

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: City Planning Committee
FROM: Administration
DATE: June 17, 2024
RE: Wasson Place Extension Master Plan

ISSUE

Advancing the Wasson Place Extension Master Plan (the Plan) for Council approval on the design concept for an expansion of the Hillcrest Industrial Area.

REFERENCES

- [Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan](#)
- [Official Community Plan Amendment \(Bylaw 2020-10\)](#)
- [2022-2024 Strategic Priorities](#)
- [2020 Commercial Industrial Land Study](#)
- [Subdivision Control Bylaw \(2012-16\)](#)
- Wasson Place Extension – Subject Site (Attachment 1)
- Wasson Place Extension Master Plan – What We Heard Memo (Attachment 2)
- Wasson Place Extension Master Plan (Attachment 3)

HISTORY

The 2020 Commercial Industrial Land Study determined that by 2040 there will be a need for 32.1 gross ha of serviced mixed commercial and industrial land. To meet this need, Council's 2022 to 2024 Strategic Priorities seek to create more opportunities for commercial and industrial land development. A master plan has been developed for the extension of the Hillcrest Industrial Area to help fulfill this goal (Attachment 1). The subject site includes the southeast portion of the former Tank Farm, a City-owner buffer, and vacant Commissioner land (Lots 426 and 421-138). The creation of the master plan was privately led by an agent of the Tank Farm owner, with support from Administration and the Government of Yukon.

Former Tank Farm

The Tank Farm site is 56 ha and generally bounded by Hamilton Boulevard to the west; Valleyview to the north; a Ta'an Kwäch'än Council parcel and Alaska Highway to the east; and Hillcrest and Burns Road to the south. A petroleum storage facility was formerly located on the Tank Farm site. In December 2019, Environment Yukon issued a Certificate of Compliance for the subject site portion of the Tank Farm site, stating that the area site has been satisfactorily restored to meet the Contaminated Sites Regulations standards.

The majority of the site is designated as Residential – Urban in the Official Community Plan (OCP). On March 27, 2024 Council approved the Valleyview South Master Plan that guides the future development of the residential portion of the former Tank Farm parcels.

In December 2020, Council approved an OCP amendment to designate a portion of the Tank Farm parcel as Industrial/Commercial to allow commercial/industrial uses similar to the existing lots nearby on Wasson Place and Burns Road. In Summer 2021 a Zoning Bylaw Amendment was introduced to Council to rezone the industrial portion of the Tank Farm to CIM with special modifications. However, the applicant withdrew the rezoning application before the Public Hearing. Therefore, the site remains zoned FP – Future Planning.

Master Planning Process

Work on the Wasson Place Extension Master Plan began in November 2023. The initial master plan proposal was reviewed by the Development Review Committee on January 10, 2024. DRC had minimal comments and have been addressed. Since then, Administration has provided input throughout the process to scope and refine the Plan.

If the Plan is approved, implementation is expected to start this fall with various approvals from the City and the Government of Yukon. It is anticipated it may take five years to grade the site before the industrial subdivision can be constructed; however, the timing of development and the release of lots is the responsibility of the various landowners.

An assessment under the Yukon Environmental and Socioeconomic Assessment Act, if required, along with further detailed studies, and all regulatory permits and approvals to develop the site, will be the responsibility of the developer.

Recent and Ongoing Council Decisions

On May 27, City Council approved the Master Plan Policy. However, since the Wasson Place Extension Master Plan started before that policy was approved. The policy exempts master plans that were already underway and/or approved prior to the Master Plan Policy being approved. Since the Wasson Place Extension Master Plan started prior to the policy's approved, it is exempt. Nevertheless, efforts were taken during the master planning process to align with the draft policy as much as possible.

There is also a zoning bylaw amendment currently before Council to extend the temporary use permit for interim gravel extraction. If the bylaw is approved, the subject site would be required to adhere to those new zoning regulations during the site preparation.

Official Community Plan

The Plan was informed by the Official Community Plan (OCP), which contains numerous policies that directed the development of the Plan (OCP policies references are provided in parentheses). A master plan is required and must adhere to the OCP (13.22, 13.23) which seeks to promote the redevelopment of brownfield sites to enhance efficiency, remediate the environment, and reduce urban sprawl (8.3). The OCP also provides guidance on the proposed gravel extraction and the contents of the Plan (13.2, 13.24).

The OCP establishes the permitted uses within the Industrial/Commercial land use designation (15.7.1, 15.7.2). The OCP also states a 200 m vegetated buffer may be required between an Industrial/Commercial area and a residential neighbourhood. That policy was reviewed and considered when Council approved the Official Community Plan amendment to redesignate the site from Residential – Urban to Industrial/Commercial (Bylaw 2020-10).

Public Engagement – Developer-Led

The applicant conducted public engagement on the Plan from May 8 to 22. During that period, the applicant:

- Published advertisements in local newspapers;
- Sent email notices to Ta'an Kwäch'an Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and Yukon government Community Services (Land Development Branch) and Energy, Mines and Resources (Land Management Branch) and the Hillcrest Community Association President and general email contact;
- Mailed letters to nearby property owners and occupants on Wasson Place and Burns Road;
- Facilitated a walking tour of the subject site; and
- Created a website (www.TankFarm.ca) to contain the draft plan and other engagement material.

The website had 161 visitors, input was received from 14 survey respondents, and ten people attended the walking tour. The applicant prepared a What We Heard Memo (Attachment 2). The applicant then incorporated the comments, where appropriate, to develop a preferred land use concept and Plan report (Attachment 3).

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council direct Administration to schedule a Public Input Session at the Regular Council Meeting of August 12, 2024; or
2. Refer the matter back to Administration.

ANALYSIS

Plan Overview

The Plan proposes to extend Wasson Place into the study area to provide more land for industrial/commercial type development. Access to the study area is proposed through a portion of Lot 426, vacant Commissioner's land. YG has provided their support for this connection to facilitate future development.

The Plan provides approximately 5.3 net ha of industrial/commercial area, which is anticipated to provide approximately 14 lots. The Plan also provides approximately 0.9 ha of functional greenspace with trails and 2.6 ha of transitional slopes.

In addition to road extension, the plan proposes active transportation connections between the area and Burns Road, the Hillcrest neighbourhood, and the Valleyview South area. The subject site is proposed to be comparable to the elevation of the existing developments along Wasson Place and will provide a transitional slope to the Valleyview South area.

Servicing

The concept envisions a typical urban level of service, including snow removal, potable water distribution, and wastewater collection. The Plan area would connect to services in the Wasson Place right-of-way.

The 2003 Water and Sewer Study indicated the Airport and Black Street sewer mains are over capacity. However, additional modeling and testing are required to confirm the

existing capacity and/or the extent of future upgrades, if feasible. The additional work and any required upgrades would be at the developer's expense.

Land Exchange

The Plan recommends considering a land exchange between the City and the applicant. The City has a 30 m buffer between the existing lots along Wasson Place and the Tank Farm parcel to convey stormwater through the area. However, the City only requires approximately 10 m to facilitate stormwater flow. Therefore, the Plan proposes to transfer 20 m of the buffer (approximately 0.7 ha) to the applicant. In return, the City would receive the equivalent area within the future Valleyview South portion of the applicant's lot. This essentially trades underutilized greenspace between the rear of industrial lots for functional parkland in the new Valleyview South neighbourhood.

Further, the Plan recommends the public use land dedication, as required by the Subdivision Control Bylaw, be transferred to the balance of Lot 429. This again increases the amount of functional parkland within the future Valleyview South neighbourhood and increase the amount of land that could be developed for commercial/industrial uses.

Relation to Valleyview South

The main private lot within this subject site also extends into the Valleyview South area (image 1). As such the landowner is interested in providing an appropriate transition between the industrial/commercial area of this Plan and the future residential neighbourhood in the Valleyview South area. This Plan provides the transitional slope between the two areas, with the future industrial/commercial uses below the Valleyview South residential area. This Plan also contains policies to ensure future industrial/commercial uses are compatible with nearby residential, both in what uses should be permitted through zoning and the scale and design of the buildings.

The Plan provides multi-use paths to connect this area with the Valleyview South trail network, as well as trail connections to Hillcrest and Burns Road. These connections will provide more options and flexibility for active transition for residents above the airport to get to/from this area, the airport trail, and ultimately downtown.

Site Preparation

Due to the steep topography and significant elevation difference between the subject site and Wasson Place, considerable site preparation will be required. The intent is to pre-grade the area to achieve final subdivision elevations, which will involve removing approximately 750,000 m³ of aggregate. The applicant anticipates this will take at least four to five years to complete, however the exact timeframe is at the discretion of the landowner.



Image 1: Relationship of the Valleyview South Master Plan (VSMP) and the Wasson Place Extension Master Plan (WPE.MP) across the former Tank Farm parcels.

The Plan recommends various mitigation strategies to reduce the impact of grading, including directing activities towards the highway and/or the Hillcrest Industrial Area, restricting the type of activities, hours of operation, noise, dust, and other adverse impacts.

If regrading exposes contaminated soils, applicable landowners will be required to remediate the areas and provide confirmation from the Government of Yukon.

Next Steps

If the Plan is approved by Council, the City will work with the applicant to implement the plan through additional detailed studies, assessment, permits, and approvals initiated by the developers.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct Administration schedule a Public Input Session at the Regular Council Meeting of August 12, 2024, on the proposed Wasson Place Extension Master Plan.