

# FEATURE Mixed-use development could house 4,000 residents, add industrial and commercial space

## \$500M plan will transform Port Coquitlam

GLEN KORSTROM / BIV

WESTERN INVESTOR

Developers plan to spend more than \$500 million to transform a triangular slice of eastern Port Coquitlam into Metro Vancouver's newest planned community.

No residents currently live in the Fremont district, most of which was part of the agricultural land reserve (ALR) and known as the Dominion Triangle 23 years ago.

The area is now primarily grassland with about 350,000 square feet of retail but, by 2018, Fremont is expected to be home to up to 4,000 people while also having nearly double the retail square footage and about 300,000 square feet of industrial space.

New cycle paths, parks and other amenities will make recreation more accessible for the community on the western shore of the Pitt River, across from Pitt Meadows.

### Residential

**Mosaic Homes** is building the first 48 of its planned 650 homes that will be across from a park that borders the river. Sales are scheduled to begin in May for the homes earmarked for occupancy this summer.

"We'll be initiating construction of additional homes within a couple months so that by the end of the year we will have either completed or started construction on 150 of the planned 650 homes," Mosaic spokesman **Geoff Duyker** said of his company's \$180 million investment.

All of Mosaic's homes will be in multi-family buildings and include about 200 apart-

ments and 450 townhomes that vary in price up to \$500,000.

### Retail

**Onni Group** is in the permitting stage of its plans to build up to 650 units in two residential towers at its Fremont Village retail complex.

The 350,000-square-foot shopping complex now has big-box tenants such as **Canadian Tire** and **Walmart**. **John Middleton**, Onni vice-president of leasing, said recent tenants include **Shoppers Drug Mart**, **RBC**, **CIBC**, **A&W** and **Burger King**. Despite the buzz about the construction of the Evergreen rapid-transit line into neighbouring Coquitlam and Port Moody, Middleton said transit wasn't a factor in Onni's retail plans.

"We see it as great location with good highway access," he said, noting it is situated at the intersection of Lougheed Highway and the Mary Hill Bypass.

The company expects to announce within weeks the name of the grocer it has landed as the anchor tenant for its final 330,000-square-foot retail phase.

Onni plans to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to develop that space.

"The concept for the new retail is to create a real village out there instead of just big boxes and a sea of parking," Port Coquitlam Mayor **Greg Moore** told *Business in Vancouver*.

Moore pointed to **Larco's** Village at Park Royal in West Vancouver as the inspiration for the kind of retail that Port Coquitlam council wanted to see in the Fremont district.

"That whole meandering street with lots of bricks and lights and water features and land-



**INSET:** Port Coquitlam Mayor Greg Moore: plan is to include commercial, retail and industrial in a multi-stage, multi-mix development. **ABOVE:** Rendering shows plans for 330,000-square-foot Fremont Village retail and residential expansion in Port Coquitlam.

scaping is what we're going for," he said.

Another novel aspect of the neighbourhood's evolution is that it will include industrial land with warehouses designed and built with the understanding that residential homes are nearby.

### Industrial

**Conwest Group of Companies** was scheduled to complete a 50,000-square-foot industrial building with six strata units in May before starting work on a 22,000-square-foot industrial building with five strata units.


Conwest principal **Tony Marinelli** said construction on the project will be completed by year's end. He added that his company plans to develop a further 228,000 square feet

of industrial strata space on its 26-acre parcel within the next two years.

Conwest and Mosaic teamed up to build the new Fremont Connector between Dominion Avenue and Lougheed Highway.

Moore said the **City of Port Coquitlam** also spent about \$12.1 million to upgrade Dominion Avenue about six years ago.

The city didn't need to offer financial incentives, according to the mayor: "We encouraged the development by being open-minded about approvals and having a unique urban-planning formula." ♦

 SCAN WITH LAYAR  
TO FLY THROUGH  
FREMONT VILLAGE