

Media Release

Alphabet’s Sidewalk Labs Recognizes that Communities of the Future will be Built with Ontario Forest Products

June 24th, 2019. Today, the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) applauded Sidewalk Labs’ proposed Master Innovation and Development Plan, which showcases the use of Ontario forest products. The plan proposes to build a new neighbourhood on Toronto’s waterfront almost entirely out of tall timber.

“Sidewalk Labs’ Quayside development is focused on using building materials that are more sustainable without sacrificing affordability or design flexibility,” says Jamie Lim, President and CEO of OFIA. “Building with tall timber systems is the obvious choice. We believe innovative and ambitious projects, such as Sidewalk Lab’s proposed development, recognizes that we are in a wood construction renaissance. The project also compliments the Ontario Government’s proposed Provincial Forestry Strategy by aspiring to grow our renewable natural use and use locally sourced forest products in innovative construction.”

Tall timber is a safe, efficient and sustainable form of engineered wood. As cities begin to confront the challenges of climate change more aggressively, sustainability has become a principal concern in how buildings and neighbourhoods are designed. Tall timber buildings can capture carbon and help reduce emissions, compared to traditional building materials, which are significantly less environmentally friendly.

“Wood performs better than traditional materials in terms of both embodied energy, air and water pollution,” says Ian Dunn, Director of Forestry and Environmental Policy at OFIA. “Achieving a 90% reduction in carbon footprint when compared to steel. By committing to locally sourced timber this project is recognizing the future of Toronto’s construction industry is Ontario’s renewable forest products sector. “

Ontario’s forestry industry directly employs more than 50,000 people, with an estimated economic impact of more than \$15 billion annually. Sidewalk’s proposal will showcase this sector’s renewable products as it meets its goal of creating North America’s first “climate-positive” neighbourhood.

- 30 -

For more information:

Ian Dunn
Director of Forestry and Environmental Policy
416-368-3827
idunn@ofia.com