

TO Members of Westerville City Council
Monica Dupee, City Manager

FROM Rachel Ray, Economic Development Director

DATE May 19, 2026

COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM #12e: ORDINANCE 2026-11: TO AUTHORIZE AND DIRECT THE CITY MANAGER TO PERFORM A REAL ESTATE PURCHASE AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE FOR THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 64 EAST WALNUT STREET.

Summary

The City Administration recommends City Council approval of Ordinance 2026-11, which authorizes the City Manager to enter into a Purchase Agreement with a buyer, Continental Development Ventures, for the recently vacated City-owned property located at 64 East Walnut for a future mixed-use redevelopment project.

The Purchase Agreement is not the final decision on the use of the property. It is the first step and the beginning of a multi-step public process. The proposed transaction outlined in the Purchase Agreement is structured so that the City retains control throughout the process. The property will not be sold to Continental Development Ventures, and the City has no obligation to proceed toward closing, unless multiple independent approvals are obtained. Those approvals include City Council approval of the sale (this Ordinance), followed by zoning approvals and a negotiated Development Agreement (future Ordinances). If any of these current or future Ordinances are not approved, the City retains ownership of the property and may pursue alternative options.

Background

With the recent completion of the City Hall Project, the City has vacated and plans to sell the 64 E. Walnut St. property for redevelopment. The sale of this ± 5.20-acre City-owned property honors a commitment to the community to reduce the number of buildings used for government purposes in Uptown. Selling this property fulfills a specific pledge when Westerville voters approved the Justice Center in 2018. Since that time, the City also sold 28 S. State St. (originally a U.S. post office, and later Westerville Police Department offices, to a local developer, BTTS Holdings, for the High Bank Distillery restaurant) and 240 S. State St. (originally a National Armory and later used as auxiliary City facility space, to COhatch for coworking and community space with the North High Restaurant and Brewery) as added amenities in and adjacent to Uptown.

Project & Developer Overview

The City administrative team began discussions with a Developer about potential plans for 64 East Walnut Street. Continental Development Ventures is a Columbus-based national developer, as well as a known and trusted partner that has successfully developed complex projects in the City of Westerville in the past (the Renaissance Hotel and Conference Center at Westar, as well as various office and medical office developments in the city). With their projects in other Central Ohio communities and across the country, the Developer has demonstrated their capability of delivering a complex mixed-use project that includes a boutique hotel, a restaurant and high-quality apartments while successfully navigating public processes that ensure projects achieve land use, context and economic development goals of the local communities.

This Ordinance (the proposed sale of the property to the Developer), initiates a series of public processes that will result in developing the project details. However, the sale of the property for redevelopment also advances years of strategic planning, including the 2023 Advance Westerville Economic Development Strategy and the 2014 Uptown Plan. These plans specifically called for a boutique hotel and infill housing in and around Uptown, as well as additional parking.

In order to study the feasibility of the potential project following the sale of the property, the Developer has proposed a mixed-use development project that consists of:

- **Class A Multi-Family:** approx. 247 units
- **Boutique Hotel:** approx. 81 rooms
- **Restaurant:** approx. 3,500 square feet
- **Parking Garage:** approx. 400 parking spaces, including a minimum of 100 spaces for public use

The Developer expects that the boutique hotel would be co-managed by Concord Hospitality, who also manages the Renaissance Polaris-Westerville hotel and conference center. Co-managing the two hotel properties allows for shared resources and overflow capacity when either hotel property is fully booked while offering different and distinct high-quality visitor experiences of Westerville.

The boutique hotel guests and new residents of the multi-family portion of the project will bring new residents and guests (“feet on the street”) within walking distance of Uptown Westerville’s many locally owned shops, restaurants, and other amenities.

The combination of uses and proposed parking structure will ensure that the project is capable of supporting its own parking requirements, while accommodating additional spaces for public use in recognition of the existing publicly-accessible parking spaces available on the site.

Purchase Agreement Terms

The draft Real Estate Purchase Agreement is on file with the Clerk. Notable terms in the proposed agreement include:

- **Typical Due Diligence Terms.**
- **Purchase Price:** \$2.5 million

- **Dedication of Land Adjacent to Hanby Park:** Buyer/Developer agrees to split off a portion of the overall \pm 5.20-acre parcel to the northeast of the parcel fronting on East Park Street adjacent to Hanby Park and along the bike trail, ensuring it remains in City control.
- **Zoning and Governmental Approvals:** The Buyer must obtain all required zoning, land use, and design approvals through a public process at both Planning Commission and City Council. If these approvals are not obtained, the Agreement may be terminated and the City retains ownership of the property.
- **Development Agreement Requirement:** Council must approve a detailed Development Agreement governing the project scope, financing, and public benefits, such as parking and infrastructure. If acceptable terms aren't reached and approved by City Council, the City can terminate the transaction.
- **Closing:** Includes conditions for closing, as well as a timeline for commencement of construction. Closing will occur only after all conditions are satisfied, including zoning approvals and execution of a Development Agreement. If those conditions are not met, the sale does not occur and the City retains ownership of the property. Following closing, the Developer would proceed to groundbreaking. **The earliest expected timing of groundbreaking would be mid- to late-2027 and only after all the prior steps are completed.**

Another key set of provisions within the Purchase Agreement is the timeline for the Buyer/Developer to obtain each of the subsequent development approvals for the project prior to closing, which are all part of the public processes described above. This **“Approval Period”** represents the primary phase of public review and decision making regarding the development concept, where Council determines whether to approve the zoning and development plans associated with the proposed project. These are structured as binding conditions precedent to closing that ensure the City retains control of the property and is not obligated to proceed with the sale unless the project is approved through the multi-step public process.

Under the City Charter and Codified Ordinances, City Council retains full legislative authority to approve or decline the proposed sale and any subsequent development approvals.

SALE AND REDEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Staff Recommendation

The City Administration recommends City Council approval of Ordinance 2026-11 at the third reading on June 16, 2026. Please contact Rachel Ray at (614) 901-6409 or rachel.ray@westerville.org with any questions.