

1266 Queen Street West - Demolition and New Construction on a Designated Heritage Property under Part V, Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act - Approval

Date: October 28, 2025

To: Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

Wards: Ward 4 - Parkdale - High Park

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the demolition of an existing building on a non-contributing property located at 1266 Queen Street West within the Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District (PHCD) and approve the erection of a replacement building in accordance with Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

A Zoning By-law Amendment to construct a 24-storey tower with a 5-storey podium at this property was approved in June 2024. A revision to this application to facilitate the construction of a new 27-storey tower mixed-use building with a 4-storey podium building is currently being considered by Community Planning staff. The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to approvals required under the Ontario Heritage Act.

As the Parkdale Heritage Conservation District (PHCD) Plan is in force and effect the proposed demolition and new construction requires approval under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act and needs to be assessed in relation to the policies and objectives of the PHCD Plan. Heritage Planning staff have reviewed the application and consider that it complies with the PHCD Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council approve the demolition of the 'non-contributing' building and the erection of a new 27-storey mixed-use building at 1266 Queen Street West, in the Parkdale Main

Street Heritage Conservation District (PHCD) in accordance with subsections 42(1) 4 and 42(1) 2 of the Ontario Heritage Act, and subject to the following conditions:

- a. that the related Zoning By-law Amendment has come into full force and effect;
- b. that the replacement building for 1266 Queen Street West is constructed substantially in accordance with the submitted plans as shown in the plans and elevations submitted by the applicant and prepared by BDP Quadrangle dated August 1, 2025, on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning; and
- c. that if construction works with respect to the replacement building for 1266 Queen Street West have not commenced within one-year of the issuance of a demolition permit for the demolition of the existing non-contributing property the owner shall:
 1. provide an Interim Landscape Plan for the treatment of the site to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning; and
 2. implement the approved Interim Landscape Plan within three-months of its approval and maintain it until the commencement of construction of the approved replacement building to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

City Planning confirms there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 19, 2022, City Council adopted the Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District Plan as the district plan for the Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District.

[Agenda Item History - 2022.TE34.58](#)

On June 21, 2024, City Council approved the Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) application for the Site—proposing a 24-storey tower with a 5-storey podium, which was originally submitted in April 2023.

[Agenda Item History - 2024.TE15.12](#)

On June 5, 2024 the Parkdale HCD Plan came into force and effect.

BACKGROUND

Proposal

The subject property is located on the north side of Queen Street West, east of Noble Street, and west of the Parkdale Amphitheatre. The site is also directly adjacent to the passenger rail corridor operated by both Metrolinx (GO Transit Georgetown Line) and Canadian Pacific Railway (CP Rail). It contains a 2-storey corner brick building and is located at the eastern end of the Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District (PHCD). Although within the PHCD it is classified as a non-contributing property, meaning it "does not support the overall cultural heritage values, heritage attributes and integrity of the district".

Adjacent Properties

Adjacent to the west, on the other side of Noble Street, is a three-storey brick building at 1274-1280 Queen Street West. This contributing property forms part of the continuous streetwall of fine-grained historic properties with ground floor commercial uses that characterises this part of Queen Street West and the Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District.

Opposite the subject property at 1229 Queen Street West is the Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre. This is a non-contributing property within the PHCD.

Development Proposal

The original Zoning By-law Amendment application in 2023 for a 24-storey mixed-use building with a 5-storey podium building was submitted before the PHCD Plan was in force and effect. A revised proposal is now being considered by Community Planning staff to construct a new 27-storey mixed-use building with a 4-storey podium building at this property.

The application that is the subject of this report is for the required approvals under the Ontario Heritage Act for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of the new building at 1266 Queen Street West. The owner is seeking heritage approval for the proposed 27-storey mixed-use building (plus mechanical penthouse), instead of the 24-storey building for which they already have planning approval. This is because they anticipate obtaining the planning approvals shortly and do not want delays in their construction schedule which is intended to commence in March 2026. In order to meet this schedule, they wish to commence demolition at the end of December/early January and therefore need City Council to grant the required approval under the Ontario Heritage Act for the demolition at their meeting on December 16-18, 2025.

The proposed new 27-storey building includes a 4-storey podium fronting Queen Street West. It has an 18m step back at the 5th floor along the Queen Street West frontage and a 3.3m step back along Noble Street. A 4.5m setback from the amphitheatre to the east is also proposed. The new building is intended to contain rental residential units with retail along the Queen Street West frontage at ground floor level.

Heritage Planning Policy Framework

The City of Toronto Official Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policy applies to heritage conservation districts and proposed new construction:

3.1.6.33 Heritage Conservation Districts should be managed and conserved by approving only those alterations, additions, new development, demolitions, removals and public works in accordance with respective Heritage Conservation District plans.

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/citygovernment/planning-development/official-planguidelines/official-plan/>

Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District (PHCD)

The property at 1266 Queen Street West is within the boundaries of the Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District (PHCD) Plan. The PHCD Plan works to protect the character of the District, conserve existing heritage attributes and resources, and guide future development. The subject property is identified as 'non-contributing' within the PHCD, meaning that it does not support the overall cultural heritage values, character and integrity of the District.

The PHCD Plan's objectives include ensuring that new development respects the historic scale, form and massing of its contributing properties and the District's general built form pattern. The following policies have guided the review of the subject application:

7.4.1 The demolition of buildings or structures on non-contributing properties may be permitted, upon satisfaction of policy 7.4.2 of this Plan.

7.4.2 If permission to demolish a building or structure on a non-contributing property is granted, demolition activity shall not begin until plans for the replacement building(s) or structure(s) have been submitted and approved by Toronto City Council, and a heritage permit issued by the City.

7.5.2 New development and additions to non-contributing properties shall be physically and visually compatible with the District's cultural heritage value and heritage attributes, including the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of any adjacent contributing properties.

7.5.3 New development and additions to non-contributing properties shall not negatively impact the cultural heritage value, heritage attributes and integrity of the District and any adjacent contributing properties.

7.6.1 New development and additions to non-contributing properties shall be designed to be compatible with the design, scale, massing and form of adjacent contributing properties.

7.6.2 The base building portion of new development on non-contributing properties shall be designed to be compatible with the design, scale, height, massing and form of adjacent contributing properties and the District's heritage attributes.

7.6.3 New development on non-contributing properties shall be set back the same distance as the primary structure on adjacent contributing properties.

7.6.4 New development on non-contributing properties shall be designed with a streetwall that references the height of adjacent contributing properties and contributing properties of the block where it is located.

7.6.5 Any portion of new development and additions to non-contributing properties that are taller than adjacent contributing properties and contributing properties of the block where it is located shall provide a minimum stepback of 5.0 metres from the streetwall of adjacent contributing properties and contributing properties of the block where it is located to maintain the legibility and prominence of the low-scale streetwall.

7.6.6 Where new development and additions to non-contributing properties exceeds a height of 16.5 metres, those portions of the uppermost storey shall provide an additional minimum stepback of 3.0 metres beyond the minimum 5.0 metre stepback to support and reinforce the historic streetwall.

7.6.7 New development and additions to non-contributing corner properties shall provide a minimum stepback of 1.5 metres to maintain the streetwall height of their Queen Street West frontage.

7.7.1 New development and additions on non-contributing properties shall conserve the horizontal rhythm articulated in the façades of adjacent contributing properties.

7.7.2 New development and additions on non-contributing properties shall conserve the vertical rhythm articulated in the façades of adjacent contributing properties.

7.7.3 New development and additions on non-contributing properties shall reference existing proportions and solid-to-void ratios found prevailing in the District.

7.8.2 New rooftop elements on non-contributing properties, including but not limited to mechanical penthouses, vents, drainage components, sustainable technologies, including solar panels and wind generators, satellite dishes, skylights, metal chimneys, flues and decks shall not detract from the public realm, excluding laneways, where technically possible.

7.9.1 New development on non-contributing properties should incorporate traditional storefront compositions (e.g. recessed entry, bulkhead, transom windows, display windows, piers, signage band, storefront cornice, etc.), and should be physically and visually compatible with the heritage attributes of the District.

7.10.1 The exterior walls of new development and additions on non-contributing properties, that are visible from the public realm, shall be designed in a manner that anticipates their visibility and is physically and visually compatible with the District's

cultural heritage value and heritage attributes and does not negatively impact the historic character of the adjacent contributing properties.

7.10.2 Cladding materials used on exterior walls of new development on non-contributing properties, that are visible from the public realm, shall be physically and visually compatible with the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the District and shall not negatively impact the historic character of the adjacent contributing properties.

The Parkdale Main Street HCD Plan can be found here: [Parkdale Main Street HCD Plan](#)

COMMENTS

New Construction

The proposed new building is taller than the scheme that was approved in 2024 but the design has been refined to relate better to its context within the now in force PHCD. The podium has been lowered to 4-storeys and is set back by 18m which is considerably greater than the stepped podium previously proposed. The 4-storey podium is taller than that of the adjacent streetwall of contributing properties on the other side of Noble Street but its separation from these properties by the road mitigates the impact of this height difference. The visual impact of this height difference is further mitigated by the presence of the taller modern community healthcare building opposite and the proximity of the site at the far eastern end of the HCD. The massing also includes set backs and stepbacks to the east by the amphitheatre. Staff consider the proposed massing to be compatible with adjacent contributing properties.

The proposed new building will be clad in red brick and brick-embedded precast concrete to ensure that it would compatibly fit into its context along this part of Queen Street West. It includes a regular grid of windows and brick piers between the storefronts that relates to the fine-grained built form of the adjacent contributing properties within the PHCD. The new store fronts are taller than those of the adjacent contributing properties and they do not include all the features of traditional storefronts of Queen Street West. They do however include piers between the storefront, glazed panels to which signage can be fixed and low bases that slope to relate to the grade change. Being separated from the adjacent contributing properties by Noble Street the proposed storefront design is not considered to negatively impact the historic character of the adjacent contributing properties.

The policies within the PHCD Plan permit the demolition of non-contributing buildings provided that plans for the replacement building have been approved by Toronto City Council. This is in order to encourage development taking place in a timely fashion and to prevent vacant undeveloped land sitting awaiting construction for extended periods of time. The guidelines in the PHCD Plan therefore seek construction of the replacement building to commence as soon as possible after the demolition has occurred. They also say that, if unforeseen delays occur between demolition and construction activity commencing, an interim landscaping treatment should be implemented.

In this case the applicant wishes to obtain approval for the demolition of the existing building prior to the approval building permits for the new building having approval. This is in order to allow construction to commence in early 2026 and also because the existing building is vacant and, although secured, it has been subject to break-ins and gatherings. The applicant does not anticipate construction delays but has agreed to implement an interim landscape plan if unforeseen delays prevent construction commencing. Staff are recommending a condition is included to ensure that this takes place in line with the provisions of the PHCD Plan.

The applicant also wishes to bring forward the application for approval under the Ontario Heritage Act prior to the final Planning Act approvals for the revised development. This is because the applicant anticipates obtaining full planning approval soon and wishes to commence demolition as soon as possible so that construction activity can commence in Spring 2026. Staff have advised the applicant that any changes to the design of the proposed new building as a result of the ongoing Planning Act review process would be subject to further heritage review and, if not in compliance with the PHCD Plan may require further approvals under the Ontario Heritage Act.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommend approval of the heritage permit application to permit the demolition of the existing building on the non-contributing property to facilitate the construction of a new 27-storey mixed-use tower with a 4-storey podium. The proposed new building is considered compatible with that of the adjacent heritage buildings and staff consider that the application conserves the cultural heritage values of the PHCD.

As such Heritage Planning staff are of the opinion the proposal is consistent with the Parkdale Main Street Conservation District Plan and other applicable policies and guidelines. It is therefore recommended that City Council approve the application under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Location Map

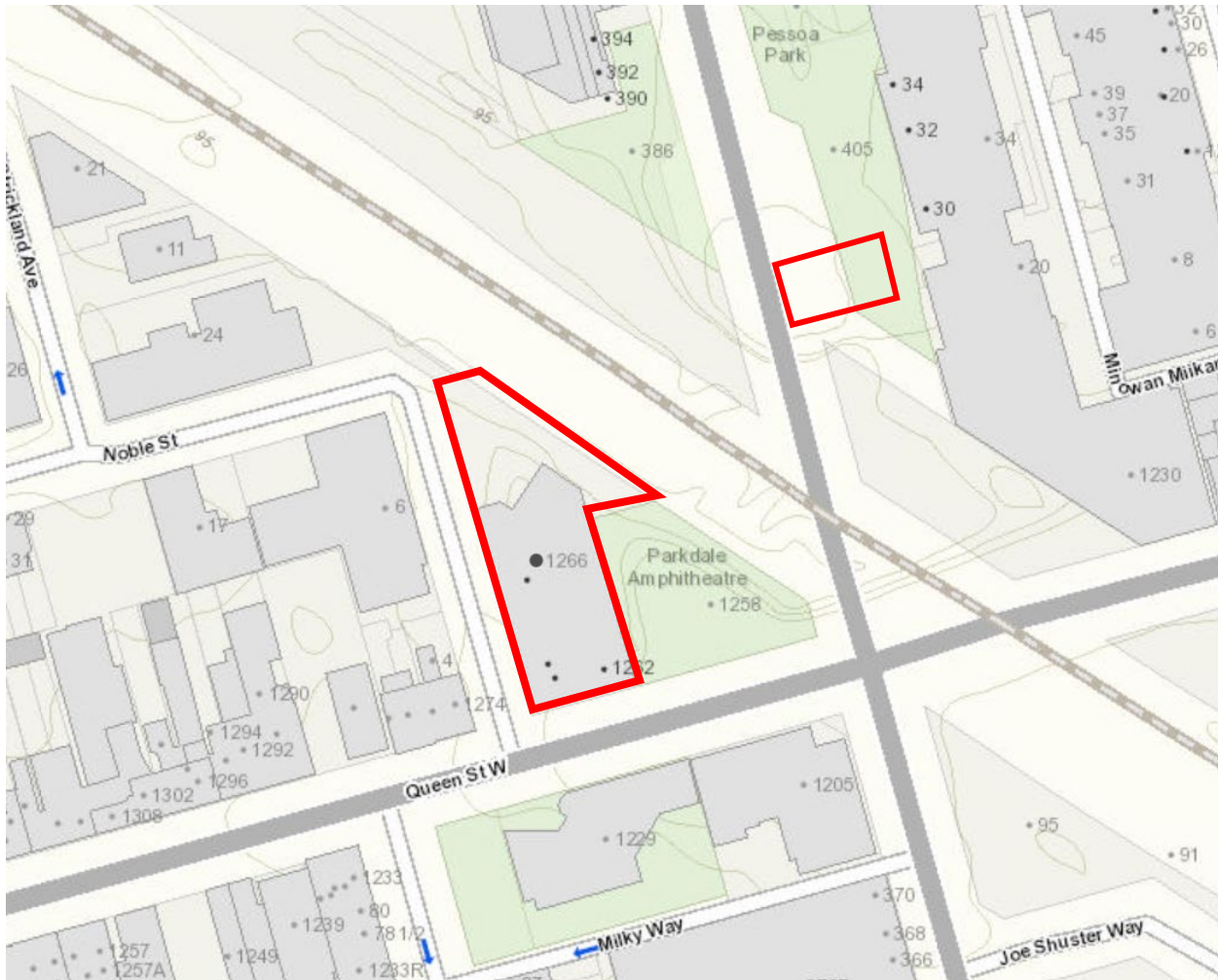
Attachment 2: Photographs of existing buildings

Attachment 3: Drawings of proposed replacement building

LOCATION MAP

ATTACHMENT 1

1266 Queen Street West



Location Map showing the development site in context of the surrounding area.
(Source - City of Toronto Data Map)

1266 Queen Street West



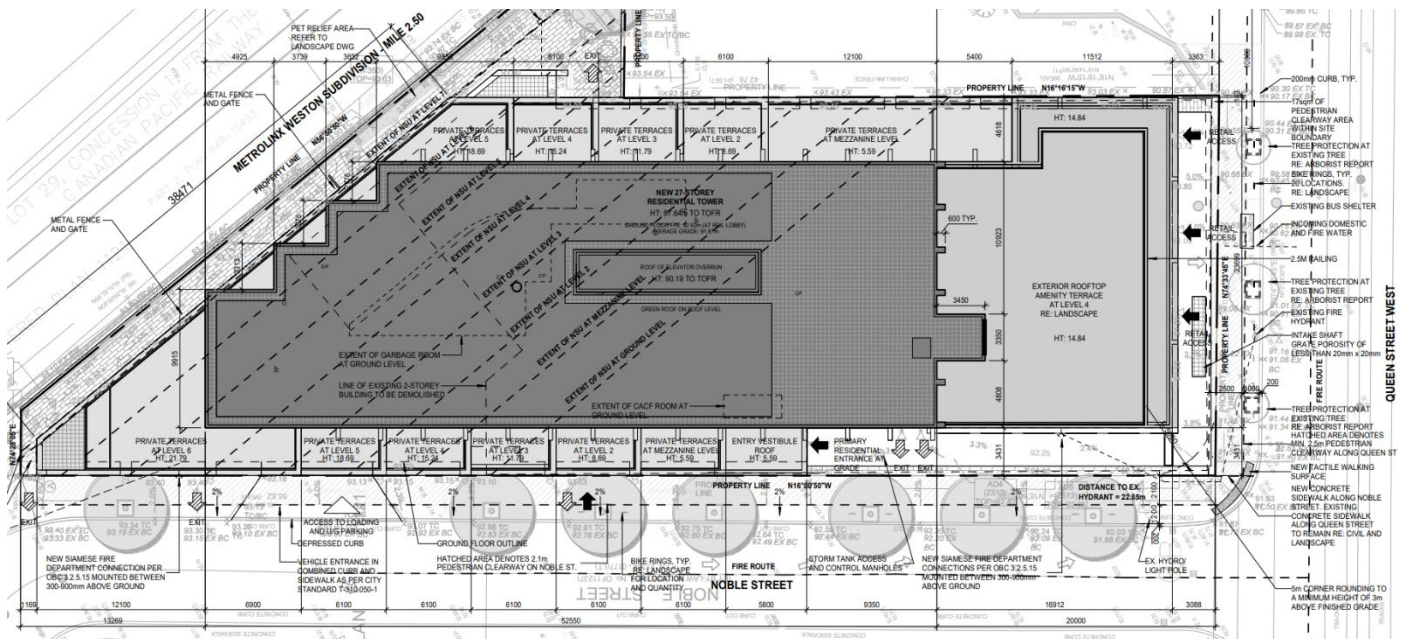
View of the primary façade (south) of building elevation at 1266 Queen Street W (Source: Heritage Planning, 2025).



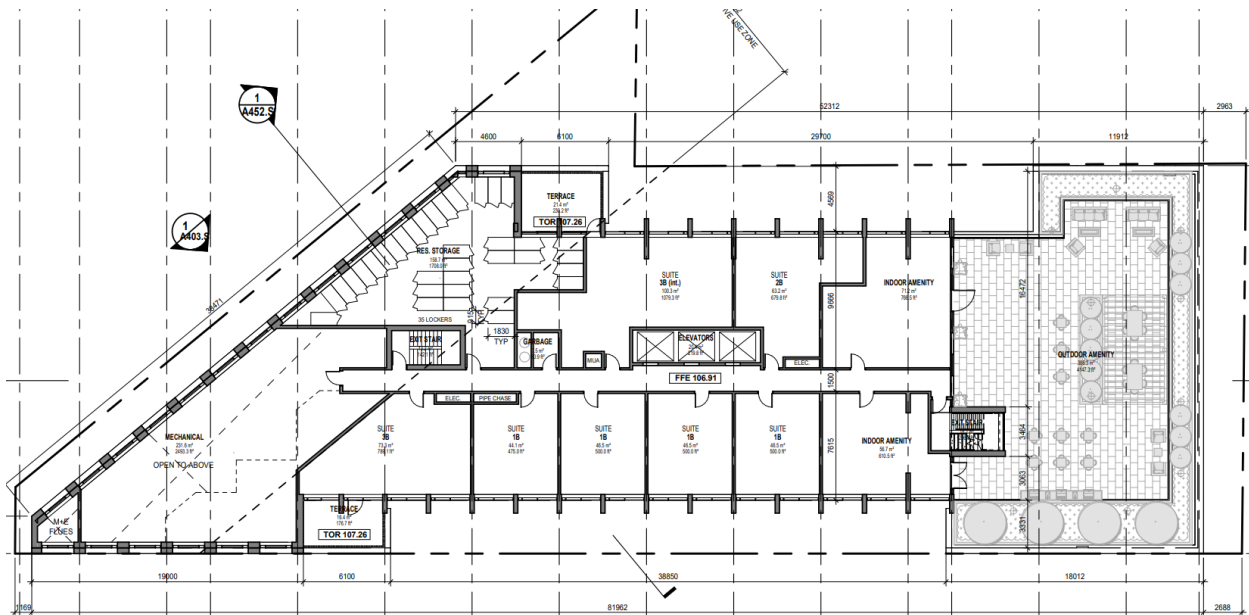
View of west elevation of building at 1266 Queen Street W and adjacent contributing property at 1274 Queen Street West (Source: Heritage Planning, 2025).

1266 Queen Street West

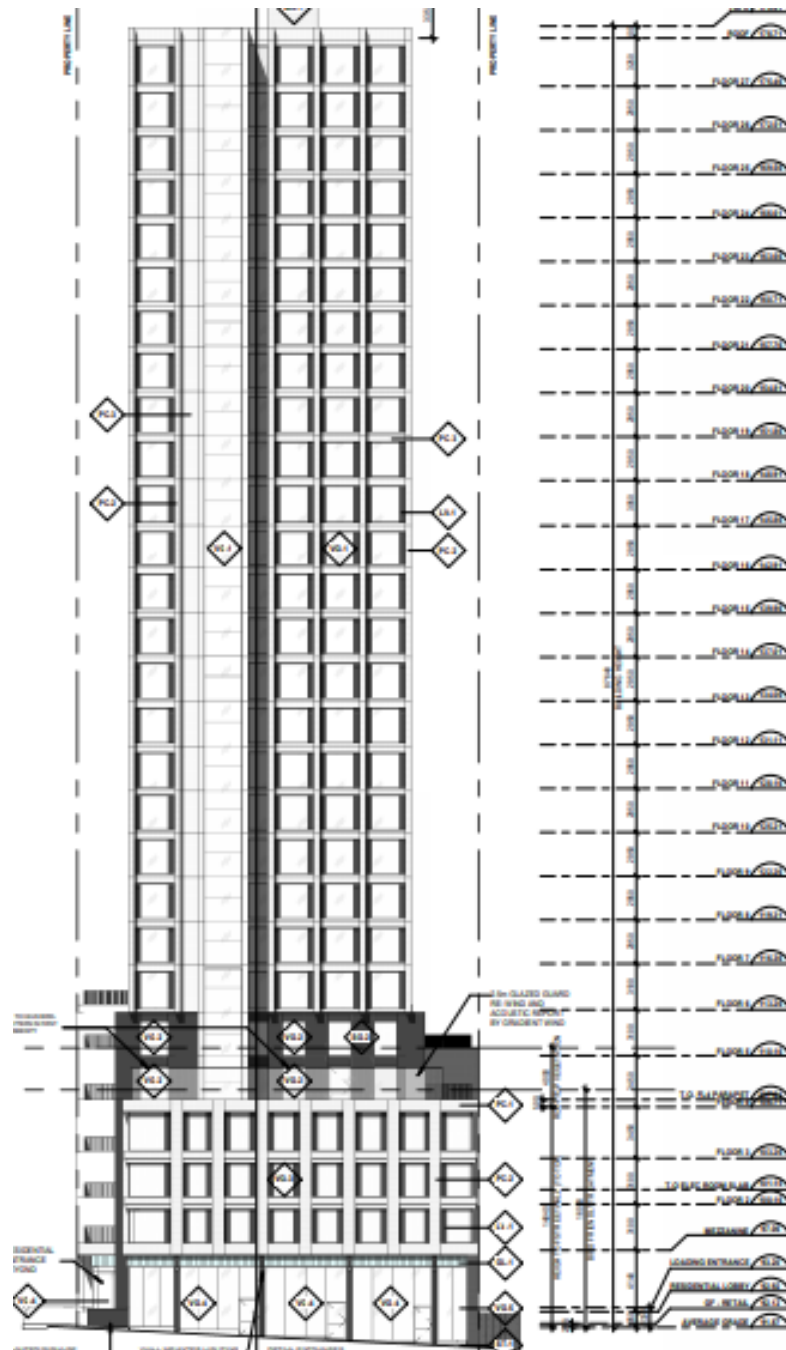
ATTACHMENT 3



Site Plan (Source: BDP Quadrangle, 2025)



Fifth Floor Plan showing stepbacks (Source: BDP Quadrangle, 2025)



South (primary) Elevation along Queen Street West. Context of new four storey podium building with ground floor storefronts and new 27-storey tower building stepped back behind the podium building (Source: BDP Quadrangle, 2025)



Partial south (primary) elevation showing horizontal and vertical articulation of podium building along Queen Street West and new contemporary storefront composition at the ground floor (Source: BDP Quadrangle, 2025).



Partial south (primary) elevation showing horizontal, vertical articulation and storefront compositions of new 4-storey podium in relation to the contributing buildings located at 1274-1280 Queen Street (Source: BDP Quadrangle, 2025)



Proposed rendering of south and east elevations of building at 1266 Queen Street West (Source: BDP Quadrangle, 2025).