 86 units of rental housing and amenity space on level 5 through 7.
- A 14-storey tower with a car dealership occupying the lower 3 levels and anchoring the critical Burrard and Drake intersection.

The surrounding neighborhood is characterized by 14 to 31 storey buildings which form tight street walls. The Burrard Gateway project will complete the Burrard, Drake and most of Hornby street frontages. This will leave only one corner at Davie and Hornby which can support an additional tower site.

The design of the project calls for a set of three unique building forms; each reacts to its individual site conditions. The two residential towers share a podium with rich street-oriented retail at its base. The office tower and the car dealership form a distinctive building form separating it from its residential neighbours. The skin of each tower not only responds to its program, solar orientation but also optimizes views for retail exposure and cityscape.

As a taller building, per City's mandate, this development seeks to be a leader in both design excellence and sustainability while contributing to making the city's skyline more interesting and animated.



Burrard Street View

Response to Urban Design Panel Comments

RESPONSE TO URBAN DESIGN PANEL COMMENTS

The previous development scheme received unanimous support from UDP on June 18, 2011. However, the Panel made suggestions to the applicants to further improve the design. There was a strong desire to strengthen the individual character of Tower B, distinguishing it from the rest of the development. It was suggested that the “jewel box” aspiration for the car dealership at the base of the tower be further explored and developed. Further study of Tower A & C by the design team has also led to the revisions of the ground plane, elevators and tower footprint.

Specifically, the Panel has made the following suggestions for the project:

Tower B

- A couple of Panel members thought the Toyota Showroom should be more of a glass “jewel-box” as they thought it read more like a podium engaged with the office tower.
- Some of the panel members thought the office tower was still perhaps the weakest part of the project, although they thought it had improved since the previous review. They suggested pushing the innovation and being more creative and artful in the design. They liked that the other buildings were inventive and unique, but felt the office tower was somewhat conventional in its design.
- The Panel thought that a pedestrian mid-block connection on Burrard Street was important.
- If the Burrard street vehicular access was removed, a pedestrian access into the site between the office tower and the showroom should be introduced instead. This would help the individual expression of the Toyota Showroom as well as improved the expression of the corner.

Tower A and C

- Although some of the panel members agreed that the shadow impacts on the corner of Burrard and David Street were minimal, several Panel members thought more attention could be given to sculpting the top of the building to lessen the amount of shadow and make for a better pedestrian experience at that corner.
- Several Panel members thought there could be an interlocking between the podium façade on Hornby Street and the secondary tower.
- One Panel member thought that landmark tower did not benefit from expressing the change of floor plans half way up the tower, and suggested the profile had the same expression all the way up the façade.

The owners and the design team have given the Panel’s suggestions serious consideration and made a critical decision to revisit the design of Tower B and review changes to Tower A & C. As a result, they wish to revise the rezoning, instead of going straight to Council Hearing as would typically be the case.

Bing Thom Architects was brought in to interpret the design objectives and urban design intents for Tower B. The result of their interpretation becomes the new design for the office tower and the car dealership that is being presented in this report. At the same time, the IBI Group has addressed various issues related to the function and livability of Tower A & C.

The following discussions will focus on the new design of Tower B and the revised design of Tower A. The report represents the project teams’ joint effort in responding to the Panel’s suggestions and the owners’ wish to strive for design excellence on this project.



Drake Street Plaza with Toyota Showroom