



Date: September 07, 2016

Office of the Councillors
800 Macleod Tr. SE.
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 2M5
Ph: 403-268-2430

Re: **Land-Use Amendment-Manchester Industrial (Ward 9)-Macleod Trail SW & 60th Ave. SW**
Proposed Bylaw 219D2016; CPC2016-218; LOC2015-0215

To the Mayor and City Councillors of the City of Calgary,

On July 14th, 2016, Lansdowne Equity Ventures Ltd.'s application for Land-Use Amendment (LOC2015-0215), pertaining to its current 'Harvester' site, located at 6008 Macleod Trail SW (Plan 5444W, Block A, Lot 4), came forward for review and approval by the City of Calgary's Planning Commission (CPC).

The intent of this application is to add and ensure the maximum and appropriate (permitted and discretionary) land uses to the existing site, while the site itself does not change, nor require improvements to accommodate those land uses. The application changes the existing DC Bylaw (41D2008), which is cumbersome and limited in granting such feasible uses. The existing DC Bylaw is to be re-written and amended, bringing it up to date and in-line with a more appropriate current COR-1 style of DC Bylaw, which is in keeping with the current City Land-use Bylaw (1P2007). This effort actually promotes the intent of the devised Chinook Station Area Plan, which advocates for greater/higher density uses, encompassing both mixed and commercial uses.

To this effect, CPC appreciated the soundness of the application, and promotes its approval by City Council. In so saying, through debate, questions of viability and the promotion of future development stagnancy were brought forward. It is here that Lansdowne would like to make comment for clarity and perspective.

To site CPC Councillor Foht, the existing Harvester site currently has vacancies that are hard to occupy with tenants that need to maximize their rental investment. By allowing the Land-use Amendment application, it becomes viable to keep the site economically alive, rather than vacant within the area, due to limited uses. As Councillor Foht aptly noted, "...this amendment will allow a use to bridge the time between now and when the market dictates a redevelopment...." (July, 2016); therein is the key to this letter.

Economics is the key factor in the entire Chinook Station Area Plan (TOD). There was expressed concern by CPC Councillor Morrow, that by allowing a DC Bylaw, complete with an extended list of permitted and discretionary uses, would in fact (and not just for the Harvester site specific, but all similar areas across the City) impede development moving forward, only providing justification for development stagnancy.

Councillor Morrow raised a fair concern when he stated:

“...it speaks to a broader problem of how we are hindering the development of Transit Orientated Development (TOD) areas by not doing City-Initiated re- designations to match our station area plan... .. we are simply ignoring the station area plan, and this is going to continue to happen and we won’t realize TOD until we proactively change land use to match station area plans...

Though appreciating the sentiment of concern, it is the intent of all redevelopment plans to propose future intended development and gentrification, as and when it can occur, through a viable process. To state specifically, as and when economic means provide opportunity. To advance development, especially gentrification, is a key aspect of increasing not only land values, but site activity and viability; why wouldn’t a developer/landowner not want to advance their viability? The key is growth rather than stagnancy.

BUT - no developer/development would financially proceed without the assurance of market demand. Without that, business models/cash-flows prove and demonstrate financial foolishness to proceed otherwise. Additionally, to develop without a market to support such magnitudes will only create empty centers waiting to be filled by hopeful tenants who intern have no customer base. If tenant and market demands do not exist prior to development, one is only creating a ‘ghost-town’ effect. Which, ironically is the opposite of allowing current sites to function with optimal site uses.

The ambition of the developable site (any site) is to remain viable and active. This in turn generates the economic fuel to promote advancing and densifying sites. The whole intent of this Land-use Amendment application to solely accomplish this purpose. Rather than being restricted in functional opportunity, closing leasable spaces/uses, creating empty spaces that no longer generate revenue to promote and support future development, this application seeks to continue to generate economic vitality that will contribute to the fulfillment of the intentions of the Chinook Stations Area Plan – high density/mix-use.

Lansdowne’s ask of Council is that it would support the approval of this land-use amendment, keeping the existing site economically viable. To site CPC Councillor Friesen: “...Development can be directed and the conditions can allow for good development, but in our system regulators are limited in their ability to initiate development. Ultimately the market must be ready or development will fail...” Without such assurance of market driven viability, development cannot advance; the financial risks are too high. The development and operations of the existing strip mall is completely different than the decision to proceed with the higher density mixed use development

Sincerely



Don Sandford
Executive Vice President
don.sandford@lansdowne.ca
403 254 6440, ext 254
403 585 0024 cellular