

Applicant Submission

September 10, 2019

Northland Village Mall today is a traditional indoor mall established in the 70s and 80s. It has served the neighbourhoods of Dalhousie, Brentwood, Varsity, Silver Springs and University Heights for many decades. With changing customer demands and lifestyles, the need for traditional malls to transform is inevitable in modern times. The owner, Primaris REIT, first looked at redevelopment of the site in 2014/15 which resulted in a comprehensive plan to turn the site into a mixed-use development. More density was achieved by adding a 5-level above-ground parkade structure which allowed to occupy today's surface parking areas to develop multi-story retail, residential and office buildings. In 2015, a Master Concept Plan was approved by CPC and the Land Use Amendment to include residential use on the site was passed by Council.

Since then, the economic landscape in Alberta and specifically Calgary has changed dramatically, which forced the development and design team to take a new look at a thoughtful and feasible redevelopment of the site. The office market in Calgary has plummeted which made the development of new office space in an area with little rapid public transport (no LRT station) unfeasible. Further, some of the already confirmed tenants had left the Alberta market due to the economic downturn.

The amended Master Concept Plan builds on the planning considerations from 2015. Urban planning principles to tie the site further into the surrounding urban fabric are applied. A new urban street grid with wide, landscaped sidewalks will be established as a base for future development.

The proposed initial phase (Phase 1) is comprised of approximately 400,000 SF and a new 6 storey residential building containing approximately 247 units. A residential development with grade accessible residential units will add activity and vibrancy to the central Plaza, Northland Drive and the two gateway streets on the site. Residential use will provide activity and vibrancy at all hours of the day and increase a sense of community for Northland Mall and the surrounding neighbourhoods. Adding a residential development to the site in the first phase of redevelopment is critical for the success of "Northland" in the short and long term.

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In the initial Redevelopment Phase (Phase 1) some of the existing retail building structures will be retained and refurbished. This approach allows for a more economic and sustainable redevelopment in the short term.

Like the initial proposal from 2015, the centrally located plaza offers the immediate and surrounding community a place to gather, meet, play and eat. The plaza is the main public amenity on the site, scaled for the neighbourhood and designed to provide a comfortable environment. It is located strategically along “The Avenue”, the new primary retail street on the site and also forms an important connection point to the west and east of the development.

Pocket parks form to welcome pedestrians and bicyclists to Northland at its main access points and then connect through a wide pathway system across the site.

All public amenity spaces on the site are planned to remain through future phases so landscape elements may mature and beautify the spaces over time without disruption.

The layout of the site sets this development up for smart urban growth in the future while allowing the retailers to build strong businesses while the residential and office density increases on the site over time. Future Phases can infill today’s surface parking lots and densify the site in an organic and market-oriented way that will contribute to Northland Mall establishing into a successful Neighbourhood Center over time.