



**City of Portland, Oregon**  
**Bureau of Development Services**  
**Land Use Services**  
 FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** October 19, 2017  
**To:** Portland Design Commission  
**From:** Benjamin Nielsen, Development Review, 503-823-7812  
**Re:** EA 17-243925 DA – OMSI Master Plan  
 Staff Memo for the October 26, 2017 Design Advice Request

Attached is a report for the OMSI Master Plan area in the Central Eastside Subdistrict of the Central City Plan District. This is the first formal hearing for this case, though the Design Commission had a one hour briefing about the proposed master plan at the August 17, 2017 Design Commission hearing.

As a reminder, the OMSI Master Plan will be utilizing recommended zoning code changes to Chapter 33.510, which are part of the Central City 2035 project and which will require approval of a Central City Master Plan for future development on this site. The approval criteria for the required master plan are still under discussion among the City Council. The most-current draft has been provided for your reference; however, to facilitate this meeting, the discussion should focus most on core urban design principles that will help to create a successful district. These principles can be found throughout the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines; some, but not all, of the CCFD Guidelines will likely become part of the adopted approval criteria. This Design Advice Hearing will fulfill one of the new code requirements.

<b>Architect/Developer</b>	<b>Valuation</b>	<b>Approximate Gross SF</b>	<b>Site Area (SF)</b>
Carol Gossett, OMSI Snohetta	N/A	Not provided	Between 18.53 and 21.25 acres

**DAR Discussion Items**

**1. Overall Concept**

- The design and development framework is described in section 3 of the master plan document and are best illustrated on page 17. The Commission questioned at the August briefing what the organizing principle was behind the location and design of streets, open spaces, building envelopes, and public art and wayfinding.

**2. Circulation System and Open Space System**

- The overall circulation system is defined by three elements: the “campus spine”, “esplanade spine”, and (realigned) “Water Avenue spine”. Cross connections between Water Ave and campus spines proposed as “green streets”. Connections should also extend to the esplanade spine and the river.
- The proposed streets have a hierarchy in their width and use, and diagrams describing these can be found on sheets 54-58.
- Pedestrian streets that run through the middle of tracts—between Tracts Y1 and Y2, between B1 and B2, and between C1 and C2—may not be constructed depending upon proposed development. Staff believes that these connections form an important part of the public realm and should be required.
- Old Water Ave includes areas for parallel parking; however, the realigned Water Ave is proposed with no parallel parking and with rolled curbs to allow for loading on the sidewalk. Consider whether parking should be provided along at least the western edge of

the realigned Water Ave to increase pedestrian comfort and to make the ground floor spaces more successful.

- Open spaces occur throughout the site. Major open spaces are oriented towards the river, and the large OMSI plaza forms the core of the district. Smaller interior plazas occur at some street intersections, giving a unique identity to public space in the area.
- Possibilities for pedestrian connections over the railroad tracks to the east are limited by lack of ROW access on the east side.

### **3. Development Tract and Street Locations**

- Streets, pedestrian pathways, and open spaces should be placed into their own clearly-defined tracts or easements to ensure that they are constructed where proposed and that development does not encroach into the public realm.
- The proposed, large Tilikum Plaza (see page 25) is somewhat compromised by its proximity to back of house uses for OMSI and adjacent development. Should the plaza open onto a street, as shown, or be surrounded more by development with active ground floor uses?
- The Phase 1 development plan (page 33) shows the north edge of tracts B1 and B2 sited approximately 70 feet to the south of the existing Water Ave alignment. This could leave a large undeveloped area between the street and the tracts for a long time, depending upon timing of the Phase 2 plan and realignment of Water Ave.

### **4. Building Envelopes and Programming**

- The bulk of proposed massing is located along the south end of the site, adjacent to the light rail and streetcar stations. Commissioners expressed concern at the briefing in August that tall development could impact views of the Tilikum Bridge, though staff notes that the bridge angles away from the site to the southwest and is mostly-hidden behind the Portland Opera building from both of these stations. Views from the bridge may be more important.
- Proposed ground floor active use edges are identified on page 35. These edges should, for the most part, run along the entirety of the pedestrian system, with additional attention paid to tracts around the transit stations.
- Upper story programming with active uses near the transit stations would help to further activate and reinforce this area.

### **5. Parking & Loading**

- Parking and loading access points should be consolidated as much as possible. Proposed access locations can be found on page 61.
- The large above-ground parking structure adjacent to the light rail and streetcar stations were a major concern to the Commission at the August briefing. This area should be devoted to active uses to support the stations rather than storing cars.
- Bus parking will be an important consideration—currently proposed at the south end of Old Water Ave.

### **6. Intersection with other planning efforts**

- Innovation Quadrant
- Green Loop
- River Overlay zones

### **Zoning Summary**

EX - Central Employment and OS – Open Space Zones; d – Design, e – River Environmental, g\* - River General, and s – Scenic Resources Overlay Zones (future overlay zones are not yet adopted by City Council); Central Eastside Subdistrict of the Central City Plan District. \*\*\*Note that this proposal is based on code that is anticipated to be adopted and/or effective in 2018.\*\*\*

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Attachments: OMSI Master Plan report  
Potential approval criteria as of 9/14/2017  
OMSI Briefing Summary Notes from 8/17/2017