



## Calgary Assessment Review Board

### DECISION WITH REASONS

In the matter of the complaint against the property assessment as provided by the *Municipal Government Act*, Chapter M-26, Section 460, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 (the Act).

between

*Stepper Centre Inc.*  
(as represented by *Colliers International Realty Advisers Inc.*)

and

*The City Of Calgary, RESPONDENT*

before

*L. Yakimchuk, PRESIDING OFFICER*  
*D. Julien, BOARD MEMBER*  
*A. Wong, BOARD MEMBER*

This is a complaint to the Calgary Assessment Review Board in respect of a property assessment prepared by the Assessor of The City of Calgary and entered in the 2014 Assessment Roll as follows:

**ROLL NUMBER:** 445110109

**LOCATION ADDRESS:** 120 Country Hills Ld NW

**FILE NUMBER:** 76621

**ASSESSMENT:** \$9,410,000

This complaint was heard on June 24, 2014 at the office of the Assessment Review Board located at Floor Number 3, 1212 – 31 Avenue NE, Calgary, Alberta, Boardroom 11.

Appeared on behalf of the Complainant:

- *T. Howell, Colliers International Realty Advisers Inc.*

Appeared on behalf of the Respondent:

- *L. Dunbar-Proctor, City of Calgary Assessor*
- *R. Tharakan, City of Calgary Assessor*

**Board's Decision in Respect of Procedural or Jurisdictional Matters:**

- [1] There were no procedural or jurisdictional matters.

**Property Description:**

- [2] The subject property is assessed as a 27,908 square foot (sf) "A+" class Office/Lowrise building constructed in 2006. It is located in the Country Hills community of Calgary and has been assessed using the Income approach.

**Issues:**

- [3] Should the Capitalization (Cap) rate for this property be increased from 6.00% to 6.50%?

**Complainant's Requested Value: \$8,650,000**

**Board's Decision:**

- [4] The Board confirmed the assessment at \$9,410,000.

**Legislative Authority, Requirements and Considerations:**

The Composite Assessment Review Board (CARB) derives its authority from the Municipal Government Act (MGA) RSA 2000 Section 460.1:

- (2) Subject to section 460(11), a composite assessment review board has jurisdiction to hear complaints about any matter referred to in section 460(5) that is shown on an assessment notice for property other than property described in subsection (1)(a).

For the purposes of this hearing, the CARB will consider MGA Section 293(1)

In preparing an assessment, the assessor must, in a fair and equitable manner,

- (a) apply the valuation and other standards set out in the regulations, and
- (b) follow the procedures set out in the regulations. .

Matters Relating to Assessment and Taxation Regulation (MRAT) is the regulation referred to in MGA Section 293(1)(b). The CARB decision will be guided by MRAT Section 2, which states that

An assessment of property based on market value

- (a) must be prepared using mass appraisal,
- (b) must be an estimate of the value of the fee simple estate in the property, and
- (c) must reflect typical market conditions for properties similar to that property.

and MRAT Section 4(1), which states that

The valuation standard for a parcel of land is

- (a) market value, or

if the parcel is used for farming operations, agricultural use value

### **Position of the Parties**

#### **Complainant's Position:**

[5] The Complainant, T. Howell, Colliers International Realty Advisors Inc., argued that the subject property is a 27,908 sf office/warehouse assessed with a 6.00% Cap rate and should be assessed with a 6.50% Cap rate.

[6] To support this assertion, the Complainant presented a Capitalization Rate Analysis (C1, p19). The analysis included four sales of "A+" properties which were transacted between December 22, 2011 and May 9, 2013. The Complainant took the "actual" Cap rate presented in the documentation and averaged them to find a typical Cap rate of 6.50% for these properties.

[7] The documentation from RealNet showed the sale on 3536 Research Way is a Leasehold interest sale, not a property sale. (C1, p25)

#### **Respondent's Position:**

[8] The Respondent, L. Dunbar-Proctor, City of Calgary Assessor argued that the best way to calculate a typical Cap rate is to calculate typical Rents and NOI first, then to calculate typical Cap rates from these and to find a median Cap rate. The Respondent also argued that third party values such as the ones the Complainant used were not used by City of Calgary as primary information, although they might be used to support information the City gathered through Assessment Requests for Information (ARFIs) and other research.

[9] The Respondent pointed out (R1, p22) that the Complainant's proposed comparable sale of property on 3536 Research Road was actually a sale of a Leasehold interest. Several of the numbers in the analysis (C1, p19) vary somewhat from the City of Calgary's values acquired through Assessment Requests for Information (ARFI). Finally, using the estimated Net

Operating Income (NOI) the Respondent calculated that the estimated Cap rate for 110 Country Hills Ld NW is actually 4.68% rather than 6.20%.

[10] The Respondent presented the 2014 Suburban Office Capitalization Rate Study – A Quality, which included five sales of suburban office properties (R1, p48). The study included “A-” and “A+” properties with Sale Registration Dates between July 10, 2012 and May 22, 2013. The average Cap rate for these sales was 6.06% and the median Cap rate was 6.09%. The typical assessment Cap rate was set at 6.00%.

**Board’s Reasons for Decision:**

[11] The Board reviewed the Complainant’s presentation and argument. The evidence came from a third party source and it was difficult to judge whether the data used to find these results was accurate. Although third party resources can be helpful in supporting arguments, they should not be relied upon as a sole source of information.

[12] The Board found the Respondent’s approach, using information gathered from property owners and through assessors, to be more reliable. This information could then be used to calculate typical values from which rates applicable to all properties within specific groups could be calculated, for use in mass assessment. Much of this information is available to taxpayers through requests to the City of Calgary Assessment Business Unit.

[13] The Complainant argued that finding actual Cap rates and averaging them to get a typical Cap rate was preferable. The Board reviewed the RealNet information used to support the Complainant’s calculations and found that the Complainant had not interpreted the data correctly, and much of the data required was not available from the reports. Further, the Complainant had not found the Cap rate error which the Respondent had recalculated.

[14] Using the corrected Cap rate and removing the Leasehold sale, the Board found the mean Cap rate was 6.00%. Removing the sale of 7175 12 St NE, which is prior to the assessment period and not time adjusted, would further decrease the Cap rate using the RealNet data to 5.34%

[15] The Board also found that assessment rates for similar properties should be similar, and the analyses for typical rates for these various properties should include the same set of comparables in order to achieve equity for all similar properties.

[16] The Board found no reason to change the Cap rate used in the subject assessment.

[17] The assessment is confirmed with a 6.00% Cap rate, at \$9,410,000.

DATED AT THE CITY OF CALGARY THIS 16 DAY OF July 2014.

  
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L. Yakimchuk

Presiding Officer

**APPENDIX "A"****DOCUMENTS PRESENTED AT THE HEARING  
AND CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD:**

<b>NO.</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
1. C1	Complainant Disclosure
2. R1	Respondent Disclosure

*An appeal may be made to the Court of Queen's Bench on a question of law or jurisdiction with respect to a decision of an assessment review board.*

*Any of the following may appeal the decision of an assessment review board:*

- (a) the complainant;*
- (b) an assessed person, other than the complainant, who is affected by the decision;*
- (c) the municipality, if the decision being appealed relates to property that is within the boundaries of that municipality;*
- (d) the assessor for a municipality referred to in clause (c).*

*An application for leave to appeal must be filed with the Court of Queen's Bench within 30 days after the persons notified of the hearing receive the decision, and notice of the application for leave to appeal must be given to*

- (a) the assessment review board, and*
- (b) any other persons as the judge directs.*

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For office use only:

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
CARB	Office	Low Rise	Income approach	Cap

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