

2016 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALTERNATE USES FOR REDUNDANT OFFICE HIGH RISES

Innovative ideas for Edmonton from around the world



downtown
business
association

The vacancy rate in commercial office spaces is at a high. With an increase to 15.3% in Q2 of 2016 from 9.83% in Q1 of 2016, there is a lot of concern about the future of older buildings that are currently vacant or expected to become vacant soon.

In the early 2000s, a similar problem was thwarted by a funding program that assisted in development of residential units in Edmonton. The possibility of conversion of office buildings has come up again now and the options are plenty.

There are many different ways to use vacant office buildings or even vacant spaces in office buildings. Examples of these can be seen in different cities from around the world. The following are a few examples that were identified based on similarity to Edmonton and for their innovativeness.



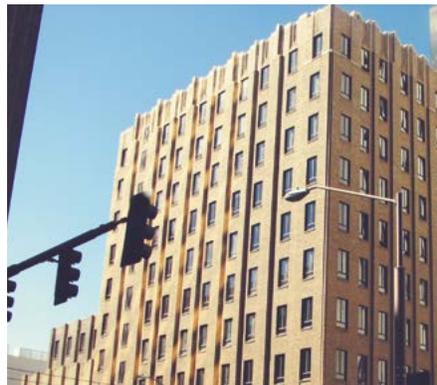
The Arc, Chicago
Floors: 17 | Age: 123 years
Premium Student Housing



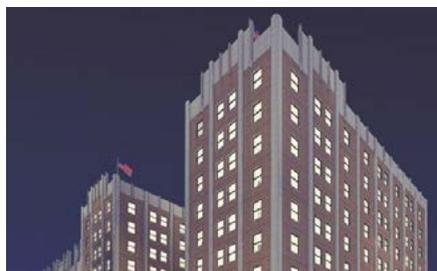
Rembrandt Building, Amsterdam
Floors: 20 | Age: 43 years
Hotel + Hotel School + Housing



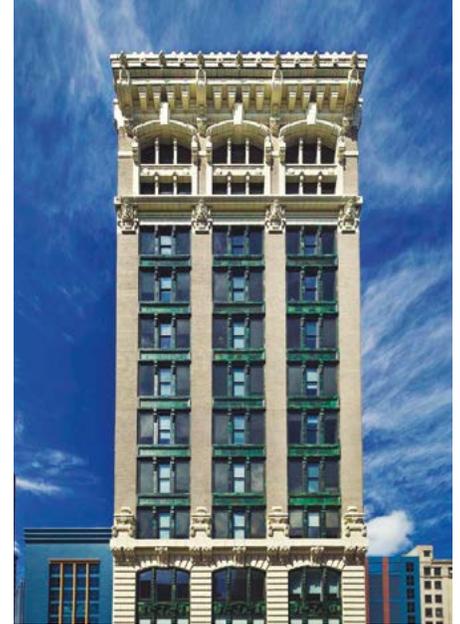
Bridgell Residences, Sydney
Floors: 16 | Age: 35 years
Luxury Residential Lofts



Orpheum Lofts, Phoenix
Floors: 11 | Age: Over 80 years
Residential Lofts



Brookfield Building, Kansas
Floors: 12 | Age: 86 years
Hotel + Apartments



Century Building, Pittsburgh
Floors: 12 | Age: 109 years
Affordable Housing + Retail



Elsevier Building, Amsterdam
Floors: 11 | Age: 52 years
Student Housing

OTHER INNOVATIVE USES

MICRO APARTMENTS

A huge advantage with micro apartments is the way it can be incorporated into existing space without major changes in the layout of the columns of the building. With technology today, most components of these buildings can be prefabricated and fitted into older buildings. Micro apartments have already become a trend in many cities around the world; they even have a premium category for those who want to cater to that demographic.

DOG-FRIENDLY APARTMENTS

It's a well-known fact that bringing dogs into a neighbourhood makes the region livelier. It increases the activity in the community by means of dog walks and interactions between dog owners. It was found that a majority of the population still finds the downtown area to be unsafe. Having dogs in the region could potentially eliminate that notion. It worked in making LA's downtown safer. It could do the same for Edmonton too.

TOWER GARDENS

It is the idea of growing produce inside a concrete building away from sunlight. Tower gardens don't necessarily need all the space in a building to be implemented. Even with just one floor, or space divided among multiple floors, tower gardens can be used to grow produce for "Farm to desk" programs in companies or can even be used to sell at farmers' markets in the city. These systems have been adopted in numerous cities around the world, even in Edmonton.

MULTIGENERATIONAL DORMITORIES

A fairly newer concept that has proven to be rather successful. The idea of bringing together different age groups into one living space not only increases engagement within the building, but is also a great solution to provide additional housing options to the aging population of Edmonton.



