

Jasper – 115 Street DC2

Urban Design Brief

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Overview

The proposed rezoning application supports the development of two mixed-use high-rise buildings located at the northeast corner of Jasper Avenue and 115 Street (10107, 10129, 10133, and 10137 115 Street NW; and 11452 and 11460 Jasper Avenue NW) in the Oliver neighbourhood.

The proposed developments consist of a mixed-use, residential / commercial / office building on the south lot and a residential building on the north lot. Both buildings take the form of a point tower on a four-storey podium, consistent with other high density developments in Oliver.

The height of the podium expresses an appropriate human scale along Jasper and 115 Street. The heights of the towers are comparable to other recently approved developments in Oliver.

The proposed development is integrated with the existing development pattern in Edmonton and reinforces the existing cluster of street-oriented neighbourhood retail along Jasper Avenue. The site programming respects and reinforces the historic status of Jasper Avenue as Edmonton's commercial main street and provides high-density residential to contribute to the development of a pedestrian-oriented corridor. The site is served by numerous high-frequency bus routes and is a short walk to the future Valley Line LRT stop on 104 Avenue and the future 102 Avenue Bike Route currently under construction.

Purpose

The purpose of this urban design brief is to provide an overview of the existing development and the surrounding area, and to provide the overarching design vision that will aid in the preparation and implementation of more detailed design plans in the next phases of development.

Context

Land Use

The sites are currently zoned DC1 (Area 8 of the Oliver Area Redevelopment Plan) and RA9. Existing uses on the sites include a four-storey commercial building south of the lane, and a surface parking lot north of the lane.

The surrounding area consists primarily of high density residential, institutional, and commercial. Existing uses immediately surrounding the site include commercial office in a historic house to the north and low-intensity commercial to the east, south, and west.

Jasper Avenue is the primary commercial street and transportation corridor through Oliver, dividing the neighbourhood north and south. The parcel located at the northeast corner of 114 Street and Jasper was recently rezoned to accommodate a high-density development of 45 storeys. The proposed development is currently in the development permitting process.

Figure 2 – Existing Uses



Connectivity

Jasper Avenue is a designated transit corridor and accommodates numerous high-frequency transit routes. The site is approximately 825 m from the existing Corona LRT station and approximately 600 m from the future planned Valley Line LRT station at the intersection of 104 Avenue and 116 Street.

Figure 2 (Street Network) shows the street network in the vicinity of the site. Surrounding streets and sidewalks provide appropriate vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure. Both sites are accessible by a rear lane. Jasper Avenue provides connections east to downtown and west to Westmount, Glenora, and West Edmonton Mall. The area directly north fits with the historic grid and provides excellent pedestrian accessibility through the neighbourhood.

Urban Pattern

Figure 3 (Figure-Ground Study) illustrates the development pattern of the neighbourhood. The relationship between built areas and open space is typical of the patterns of high-density development in the 1970s and 80 interspersed with single family residential dwellings. The pattern for the apartment towers is characterized by isolated towers with large floor-plates, no podium, and increased setbacks.

Built Form

Figure 4 (Built Form) builds on the figure-ground study and illustrates the built form of the study area as

predominantly 15 storeys for the apartment buildings and between two and four storeys for the single-family dwellings and commercial uses.

Visual Quality and Legibility

Figure 5 Surrounding Elements was prepared to understand the legibility of the study area based on the five elements identified by Kevin Lynch (1960) – paths, districts, edges, landmarks, and nodes.

- **Edge:** There are three defined edges around the sites. These include 104 Avenue, 109 Street, and the top of bank of the North Saskatchewan River Valley.
- **Paths:** Four Paths were identified within the study area in of the site: Jasper Avenue, 102 Avenue, 104 Avenue, and 116 Street. These paths provide primary connections to the rest of the neighbourhood and across Edmonton.
- **Nodes:** Two nodes are identified in the study area within the surrounding community. These include the Grandin LRT station on 110 Street, Corona LRT station on Jasper Avenue, and the Canterra shopping centre.
- **Landmarks:** The study area has several landmark buildings. These include St. Joseph's Basilica, the Pearl Tower, and the Alberta Legislature Building.
- **Districts:** the scale of this study area is within one clear district of the city characterized by high density residential development and commercial uses along Jasper Avenue.

Figure 2 – Street Network

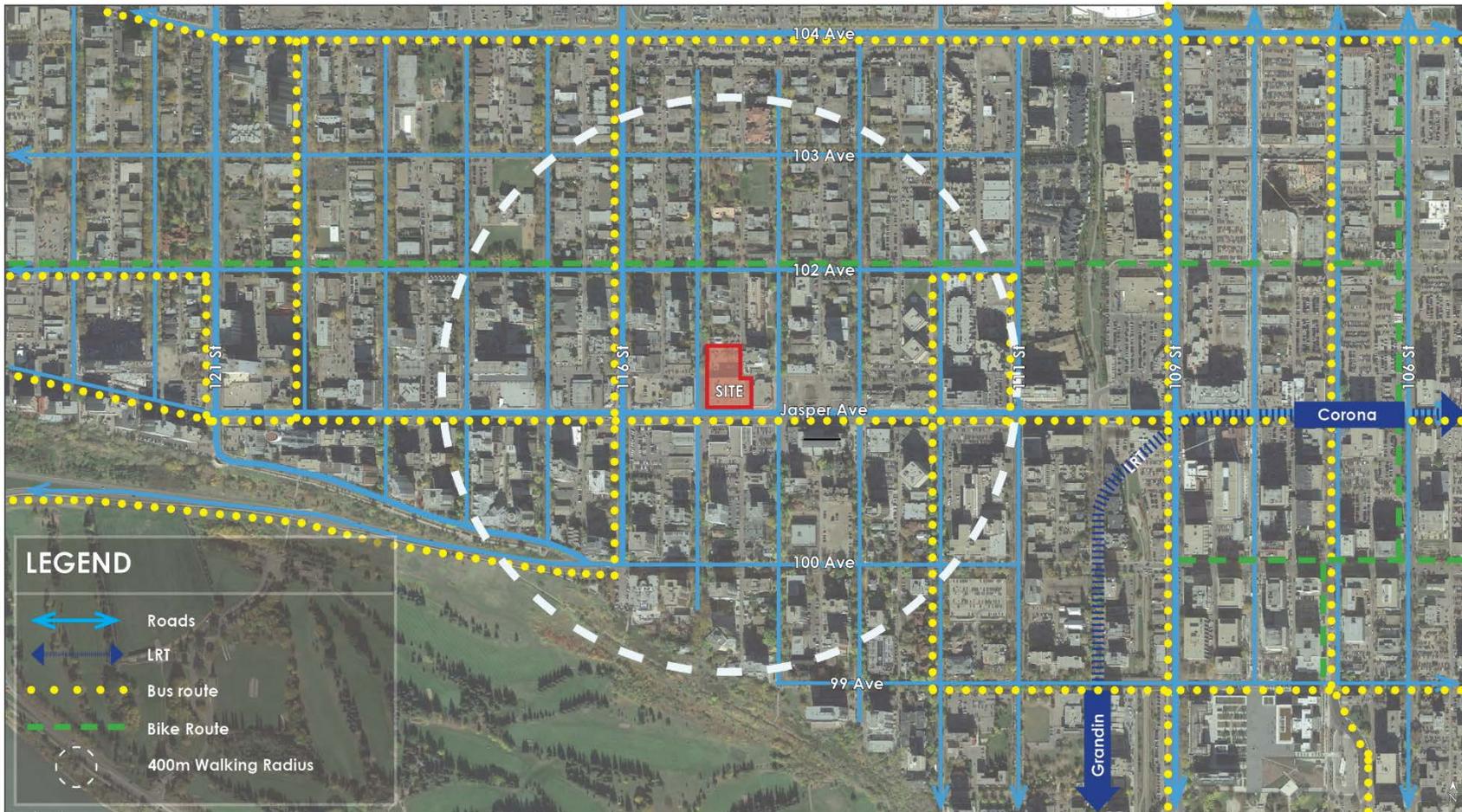


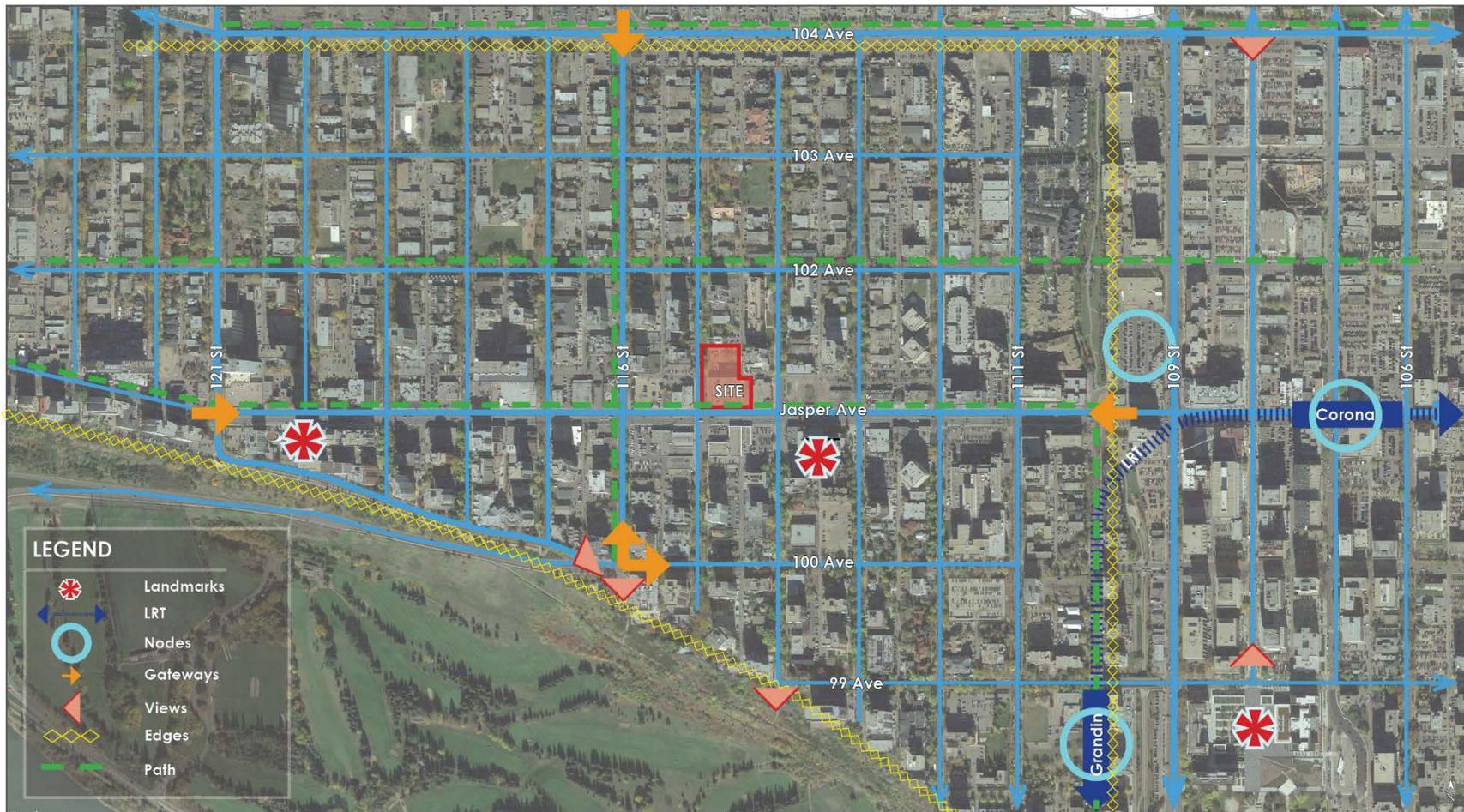
Figure 3 – Figure Ground Study



Figure 4 – Built Form



Figure 5 – Surrounding Elements



Vision and Principles

Animated Streetscape

The design of the south building proposes to animate Jasper Avenue with high quality landscaping, durable building finishes, and a splash of colour to add visual interest to the public realm, particularly in the winter. Jasper Ave and 115 Street facades are set back at grade to allow wider sidewalks with street trees and opportunities for outdoor seating, supporting the vision outlined in Imagine Jasper Avenue.

Full weather protection in form of a continuous glass and steel canopy is provided for all retail frontages and lobbies to improve the pedestrian experience in all seasons.

Living Lane

A "living lane" is created as the existing city lane is improved with setbacks on each side, and given full width retail frontages that bring more pedestrian oriented-activities to the space. Smaller retailers such as cafes or art studios are envisioned to occupy these retail spaces and animate the lane frontage.

Special paving patterns on the lane sidewalks, boulevard trees, and continuous weather protection on both sides of the lane help create a lively, welcoming urban lane with activities on both sides. A residential drop off zone serving the lobby of south building further improves this lane with a variety of activities.

360 Degree Architecture

Both towers have been designed with 360° architecture in mind. The design and finishes of the podium wrap around to provide an engaging façade on all sides. The top few stories of both towers will be varied in plan to sculpt the tower top and add visual interest to Edmonton's skyline.

The north building is given a residential presence at grade, with a four-storey podium and ground oriented residential units. This residential tower is set back from north property line in order to provide a better transition to the existing RA9 zone to the north.

The two residential towers share a large indoor amenity space (indoor swimming pool, sauna, gym and other facilities) located within the podium of the south tower. The north tower is given secure, direct access to the indoor amenities via a fully indoor crossing bridge which spans the lane.

Housing Mix

This tower features a diversity of unit types to support economic and social sustainability by allowing for a broad mix of family types from singles to large families. There will be an accompanying broad mix of price points for these units which will appeal to a wide range of income levels and household types. Larger ground-oriented family units are also provided at the base of the north tower with direct access to 115 Street.

Design Intent

The podium, tower, and landscape have been designed to provide a sense of arrival for visitors and residents, contribute to the Oliver community with an engaging public realm with street-oriented retail and outdoor public patio space, and add to the visual interest to Edmonton's skyline.

Building Design

The design of each building consists of a podium base, mid tower, and tower top. The podiums accommodate street-level commercial (south building) and ground-oriented residential (north building) to frame the public realm and contribute to an engaging pedestrian experience.

The tower of both buildings will accommodate only residential uses. The mid tower floor plate for both towers is limited to 750 m² to ensure that the shadows cast from the buildings are slim and pass quickly across the horizon, minimizing shadow impacts on adjacent land uses. The towers on both sites are in alignment on the north-south axis to overlap the shadows at noon and further minimize the shadow impact.

The floor plate of the tower top is about 10% smaller than the mid tower and includes a distinct roofline to add visual interest to the skyline and add an appropriate conclusion to the building. The tower top will accommodate the building mechanical systems to

screen them from view while adding articulation to the building.

The south building is located over a four-storey podium which brings full retail frontage on all three sides, including multiple smaller retail spaces that attract and engage the pedestrians along Jasper Ave, consistent with the vision of Imagine Jasper Avenue. The central part of this podium is designed as a large indoor amenity space with a gym, indoor swimming pool, and sauna. This large space is also available to the residents of the North Tower via a direct connecting walkway that spans the lane to link the podiums and allow the residents of the north tower to access the larger facility.

The north tower is mainly a residential tower with 37 stories, making a transition in height from Jasper Avenue towards the residential towers of RA9 to the North. The podium includes ground-oriented row housing as well as Live/Work housing units along the lane to bring a wider range of residential units and commercial uses within the project.

Underground Parking

All project parking is located below ground in separate parking garages which are accessed separately from the back. Retail and office parking are provided within the south tower's first two underground parking levels with dedicated elevator access. The commercial and residential parking will be separated by a gate within the underground parking structure.

Bicycle parking will be accommodated within the underground parkade to provide safe secure storage and easy access.

Public Realm

Retail uses are located on the ground floor and oriented to Jasper Avenue and the south portion of 115 Street to provide a welcome and active presence. The street-oriented retail respects the historic main street status of Jasper Avenue and builds on the existing urban fabric in the surrounding area to provide additional neighbourhood amenities for Oliver residents and enliven the public realm. The ample sidewalks and high quality materials on both Jasper Avenue and 115 Street acknowledges the prime location of the building on one of Edmonton's most important commercial street.

The ground floor landscape design proposes new street trees along Jasper and the south portion of 115 Street. The additional setback along Jasper Avenue provides ample space for outdoor seating and unobstructed sidewalks along Jasper Avenue, supporting the principles of Imagine Jasper Avenue and contributing to a more pedestrian-oriented design. Continuous weather protection in the form of glass and steel canopies are also provided on all commercial frontages to allow for potential use of the sidewalk by tenants of these future units and their patrons.

The lane separating the two buildings is proposed to be improved by introducing differentiated sidewalks, street

trees, and lighting along both sides of the lane within an increased building setback to improve pedestrian-friendly activities along the lane. Smaller retail spaces and live/work units fronting on the lane will establish it as a destination and increase pedestrian activity in an underutilized space.

Response to City Documents

The Way We Grow

The City of Edmonton's MDP, *The Way We Grow*, encourages growth in mature neighbourhoods and near transit (3.3.1.2) that contributes to the livability and adaptability of established neighbourhoods (3.5.1.1). The proposed rezoning application provides a mix of residential units, from studio to 3 bedroom apartments, for various demographic and income groups (4.4.1.1). The site is also in proximity to education institutions (i.e. Grant MacEwan University and Oliver School), recreation facilities and parks (i.e. Kitchener Park, Railtown Greenway, Peace Garden Park, Paul Kane Park, and the North Saskatchewan River Valley), and numerous employment centres.

The Way We Move

This project is consistent with the City of Edmonton Transportation Master Maser, *The Way We Move*. This site is directly adjacent to Jasper Avenue—a designated Transit Avenue which accommodates numerous high-frequency transit routes—and is a short walking distance

to the existing Corona LRT station (800 m) and the future Valley Line LRT station at 104 Avenue and 116 Street. The site is also located with good access to the 102 Avenue Bike Route, which is currently under construction.

In addition, the proposed rezoning would also require secure bicycle parking for residents and additional bicycle parking for visitors that would support use of the 102 Avenue bike route.

Oliver Area Redevelopment Plan

The proposed development meets the overall intent of the Oliver ARP as it calls for the neighbourhood to be the high-density residential core to the City with a mix of residential dwelling types including family-oriented housing. The proposed design creatively integrates a townhouse podium and commercial podium into the development to activate the street.

Winter Design Guidelines

The proposed design supports the principles and guidelines outlined in the City of Edmonton Winter City Design Guidelines. The ground level is articulated and incorporates distinct, bright colours to provide visual interest at the pedestrian level and minimize wind tunneling. Landscaping supports the use of hearty and local materials with colour to provide visual interest in all seasons. Canopies along Jasper Avenue and the south portion of 115 Street provide weather protection on the main commercial pedestrian streets.