

Next step of waterfront revitalization moves forward City finalizes sale for waterfront redevelopment lands

For immediate release (April 5, 2022) – The City of Orillia is pleased to announce that the sale of municipally-owned lands for redevelopment located at and around 70 Front St. N. to FRAM Building Group (FRAM) is now complete.

The sale, which closed on April 5, 2022, is a major milestone in the redevelopment and revitalization of approximately 8.7 acres of strategic downtown waterfront land in Orillia.

“This sale is a significant milestone in our journey to revitalize and reanimate this underutilized property and better connect our beautiful waterfront and historic downtown,” said Mayor Steve Clarke. “Throughout this process, our goal has been to facilitate development that matches and even further enhances Orillia’s unique character and aligns with development principles that were guided by our community. FRAM has demonstrated a genuine excitement and willingness to work with the City to bring their proposal to life and make this a premier waterfront development that meets these objectives. On behalf of Council, I would like to welcome FRAM to the Sunshine City.”

The majority of the waterfront redevelopment lands were purchased by the City in 2016 as part of a strategic redevelopment plan to better connect the City’s downtown and waterfront areas and has allowed the City to secure the lands needed to extend Coldwater Street to Centennial Drive. The property has an industrial legacy and will require environmental remediation by the developer to enable the new development. The City took steps to actively foster revitalization of the site, including the expropriation of certain lease rights, pre-zoning the lands, and the demolition of the southern portion of the plaza to ready the site for redevelopment consistent with the Downtown Tomorrow Plan.

Early in the process, the Waterfront Working Group established 12 development principles based on extensive public engagement that has taken place over the past 10 years in order to ensure that this development was guided by the community. FRAM’s concept closely aligned with those principles and was selected as the preferred proponent by Council in May 2021. Moving forward, the concept will be further developed and refined through the development approval process.

“FRAM Building Group is excited to have completed the transaction for the sale. This represents a major milestone for both the City and our team at FRAM. We now have been passed the torch from the City to carry on with delivering on a major redevelopment in downtown Orillia that aligns with the vision of the City’s Downtown Tomorrow Plan,” said Fred Serrafiero, FRAM’s Senior Vice President and one of the firm’s principals. “FRAM Building Group would like to take this opportunity to recognize the assistance and cooperation of all the staff from the City of Orillia who have worked diligently to get us to this milestone.”

The design concept as submitted by FRAM consists of a mixed-used development that includes waterfront townhomes, a stepped-back eight-storey mixed-use building at the corner of Coldwater and Front Streets, a variety of commercial space, green building practices, pedestrian linkages and more. The Metro supermarket will remain for the duration of their lease, until at least 2029. Beyond the sales price of \$10.5 million, the redevelopment of this brownfield site in the core of the city will add new residents and job opportunities to the downtown, which will contribute to the overall tax base and economic development of the city. The proceeds as a result of the sale will be allocated to the Land Acquisition Reserve.

“I would like to extend a warm welcome to FRAM to the City of Orillia. We look forward to working with FRAM as they move forward with their development in the heart of our amazing community,” said Gayle Jackson, Chief Administrative Officer. “I would also like to thank our dedicated project team for their ongoing efforts throughout this extensive process to facilitate this exciting development that will bring more vibrancy to our downtown core, alleviate the overall tax burden on residents, inspire further development in the area, and contribute to the lifestyle and wellbeing of our community.”

It is anticipated that FRAM will begin environmental remediation of the site in 2022 and that the first phase of construction (starting with the residential block north of Neywash Street) will begin in 2024. Redevelopment of the waterfront lands will coincide with the City’s infrastructure projects to realign Centennial Drive (which will begin in 2022) and the extension of Coldwater Street (which is scheduled to begin in 2023).

FRAM is known for its innovation, quality and community building initiatives. Their mandate is to design, develop and build sustainable communities where people ultimately want to live, work and play. Through the years FRAM has proven to be successful in developing a variety of residential mixed-use and commercial property across the Greater Toronto Area, Southern Ontario, Alberta and select markets in the U.S. FRAM has been recognized for innovative designs, particularly focused on energy efficiency and environmental sustainability through brownfield redevelopment projects, such as its multi-award winning project of the Port Credit Village in Mississauga, as well as the Shipyards Waterfront in downtown Collingwood.

For more information on the Waterfront Redevelopment Project and to sign up for updates, visit the project webpage at orillia.ca/waterfront.

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Photo Cutline: The sale of the municipally-owned lands for redevelopment located at and around 70 Front St. N. in Orillia to FRAM Building Group closed on April 5, 2022. For more information on the Waterfront Redevelopment Project, visit orillia.ca/waterfront.