

# **REPORT**

## ***Climate Action, Planning and Development***

**To:** New Westminster Design Panel      **Date:** July 26, 2022

**From:** Amanda Mackaay, Development Planner      **File:** DP000946

**Item #:** 2022-556

**Subject:** Development Permit Application: Brewery District Transit Plaza

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** the New Westminster Design Panel review the design submission and provide comments for applicant and staff consideration; and

**THAT** the New Westminster Design Panel consider a motion of support or non-support for the proposed Development Permit Application.

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### **PURPOSE**

A Development Permit application has been submitted for the Brewery District Transit Plaza which would facilitate the development of a privately-owned public plaza space that would provide an accessible connection to the Sapperton SkyTrain Station and the Royal Columbian Hospital.

The purpose of this report is to provide information to the New Westminster Design Panel (NWDP) in regard to the overall project design, and to receive comments from the Panel with special consideration of the items noted in the Design Considerations section of this report.

### **GUIDING POLICY AND REGULATIONS**

#### **Land Use Designation**

The site is designated as (BDMU) Brewery District Mixed Use and Health Care in the Official Community Plan. The purpose of this designation is to “provide large mixed use site which must include multiple unit residential, retail and health care offices and

facilities and may include other business and professional office uses". Complementary uses include parks, open space and community facilities. The proposed development is consistent with this land use designation.

### **Development Permit Area**

The site is designated as part of the Brewery District Mixed Use Neighbourhood, identified as Development Permit Area (DPA) 5.3. The intent of this DPA is to "facilitate orderly and sequential development of commercial, health care services, and multi-family development adjacent to the Sapperton SkyTrain Station".

As outlined in the design guidelines, the "Arrival Plaza" will provide a memorable first impression to commuters and visitors who arrive in Sapperton by SkyTrain, as well as a viewpoint over Brunette Avenue to the Fraser River, a setting for outdoor dining, for people waiting for medical appointments, and a venue for people meeting friends and colleagues

Developments within this DPA are evaluated in relation to the Villages at Historic Sapperton Green (January 2007) design guidelines. A copy of these design guidelines can be accessed via the link below:

[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Village\\_at\\_Historic\\_Sapperton\\_Design\\_Guidelines\\_January\\_2007.pdf](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Village_at_Historic_Sapperton_Design_Guidelines_January_2007.pdf)

### **Zoning Bylaw**

The site is zoned Village at Historic Sapperton Comprehensive Development Districts (C-CD-3) which applies to the entire Brewery District site. The intent of this zone is to "regulate use, density, and building form of a nine-acre parcel to be developed as an integrated, comprehensive mixed use site comprising residential, commercial, business, and professional offices and health care services and office". The Brewery District is divided into sub-districts in the Zoning Bylaw. The site is located within Sub-District 4. This development permit application would be required to meet the regulations of pertaining to sub-district 4 within the C-CD-3 zone.

### **PROPOSAL**

#### **Project Description**

Primarily located at 268 Nelson's Court (the site of Building 7 in the Brewery District), directly to the west of Building 8 (located at 230 Keary Street) and to the south of the existing Anvil Building (located at 200 Keary Street), the Transit Plaza is proposed as a prominent public space within the Brewery District site.

The design seeks to create a safe and universally accessible connection with the Sapperton SkyTrain station, Royal Columbian Hospital, Keary Street and the pedestrian network and buildings within the Brewery District. Proposed to be privately owned and

maintained by the developer, the open design intends to provide clear sightlines throughout the plaza and to the new SkyTrain entrance at the Northeast corner of the site. The primary circulation routes wrap around a centralized gathering space in the plaza, which is delineated by planters with integrated seating walls.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Related Development Permit Applications**

Two separate Development Permit applications have been issued for Building 7 (located at 268 Nelson's Court) and Building 8 (located at 230 Keary Street). The design of these two buildings were reviewed by the Design Panel on December 11, 2018 and April 27, 2021 respectively.

The design review process for the proposed Transit Plaza requires additional time given the need to consult with additional stakeholders (TransLink, Royal Columbian Hospital, Anvil Building Strata). As such, the Transit Plaza is being considered through a separate Development Permit application.

## **DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

The applicant's drawings are included as Appendix A and Accessibility Memo is in Appendix B. Staff would appreciate comments from the New Westminster Design Panel on the proposed plaza, including how it responds to the Villages at Historic Sapperton Green guidelines and principles. Some items identified by staff for consideration by the Panel are as follows:

### **Universal Accessibility and Circulation**

A key objective for the Brewery District site is the provision of safe and universal accessibility (less than 5% grade) for people of all abilities and modes of travel. As shown on sheet L5.1 in Appendix A, the proposed design provides a maximum slope of 5% as well as wider pathways for all major circulation routes throughout the plaza. The design also proposes the inclusion of covered bike and scooter racks, as well as bike repair stand on the north side of the plaza.

Staff will continue to work with the applicant to further explore opportunities to respond to the 5% slopes in the north plaza area. Staff would appreciate feedback from the Design Panel on how the design of the north plaza bench can better work with and respond to the grade change; currently the seat wall surrounding the planting area ends up as two levels as shown in Figure 1 below.



*Figure 1: Looking east at the north plaza bench.*

Another key objective is the provision of a clear, safe and universally accessible connection between the SkyTrain station, the hospital and the surrounding buildings in the Brewery District. The permanent condition of the plaza would see the removal of the existing linear access ramp along the Anvil building and switchback ramp to the west of the building which connects the Brewery District with the SkyTrain; it would be replaced with a wider pathway at a more gradual slope with the goal of improving circulation and universal accessibility. A new crosswalk would also be provided across Keary Street to create a safer and more accessible connection to and from the Royal Columbian Hospital. The HandyDART drop-off location will be relocated next to the crosswalk, directly connected to the plaza by a 7% grade ramp with handrails. The design and location intends to create a safer condition and the limit the uphill travel distance for users.

### **Placemaking and Quality of Public Realm**

As envisioned in the design guidelines, the Transit Plaza will provide a memorable first impression for commuters and visitors who arrive in Sapperton by skytrain, marking the point of arrival into the City of New Westminster. The new entry gate for the SkyTrain station has been designed to be a prominent entry point. The design includes a large canopy for weather protection which enhances its visibility from different areas of the plaza.

The sun and shade analysis found on L6 demonstrates how the plaza has been designed to provide shade in the summer months while balancing opportunities for access to sunlight.

A diversity of seating options and softcaping are proposed to provide visual interest, and contribute to the active and passive enjoyment of the space. Staff will continue to work with the applicant on a planting plan that contributes to a welcoming and engaging public realm, while mitigating the urban heat island effect. Comments from the panel on the proposed planting plan (as shown in sheet L7 in Appendix A) would be appreciated.

## **Interface with Adjacent Buildings**

The Transit Plaza will interface with Building 7 (268 Nelson's Court) to the south, Building 8 (230 Keary Street) to the west and the Anvil Building (200 Keary Street) to the north. Retail commercial is proposed at grade for both Building 7 and 8; it is anticipated that patio space would be located along these frontages. The coordination of the design between the Transit Plaza and Buildings 7, 8 and the Anvil Building will be important to ensure the plaza is seamlessly integrated with plaza and/or patio spaces along these building frontages.

## **Wayfinding and Safety**

The applicant has integrated CPTED and Defensible Space principles into their proposed design. The plaza has been designed to provide clear sitelines of public seating areas and circulation routes, with the intention of ensuring users feel safe in the space. Lighting has been integrated into the design to facilitate safe movement in the plaza at night. The applicant proposes to provide 24 hour security with the intention of mitigating nefarious activity.

The proposed design integrates TransLink signage and map kiosks at key areas across the plaza to support wayfinding and clarity of the SkyTrain entrance. The proposal uses lighting, as well as hard and soft landscaping materials to create multi-modal wayfinding opportunities. Wood has been added to many of the benches as a contrasting material with the intention of helping someone with limited vision locate the seating.

Staff will continue to work with the applicant to incorporate clear and universally accessible signage and wayfinding into the design. Suggestions and/or further considerations from the panel would be appreciated.

## **Questions for the Design Panel's Consideration**

In addition to seeking general comments from the New Westminster Design Panel (NWDP) in regard to the overall design of the proposed Transit Plaza and the above-mentioned design considerations, staff has identified the following questions for the NWDP to provide specific response to:

1. Staff seeks input from the NWDP on how successful the proposed design is providing a clear, safe and universally accessible connection to the Sapperton SkyTrain station, the Royal Columbian Hospital and the surrounding Brewery District pedestrian network.
2. Staff seeks input from the NWDP on the overall quality of the proposed public realm and how successful the proposed design is at creating a memorable destination for residents and visitors.

3. Staff seeks input from the NWDP on the proposed wayfinding, signage and lighting design.
4. Staff seeks input from the NWDP on how well the design interfaces with Building 7 to the south, Building 8 to the west, and the Anvil Building to the north as shown in drawing L10 in 'Appendix A'.
5. Staff seeks input from the NWDP about the selection of hard and soft landscaping materials, including input on the planting species selected as shown in drawing L4 and L7 in 'Appendix A'.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A: Applicant Submission Package  
Appendix B: Accessibility Summary

This report was prepared by:  
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This report was reviewed and approved by:  
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