

Options for Advancing Wernerville Redevelopment

Administration has recently supported land development applications for Council consideration that enable redevelopment of properties in the Wernerville Special Study Area, based on serviceability, appropriate scale and minimal impacts to existing country residential uses. As part of Council approval, these properties have been removed from the Special Study Area. This results in incremental change and represents the default approach. Properties in the interior of the neighbourhood face greater servicing challenges.

Options for advancing Wernerville redevelopment are described below. These options were presented to Wernerville residents in May 2023.

Applicant Driven

Following standard process, a landowner or a group of landowners would guide and pay for the required technical studies and planning work, and make an application to the City for an amendment to the Neighbourhood Structure Plan to accommodate the proposed development. This would involve a consultant working with a group of participating landowners, or a developer acquiring multiple properties in the area and leading the planning process.

This option maintains the City's role as the development authority in relation to a local issue. However, it does not contribute to supporting the desires of some of the land owners in Wernerville, and the fragmented ownership of Wernerville remains a challenge. It is possible that an applicant-driven process could begin at any time, based on market demand and the economics of redevelopment.

Council Directed

Alternatively, Council could direct Administration to undertake the planning, engineering, and engagement work required to amend the Ellerslie Neighbourhood Structure Plan. This would further prepare the properties for redevelopment. This is not the typical process in the developing area, and would require new or reprioritized staffing resources, budget for the procurement of external consultants for technical studies and extensive engagement with current landowners. Additional work and costs associated with rezoning, permits, engineering design and construction would follow. This approach could lead to more efficient use of the land and improved land use compatibility with its surroundings in a shorter time frame, however the costs associated with developer-funded infrastructure (e.g. water, stormwater management and transportation upgrades) could remain a barrier.

Next Steps

The City Plan directs that market forces guide the timing and type of redevelopment in areas that are not identified as current priorities. Adhering to this direction, Administration will allow the market to guide redevelopment of the Wernerville Area at this time. The City Plan (Map 11D) calls for the City to strategize along the Ellerslie Road corridor, including the Wernerville Area between the 1.75 to 2 million population horizons. This area is therefore not a current priority. In addition, initiating a City-driven planning process would set a precedent and land owners in other areas that are not aligned with the current priorities of The City Plan may request access to City resources to advance development.

If Council directs Administration to pursue the City-driven option, other deliverables related to growth management will be delayed and a budget adjustment will be required.