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News / Edmonton

Edmonton's Jasper House permit approval contingent on public art

Public art remains the final hurdle for a massive downtown condominium project to get approval from the City of Edmonton, its developer says.



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An artist's rendering of the planned luxury condo development Jasper House in downtown Edmonton.

By: **Matt Kietlyka** Metro Published on Wed Mar 01 2017

The final roadblock for a luxury downtown condominium's development permit is public art.

The Jasper House condo project has the potential to revitalize the city's warehouse district, according to its Toronto developer, Brad Lamb, but the 36-storey project has been stuck in the city's rezoning and permitting process since 2014.

City planner Andrew McLellan said Tuesday the finish line is in sight.

"I don't think it's useful to get into a debate about whose fault it is, or anything. But there have been some hurdles that have had to be overcome along the way and we are getting into the final stages of that process," McLellan said.

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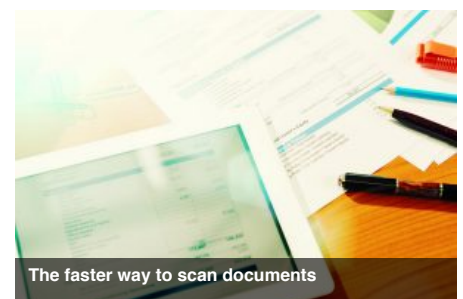
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Before the city will grant Lamb Development Corp. that long-awaited permit, it wants more information on the required public art contribution, of up to \$150,000, at Jasper House.



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An artist's rendering of the planned luxury condo development Jasper House in downtown Edmonton.

Specifically, McLellan wants to know how accessible the planned installation will be and whether it adds to the public experience.

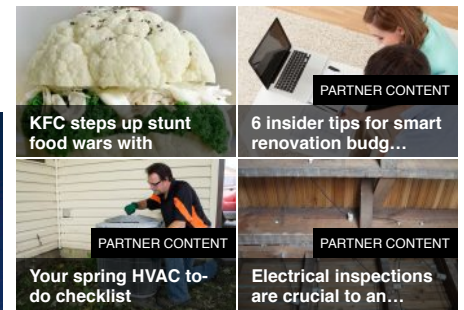
Reports last year suggested the developer intentionally delayed the project due to Alberta's slow economy, something Lamb denies.

"By no means am I complaining. I'm happy with how the city process has treated me. But the reality is that you cannot build a building without a permit," Lamb told Metro Tuesday. "We have had our foot to the gas since I closed on this in 2014. Buyers are unhappy, the media likes to talk about why this thing is late but it's got nothing to do with us. It has to do with the process."

After that is sorted and a development permit is secured, Lamb will need a building permit before breaking ground.

Best-case scenario for that, he said, is early next year. But it will be worth the wait. "I'm interested in this area," Lamb said.

"I think the warehouse area is the future of downtown Edmonton. Alberta has lived



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through an economic shit storm over the last two years ... but I suspect that there will be steady job growth and population growth in Edmonton for the next 30 years. I like what the city is doing. There's a lot of opportunity for people to develop in that city in every way."

Lamb describes the art piece as a modern re-interpretation of a city gate.

"The idea is you kind of enter into the city through these gates, even though it's just Jasper House that you're entering," he said. "They're incredibly, beautifully, modernly ornate. It's different. It's not a traditional type of art, like a sculpture of a fat guy spinning around on one foot. Or a horse."

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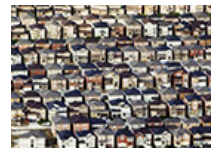
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