

PLANNING CASE STUDY OPENING NEW DOORS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Challenge

Our Client owned a large property located in a developing rural community. The building was nearing the end of its economic life and time had changed the nature of its environs; it was no longer one of many large rural residential properties, but a vestige surrounded by commercial, light industrial, and multi-unit residential buildings. Updating the planning framework to reflect this would make the property more valuable. To avoid leaving that money on the table, our Client wanted to complete the planning work themselves. This way they could redevelop the site, or receive a better price if sold. Though they had experience with construction, this would be their first attempt into land development. They turned to Turner Drake for assistance.

Turner Drake's Approach

Our Planning Division began by undertaking a Planning Policy and Regulatory Review. We built a comprehensive picture of what development could be achieved on the property and what planning processes would be required to receive approval. However, the planning framework is made up of living documents, so we went beyond the present day policy and by-laws. Based on those alone, our client's goals would require us to undertake amendments to multiple documents, and receive a Development Agreement. Casting a wider gaze, we identified an ongoing comprehensive review and update of the municipality's community planning policy and regulations. We examined a number of preliminary documents to build our understanding of the community's goals.

Meeting with our colleagues in the municipal planning department, we discussed the property, its context, and our client's objectives. We identified how our efforts could support the broader goals of their forthcoming plan. This opened new doors: we could work to achieve the same outcome as an integrated part of the overall plan update. This was a less expensive proposition, however the trade-off was a longer timeline for completion and a degree of uncertainty as to what the final development regulations would be. After reviewing these choices, our client decided they were in no hurry and opted to pursue this novel opportunity. We drafted a strategy, and continued to work with our Client and the municipality through the plan review process.

Winning Results

Leaving no stone unturned, we identified an innovative opportunity for our client to achieve their goal of increasing the development potential of their property without requiring a separate series of expensive and uncertain planning applications.

