

ORILLIA RECREATION FACILITY



Orillia Recreation Facility Concept Plan (2016) Source: City of Orillia Website

QUICK FACTS

Address: 255 West Street South, Orillia, Ontario
Site Area: 14.57 ha (36 acres)
Proposal: Recreation Facility
Status: Opened in Spring 2020
Investment: \$ 55.5 million
Awards: 2016 Brownie Awards - Rebuild-Redevelopment at the Local/Site Scale category

HISTORY

- Site was previously used for industrial purposes.
- The site housed wooden grain tanks, a tannery operation, farm related equipment manufacturing, aircraft industry part manufacturing, steel and grey iron casting manufacturing, manufacturing of gas and oil furnaces, automotive manufacturing, ductile iron manufacturing and tobacco operation (City of Orillia, 2015).
- The most memorable industrial use of the site was the Molson Brewery, which lay vacant for 20 years.
- As a result of these historical uses, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were found in both the soil and groundwater samples.



Orillia Recreation Facility-Detailed Design Stairs. Source: City of Orillia Website

DESCRIPTION

- The Orillia Recreation Facility is a brownfield site located near their downtown built by the City.
- The Recreation Facility will include facilities such as various pools, fitness centre, running track and a childcare room.



Orillia Recreation Facility- Outdoor Gym. Source: City of Orillia Website

WHY WAS THE SITE CHOSEN?

- City of Orillia (2020) confirmed that there were initially three sites that were chosen as potential hosts for a recreation facility.
- Due to size, affordability, walkability, tourism potential and political issues, 255 West St S. was chosen as the ultimate location.
- Plans were for the revitalization of the entire corridor. Thus, since the site represents such a large amount of underutilized real estate near the downtown, staff saw the potential for redevelopment.

WHO INSTIGATED THE DEVELOPMENT?

The **2014-2018 council** were the champions and ultimate supporters of the revitalization from the start of their inauguration (Orillia, 2020).

WHY IS IT CATALYTIC?

- Increase in development applications (8 sites within visibility of the brownfield site have been sold, redeveloped or have development applications in the process).
- Annual residential average purchase price rose 26.6% change year over year.
- Development surrounding the recreation facility in the form of 9 residential and commercial properties.
- Sparked redevelopment of other areas within the municipality even before its full completion (waterfront and other underutilized areas)
- Technology used to ensure safety, such as the elaborate active and passive venting systems.
- Transformed the landscape of the Western corridor and the site has the potential to become a gateway landmark for the City.

References:

1. Cambium Inc. (2018). 2018 Off-Site Annual Monitoring Report - 255 West Street South, Orillia, Ontario. Retrieved from, https://www.orillia.ca/en/living-here/resources/Environmental_Services/2018-FINAL-Off-Site-Annual-Monitoring-Report.pdf
2. City of Orillia. (2015). Environmental Information: May 2015 Public Open House information boards. Retrieved from, <https://www.orillia.ca/en/city-hall/recreationfacilitiesites.aspx#Environmental-Information>
3. City of Orillia. (2020). Personal Communications.

