



Austin Design Commission

Date: November 27, 2017

To: Director of Planning and Zoning

Subject: Review of Block 71: 200 West 6th Street for substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines (one of the three Gatekeeper Requirements for the Density Bonus Program)

Applicant: Jade Kanevski (Page Southerland Page, Inc.)

DC Action: The motion to support the finding that the project is in substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines was made by A. Coleman; second by Vice Chair M. Gonzalez; approved on a unanimous vote [7-0]; C. Kenny, B. Frail, M. Henao-Robledo, and K. Halloran were not present.

The project location is 200 West 6th Street.

Existing zoning for the project is CBD. The project design includes office, retail, restaurant, support spaces, and a parking garage. The lot area is 1.75 acres (76,240 sq ft), and the total proposed project area is 770,513 sq. ft.

The FAR for this project is 25:1, above the 8:1 maximum allowance for CBD zoning, so an increase in FAR of 17:1 is being requested.

The proposed building height is 555 feet; 37 stories, including 17 levels of parking.

Per the downtown density bonus ordinance, the applicant is required to meet three gatekeeper requirements:

1. substantially comply with the Urban Design Guidelines,
2. provide streetscape improvements along all public street frontages consistent with the Great Streets Standards, and
3. commit to a minimum of 2 star green building rating.

DESIGN COMMISSION COMMENTS REGARDING PROJECT'S COMPLIANCE WITH URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

AREA WIDE GUIDELINES

1. Create dense development-
25:1 FAR is being proposed. The project complies with this section.
2. Create mixed-use development-
The project has office use, restaurant use, retail use, and outdoor recreational use. Each half block has 2 of these on street level. This project does substantially comply with this section.
3. Limit development which closes downtown streets-
No street closures planned. Project complies with this section

David Carroll, Chair

Martha Gonzalez, Vice Chair

Aan Coleman

Beau Frail

Samuel Franco

Katie Halloran

Conor Kenny

Ben Luckens

Melissa Henao-Robledo

Evan Taniguchi

Bart Whatley

Katie Mulholland,
Executive Liaison

Nichole Koerth,
Staff Liaison

4. Buffer neighborhood edges-
Project not applicable to this section
5. Incorporate civic art in both public and private development-
Current public art will remain on site. Project does comply with this section.
6. Protect important public views-
Project complies with CVC and 6th street façade steps back from ROW. This project complies with this section.
7. Avoid historical misrepresentations- Project complies.
8. Respect adjacent historic buildings-
Post Office building is being preserved and 6th street façade reacts to it. Project complies
9. Acknowledge that rooftops are seen from other buildings and the street-
Project complies with this section.
10. Avoid the development of theme environments– Project complies.
11. Recycle existing building stock-
Existing building will be reused. This project complies.

*Project complies with 10 of the 11 Area Wide Guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PUBLIC STREETSCAPE

1. Protect the pedestrian where the building meets the street-
Overhead protection does not appear to be at least 8 feet deep at all street facades. The project does not comply with this section. Increase depth of overhangs to comply with this section.
2. Minimize curb cuts-
Two adjacent curb cuts, essentially 6 lanes wide, along Colorado is not safe for a pedestrian activity. This project does not comply with this section.
3. Create a potential for two-way streets-
Design of garage entries allows for two-way street. Project complies with this section.
4. Reinforce pedestrian activity-
Incorporation of Great Streets reinforces existing pedestrian activity but minimal mixed-use and wide garage entry/exits limit activity that could be generated by this project itself. The Plaza does have public appeal. The Austin Energy vault location is a detriment to pedestrian activity on Colorado Street and the vault should be rotated or placed underground. Project does comply.
5. Enhance key transit stops-
Project not applicable as there are no current transit stops.
6. Enhance the streetscape-
Incorporation of Great Streets enhances streetscape. Project complies with this section.
7. Avoid conflicts between pedestrians and utility equipment-
There are no physical conflicts shown, but AE vault on street level deactivates Colorado Street. Project complies with this section.
8. Install street trees-
Street trees included with incorporation of Great Streets. Project complies with this section
9. Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting-
Pedestrian scaled lighting included with incorporation of Great Streets. Project complies with this section
10. Provide protection from cars/promote curbside parking-
Incorporation of Great Streets. Project complies
11. Screen mechanical and utility equipment- Project complies.
12. Provide generous street-level windows- Project complies with this section.
13. Install pedestrian-friendly materials at street level-
Incorporation of pedestrian-friendly materials. Project complies with this section.

*Project complies with 10 of the 13 Guidelines for Public Streetscape.

GUIDELINES FOR PLAZAS AND OPEN SPACE

1. Treat the Four Squares with Special Consideration-
Not applicable to this project
2. Contribute to an Open Space Network-
Moving existing plaza from southeast corner to northwest corner of block. Project complies
3. Emphasize Connections to Parks and Greenways-
Project complies
4. Incorporate Open Space into Residential Development-
Not applicable to this project
5. Develop Green Roofs-
Project complies
6. Provide Plazas in High- Use Areas-
Project complies
7. Determine Plaza Function, Size, & Activity-
Project complies
8. Respond to Microclimate in Plaza Design-
Project complies
9. Consider Views, Circulation, Boundaries, and Subspaces in Plaza Design-
Project complies
10. Provide an Appropriate Amount of Plaza Seating-
Project complies
11. Provide Visual and Spatial Complexity in Public Spaces-
Project complies
12. Use Plants to Enliven Urban Spaces-
Project complies
13. Provide Interactive Civic Art and Fountains in Plazas-
Art provided. Project does comply.
14. Provide Food Service for Plaza Participants-
Project complies
15. Increase Safety in Plazas Through Wayfinding, Lighting, & Visibility-
Project complies
16. Consider Plaza Operations and Maintenance-
Compliance methods will be developed. Project does comply.

*Project complies with 14 of the 16 Guidelines for Public Streetscape.

GUIDELINES FOR BUILDINGS

1. Build to the street-
Project complies
2. Provide multi-tenant, pedestrian-oriented development at the street level-
Project has pedestrian-oriented development on 80% of frontage. Project does comply.
3. Accentuate primary entrances-
Entrances are not accentuated. Entire 6th Street façade is pulled back is entrance is not distinguished. 7th Street entries do not appear accentuated either. Project does not comply.
4. Encourage the inclusion of local character-
The Working Group did not see the inclusion of local character, although the building does highlight the character of the adjacent post office. The structure appears more generic or universal and less unique to Austin's character. Project does not comply. Please provide better examples of Austin's unique character to comply with this section.
5. Control on-site parking-
Project appears to control on-site parking using underground and screened above ground parking, but less parking and more inhabited and multi-use space is preferred. Project complies with this section
6. Create quality construction- Project appears to comply.

7. Create buildings with human scale-
The Lobby on 6th Street seems over-scaled and too generous to support comfortable, active occupation. The Colorado Street façade spans the entire block width with minimal active uses and almost no articulation. Project does not comply.

*Project complies with 4 of the 7 Guidelines for Buildings.

Some positive attributes that the Design Commission noted includes keeping the 6th Street trees, restoring the old post office, and keeping a plaza onsite to help activate the area.

Concerns noted by the Design Commission included removal of live oaks along Colorado Street because they are off the standard Great Streets dimensions. The curb cut width on Colorado with loading and vehicle curb cuts side by side. The amount of frontage that the transformer vault occupies on Colorado St. will severely impact the pedestrian experience, especially in that it is adjacent to the 2 curb cuts/vehicle entrances. Intersecting volumes at the lower levels could help break the scale. The east and west elevations are expansive and over-scaled in relation to the surrounding context. Suggest sun shading over garage entrances or trees between garage and loading curb cuts to shelter pedestrians.

We have determined that this project, as presented, is in substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines. The Design Commission has appreciated the opportunity to review and comment on this project.

Respectfully submitted,



David Carroll, AIA
Chair
City of Austin Design Commission

cc: Katie Mulholland, Executive Liaison to the Design Commission
Anne Milne, Density Bonus Program Coordinator