

Oct 5, 2020

CONSUMER REAL ESTATE CANADA

The Takeaways & Trends - Cross-Canada Consumer Real Estate Market Conditions Conference Call

FROM MAIN STREET TO THE MAIN MALL AND ANYWHERE THAT RETAIL HAPPENS IN CANADA...KEEPING RETAILERS, FOOD SERVICE SPECIALISTS, E-COMMERCE PROFESSIONALS, RETAIL SPACE BROKERS, BUILDING OWNERS & DEVELOPERS AND INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS CONNECTED!

Hello fellow Canadian consumer real estate professionals, we hope you enjoyed the recent CREC update on Canadian consumer real estate market conditions. Here are the takeaways and trends from our call on Oct. 5, 2020, compiled by the call moderator Michael L. Kehoe...

- In Halifax – several new large-scale mixed-use projects announced or underway on the city's waterfront.
- In Winnipeg – the 650,000 sq. ft. Hudson Bay store on Portage Avenue closing. Building valued at \$0.00 with extensive deferred maintenance.
- New leases for Cannabis stores and QSR brands skewing rents up.
- In Edmonton – 19% downtown office vacancy the 'elephant in the room' on the commercial real estate front.
- In Calgary - turn-key vacant restaurants recently locked in at pre-covid-19 / pre-Alberta recession rental rates. Concern that rents are not sustainable.
- Significant disconnect between landlord expectations on rents and tenant's ability to pay.

Our special guest this week was Lothar Wiwjorra, Senior Urban Designer, Community Planning at The City of Calgary.

Lothar has been busy for the past 12 years changing the face of the retail-built environment especially shopping centres. He noted the following four urban design trends in his remarks to the call participants:

- 1) The approval process at the municipal government level for new retail projects needs to be reformed and 'red-tape' reduced,
- 2) The creation of 'Enterprise Zones' proving to be effective in decreasing approval times related to building permits and change of use,
- 3) The de-malling trend is accelerating as retail properties are evolving and being repurposed in some cases,
- 4) The revival of 'main street' retail environments continues to gain momentum.

Lothar Wiwjorra – wicon@telus.net