



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

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## Design Advice Request

### DISCUSSION MEMO

**Date:** July 25, 2019  
**To:** Portland Design Commission  
**From:** Benjamin Nielsen, Design / Historic Review Team  
(503) 823-7812, [benjamin.nielsen@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:benjamin.nielsen@portlandoregon.gov)  
**Re:** EA 19-174414 DA – Toyoko Inn  
Design Advice Request Memo – August 1, 2019

Attached is a drawing set for the Design Advice Request meeting scheduled on August 1, 2019. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

#### I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Design Advice Request for a proposed 180,409 SF, 32-story, approx. 357-feet tall hotel on the vacant parcel located at the NE corner of SW 3rd Ave & Oak St in the Downtown Subdistrict of the Central City Plan District. The proposed tower would lie on the western half of the approx. 10,000 SF lot, and a courtyard would occupy the eastern half of the lot.

#### II. DEVELOPMENT TEAM BIO

<b>Architect</b>	Shuma Tei, Toyoko Inn Architect Co, Ltd
<b>Owner's Representative</b>	Kiyoshi Mukumoto, Toyoko Inn Development Co, Ltd
<b>Project Valuation</b>	Not Provided

#### III. FUTURE DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL CRITERIA: Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines

#### IV. STAFF ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDED DAR DISCUSSION TOPICS

Staff advise you consider the following among your discussion items on August 1, 2019:

- Relationship to context. The proposed building's footprint, articulation, and site design do not yet complement or integrate well with the context of surrounding historic structures (both listed and unlisted).
- The proposed plaza on the eastern portion of the site is not contextual and is not sufficiently activated to be successful.
- The proposed design is not yet cohesive: the expression of the ground floors appears to be too function-driven without regard for overall cohesiveness and clarity of design intent.

Inconsistent window expression on the upper stories should also be made to be more consistent to create a clear, unified tower (or other massing form) expression.

## CONTEXT

1. **Policy.** The following summarizes key policy context as it applies to the subject site.
  - a. **Plan – Central City 2035 Plan.**
  - b. **Development Standards – CX: Central Commercial base zone / Central City Plan District – Downtown Subdistrict.** *Though early in the design process, the proposal appears generally compliant with zoning code standards (allowed use, maximum setbacks, parking, loading, landscaping, windows, etc.). Anticipated/possible modifications include modifications to Required Building Lines standard (33.510.215) along SW Oak St, Ground Floor Windows standard (33.510.220.B.2) facing plaza, Ecoroofs (33.510.243), and long-term bike parking (33.266.220). One anticipated adjustment includes reduction of loading spaces to 1 Standard A space (33.266.310). See section V, below for more information.*
  - c. **Streets – TSP Designations.**
    - i. SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave: Traffic Access Street, City Bikeway, City Walkway. Local Service all other modes.
    - ii. SW Oak St: Major City Bikeway, City Walkway, Major Emergency Access Street. Local Service all other modes.
    - iii. The site is located within the Downtown Pedestrian District and the Downtown Bicycle District.
2. **Natural.** The subject site and its vicinity are largely urban in nature. The nearest defining natural features include the Willamette River, which is approximately 4 blocks to the east, and the West Hills to the west. Slopes in this area of Downtown are relatively minor.
3. **Built.**
  - a. The overall design of the proposed building does not yet complement the context of nearby towers, nor does it complement the lower-scale landmark buildings nearby. (Guidelines A2 – Emphasize Portland Themes, A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A5 – Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas, and C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings)
    - i. The site is currently part of the Portland Police Block, which is a historic landmark site and building. The boundary of the Portland Police Block is currently being reviewed to narrow it down to only the building itself, leaving the subject site outside of the landmark boundary.
    - ii. Given the proximity to the landmark Police Block building, other nearby masonry landmark buildings, and the adjacent Skidmore Historic District, the applicants need to clearly demonstrate how the proposed building relates to the historic context. (Guidelines A5 – Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas and C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings)
    - iii. The blank north elevation is not contextually appropriate for a tower building typology. (Guidelines A5 – Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas and C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings)
    - iv. Exterior materials are not yet described, though a panelized system appears to be proposed. Given the immediate context of landmark, historic, and other old structures and which consists almost entirely of various types

of brick, stone, or stucco masonry, the proposed cladding should add to and complement the masonry character in this portion of Downtown. (Guidelines A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A5 – Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas, and C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings)

- v. While the proposed public plaza on the east half of the site provides some breathing room between the new hotel and the landmark Police Block building, such permanent open spaces are atypical in the Central City, generally, and would not be contextual in the historical context of nearby landmark buildings or the nearby Skidmore Historic District. Rather than creating a slender tower, the program should fully occupy both site frontages (possibly allowing for some setback from the landmark Police Block) to maintain a consistent pattern of full block development Downtown. That being said, a very well-designed plaza with significant activation from the adjacent building(s) could be an asset to the area, particularly with the large number of hotel rooms proposed. (Guidelines A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A5 – Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas, and C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings)
- b. The ground floors appear to lack any articulation that would help relate the building to its context and to the pedestrian scale. (Guidelines A4 – Use Unifying Elements, A5 – Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas, A7 – Establish and Maintain a Sense of Enclosure, C4 – Complement the Context of Existing Buildings, and C8 – Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings)
- c. Staff asked the applicants to show context of adjacent buildings in their drawings. Staff believes that this is particularly important given the proximity of the building to the landmark Police Block building, as well as other nearby landmark buildings and historic buildings in the Skidmore Historic District. Those contextual drawings and studies have not yet been provided and may not be available at the DAR.

## **PUBLIC REALM**

### **1. Site organization.**

- a. The large courtyard on the eastern half of the site has no connection to the interior of the proposed building or to the other surrounding buildings, and therefore, it is likely to be a very unsuccessful, inactive, and possibly dangerous space. A design option that provides building frontage along both SW 3rd Ave and SW Oak St should be studied and pursued. A very well-designed plaza with significant activation from the adjacent building(s) could be an asset to the area, however, particularly with the large number of hotel rooms proposed. (Guidelines A7 – Establish and Maintain a Sense of Urban Enclosure, A8 – Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape, B4 – Provide Stopping and Viewing Places, B5 – Make Plazas, Parks and Open Areas Successful, and C6 – Develop Transitions Between Buildings and Public Spaces)
- b. Active uses are placed along both the SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave and SW Oak St frontages. These uses will help to activate the sidewalks.

### **2. Main Entry.**

- a. The proposed wall along the “business counter” in the entry should not be opaque, as appears to be indicated on the plan. Rather, it should be glazed to help activate the corner. (Guidelines A7 – Establish and Maintain a Sense of Urban Enclosure, A8 – Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape, B4 – Provide Stopping and Viewing Places, C1 – Enhance View Opportunities, and C7 – Design Corners that Build Active Intersections)

- b. Staff believes that an option should be studied that looks at placing the main building entry towards the center of the building on the south elevation, rather than at the corner. This would require a modification to the Transit Street Main Entrance standard in 33.130.242, however.

### 3. Circulation System & Transportation.

- a. One loading space is proposed (two Standard A loading spaces are required) with access from SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Staff believes that providing loading access from SW 3<sup>rd</sup> is supportable and preferred over providing access from SW Oak, both from a contextual and pedestrian/bike perspective. (A4 – Use Unifying Elements, B1 – Reinforce the Pedestrian System, and B2 – Protect the Pedestrian)
4. The ground floor appears to lack any **weather protection**. Canopies or awnings are needed along both street frontages. (Guideline B6 – Develop Weather Protection)

## QUALITY & PERMANENCE

### 1. Exterior materials.

- a. Exterior materials are not yet described, though a panelized system appears to be proposed. (See related issue 3.a.iv under “Context”, above.) Other Toyoko Inn projects around the world typically appear to use metal panels as the primary cladding material.

### 2. Coherency.

- a. The proposed design is not yet cohesive: the expression of the ground floors appears to be too function-driven without regard for overall cohesiveness and clarity of design intent. Inconsistent window expression on the upper stories should also be made to be more consistent to create a clear, unified tower expression. (Guidelines C5– Design for Coherency and C8-Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings)
- b. The southwest corner should be glazed on both street-facing facades. (Guideline C5– Design for Coherency)
- c. The square windows used in the upper stories visually conflict with the tall, vertical proportions of the main building form and of the cladding. (Guideline C5 – Design for Coherency)

## V. POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS / ADJUSTMENTS

Modifications are subject to the following approval criteria:

- A. *The resulting development will better meet the applicable design guidelines; and*
- B. *On balance, the proposal will be consistent with the purpose of the standard for which a modification is requested*

Following Modifications may be requested:

1. 33.510.215 – Required Building Lines. Standard requires that building extend to within 12 feet of street lot line along minimum of 75% of street lot line. This standard is not met along SW Oak St, where the building extends to street lot line for only approx. 58% of lot line length.
2. 33.510.220 – Ground Floor Windows. Standard requires that windows cover at least 40% of the ground floor wall area that faces a sidewalk, plaza, or other publicly-accessible open space at between 2 and 10 feet in height on the wall. Only one small window meets this standard facing the plaza.

3. 33.510.243 – Ecoroofs. No roof plan provided, but a mechanical screen is shown at the roof on the elevations. The standard might not be met.
4. 33.266.220 – Long-term Bicycle Parking. No long-term bike parking is shown yet. A Modification to the rack spacing/dimensions is likely.

Adjustments are subject to the following approval criteria:

- A. *Granting the adjustment will equally or better meet the purpose of the regulation to be modified; and*
- B. *If in a residential, CI1, or IR zone, the proposal will not significantly detract from the livability or appearance of the residential area, or if in an OS, C, E, I, or CI2 zone, the proposal will be consistent with the classifications of the adjacent streets and the desired character of the area; and*
- C. *If more than one adjustment is being requested, the cumulative effect of the adjustments results in a project which is still consistent with the overall purpose of the zone; and*
- D. *City-designated scenic resources and historic resources are preserved; and*
- E. *Any impacts resulting from the adjustment are mitigated to the extent practical; and*
- F. *If in an environmental zone, the proposal has as few significant detrimental environmental impacts on the resource and resource values as is practicable.*

The following Adjustment may be requested:

1. 33.266.310.C.2 – Number of loading spaces. Two Standard A loading spaces are required. Only one Standard A loading space is proposed.

## VI. LINKS & ENCLOSURES

- Drawing package (enclosed)
- Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines matrix (enclosed)
- Public comment from Michael Van Kleeck (enclosed)
- Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines:  
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/98064>