

Arlington Street has big designs for 17th Avenue



DAVID PARKER, CALGARY HERALD

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Arlington Street Investments president and CEO Frank Lonardelli built the four-storey commercial tower on 8th Avenue S.W. just to the west of the Uptown Theatre block where his head office is housed.

Under construction is The Windsor, a five-storey, mixed-use commercial project on the strategic corner of Elbow Drive and 50th Avenue S.W., surrounded by the communities of Elboya, Windsor and Britannia.

Designed by NORR Architects and built by Clark Builders, the structure will house almost 20,000 square feet of retail on the ground floor and an additional 5,000 square feet on the second. The remaining 70,000 square feet will be built for offices.

Lonardelli's new focus is squarely on 17th Avenue between Macleod Trail in the southeast to 14th Street S.W. At the vibrant southwest intersection of 17th Avenue and 14th Street, Arlington Street purchased what many people still refer to as the Bank of Nova Scotia block but was known more recently as a retail outlet for American Apparel.

It has been fully leased to Prema Sai Wholistic Living, a clinic with the goal of transforming health care by a variety of different bodywork sessions including massage, acupuncture and detox services consulting with Calgary's best practitioners.

Kitty corner to that site, Arlington Street has purchased the 36,000-square-foot Condon Building and Lonardelli has great plans to transform it and the parking area into a new Sentinel Block. He wants to create a village atmosphere with a design of retail that will include a grocery store on the main floor and a high tower of residential rental suites bringing more shoppers to walk the avenue.

The company already owns the block of 17th Avenue at 1st Street S.E. The next piece of land to be redeveloped will be the assembly it has purchased between College Lane and the Bank of Montreal branch at 7th Street S.W.

Designed by McKinley Burkart architects and interior designers, the dramatic High Street project is influenced by a New York Italian market concept.

Preliminary designs show a high-end restaurant on the ground floor. On the second will be a cooking school, bakery, wine boutique and grab-and-go foods. Floors three and four will be for office lease and the fifth floor will house a large 8,000-square-foot retail area connected to the second floor by an open glass stairwell and elevator.

It will be a casual, open area with kitchen for simple pastas, wine and beer, a variety of foods for sale and feature an atrium with retractable roof offering wonderful views of the downtown skyline to the north.

Lonardelli has a vision to see all of 17th Avenue as a destination, not just individual stores, so he is keen on providing space for unique shops. He will be in even more control of his idea as he also is in the final stages of negotiations to buy two more major sites he wants to develop along the avenue.