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PROPERTY HIGHLIGHTS

**NEWTON SHOPPING CENTRE MAKEOVER!
AFFORDABLE RETAIL SPACE!**

LOCATION: NEWTON CENTRE

12139-54 STREET, EDMONTON, AB

FOR LEASE

**1,184 SQ.FT RETAIL, COFFEE SHOP, BAKERY,
PROFESSIONAL OFFICE**

- BASE RENT - \$14/SQ.FT
- EXPOSURE TO BUSY TRAFFIC/BUS ROUTE
- EXCELLENT SIGNAGE OPPORTUNITY
- OP COSTS - \$4.45 (EST FOR 2016): PLUS WATER
- AMPLE SURFACE PARKING STALLS
- ACROSS FROM 2 SCHOOLS

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IN THE NEWS!

Courtesy of Edmonton Journal - March 5, 2016

In the Newton neighbourhood, business owners are nearly giddy with enthusiasm over their bright new façade and the possibility of a barbecue/bouncy castle grand opening.

After years of debate, city planners believe they've finally found a solution to help reinvigorate at least some of the aging strip malls tucked out of sight in mature neighbourhoods across Edmonton. Newton, near Beverly, is one of their first. Ritchie Four Corners and Elmwood Centre are also going well, and city councilors just endorsed a plan to add five more pilot sites to the program.

"It's terrific. It's the best thing that ever happened in our neighbourhood," said Katherine Holyk, whose father started Holyk's Denture Centre in 1983. She now owns the store.

Her longtime clients are thrilled with the bright new white and red look, vintage murals and trees. New clients from the neighbourhood are also noticing her new sign and stopping in.

Jocelyn Dearing estimates business is up 20 per cent for the K J bowling alley with new party bookings, especially since the new Newton Centre Website went up. Shelly's Food Store owner Dave Agnihotri says he's seen a significant increase in walk-in traffic. In one year, all but one vacancy on the strip has been filled. There's a new daycare, donair shop and fitness centre.

Together, business owners are planning the grand opening. They think it could be the first neighbourhood-wide party in years.

Edmonton has more than 100 strip malls scattered throughout its mature neighbourhoods. Many are several blocks off the main roads and grew quiet over the years as residents drove past them to larger shopping centres. It's gotten so bad, the University of Alberta planning school sponsored an international competition in 2011 to see how imaginatively they could be repurposed. But the new city pilot project isn't so extreme.

Wai Tse Ramirez, senior planner for commercial economic development at the city, said the key is having a willing property owner.

The corner stores pilot project makes the site eligible for matching grants to improve the façade and sets aside \$250,000 per project for improvements to public benches, lights and sidewalks. Staff also give planning advice and support. They commission a market analysis to give updated demographic information on the neighbourhood with advice on what sort of stores and products will do best. The city helps create a website with new branding, and a planner meets one-on-one with each business to help brainstorm ideas.

In Ritchie, just getting all the business owners together helped. The facade improvement brought new energy and every single owner turned out to hear the market analysis. "They started to talk about what each of them was offering," said Ramirez.

The corner store program isn't changing the basic economics that caused the strip malls' decline in the first place. But over the next year, staff will track if the new energy helps them compete again. The market analysis showed neighbourhoods such as Ritchie are experiencing high rates of infill and reinvestment from a demographic that values local shopping, which could tip the scale.

The next five sites are still being determined, and Ramirez said over the next year the city will track the economic impact of the changes. "When we're looking at local economic benefits, it's really about how do we ensure that amenities are available to citizens in a variety of ways," she said. "And how do we enhance infill by providing some of these economic opportunities."

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MORE INFORMATION

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Business owners Katherine Holyk (Holyk's Denture Centre), Dave Agnihotri (Shelly's Food Store) and Jocelyn Dearing (KJ Bowl) at Newton Centre. LARRY WONG / POSTMEDIA