

MUST partners Flex by JLL to embark on flex space in Plaza, Secaucus

- Marks first official ground-up Flex by JLL office space in the U.S.
- Flex by JLL to take up ~15,400 sq ft at Plaza, with option to add ~20,450 sq ft by 2023
- Three phases could potentially achieve stabilised rent premium of ~30% to market
- Continue exploring flex partnership for other assets and increase coworking space from ~2% currently



(L-R) Anastacia Anderson, Vice-President of Investor Partnerships, Flex by JLL, shake on the deal with Tripp Gantt, CEO of MUST

Singapore, 15 September 2022 – Manulife US Real Estate Investment Trust (“MUST”) on Thursday announced that it has just entered into a management and licensing agreement for Flex by JLL to take up 15,407 sq ft of office space at 500 Plaza Drive in Secaucus, New Jersey, making up 3.3% of the building’s net lettable area (NLA). This is accompanied by options for Flex by JLL to lease a further 20,451 sq ft in two phases, bringing the combined floor plate to 35,858 sq ft (7.7% of NLA) by 2023. In all, the three phases are expected to achieve a stabilised rent premium of ~30% to the market.

Flex by JLL is JLL’s enterprise-grade flexible space solution. The agreement marks the first official ground-up Flex by JLL office space to come to market in the U.S. It follows MUST’s announcement in its 1H 2022 financial results where it shared its two-pronged approach to capture growing market demand for flex and modernised office space. Its strategy involves partnering best-in-class operators to offer more flexible workspace in its buildings as tenants seek the option of expanding and contracting as needed, as well as shortlisting portfolio assets for rejuvenation.

The Flex by JLL space at Plaza will offer flexible private offices, coworking space, meeting rooms, team suites and virtual offices to organisations and residents in the region. The space includes ergonomic furniture, Tier 1 fibre broadband internet access, interactive client portals to book meeting

rooms digitally, an on-site hospitality team and state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment. Its location within Plaza, an 11-story office property situated within Harmon Meadow, offers tenants a variety of on-site amenities and provides convenient access to the New Jersey Turnpike, Route 3 and surrounding hotels, restaurants and retail. In total, the three phases will cost ~US\$6.8 million to build out over two years. Phase 1, comprising mostly flex desks and private offices, is expected to be completed in April 2023, while Phases 2 and 3 will comprise mostly enterprise suites.

Mr Tripp Gantt, Chief Executive Officer of Manulife US REIT, said, “This partnership has tangible benefits for MUST. With the flex space business model having evolved from the traditional serviced office and coworking spaces pre-COVID-19, the new structure will allow MUST to enjoy greater upside potential by sharing a majority of the operating profits with the operator. We believe that this product presents a compelling value proposition for tenants to justify paying a rent premium for the flexibility and amenities offered by the flex office solution. This would also allow MUST to maintain its relationships with tenants and creates a real possibility of new flex tenants eventually converting into traditional tenants. Above and beyond these benefits, integrating flex space into Plaza will also drive foot traffic in the building.”

He added, “We believe Flex by JLL to be the ideal operator for MUST to partner with at this stage, given the existing relationships between the two parties spanning facility management, capital markets brokerage, leasing and development services. We believe this partnership will generate accretive, risk-adjusted returns that are superior to the alternative of pursuing traditional leases in the space.”

Jacob Bates, Head of Flex by JLL, added, “We are excited for our new Flex by JLL location at 500 Plaza. This location will include both coworking space and enterprise flex suites. Completed by our Flex by JLL design team, the space will incorporate components of our evolving environments and flexible architecture design ethos, offering flex tenants and members the ability to flex the built environment to their physical needs. This partnership between MUST and Flex by JLL creates a symbiotic relationship and allows Flex by JLL to manage the flexible spaces, while MUST maintains control of the space, experience, tenants and revenue.”

For queries, please contact:

Media

Lee Meixian
Senior Manager, Investor Relations &
Communications
Email : meixian_lee@manulifeusreit.sg
Phone : +65 8777 6206

Analysts

Caroline Fong
Chief Investor Relations & Capital Markets Officer
& Chief Sustainability Officer
Email : carol_fong@manulifeusreit.sg
Phone : +65 6801 1066

Artist Impressions of Flex at Plaza



1 Entrance



2 Lounge



3 Library



4 Pantry

About Manulife US REIT

Manulife US Real Estate Investment Trust (“Manulife US REIT”) is the first pure-play U.S. office REIT listed in Asia. It is a Singapore listed REIT established with the investment strategy principally to invest, directly or indirectly, in a portfolio of income-producing office real estate in key markets in the United States (“U.S.”), as well as real estate-related assets. MUST’s portfolio comprises 12 freehold office properties in Arizona, California, Georgia, New Jersey, Oregon, Virginia and Washington D.C. The current portfolio has an aggregate net lettable area of 5.4 million sq ft and is valued at US\$2.2 billion as at 31 December 2021.

About the Sponsor – The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company (“Manulife”)

Manulife is part of a leading Canada-based financial services group with principal operations in Asia, Canada and the United States. The Sponsor operates as John Hancock in the U.S. and as Manulife in other parts of the world, providing a wide range of financial protection and wealth management products, such as life and health insurance, group retirement products, mutual funds and banking products. The Sponsor also provides asset management services to institutional customers. Manulife Financial Corporation is listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, the New York Stock Exchange, the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and the Philippine Stock Exchange.

About the Manager – Manulife US Real Estate Management Pte. Ltd.

The Manager is Manulife US Real Estate Management Pte. Ltd., an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of the Sponsor. The Manager’s key objectives are to provide Unitholders with regular and stable distributions and to achieve long-term growth in DPU and NAV per Unit, while maintaining an appropriate capital structure.

About Flex by JLL

Flex by JLL, a wholly owned subsidiary of Jones Lang LaSalle, is the only available enterprise-grade flexible solution on the market. Flex by JLL partners closely with JLL Experience Management to support tenant demands for flexibility and experiential workplaces within an asset. The offering was launched to demonstrate JLL’s commitment in supporting its clients by bringing flexible office space solutions to meet the growing market demands from tenants and occupiers for flexible space.

About JLL

JLL (NYSE: JLL) is a leading professional services firm that specialises in real estate and investment management. JLL shapes the future of real estate for a better world by using the most advanced technology to create rewarding opportunities, amazing spaces and sustainable real estate solutions for our clients, our people and our communities. JLL is a Fortune 500 company with annual revenue of \$19.4 billion, operations in over 80 countries and a global workforce of more than 102,000 as of June 30, 2022. JLL is the brand name, and a registered trademark, of Jones Lang LaSalle Incorporated. For further information, visit jll.com.

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