

## Attachment 4

### *Discussion Supplemental Information*

## **DISCUSSION - SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

### **Heritage Considerations**

The entire building's exterior is protected through a Heritage Designation Bylaw (bylaw no. 6654, 2001). There are two Conservation Covenants registered on title, one for retention and maintenance of the Columbia Street façade and another for the interior auditorium features (paintings, ceiling tiles and various cast plaster works).

The proposal is to retain and restore the Columbia Street façade and to demolish and reconstruct the Front Street façade and auditorium. Given that the building is legally protected, but recognizing construction challenges, the applicant has offered the following heritage benefits:

- *Columbia Street façade* - retention and full restoration generally as outlined in the preliminary Heritage Conservation Plan (HCP), including the restoration of the marquee and vertical sign. The tower will be set back to enhance the prominence of the heritage façade;
- *Front Street façade* – reconstruction of the façade and retail unit generally as outlined in the preliminary HCP. The ghost signs, if they cannot be retained, will be recreated through lighting feature or other suitable alternative.
- *Auditorium* – removal and full reconstruction of the protected interior elements including the atmospheric ceiling and murals; and
- retention and rehabilitation, restoration, or recreation (as appropriate) of the original doors, windows, balconies, and other openings for the above.

Endorsement by LUPC in 2019 was based on full retention and restoration of the protected heritage building and interior elements. The level of retention does not fully meet existing heritage protections.

### **Auditorium Reconstruction and Community Use**

As discussed above, the proposal is to deconstruct the auditorium removing any interior heritage elements that can be salvaged, and then reconstruct the space including recreation of the atmospheric ceiling and murals. The auditorium, as it exists today, is about 1/3 of its original design size.

The venue is currently operated Rick Bronson's House of Comedy. The venue is programmed six days a week (Tuesday-Sunday) with evening events. The venue accommodates 300 guests on the main level, with additional capacity on the upper level.

The proposed revitalization of the auditorium would maintain the cultural use of the site, and would support the cultural heritage value of the theatre. Retention of an auditorium use would additionally support the building in its historic role as an economic and cultural hub on Columbia Street and within downtown.

The reconstructed space is proposed to be approximately 2,900 sq. ft. and will have an occupant capacity of around 300. The reconstructed space is proposed to be operated by the hotel as a multi-purpose venue. The venue would be suitable for events such as graduations, weddings, and conferences. The auditorium, originally designed as a movie theatre, lacks back-of-house space to operate as a performance venue. Additionally, the relatively small footprint of the ground floor and the introduction of residential lobby, coffee bar, and the elevator core, limits ability to accommodate front-of-house functions. The applicant has offered to work with a theatre consultant to improve the design within space constraints.

The applicant has proposed to make the auditorium available to community associations and non-profit organizations for up to 100 hours per year, subject to venue availability, at 30% discount to the market rate. This would be secured through a legal agreement registered on title. Given the cultural and historic value of the Columbia theatre, staff recommend further discussion with the applicant, and the hotel operator, to improve the offered terms. Consideration would be given to expand the hours of availability, review of the level of affordability, and/or exploration of alternative approaches.

### **Height and Density Considerations**

HRAs are negotiated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the context of each specific site. A number of HRAs and similar heritage-related infill projects have been undertaken in the downtown. These projects are summarized below, with the statistics for the revised proposal in question highlighted in grey. The subject site is quite small as compared to the typical tower site. The small site combined with high site coverage yields relatively high FSR.

**Figure 1: Comparison of Similar Tower and Heritage Retention Projects Downtown**

Address	Site Size	FSR	Relaxations	Height	Heritage
<b>774 Columbia St</b> BC Electric Railway Building (Salvation Army)	17,424 sq. ft. (1,619 sq.m.)	10.47 (both sites)	- overall density - parking	18 Storeys	Full Exterior
<b>508 Agnes St</b> Mason's Hall (the Beverley)	17,411 sq. ft. (1,618 sq.m.)	6.55	- residential density - overall density - height - parking	19 Storeys	Façade
<b>600-700 Columbia St</b> Trapp-Holbrook Blocks	25,501 sq. ft. (2,369 sq.m.)	10.65	- residential density - overall density - height - parking	19 Storeys	Two Façades
<b>514 Carnarvon St</b> Holy Trinity Cathedral	33,443 sq. ft. (3,107 sq.m.)	5.8	- residential density - overall density - height - parking	30 Storeys	Full Exterior
<b>530 Columbia St</b> Columbia Theatre <i>(revised proposal)</i>	8,690 sq. ft. (807 sq.m.)	18.8	- residential density - overall density - height - parking (TBD)	30 Storeys	One Façade  Reconstruction of auditorium and Front St facade

In 2019, LUPC supported the proposed building height of 22 storeys which was in keeping with other developments on Columbia Street. The revised proposal, while generally consistent with other approvals in the downtown, would become the tallest building within the Columbia Street Historic Precinct at 30 storeys.

The proposal is generally consistent with the provisions in the Downtown Community Plan for heritage buildings in the Columbia Street Historic District. While the proposal exceeds the maximum height and density thresholds set out within the Density Bonus zones in use throughout downtown, some relaxation could be considered given the mix of uses and heritage revitalization that is proposed.

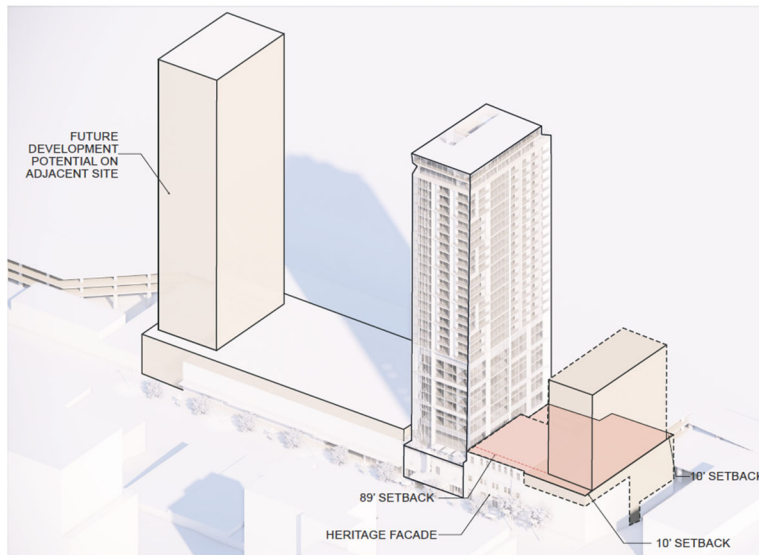
### **Adjacent Development Considerations**

The subject site is located mid-block. The property to the east of the site (Army and Navy) is large enough to be redeveloped independently, however tower separation requirements may limit the number of towers achievable on the site. West of the site, there are four properties: 544 (Bank of Commerce, a protected heritage building), 554 Columbia, 553 Front Street, and 535 Front Street. These buildings all have heritage character and are turn-of-the-century construction.

The applicant has prepared an analysis of the development potential of the adjacent sites. The analysis demonstrates that the mid-block tower limits the overall development potential for the block, particularly on the properties to the west where achieving tower

separation would result in an exceptionally narrow (40.97 feet) and likely impractical tower footprint.

*Figure 2: Applicant Analysis of Adjacent Development Potential*



544 | 554 | 553 | 535 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

As a result, it is likely that if these properties were to develop, they would be limited to a low-rise form.

Design adjustments, such as introduction of a zero lot line condition above the third storey, could improve adjacent development by allowing more development on the podium levels. This approach would likely result in fewer hotel units on the lower levels.

### ***Massing and Design***

The Applicant's Drawing Package (Attachment B) describes a rectangular tower with the narrowest frontage along the streets. The tower is set back from the theatre's historic façade. The hotel (levels 4-10) are architecturally distinct from rest of the tower.

A detailed review of the tower design, to ensure compliance with the Downtown Building and Public Realm Design Guidelines, would be required following Council direction. Further design development to better integrate balconies and to improve the architectural expression of the heritage building, hotel and residential components of the tower is expected.

Additional analysis of the proposed tower's shadow, view, and skyline impacts would be completed as part of application review.

## Housing Policies

### *Unit Mix and Family Housing Policy*

The applicant is seeking a relaxation from the Family Friendly Housing Policy given the limited amount of residential parking spaces that can be accommodated on-site. The policy requires that 30% of units in strata multi-family buildings are designed for families with children. The following table summarizes the proposed housing mix.

*Figure 3: Summary of Proposed Unit Mix*

<b>Family Unit Mix</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
3-bedroom	10%	0%
2- and 3-bedroom (combined)	30%	8%
Studio and 1-bedroom	Up to 70%	92%

Of the 216 units proposed, 198 units (92%) are comprised of studio and one-bedroom units. The application includes 18 two-bedroom units (1 unit per floor) which would have associated on-site parking. The applicant is concerned about the marketability of additional family units in the absence of associated parking. The physical constraints of the parkade footprint limits the total number of parking spaces that can be provided on-site (currently 57 spaces). Maintaining, or increasing, the number of family housing units would require additional relaxations for the number of parking spaces for the hotel, restaurant, auditorium and retail uses. Noting that the recent legislation to eliminate parking requirements applies only to residential uses.

The proposal generally includes smaller units, of which 17% do not currently meet the minimum unit size (500 sq. ft.) as required by the Zoning Bylaw. The applicant has committed to revising the unit layout to ensure the minimums are met. The intended market for these units is smaller households including young professionals, first time home buyers, and downsizers. The building is designed to include enhanced residential amenity space the top floors of the building, to provide additional space for residents.

The City is in the process of updating the Family Housing policy to better meet the housing needs in New Westminster. It is anticipated that the family housing requirements, particularly for three-bedroom units, will be increased through this process.

### *Inclusionary Housing*

New mixed-use multi-unit strata housing developments seeking density beyond Density Bonus zone provisions are subject to the City's Inclusionary Housing Policy. The policy requires that 20% of the units be built as affordable housing, and sold to a non-profit or BC Housing at below market value. The policy is being updated given the introduction of new Provincial legislation and on-going challenges with implementation.

This application proposes to be exempt from the Inclusionary Housing Policy requirements for the following reasons: 1) heritage retention/reconstruction, 2) provision

of hotel, and 3) continued community use of the auditorium. Staff consider this request to be reasonable, taking into account the package of public benefits provided as part of this proposal, and subject to a pro forma review to ensure the benefits offered are commensurate with the increase in residential density.

## **Hotel Use**

The application proposes a 95-room hotel for this site. The hotel units range in size from 255 sq. ft. to 409 sq. ft., all of the units meet the minimum required size (240 sq. ft.). Marriott International has expressed interest in the hotel to be operated under their Tribute Portfolio brand which is a collection of independent boutique hotels. These hotels leverage unique sites and heritage properties, such as this one, to establish a brand and story for each hotel in the portfolio.

The hotel use supports City policies to encourage economic activity in the downtown, especially related to tourism. The hotel use and the restaurant are considered downtown destination role enhancers in the Retail Strategy. The hotel use is expected to generate more daytime activity to support revitalization of Columbia Street.

## **Amenity Contributions**

The Interim Development Review Framework guides evaluation of development applications in response to the introduction of new Provincial legislation. There are two key components of this policy that applies to this application:

- *OCP Compliant Applications* (Section 2.2 b) i.) – These applications proceed under the current policy context. Stratified developments which trigger amenity charges and inclusionary housing requirements.
- *Transition to Fixed Rates* (Section 3.2 a)) – Existing applications (received prior to January 29, 2024), for which negotiations are underway and progressing for a VAC or in-kind amenity, must continue under the negotiated approach.

Heritage restoration and continued community use of the auditorium are the proposed amenities. The hotel use is also recognized as a community benefit. As is standard practice for HRA applications, a financial review will be required to ensure that the amenities offered are commensurate with the stratified residential that is proposed, subject to Council feedback on the components of the application.

## **Other Considerations**

### ***Transportation and Parking***

There is no parking currently on site for the Columbia Theatre. Three levels of parking are proposed with redevelopment of the site with one level dedicated to vehicle parking. Given the small site size and other constraints, vehicle parking relies on car elevators,

stacking systems, and valet service to facilitate access. Vehicle parking is primarily intended to serve the hotel, restaurant, and auditorium.

In December 2023 the Province introduced legislation that does not allow municipalities to require off-street parking for residential uses in TOD Areas. The legislation still enables municipalities to require parking for other land uses, and accessible parking.

The lowest level of the parkade can physically accommodate a total of 57 vehicle parking spaces, of which 39 are intended to serve the hotel, restaurant and auditorium.

The design relies on car elevators and a mechanical system that allows for vehicles to be stacked three high. Of these spaces, 39 are intended to serve the hotel, restaurant, and auditorium. The remaining 18 are dedicated residential parking spaces, one space for each of the two-bedroom units. The proposal includes two of three required loading spaces and 250 of 296 required short and long term bicycle parking spaces.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures have been included in the application. An updated parking analysis is required to reflect the new legislation, which removes residential parking requirements but maintains parking minimums for commercial uses. As such, the proposal has not been reviewed in detail by the City's Transportation Division.

Even with limited residential parking, given the physical constraints of the site, it is expected that further relaxations may be necessary. These additional relaxations, if paired with appropriate TDM measures, may be considered through the HRA. Minimizing, or eliminating, on-site residential parking may enable potential expansion of Friday's on Front Street along this section.