

## Committee of the Whole (2) Report

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**DATE:** Tuesday, April 12, 2022

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE:** STREAMLINE DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL FUND

**FROM:**

Nick Spensieri, City Manager

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

To report on the implementation strategy for the Streamline Development Approval Fund (SDAF) received from the Province of Ontario to implement a series of initiatives aimed at streamlining the development approval process to assist with coordination efforts to increase the supply of homes across the province.

**Report Highlights**

- On January 19, 2022, the Province announced at the Ontario Housing Affordability Summit that more than \$45 million in funding will be provided to help Ontario's 39 largest municipalities modernize, streamline and accelerate processes for managing and approving housing applications.
- On January 19, 2022, the City received a letter noting its eligibility to receive up to \$1,000,000 for development approval initiatives such as e-permitting systems, temporary staff to address backlogs, online application portals, and other projects subject to returning a copy of a letter, signed by the Head of Council, to the ministry and the execution of a transfer payment agreement.
- On January 20, 2022, a letter was forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing confirming the City of Vaughan's participation in the Streamline Development Approval Fund and the transfer payment agreement was executed by the City's signing authorities as per Bylaw 154-2018.

**Recommendations**

1. THAT Staff be directed to proceed with the identified projects and resourcing requirements through the Streamline Development Approval Fund, as outlined in this report;

2. THAT a new capital project be established to fund the newly identified projects not to exceed \$1,000,000 inclusive of applicable taxes funded from the Streamline Development Approval Fund;
3. THAT Council authorize the City Treasurer to apply the required budget amendment of existing approved capital funding arising from the Streamline Development Approval Fund reallocation; and
4. THAT inclusion of this matter on a Public Committee or Council agenda with respect to creating a new capital project and amending capital budgets, as identified in this report, be deemed sufficient notice pursuant to Section 2(1)(c) of By-Law 394-2002, as amended.

## **Background**

### ***On January 19, 2022, the Province announced funding to help Ontario's largest municipalities modernize, streamline and accelerate development approval processes***

On January 19, 2022, Premier Doug Ford and Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, met with city mayors and regional chairs at the Ontario Housing Affordability Summit to discuss the housing crisis and coordinate efforts to increase the supply of homes across the province. The virtual summit provided provincial-municipal leaders with an opportunity to share best practices, identify persistent issues and collaborate on ways to build the right mix of housing.

Premier Ford announced at the Summit that more than \$45 million in funding will be provided to help Ontario's 39 largest municipalities modernize, streamline and accelerate processes for managing and approving housing applications. Subsequently, the City received a letter noting its eligibility to receive up to \$1,000,000 for development approval initiatives such as e-permitting systems, temporary staff to address backlogs, online application portals, and other projects.

The letter was signed back to the Province on January 20, 2022, with the Mayor's signature (Head of Council) as requested by the Province to participate in the SDAF (Attachment 1) and on February 23, 2022, the Transfer Payment Agreement was signed. Details on eligible costs and program requirements are noted in the Analysis and Options section of this report.

## **Previous Reports/Authority**

[KPMG Final Report: Comprehensive Review of Development Review and Policy Formulation](#)

## **Analysis and Options**

### ***On February 23, 2022, the City executed the Transfer Payment Agreement for the Streamline Development Approval Fund***

Following Vaughan's confirmation of participation in the SDAF, the Province provided the City with the Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) setting out the terms of funding. The City executed the TPA on February 23, 2022, as per Bylaw 154-2018.

The following is a high-level description of the terms outlined by the Province in the TPA:

- The funding is for the City (as the Recipient) to implement projects that streamline the development approval process or support a diversity internship program in connection with the development approvals process, such as:
  1. Procuring consulting or fee-for-service resources to do one or more of the following:
    - a) Identify and assist the Recipient to implement more efficient processes for the Recipient's development approvals;
    - b) Prepare draft changes to the Recipient's zoning by-laws and explore opportunities to accommodate new housing development as-of-right;
    - c) Implement or enhance implementation of a Community Planning Permits system with a housing component;
    - d) Review council decision-making processes related to development approvals and make recommendations for streamlining those processes, including delegating certain planning decisions to the Recipient's staff where considered appropriate;
    - e) Develop draft Community Improvement Plans that include housing incentives; and
    - f) Undertake studies to support new housing types;
  2. Implementing e-permitting systems or online "Manage My Application" systems that provide for online status checking, interaction between the applicant and planners, fee payments, and ability to start additional permits and view agency comments;
  3. Implementing systems that enable the use of online application forms, which allow for the submission of supporting documents, drawings, and studies as well as standardizes forms, drawings, studies and data submissions;
  4. Developing online application guides to help applicants select a location, identify development type, and follow a step-by-step guide to determine application submission requirements;

5. Implementing online booking and web meetings systems for pre-consultation and planning meetings;
  6. Purchasing data/application management/workflow software, digital drawing software, or 3D tools to assist with design and visualization of development applications;
  7. Purchasing software or hardware to improve the Recipient's efficiency in handling payments related to development approvals, such as new hardware or software to handle online payments or credit card payments;
  8. Standardizing terminology, application processes, and data requirements as well as developing terms of reference to improve the customer experience and position partners for simpler data sharing;
  9. Hiring temporary staff to deal with backlogs related to development approvals, including inspectors and Committee of Adjustment clerks;
  10. Implement diversity internship programs to support diversification of planning or building departments including internships for qualified students or new graduates with a focus on people with disabilities, Indigenous, Black, and racialized individuals, and people from diverse ethnic and cultural origins, sexual orientations, and gender identities and expressions; and
  11. Other initiatives to streamline the Recipient's development approval processes, with the written approval of the Province.
- The funding will be received in several payments, with an initial payment of \$500,000 to be received no more than 30 days after execution of the TPA.
  - By April 22, 2022, the City must submit an Interim Report Back to the Province outlining how the City intends to spend the funds along with a workplan, timeline and budget for the projects.
  - Another payment no more than 30 days after the Province's approval of the Interim Report Back will be received for costs submitted as part of the Interim Report Back that exceed the initial payment.
  - By February 28, 2023, the City must submit a Final Report Back to the Province that will include a publicly posted staff report on the City's website, completion of a report back template, and identification of costs submitted as part of the Final Report Back that exceed the initial and interim payments.
  - The reimbursement of project costs must incur between January 19, 2022, to the earlier of February 28, 2023, or the submission of the Final Report Back.

***Staff have identified a number of initiatives that meet the eligibility requirements of the SDAF***

In December 2020, the City applied for funding under the Audit and Accountability Fund (AAF) Intake 2 Program from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and was awarded up to \$175,000 to review the City's Policy and Development Application process for managing Development Applications in a more timely and efficient manner. In April 2021, the City retained KPMG LLP to conduct a comprehensive assessment of its development review and policy formulation processes. In November 2021, KPMG issued their Comprehensive Review of Development Review and Policy Formulation Processes Final Report, a link is provided above in the Previous Reports/Authority section of this report. Selected recommendations from the Final Report, such as creating a Standardized Operating Procedures for Development Planning Processes and Project Management Toolkit and templates and guidelines will be implemented through the SDAF. High level costs for each initiative have been estimated, with more detailed costing to be finalized through the process.

Staff have identified the following projects and resourcing requirements that meet the eligibility requirements of the SDAF to an upset limit of \$1,000,000, which have been confirmed with Provincial staff.

Procurement for Consulting:

- Create Standardized Operating Procedures for Development Planning processes;
- Create Project Management Toolkit and templates including circulation guidelines, standardized comment matrix and formalizing meetings structures for Development Planning;
- Modernize Development Engineering Agreements;
- Peer Review of Underground Storage Tanks vs. Conventional Stormwater Management Ponds;
- Preparation of guidelines (i.e., Terms of Reference) for development related engineering reports;
- Establish Noise Policy and Guidelines;

Technology and Software Upgrades:

- Improvements to Citizen Portal for AMANDA, including Online Payment fees;
- Purchase of AMANDA licenses and maintenance of software for Development Planning Staff;
- Purchase of Blue Beam Revu software licenses for Development Planning and Park Infrastructure Planning and Development Staff;
- Acquire 3D modelling software and professional services to build modelling;
- Improvement of GIS systems to build an interface for open data on development and building permit applications to provide real time information for staff;

Staffing:

- Contract staff to assist with implementing the projects identified above; and

- Contract staff to assist in the Development Planning Department and Policy Planning and Special Programs Department – Yonge and Steeles Program

The broader outcomes expected to be achieved include a leaner and more efficient development approvals process including streamlined process guidelines for the public and staff, maximized return on investment with the AMANDA system online application portal, improvement in GIS Data management, improved development data to make more informed decisions and recommendations, and improved efficiency in processing of higher quality complete development applications. The outcomes of the individual project and resources requirements are further identified in Attachment 3. Together these initiatives will help Development Staff in improving processing times for residential planning applications, ultimately bringing on stream approvals in a more timely manner to assist with coordination efforts to increase the supply of homes across the province.

### **Financial Impact**

Under the SDAF, Vaughan is eligible to receive up to \$1,000,000. This Provincial investment can help offset existing approved operating and capital funded initiatives, as well as provide funding for other initiatives which are currently unfunded. A new capital project is required to fund these new unfunded initiatives in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 (inclusive of applicable taxes). Staff will reallocate the existing approved capital budget funding to the SDAF and the remaining funding will be applied to the new capital project to a maximum SDAF funding of \$1,000,000 between the existing and new projects.

Any future operating costs associated with these initiatives will be requested during the annual budget process.

### **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

The allocation of the SDAF will assist in streamlining development approvals processes by the City and other York Region Municipalities in a coordinated effort to increase the supply of homes across the province.

### **Conclusion**

With Council endorsement of the identified projects, the SDAF will assist in advancing several processes and initiatives to modernize, streamline and accelerate processes for managing and approving housing applications as outlined within the TPA and this report. All funds will be distributed as per the grant terms and conditions as indicated in this report.

**For more information**, please contact: Mary Caputo, Senior Manager of Development Planning, ext. 8635.

## **Attachments**

1. Executed Letter of participation to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
2. Streamline Development Approval Fund Q & A
3. Streamline Development Approval Fund Projects and Outcomes

## **Prepared by**

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## **Approved by**



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## **Reviewed by**



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