



PORT COLBORNE

MEDIA RELEASE

City partners with Port Cares to create more affordable housing

Port Colborne, ON (Dec. 16, 2020) – In a unanimous vote at Monday night's Council meeting, the City plans to donate Chestnut Park to Port Cares to build affordable housing units for the community.

According to a recent study by Brock University, Niagara needs 20,000 more affordable housing units and the wait times are significant. Identified as a priority, Council asked staff to explore innovative approaches and strategic partnerships to address affordable housing shortages. After reviewing several options, it was determined that Chestnut Park, located between Lock Street and Clarke Street, could be repurposed and redeveloped for a broader community benefit.

"There's no denying it, we need more affordable housing in Port Colborne," said Port Colborne Mayor Bill Steele. "This is a priority for Council and we're committed to finding creative solutions to establish more affordable housing, working with various community partners like Port Cares, and building economic and social sustainability."

Port Cares will acquire the Chestnut Park property from the City of Port Colborne and construct a multi-unit, low rise affordable housing structure. The City will transfer Chestnut Park to Port Cares for \$1, as its contribution to this affordable housing project.

"By working together with the City of Port Colborne, we will make great strides towards improving opportunities for the people of Port Colborne to secure safe and affordable housing. Investing in this project means improving quality of life for independent seniors who need a clean and safe place to live and giving single parent families a decent home to raise their children. Port Cares commends Council for their leadership and vision," said Christine Clark Lafleur, Executive Director, Port Cares.

As a part of the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the playground equipment at Chestnut Park will be relocated to nearby Lockview Park. The goal is to create premier parks by investing in new amenities to make them more modern, enjoyable and accessible for residents and visitors. City staff will seek public consultation from residents to better understand the needs within the community to make Lockview Park and other parks in the area an enhancement to Port Colborne neighbourhoods.

"This multi-unit project will make a substantial impact on the housing crisis in Niagara – Port Colborne specifically – helping members of the population in the highest core need," said Donna Woiceshyn, Chief Executive Officer of Niagara Regional Housing. "Niagara Regional Housing is excited to be working with Port Cares, providing project management services on this development. We're confident that through this partnership with the City of Port Colborne, and with support from NRH, the Region and other levels of government, Port Cares will make this project vision a reality."

City staff will work with Port Cares on next steps in the planning and development process and establish a due diligence period to allow Port Cares time to complete design work and studies, as well as secure funding grants and project financing.

About City of Port Colborne

Located on the south coast of the scenic Niagara Region, Niagara's Port of Call has found the perfect balance – successful industrial and commercial sectors, comfortable and scenic residential areas, white sand beaches, unique culinary choices, the world class Sugarloaf Marina, fishing, golfing, trails, shopping districts along the historic Welland Canal and an energized festival and entertainment scene that includes live theatre – truly a community that adds to the overall Niagara Experience.

About Port Cares

Port Cares - Port Colborne Community Association for Resource Extension - was established as a not-for-profit registered charity in 1986. Port Cares mission is to help those in our community with social and economic needs improve their quality of life. As one of Canada's first and most comprehensive wrap-around service community hubs, Port Cares provides training, literacy, employment, housing, homelessness prevention, youth justice, child development and parenting support services as well as basic needs services including a food bank, meal program, crisis intervention to enhance the quality of life for individuals in Port Colborne, Wainfleet and the surrounding area. To learn more about our organization please visit www.portcares.ca.

Donations to Port Cares can now be made electronically through e-transfer donations@portcares.ca or by logging onto www.portcares.ca and clicking on the DONATE button.

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