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Port Property submits 10-year plan for West Bayside including 800+ units and 28,500 s/f

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Portland, ME Port Property, a development and management company, submitted a master development plan to the city's planning department for consideration. The plan proposes the creation of 800+ new units of rental housing while also introducing mixed-use community spaces, increased pedestrian access, and connectivity throughout the neighborhood.

The plan includes five phases of development that include the construction of seven new buildings, 200+ affordable housing units, 600+ market-rate units, and 28,500 s/f of new commercial space. Along with this new construction, the plan also outlines the retention and renovation of existing commercial and institutional buildings, as well as the retrofitting of the Public Market parking garage with infill retail and amenity uses. Developed in collaboration with a local team including Stantec's Urban Places Studio and Acorn Engineering, the proposed project aligns with the city's planning goals and prioritizes a sustainable and equitable community within West Bayside that reinforces the area's local heritage.

Many of the proposed new builds will be sited on surface parking lots, adding new mixed-use communities without displacing existing structures. The plan calls for buildings that incorporate visual diversity, combining contemporary and existing architectural elements, and will employ a "step-down" approach in height to seamlessly blend within the neighborhood's current landscape.

"We are thrilled to be launching this project and look forward to working with the City of Portland and the West Bayside community throughout the planning process to create something wonderful in this area," said John Laliberte, Port Property's head of acquisition and development for southern Maine. "As a local team headquartered in West Bayside, Port Property is deeply committed to this neighborhood and has worked to continually strengthen this community throughout the years. We are steadfast in our goal to create a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive neighborhood that meets the needs of current and future residents, all while honoring the history and character of the area."

A key feature of the development plan is the prioritization of pedestrian networks and connectivity within the surrounding neighborhood. Port Property aims to optimize streetscapes for walkability with widened sidewalks, enhanced lighting, and additional landscaping. The plan also includes a shared street and linear park along Lancaster St., representing the development's aim to add inviting community spaces to the neighborhood. Extending the emerging corridor of destinations along Lancaster St., the plan will connect more recent developments (including the array of local businesses at 82 Hanover St.) with the established commercial area along Franklin St. to create an

engaging and cohesive pedestrian experience from end-to-end.

A master development plan is an optional planning tool that can be used to outline large, multi-phase projects in the early stages. It requires approval of subsequent site plan applications outlining project specifics prior to start of development. Should the planning board approve a master development plan for this site, Port Property would submit a site plan development application for phase 1 review with the goal of completing that process and beginning construction on phase 1 in 2024 for a 2025 delivery.

Prior to the announcement of their master development plan, Port Property finalized the acquisition of a substantial real estate portfolio within West Bayside. In total, the multi-building portfolio comprises approximately 180,000 s/f of commercial office and retail space that will now join the company's list of properties in West Bayside.

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