

Date: November 23, 2020

Report To: Mayor & Council

From: Cody Vangel, Chief Building Official & Municipal Planner

Re: Fort Frances/Aazhogan Renewal Planning Committee – Funding Allocation

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On May 27, 2020 members of the Town of Fort Frances administration along with our land use planning and economic development consultants met with Riversedge Developments Inc. (2670568 Ontario Ltd.) and Rainy River First Nations, together in joint venture as Aazhogan Renewal, to discuss land use planning policies and mechanisms associated with the potential redevelopment of the Fort Frances mill properties. In this meeting it was discussed that in order to facilitate the implementation of various policies and mechanisms, that the Town apply for funding opportunities to prepare a study of the lands similar to that of the Shevlin Woodyard and Gateway to Market Square. In support of the study it was also discussed that a joint planning committee be formed known as the “Fort Frances / Aazhogan Renewal Planning Committee”. The terms of reference behind this committee are attached.

The intent of this committee and study will be to engage a consultant to craft location specific land use planning policies, identify economic development opportunities and to provide recommendations that will be used to amend the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan and Zoning By-Law to assist in the redevelopment of the subject lands. The outcome of these amendments will assist to mitigate delays and reduce turnaround times on planning applications associated with the subject lands and to promote redevelopment of the lands for a wide range of uses.

Through discussions with RRFDC and our regional representative with the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines (ENDM), it has been brought forward that a revised resolution is required as part of the grant funding application. The correspondence from ENDM has requested the resolution include the following verbiage “That the Town of Fort Frances will cover project costs of \$11,000.00 plus any project cost overruns” and that the final terms of reference be included as well. It should be noted that this is required as part of the grant funding application, though ultimately as per the terms of reference of the committee project costs not covered by grant funding will be split 50/50.

Funding allocation for the project would be structured as follows:

Funding Source	Funding Type	Eligible Project Costs	Ineligible Project Costs	Funding Amount
NOHFC	Conditional Grant	\$67,500	nil	\$67,500
TOFF	Cash	\$10,000	\$1,000	\$11,000
Partner	Cash	\$10,000	nil	\$10,000
RRFDC	Cash	\$2,500	nil	\$2,500
Total		\$90,000	\$1,000	\$91,000

This matter was considered at the November 16, 2020 session of the Planning and Development Executive Committee with recommendation to:

1. Pass a resolution confirming that the Town of Fort Frances will contribute \$11,000 plus any cost overruns to satisfy the request of ENDM on behalf of NOHFC with regard to funding of the Fort Frances-Aazhogan Renewal mill property re-development planning initiative, and that cost overruns covered by the Town of Fort Frances will be allocated as per the agreed upon committee terms of reference; and
2. Authorize Mayor and Clerk to execute the funding agreements under the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation on behalf of the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances, conditional upon award of funding.

Respectfully submitted



Cody Vangel, EIT  
Chief Building Official & Municipal Planner

**Council approval of this report will** agree to the recommendation of the Planning and Development Executive Committee to:

1. Pass a resolution confirming that the Town of Fort Frances will contribute \$11,000 plus any cost overruns to satisfy the request of ENDM on behalf of NOHFC with regard to funding of the Fort Frances-Aazhogan Renewal mill property re-development planning initiative, and that cost overruns covered by the Town of Fort Frances will be allocated as per the agreed upon committee terms of reference; and
2. Authorize Mayor and Clerk to execute the funding agreements under the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation on behalf of the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances, conditional upon award of funding.

## Terms of Reference

### Fort Frances / Aazhogan Renewal Planning Committee

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#### 1.0 Background on Aazhogan Renewal

2670568 Ontario Ltd. acquired the former Fort Frances mill properties in July 2019. Since that time, 2670568 and Rainy River First Nations have formed a joint venture with the intent to collaboratively redevelop the mill properties. The joint venture operates as Aazhogan Renewal.

In June 2020, Aazhogan Renewal and the Town of Fort Frances (together, The “Parties”) agreed to work together to address anticipated planning and development requirements associated with the mill properties, most notably with amendments that may be required with the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan ([click here](#)) and the ambitions of Aazhogan Renewal. The Town of Fort Frances and Aazhogan Renewal agreed to work together through a newly formed *Fort Frances/ Aazhogan Renewal Planning Committee* (“the Committee”).

#### 2.0 Purpose

The Committee has been established to provide a forum to align The Parties’ priorities and to develop recommendations for amending Town planning documents relevant to ongoing renewal efforts within the Town limits.

The Committee is an advisory committee and will have no official authorities.

#### 3.0 Principal responsibilities

The principal responsibilities of the Committee will be to:

1. Meet with the Town of Fort Frances’ designated planner to understand requirements within the municipality (i.e. *The Planning Act*, Official Plan, Zoning By-law, Provincial Policy Statement, etc.) as may be necessary.
2. Recommend appropriate mechanisms for efficiently re-zoning the mill properties from current designations to more appropriate Official Plan land use designations.
3. Develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a qualified consultant\*. The consultant will have four primary responsibilities;
  - a. work with Aazhogan Renewal to develop a conceptual master plan for the former mill properties;
  - b. work with the entire Committee to identify opportunities for advancing the Official Plan and Zoning By-law in support of anticipated renewal projects;

- c. prepare and present a report to the Town of Fort Frances which shows the conceptual master plan and provide recommendations on amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law and;
- d. conduct public engagement activities upon request from the Committee.

*\*Selection of consultant will be through a scoring process and presented to both Aazhogan Renewal principles and the Town of Fort Frances for acceptance of consultant through a resolution.*

4. If necessary, develop and execute engagement and communication plans to gain support from key stakeholder groups, including governments, regulators, companies, and investors.

#### **4.0 Membership**

Membership of the Committee will include;

- 2 (two) representatives for Aazhogan Renewal and
- 2 (two) representatives from the Town of Fort Frances administration.

Members will sit on the Committee as representatives of their organization, in addition to bringing individual expertise.

The Committee will be chaired on a rotational basis by each of the four members.

#### **5.0 Funding for the Committee**

Each party will pay any out of pocket and travel expenses for their representatives.

The Town of Fort Frances will pay for all expenses related to the qualified consultant, including fees, expenses, etc. pending approval of funding submissions to granting agencies. Any fees or expenses for the consultant that are not covered by the grant will be split 50/50 by The Town of Fort Frances and Aazhogan Renewal.

#### **6.0 Meeting Frequency and Location**

The Committee will meet two times per month, on the second and fourth Tuesday.

The time requirement for each session will vary, but generally the session will begin at 1:30 pm and end by 3:30pm. Once a consultant is engaged, the committee may mutually agree to vary day and time requirements to facilitate an efficient process.

Meetings will be held in a location to be determined.

#### **7.0 Duration**

Duration of the Committee will continue to exist until the work is adopted by the Town of Fort Frances within their Official Plan and Zoning By-law.