

## Media Release

### **DRRSB Continues Housing-Focused Direction for Fifth & Frenette Property**

**Fort Frances, Ontario – 2026/06/19** – The District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB) has approved Administration’s recommendation to discontinue further exploration of renovating the former school building at the Fifth & Frenette property and to continue advancing a broader, housing-focused redevelopment approach for the site.

This decision follows a detailed review of the building’s condition, servicing requirements, and redevelopment costs. The analysis confirmed that significant investment would be required to repurpose the existing structure, without fully addressing long-term infrastructure challenges or the overall potential of the property.

Moving forward, DRRSB will continue exploring opportunities through a Northern Ontario Housing Portfolio Project to support the development of new housing on the site. This work is focused on increasing housing supply in the district, with planning considerations that include options for families, seniors, and individuals entering the workforce - helping people to live, work, and build their lives locally.

This direction reflects the importance of using public assets strategically to respond to growing housing needs across the district while ensuring long-term sustainability and flexibility in how the property is developed over time.

At the same time, child care, EarlyON, and family support services remain important priorities for the DRRSB. The direction approved by the Board maintains the opportunity to consider these services as part of a future, purpose-built phase of development that better aligns with current and future community needs.

DRRSB recognizes that residents value their neighbourhoods and are interested in how redevelopment may evolve. As this exploratory work continues, local perspectives will be considered alongside the broader need to address housing supply across the district, with additional information and opportunities for input shared as planning progresses.

“This direction reflects the need to make responsible, long-term decisions about public assets while responding to housing needs across the district,” said Deb Ewald, Board Chair.

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