

KMC Solutions expects new private office spaces in Clark, SM North Edsa



KMC SOLUTIONS, a provider of flexible private and co-working office spaces, said it targets to introduce new private office spaces in Clark and SM North EDSA this year.

The Clark project, comprised of private office spaces and a penthouse, is scheduled for completion by June, KMC Solutions Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer Michael McCullough said in an e-mail interview with *BusinessWorld*.

Meanwhile, the single-floor private office space at SM North EDSA is expected to be finished by July or August, Mr. McCullough said.

He said KMC is bullish on the expansion of the shared space sector. It aims to focus on management contracts and joint ventures as a response to the continued demand for flexible workspace solutions.

The company has maintained an average of mid-80% occupancy rate and a growth of 5-10% in occupancy in 2023 from a year ago, he said.

In addition, approximately 105,000 square meters of total office space were rented and leased to various companies in the same year, according to KMC.

There is a continued and growing demand for co-working spaces or "pro-

working," but private offices remain a popular choice among clients, it noted.

A "proworking" office offers a flexible and cheaper space for individuals and businesses, an alternative to traditional office spaces.

According to Mr. McCullough, key central business districts like BGC, Makati, Cebu, and Pasig were observed to have a strong market for flexible workspace solutions in 2023.

He said the company is looking for new locations outside Metro Manila to meet the client needs in provinces and emerging cities.

"While the business outsourcing sector is a significant part of our clientele... we have clients ranging anywhere from tech to healthcare," Mr. McCullough said.

KMC Solutions has 27 office space branches in Makati, Ortigas, Mandaue, Bonifacio Global City, Alabang, Pasay, Clark, Cebu, and Iloilo.

In March, KMC announced it became the fifth company in the country to secure a B Corp Certification from the non-profit B Lab.

The award merits the company's commitment to social and environmental responsibility. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**

Cebu properties well-positioned for upswing

By Joey Roi Bondoc

(First of two parts)

THE Colliers Philippines team had an action-packed roadshow in Cebu last March 11 and 12. After a series of face to face briefings in Metro Manila, we decided to touch base with our clients from the queen city of the south. Our team, led by Colliers Philippines Managing Director Richard Raymundo, updated our clients on the latest and unbiased property insights and shared data-backed recommendations. We were joined by Colliers Consultant Ieyo de Guzman, Capital Markets and Investment Services Senior Director Julius Guevara, Advisory Services Senior Director Tim Teodoro, Landlord Representation Director Maricris Sarino-Joson, and Colliers Cebu's Ohara Rosales-Sagun.

We had a superb time brainstorming with our clients that included King Properties, InnoLand, Rockwell Land, AppleOne Properties, Alveo Land, Filinvest Land, Genvi Development Corp., Vista Land, and Vibo Land Corp. Our clients gamely shared information about Cebu's vast development opportunities and how these can be maximized in the near to medium term. We discussed how macroeconomic factors including OFW remittances, regional gross domestic product (GDP) growth, inflation, and interest rates shape the environment that they are operating in.

What I can conclude from our discussion is that Cebu is indeed viable for more property projects,

further cementing the queen city of the south's stature as a major property investment destination across the Philippines. Cebu remains an important location for property developers looking to expand footprint outside of the Philippine capital, as supported by continued landbanking and launch of more

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integrated communities. With immense potential for further expansion, Cebu's property market is definitely well-positioned for an upswing. It is ready to pivot for further growth.

Outside of Metro Manila, developers have constantly expanded their presence in other thriving locations outside of Luzon. Cebu is a top-of-mind option for national players planning to capture demand outside of Metro Manila and at the same time corner the growing demand from burgeoning upscale and luxury markets. Cebu remains as one of the most attractive and largest residential hubs outside of Metro Manila. National developers continue to launch in Metro Cebu as they are optimistic of the locale's potential for growth even beyond 2024. In our view, the improv-



ing sentiment from businesses and individual investors and end-users will likely support the Cebu residential sector's growth.

Colliers believes that the market for upscale and luxury residential units in Cebu is likely to expand so developers should further test investors and end-users' appetite for these units. Land values in Cebu City have been rising so property firms should also explore alternative sites for development. Property firms should also explore launching more resort-themed projects, this is timely given the rebound of the travel and tourism segment. This is a segment of the residential market that also captures the interest of foreign market.



condominium projects under the upscale and luxury price segments, offering condominium units prices at least P12 million a unit. Meanwhile, property firms should look at parcels of developable land in Mandaue, Cebu IT Park, and Cebu Business Park that are ideal for higher-priced condominium projects. Established national developers may explore tie-ups with Cebu-based developers for their planned pockets of development. Other areas that developers should consider exploring for vertical developments include Talisay City, Liloan and Minglanilla.

MORE LEISURE-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENTS

In our view, demand for leisure-oriented properties will partly be sustained by the recovery of leisure and travel sector. Aside from local investors, the demand for these residential projects is also likely to come from foreigners. Colliers believes that developers planning to capture demand from the foreign market should explore the attractiveness of leisure-oriented and resort-themed projects especially in Mactan. Over the near to medium term, the demand for resort-themed developments should be propelled by the rising number of foreign and domestic tourists. No surprise given that Cebu is one of the country's major tourist destinations, thanks to its recently expanded and modernized airport.

More insights next week.

JOEY ROI BONDOC is the research director for Colliers Philippines.



TEST THE MARKET FOR UPSCALE AND LUXURY UNITS

Among the recently launched upscale and luxury projects include Rockwell Land's The Villas at Aruga, the most expensive project in Cebu so far on a per square meter basis. The project has an average Total Contract Price (TCP) of P101.3 million (\$1.8 million) and an average price per square meter of P589,600 (\$10,700). Meanwhile, Robinsons Land also launched an upscale project, Mantawi Residences, with an average price of P16.3 million (\$296,400) per unit.

The supply of upscale and luxury residential projects in Metro Cebu is relatively small compared to Metro Manila. But the demand

is likely to be driven by local and overseas-based Cebuano investors looking for attractive investment prospects that are also viable hedges against inflation. Just like in Metro Manila, we see these investors banking on the capital appreciation potential of these upscale and luxury residential developments.

ALTERNATIVE SITES FOR VERTICAL PROJECTS

Colliers encourages national players as well as local/homegrown firms to look for alternative sites for condominium development outside of Cebu, Lapu-Lapu, and Mandaue cities. Colliers has observed that these locations are among the most popular sites for

Sunlight Air starts flights from Clark airport

BOUTIQUE airline Sunlight Air has started offering flights from Clark International Airport after relocating its hub there.

"In line with our commitment to delivering exceptional customer service and top-tier flights to underserved local destinations, we are happy to have launched our first flight from Clark," Ryna C. Brito-Garcia, Sunlight Air chief executive officer, said in a press briefing at Clark International Airport on Monday.

Sunlight Air, operated by Sunlight Express Airways, launched its Clark-to-Busuanga flight on Monday.

The airline targets to capture the growing demand for travel, the company said in a statement.

Currently, the company flies to Siargao, San Vicente, and Coron in Palawan; and Caticlan in Aklan.

"We do (have Manila operations), we have Manila-Cebu," Ms. Brito-Garcia told reporters.

The decision to move its hub from Ninoy Aquino International Airport to Clark primarily stems from the availability of space and the advanced technologies offered by the airport, making it more convenient for passengers, she added.

"It's a lot more spacious. They have innovative approaches to doing things also. They have a self-check-in kiosk. They have the baggage drop," Ms. Brito-Garcia said.

The company is also optimistic because the Clark airport serves as an alternative gateway to the Philippines' capital, she noted.

"A lot of people would be surprised, of course Central Luzon's population is big. Our biggest population in Metro Manila is Quezon City, it is very congested. For now, a lot of people do not know about Clark yet but I think in time, we will get there," she added.

Sunlight Air plans to launch new domestic flights from Mactan-Cebu International Airport on April 3, with more routes to follow.

Noel F. Manankil, president and chief executive officer of Luzon International Premiere Airport Development (LIPAD) Corp., said the company is expecting more than two million passengers for 2024.

"We are confident that Clark has its own catchment population. Central and Northern Manila, of course and I think we've proven that. So long as the flights are available, then passengers will come," Mr. Manankil told reporters.

In an earlier interview with *BusinessWorld*, Mr. Manankil said LIPAD, the company that manages and operates the Clark International Airport, is anticipating a 42.9% increase in domestic passengers this year to 915,168 from 640,381 in 2023.

International passengers will rise by 14% to 1.55 million from 1.36 million in 2023.

The expected passenger volume for the year was actually lower than its previous forecast, he said.

"The original forecast was a bit higher than 2.4 (million), but because of engine issues," Mr. Manankil said, adding that the earlier projection was about four million passengers.

To recall, American aerospace manufacturer Pratt & Whitney inspected A320/321 NEO aircraft engines worldwide following suspected issues resulting in grounding of several aircraft.

For Sunlight Air, Ms. Brito-Garcia said the boutique airline will add more fleet in the next two to three years.

"It could be purchased, it could be through lease. [About] two to three planes in the next years," she said. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

Iloilo's MORE Power says P1.5M in bill deposits refunded to 476 customers

MORE Electric and Power Corp. (MORE Power), a distribution utility in Iloilo City, announced on Monday that it has refunded a total of P1.5 million in bill deposit refunds to 476 customers.

"We are committed to ensuring that all eligible customers are aware of their entitlement to a bill deposit refund," Ma. Cristina D. Cabalhin, MORE Power's vice-president for customer care, said in a statement.

Under the Magna Carta for Residential Electricity Consumers, the Energy Regulatory Commission mandates all distribution utilities to refund the bill deposit of their customers who have paid their electric bills on time for three years and have no service disconnection record.

MORE Power said that "approximately close to a thousand customers" are eligible, yet not all have initiated the process.

"To bridge this gap, proactive measures have been implemented, including the inclusion of a notification in customers' Statements of Account or Spot Bill," the company said.

The company also said it has been reminding eligible customers through calls and text messages of their entitlement.

Ineligible customers who have not met the criteria for re-

fund eligibility can still receive their bill deposit upon termination of their electric service, with an annual interest rate, the company said.

For March, the company hiked power rates by P0.06 per kilowatt hour (kWh) to P10.0316 per kWh for residential customers, driven by the increase in transmission charges.

— **Sheldene Joy Talavera**

MAX'S GROUP

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of stockholders of **MAX'S GROUP, INC.** (doing business under the name and styles of **Max's Restaurant, Pancake House, Maple, Dencio's, Singkit, Yellow Cab, Teriyaki Boy, Sizzlin' Steak, Max's Corner Bakery, Max's Group Kitchen, Max's All About Chicken, and All About Chicken**) for the year 2023 will be held and conducted on Thursday, 09 May 2024 at 9:00 a.m., at Max's Scout Tuazon, 21 Scout Tuazon Street, Brgy. Laging Handa, Quezon City. The order of business thereat will be as follows:

1. Proof of required notice of meeting and presence of quorum
2. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 11, 2023
3. Presentation of the President's Report and Audited Financial Statements for the year 2023
4. Ratification of all acts of the Board of Directors and Officers since the 2023 Annual Stockholders' Meeting
5. Election of the members of the Board of Directors, including the Independent Directors, for the year 2024
6. Appointment of External Auditor
7. Adjournment

For the purpose of the meeting, only stockholders of record at the close of business on 01 April 2024 will be entitled to vote thereat. Please bring some form of identification, such as passport, driver's license, or company ID, in order to facilitate registration, which will start at 9:00 a.m.

The Company will be using the alternative mode for distributing and providing copies of this Notice, Information Statement, and other documents in connection with the holding of the annual meeting of stockholders for 2024.

The Company is not soliciting proxies. However, should you be unable to attend the meeting personally, you may nevertheless be represented and vote at this annual meeting by submitting a proxy to the office of the Corporate Secretary at the Company's office address at the 3/F KDC Plaza, 2212 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City, Metro Manila, or by email to asm2024@maxsgroupinc.com. Duly-accomplished proxies should be received by the Company by 6:00 p.m. on 02 May 2024.

N.A. ALICIA G. PICAZO-SAN JUAN
Corporate Secretary

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