

Thinking small can be a big idea

BY DAVID PARKER, FOR THE CALGARY HERALD OCTOBER 25, 2012

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A number of office towers are being built, or are in various stages of planning, within the downtown and Beltline districts.

A pedestrian in the core will notice lots of activity that will eventually offer large floor plates and opportunities for companies wanting to lease areas of stacked contiguous space.

However, there is also a need for new, modern offices that allow a company to lease attractive space in a smaller, less imposing environment.

Frank Lonardelli, CEO of Arlington Street Investments, has provided that opportunity with the soon-to-be-ready boutique space in his restored building at 718 8th Avenue S.W.



Final Rendering for 718 – 8th Avenue

He purchased the two-storey building, took it down to the steel, and rebuilt it with new envelope, windows and mechanical/electrical as a classy four-storey with retail space on the ground floor and three levels of offices.

Designed by Duel Architecture of Calgary, it sports a glass enclosed elevator tower on the west end looking out onto 8th Avenue. It opens up directly into the offices that wrap around it so that each tenant will have a complete floor of 6,683 square feet. All have 14-to 16-foot ceiling heights.

CBRE's Trevor Davies is responsible for leasing the office floors and John Moss, also with CBRE, is marketing the main floor retail, which is expected to be leased for restaurant/ food and beverage use.

Lonardelli is a quality developer who prides himself in providing space the end user will feel great about; he is relocating his head office into the top floor using DIRTT walls and furnishings.

The project was built under a new partnership that Lonardelli formed in order to create a team that could work together to provide continuity of values. Lon-ardelli seeks, secures and arranges financing for developments and along with his in-house development director Ralph Bennetsen, Ikon Construction is the builder and Julie Okamura and her Pop Design Group create the interior designs. The same partnership group of Arlington Street is currently working on three other developments. Two are on strategic

locations along 17th Avenue S.W. where Lonardelli is assembling two blocks to convert into new four-storey retail/office buildings.

And one that is progressing well is the Britannia Block that covers the frontage along the east side of Elbow Drive between 50th and 51st Avenues S.W.

Designed by Kasian Architecture, the main floor of the 130,000-square-foot building will be available for unique food or service providers. Lonardelli is a resident of the area and knows the retail needs of the people and that there is a lack of services; but a decision has yet to be made as to the usage of the other four storeys.

Arlington is sensitive to feedback from the community before determining what the project will evolve into. He is in the process of setting up town hall meetings so that residents of the surrounding areas of Britannia, Bel-Aire, Elboya and Windsor Park are able to voice their opinion as to what they would like to see built on the brownfield site. The Symphony Seniors Residence Development is to be built two blocks to the north and another mixed use development is planned for the west side of Elbow Drive.

Since moving to Calgary from Winnipeg in 2000 Lonardelli has amassed a portfolio of buildings in the Inglewood, Ogden and Victoria Park districts and more recently re-developed a 23,000 square foot building on the corner of 10th Avenue and 7th Street S.W. Across Canada his portfolio is now well in excess of \$150 million.

David Parker appears Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Read his columns online at CalgaryHerald.com/Business. He can be reached at 403-830-4622 or e-mail info@DavidParker.ca

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