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**Subject:** Westfield Estates Neighbourhood Land Use Study Update

**Staff Report No.** DS-055-24

**Department/  
Commission:** Development Services Commission

**Date:** November 6, 2024

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**Recommendation:**

- 1) That Council receive Report No. DS-055-24 for information.

**Report Highlights**

- The Town has initiated a Land Use Study for the Westfield Estates Neighbourhood to develop a vision and land use plan for the neighbourhood, in anticipation of potential future redevelopment pressures.
- A community engagement session was held on October 2, 2024 to present background information and receive feedback on developing a vision and land use plan for the neighbourhood.
- Town staff and the consulting team will be preparing various land use options for presentation at a future community engagement session in early 2025 to receive feedback. A preferred land use plan and associated recommendations will be presented to Council for consideration at a future date.

**1. Purpose:**

The Town has initiated a Land Use Study for the Westfield Estates Neighbourhood to proactively develop a vision and land use plan for the neighbourhood, in anticipation of potential future redevelopment pressures. This Report presents the background work that has been undertaken to date, including a summary of the public input received at the community engagement session held on October 2, 2024.

## 2. Background:

The Westfield Estates Neighbourhood generally comprises the lands within the Cam Fella Boulevard, Aintree Drive, and Asbury Park Court area. Located on the eastern edge of the Community of Stouffville, the neighbourhood is characterized by large lots accommodating single-detached dwellings, and expansive lawns and yard setbacks. The neighbourhood contains a range of natural features, mature trees, ponds and a unique street and block pattern including a rural street cross-section, characteristic of an estate style subdivision.

The Westfield Estates Neighbourhood is experiencing redevelopment pressures including recent planning approvals for the properties fronting on Cam Fella Boulevard and Main Street, which were approved by Council on May 15, 2024 (Staff Reports No. [DS-022-24](#) and [DS-023-24](#)).

On June 19, 2024, Council received Staff Report No. [DS-030-24 Westfield Estates Neighbourhood Land Use Study](#) informing Council that staff will be undertaking a Land Use Study to develop a vision and land use plan for the neighbourhood. The Study is intended to be proactive in assisting the Town in planning and evaluating potential future redevelopment applications within the neighbourhood, while ensuring the adequate provision of community services and facilities for existing and future residents.

The Town retained O2 Planning + Design Inc. to assist in undertaking the Study, which is being undertaken in five phases:

- Phase 1: Background Review: Research relevant existing policy and legislation and identify potential opportunities and constraints;
- Phase 2: Community Engagement No. 1: Visioning: Community engagement session to receive feedback on the background information and inform the development of lands use options;
- Phase 3: Land Use Study: Prepare land use / block plan options;
- Phase 4: Community Engagement No. 2: Present land use options to stakeholders to receive input and feedback; and
- Phase 5: Develop and Present Recommendations to Town Council: Prepare a preferred land use concept and draft recommendations and present to Council for consideration.

## 3. Analysis:

The following provides a summary of the Phase 1: Background Review and Phase 2: Community Engagement No. 1 consultations.

### 3.1 Background Review

Attachment 1 to this Report is the Westfield Estates Land Use Study: Background Review, October 2024, which provides an overview of the existing policy and legislation

that is relevant to the Study Area. The Background Review includes a high level assessment and the identification of key considerations (opportunities and constraints) to inform the Study. These matters relate to: land use, transportation and mobility, parks and natural areas, commercial and community facilities, urban form and development, and recent development activity.

The following provides a high level summary of the key considerations for the Study Area, as outlined in the Background Review:

### **Land Use**

The [Town's New Adopted Official Plan, May 2024](#) is currently pending final approval from the Province. Notwithstanding, the policy framework is generally consistent with the Town's current Official Plan.

The Town's New Adopted Official Plan designates the majority of the Study Area as Neighbourhood Area, as shown on Schedule D - Stouffville Land Use Designations. This designation encourages the creation of new residential neighbourhoods and gentle intensification within existing developed areas. Neighbourhood Areas are intended to support the development of complete communities and include a mix of uses such as schools, small-scale commercial uses, and community uses.

Permitted uses within the Neighbourhood Area designation include low rise residential dwellings, additional residential units, home occupations, live-work units, small scale commercial uses and community facilities. Low-rise residential uses include various housing types such as single detached, semi-detached, and duplex dwellings. Furthermore, low-rise residential dwellings in the form of townhouse dwellings, and low-rise apartments are also permitted, up to generally 4 storeys in height and a maximum Floor Space Index (FSI) of 1.5; subject to demonstrating overall neighbourhood compatibility and provided they are generally directed to the periphery of the neighbourhood and/or accessible to arterial or collector roads.

### **Transportation and Mobility**

The existing road network was built to a previous standard that is without basic pedestrian infrastructure. Though the network currently serves the existing population well, new connections and pathways should be explored to increase neighbourhood permeability and mobility options. This will support compact neighbourhood development while delivering safe and efficient travel options for all residents.

### **Parks and Natural Areas**

With no existing park in the Study Area, it will be important to explore opportunities for a future neighbourhood park that is within walking distance of all residents. It will also be critical to limit potential impacts to existing environmental features and explore appropriate transition and buffer strategies with future development.

## Neighbourhood Retail

While a small commercial node is currently located at Tenth Line and Main St, the daily needs of residents are located approximately 5 – 10 minutes away by driving. Neighbourhood commercial uses could be considered to support the development of a complete community. This would provide shops and services close to home by meeting residents' daily needs. In particular, future neighbourhood shops could be explored further along Tenth Line, an existing arterial road.

## Urban Form

Primarily consisting of large-lot single detached housing and a unique street and block pattern, the existing character of the Study Area presents several considerations for future development. Of note, the relatively large and regular shaped lots present greater opportunities for lot consolidation that may support gentle intensification across a variety of housing typologies. Furthermore, it could present options for future roads and trail connections.

### 3.2 Community Engagement

The What We Heard Report, October 2024, forms Attachment 2 to this Report. It provides a summary of the community engagement session held at Town Hall on October 2, 2024, and the comments received by the Town, at the time of preparing this Report.

Additional information, including frequently asked questions and the display materials from the community engagement session have been posted on the project webpage for review and comment: [www.townofws.ca/westfield](http://www.townofws.ca/westfield)

Invitations to attend the community engagement session were mailed to all landowners within 120 metres of the Study Area, and advertised through the Town's On The Road magazine and social media channels. Approximately 80 individuals attended the community engagement session.

The following provides a summary of the key takeaways from the community feedback:

#### **1 *Diverging Perspectives on the Future of Westfield***

Engagement with residents revealed a divide among residents regarding the future of Westfield. While some community members expressed a strong desire to maintain the current state of the neighbourhood, others expressed that they are open to change, advocating for redevelopment and increased density in favour of increased housing supply.

#### **2 *Infrastructure Maintenance***

Residents emphasized the need for ongoing maintenance and investment in existing infrastructure before considering new development. There are significant

concerns about the current state of the swale drainage systems, with frequent potential for flooding during significant rainfall events. In addition, residents highlighted the importance of improvements to servicing to reduce existing residents' reliance on private septic systems.

### **3 *Tree Preservation***

Residents value the mature trees in the neighbourhood for their environmental, aesthetic, and historical significance. They advocate for policies and regulations to ensure the preservation of mature trees during development projects, and the designation of certain areas as parkland to support future development.

### **4 *Enhanced Connectivity***

Residents would like to see improved road and active mobility pathways to create more accessible connections throughout the neighbourhood. Feedback provided during the open house highlighted a need for safer crosswalks across arterial roads, well-designed trails, increased road connections to accommodate traffic, and seamless transit options. Residents envision a network of walking paths and transit connections that facilitate easy access to downtown, promoting an active lifestyle.

### **5 *Preservation of Neighbourhood Character***

Some residents expressed concern that future development could disrupt the current neighbourhood character of large single-family homes, greenery and canopy cover, and overall experience that they believe make the Westfield Estates neighbourhood unique. While some residents acknowledge the inevitability of development, they advocate for approaches that maintain the neighborhood's unique identity, with requests to preserve and minimize disruption to existing character and greenery.

## **4. Next Steps:**

Based on the findings of the background review and the input received through the community engagement session, the Town and consulting team will be preparing various land use options for presentation at a future community engagement session in early 2025 to receive feedback. Based on further evaluation and community consultations a preferred land use plan and associated recommendations will be presented to Council for consideration at a future date.

## **5. Financial Implications:**

None

## 6. Broader Intergovernmental Impacts and/or Considerations:

None

## 7. Communication:

A community engagement session was held at Town Hall on October 2, 2024 to receive feedback on the potential future vision and land use plan for Westfield Estates. Invitations to attend the community engagement session were mailed to all landowners within 120 metres of the Study Area, and advertised through the Town's On The Road magazine and social media channels.

Additional information on the Study, including frequently asked questions and the display materials from the community engagement session have been posted on the project webpage for review and comment: [www.townofws.ca/westfield](http://www.townofws.ca/westfield)

The What We Heard Report, October 2024, included in Attachment 2 to this Report, provides a summary of the community engagement session feedback and the comments received by the Town, at the time of preparing this Report.

Regular e-newsletters are being sent to interested parties who have requested to be notified of Study updates, including Council Reports and future meetings.

## 8. Alignment with Strategic Plan:

1. A Town that Grows  
A Town that grows in support of complete communities

## 9. Attachments:

Attachment No. 1 – Westfield Estates Neighbourhood: Background, October 2024

Attachment No. 2 – Westfield Estates Neighbourhood: What We Heard Report, October 2024

## 10. Related Reports:

[June 19, 2024 – DS-030-24 Westfield Estates Neighbourhood Land Use Study](#)

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**For further information on this report, please contact the Department Head:** Dwayne Tapp, Commissioner of Development Services at 905-640-1900 or 1-855-642-8697 ext. 2431 or via email at [dwayne.tapp@townofws.ca](mailto:dwayne.tapp@townofws.ca)