



Osoyoos Indian Band



Settle down.

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS OSOYOOS INDIAN BAND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Partnership with Osoyoos Indian Band provides housing and spares demolition of floodplain homes in Grand Forks

GRAND FORKS, B.C., November 10, 2021 – The City of Grand Forks and the Osoyoos Indian Band (OIB) reached an agreement that will provide housing through the relocation of houses currently located within the floodplain restoration area in North Ruckle. Up to 10 houses will be moved and another 10 modular houses constructed in three potential areas, providing much-needed housing for Grand Forks residents.

The Osoyoos Indian Band has agreed to lead the house moving and land development for three potential building sites. The OIB will move the houses from their current location within the floodplain restoration area, set them on new foundations, and undertake any necessary repairs or updates. The OIB's Development Corporation has the skills and financial capacity to lead the development without financial risk for the City.

The City's Flood Mitigation Program will protect Grand Forks homes, businesses, and infrastructure from devastating spring floods, like the 2018 flood that damaged over 400 homes and destroyed another 50. With over \$50 million in federal and provincial grant funds, Grand Forks is creating an extensive network of dikes, flood walls, floodplains, and engineered stormwater management systems.

As part of this program, houses within the floodplain restoration area and in the dike alignment were acquired from their owners. A few were damaged beyond repair and will be sold off, salvaged, or demolished; however, a number of these houses are still in good condition, which led to the agreement with OIB.

“The 2018 flood was like nothing Grand Forks has seen in its history, and brought tremendous destruction and upheaval for residents. We are also facing a serious housing crisis,” said Mayor Brian Taylor. “Saving some of these homes from the flood plain area is a silver lining, and we are very grateful to the Osoyoos Indian Band for making this opportunity a reality. We really value the relationship the City is developing with OIB and look forward to continuing it.”

“The Osoyoos Indian Band has developed a good business relationship with the City of Grand Forks. We look forward to developing this housing project which sits on the Osoyoos Indian Band's traditional territory. – Chief Clarence Louie



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“Housing is a foundation to thriving communities, and creative solutions to our housing challenges are always exciting to me. This partnership between the Osoyoos Indian Band and the City of Grand Forks is a great example of an environmental, social, and economic win: recycle-reuse writ large, adding rapid housing solutions, building community partnerships, and increasing local economic activity. All that means our local people win—congratulations to everyone involved with this innovative project.” – Roly Russell, MLA (Boundary-Similkameen)

Up to 10 houses were identified as candidates for relocation from the homes located within the North Ruckle floodplain area. The cost to move, create a foundation, and undertake necessary repairs and updates (such as roofs, appliances, plumbing, and heating) was a factor, and cost-prohibitive for many of the larger and smaller houses.

Once the houses are moved, repaired, and connected to services, they will be offered for sale to the public. Any of the City’s net revenue from this shared partnership would be returned to the Flood Mitigation Program.

BACKGROUND:

The Flood Mitigation Program will protect core neighbourhoods in the City of Grand Forks from future floods like the one experienced in spring 2018. The City is constructing protective works such as dikes, flood walls, and rip rap, and restoring the North Ruckle floodplain to provide room for the river during future flood events. Funding has been provided through a \$20 million federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) grant, a \$31.5 million provincial grant, and \$3.5 million in City of Grand Forks funding. Work is expected to be completed in 2023.

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