



SUBJECT: Streamline Development Approval Fund

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Corporate Strategy

Report Number: CS-04-22

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 155-03-01

Date to Committee: N/A

Date to Council: February 15, 2022

Recommendation:

Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute on behalf of The Corporation of the City of Burlington the transfer payment, and any other ancillary document(s) or amendment(s), between the City of Burlington and the Province of Ontario regarding the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative, to the satisfaction of the Executive Director of Legal Services and Corporation Counsel; and

That By-law Number 20-2022 authorizing the execution of the transfer payment agreement with the Province of Ontario as represented by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative, substantially in the form attached as Appendix A to Report CS-04-22, be enacted; and

Direct the Chief Financial Officer to single source a third-party consultant(s) to complete each review project outlined in Report CS-04-22; and

That the Manager of Procurement Services be authorized and directed to execute any Agreements with any third-party consultants retained for the purpose of giving effect to the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative in a form satisfactory to the Executive Director of Legal Services and Corporation Counsel.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

Background and Discussion:

In January 2022, as part of the Provincial Housing Summit with big city mayors and regional chairs, Premier Doug Ford announced the launch of the \$45 million Streamline Development Approval Fund (SDAF) Initiative. Ontario's 39 largest municipalities each received an allocation from the province to help modernize, streamline and accelerate processes for managing and approving housing applications. The City of Burlington is eligible to receive up to \$1 million in funding.

Strategy/process

Projects eligible for funding under the Streamline Development Approval Fund include initiatives such as consulting/fee-for-service resources to identify and implement LEAN processes for development approvals, undertake studies to support new housing opportunities, on-line application forms, guides and portals, on-line booking and web meetings systems for pre-consultation and planning meetings, temporary staff (including full time or interns) to address backlogs and diversity internship programs to support diversification of planning/building departments.

The funding can be applied to expenses incurred for multiple SDAF eligible projects within the up to amount of funding, which in Burlington's case is \$1 million.

The program will not cover projects where:

- the main outcome is a reduction in front line services
- the municipality would not be prepared to support any ongoing maintenance costs resulting from the project.

Regular municipal staff costs that are part of the municipality's annual budget and major capital expenditures are not considered eligible costs. Minor capital expenditures like hardware and software that are necessary to achieve the outcomes of the project are eligible. Projects must be completed by February 28, 2023. Municipalities are required to submit an interim report in April 2022 and a final report (posted publicly) in March 2023.

Options Considered

In the short time since the funding was announced staff from community planning, building, finance and corporate strategy worked together in gathering information to identify and assess the potential options for projects that could be funded through the SDAF.

This process included:

- Content Review – recommendations from 2019 Audit and Accountability Pre-Building Permit Development Approval Process review and the Red Tape Red Carpet Task Force, any recently completed and/or ongoing internal process reviews; and departmental business plans and priorities.
- Identification of Key Pain Points –pain points identified through the previous formal reviews (by customers and stakeholders), common themes raised in staff and leadership feedback and improvement areas identified in business plans and council service presentations.
- Prioritization for Implementation - Focus on identifying opportunities to implement customer-centric solutions and recommendations that would address key pain points and solutions that would offer the greatest impact for the end to end process.

Selected Projects

Staff have selected the following list of projects to be completed with the SDAF funding.

Streamline Development Application Process:

- Review and optimize the timing and calculation of development charges during the development application process including proposed system enhancements for recent legislated amendments
- Optimize the pre-consultation and application submissions process along with other key activities related to pre-consultation
- Assessment and implementation of previous review recommendations
- Technology needs assessment and functional requirement for development review
- Support and sustain continuous improvement through LEAN training of staff

Expected project and organizational outcomes:

- Clarity in process for both staff and customers
- Reduced application review time
- Reduction in process touchpoints and rework
- Reduction in waiting at various process steps
- Reduction in manual work required by staff
- Improved communication between internal departmental staff
- Support V2F Priorities and Goals – Increase options for housing across the city and community responsive growth management

- Decrease nonvalue capacity demands on community planning and building staff
- Provide streamlined and customer focused development processes

The City's application to the Audit and Accountability Fund for the Land Management Technology Review was approved in January. The work on the SDAF projects will ensure the City's readiness for the implementation of the recommendations from the Land Management Technology Review.

Housing Strategy Additional Work: Surplus School Sites

In January 2021, City Council endorsed the Housing Strategy Proposed Terms of Reference and staff received direction to initiate the Housing Strategy Project. The objective of the Housing Strategy project is to develop an innovative Housing Strategy that redefines the City's role in housing and sets out recommendations for policies, tools and actions to provide creative and innovative solutions to address local housing needs. This objective is expected to be accomplished through the consideration of a variety of planning policy and financial tools, partnerships, collaboration and advocacy opportunities, strategies and initiatives in order to increase options for housing in Burlington that meet the needs of all current and future residents and that are attainable at all income levels.

On October 6, 2021 at Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk and Accountability Committee staff report CM-22-21 titled "Burlington Lands Partnership update 1" was considered. In addition to the recommendations of the report, staff received the following Staff Direction:

Direct the City Manager to report back by Q1 2022 with a proposed strategic lands strategy for the acquisition and community use of current and potential surplus school sites that includes the following elements:

- a current practise review of former school site uses in other municipalities, including opportunities for attainable housing;
- a complete review of existing federal and provincial housing support programs, in coordination with the work underway via the housing strategy;
- opportunities for housing, parkland and community uses on these sites, in partnership with other agencies, non-profit organizations and levels of government, including Halton Region, and coordinated with the work of the Burlington Lands Partnership;
- budgetary implications for known and potential sites that may come available;

- a community engagement strategy on potential uses for these sites; and
- communication to the four school boards (English public and catholic, French public and catholic) that the city has an interest in considering any school sites that may become available, and requests regular communication from all boards about their long-term plans. (SD-29-21)

A portion of the SDAF program funding will be used to complete components of this staff direction.

Financial Matters:

There is no municipal cost sharing requirement for this program. The provincial funding will cover 100 per cent of the eligible costs up to the maximum amount of funding that has been made available to the City (\$1 million). Staff are currently developing a project budget which will include consulting service fees, staff training costs, and technology tools and licensing fees.

Climate Implications

N/A

Engagement Matters:

For the development application process projects, the external consultation will focus on engagement with neighbouring municipalities to assess any leading practices as well as with key stakeholders and customers including the City's Housing and Development Liaison Committee (HDLC). The project team will also use the input gathered through the Red Tape Red Carpet Task Force and the 2019 Audit and Accountability Pre-Building Permit Development Approval Process review.

The surplus school site work will also include consultations with other municipalities and school boards. An outcome of this project will be a community engagement strategy on the potential uses of the sites.

Conclusion:

The SDAF funding will allow the City of Burlington to complete and implement several very important projects that will ensure our processes for managing and approving development applications are as efficient and streamlined as possible. The City will have consultant support in developing recommendations to be considered by Council as the basis for the development of a strategy for the acquisition and use of surplus school sites to provide creative and innovative solutions to address local housing needs while also providing parkland and other community uses. We are grateful to the Province of Ontario for this funding and for their commitment to working together with municipalities to address housing availability and affordability.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Walihura

Government Relations Manager

905-335-7600, ext. 7895

Appendices:

A. By-law Number 20-2022

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.