

MAKING EXTRAORDINARY PROGRESS DURING CHALLENGING TIMES ***THE RED CEDAR DEVELOPMENT***

By James Young

Spring is here; bright rays of sunlight are now shining onto the critical Michigan Avenue corridor and the Red Cedar Development. This \$250 million-dollar mixed-use project is making significant progress keeping construction phases on time and on schedule. This is great news, especially considering the challenges of current and past COVID-19 guidelines and construction restrictions. It is also a textbook example of a public/private partnership (P3).

*A **public-private partnership (P3)** is an innovative project delivery model that builds upon the strengths of the design-build delivery model. A hallmark of design-build and P3 is upfront collaboration by parties in the design and construction of infrastructure assets that results in increased efficiencies.*



Steady work is being done on both the senior living and market rate housing, which are deep into their construction phases, along with the construction of the two student housing buildings. Branded as University Edge, with the leasing office located conveniently in downtown East Lansing, units are quickly leasing to students for the Fall 2021 semester.

“Despite state-wide construction shutdowns back in early 2020, we’ve made excellent progress thanks to the support, creativity, and teamwork from all involved in this project. Our subcontractors and the entire team have worked together to maintain an aggressive schedule and safe project”, stated Josh Corna, CEO of Continental Building Company.

“I’ve always believed that mid-market development projects hold the greatest potential for the community, for business, and for the region.” said Frank Kass, a founding partner of Continental/Ferguson LLC. “We could not have accomplished this without Mayor Schor’s leadership and the continued support of LEAP.”

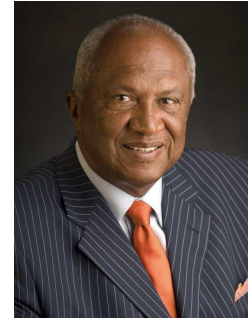


Lansing Mayor Andy Schor agrees. “This is how local government should work. Linking neighbors, commerce, and government to do great things. We are thrilled with the project and excited at the progress being made.”

The construction is utilizing a phased approach that allows for the most efficient path to completion. This process highlights the diversity of the project and its potential impact on local business. Blair Mayes, long time business owner of University Foreign Car ,which is about two blocks away on East Kalamazoo Street says, “It’s going to be a wonderful addition to the community. It’s helping bring MSU closer to Lansing.”



Joel Ferguson, a founding partner of Continental/Ferguson Development LLC, concurs. “The progress we’ve achieved during this challenging time has been nothing short of extraordinary. We need more large-scale projects like this to bring us together and grow as a region.”



Ferguson’s thoughts are reinforced by Mayes. “The project is good for the neighborhood, creates jobs, and helps support businesses in the area. They’re the only developer who cleans up their job site and surrounding streets every day. This project is a huge plus for the city and region. We very much appreciate Mayor Schor and his staff for working closely with us to make it happen.”

“This development will do wonders for our region. The mix of unique lodging and practical amenities and services for residents will showcase our community as both a high demand tourist destination and an exciting place to live”, said State Rep, Sarah Anthony when asked about the impact this will make in the 68th district that she represents.



The Red Cedar project is a true mixed-use development that will connect the State Capitol located in downtown Lansing to Michigan State University and adjacent communities along the Michigan Avenue/Grand River corridor. Long viewed as an important yet under-realized area of possibility, this project will serve as a powerful catalyst for new multi-generational housing, vibrant activity, environmental stewardship, wide-ranging economic impact, and regional pride. In addition, this development supports the work taking place on the Montgomery drain, transforming a long time environmental problem into a beautiful, clean, and natural habitat for all to enjoy.

Lansing City Council Member, Carol Wood expressed what this project means for the community, “The Red Cedar Development Project has been a game changer for our community combining new living spaces with retail and commercial opportunities that create environmentally friendly green and blue space that brings about a unique experience for our region.”

The project will include a dual-brand hotel, market rate housing, senior living, restaurants, student housing, a park, and public amenities. This \$250 million dollar mixed-use development will be a catalyst for the City of Lansing, the Michigan Avenue/Grand River corridor, and the region. The Red Cedar mixed-use development is a perfect example of an urban retrofit for blighted property that is evolving into a development that creates activity in an urban setting, is already creating jobs, enhancing the economy, and will provide community residents with a sense of place while engaging and protecting the environment.



Christopher Stralkowski, Executive Project Manager for Continental/Ferguson Development LLC, recognized the hard work of all who contributed to this undertaking, stating: “Instrumental to our success was the dedication and support of Mayor Schor and his staff, along with previous city leadership, LEAP, the Lansing Brownfield Development Authority, Williamstown Township, all of the citizens participating in numerous community meetings, and of course, Lansing City Council.” Stralkowski is excited about the next phase and noted that, when it opens, he expects it to result in what the 2020 Economic/Fiscal Regional Impact Study conducted by the Anderson Economic Group described as *“one of the most economically impactful mixed-use development projects we have studied.”*

This project is a model of how a public/private partnership can be a force for positive change. Ferguson described the many challenges with a project of this magnitude, acknowledging how “the current and past leadership and staff at MEDC helped us refine and enhance the Red Cedar project to bring a bright future for Lansing and the region.” For more information, contact: Christopher Stralkowski, MEd., Executive Project Manager - cstralkowski@gmail.com or 219 898 6667

To learn more about student housing, visit <https://liveuniversityedge.com>.

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