

## Report to Planning and Environment Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Planning & Environment Committee

**From:** Scott Mathers, MPA, P.Eng.,  
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development

**Subject:** Streamline Development Approval Fund:  
Continuous Improvement of Development Approvals  
Single Source Contract Award

**Meeting on:** April 25, 2022

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development, the following actions be take:

- a) A Single Source Procurement in accordance with section 14.4(e) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy **BE AWARDED** to EZSigma Group, 61 Wellington Street East, Aurora, ON, L4G 1H7, to guide the continuous improvement process for the Streamline Development Approval Fund in partnership with the City of London at a cost of up to \$446,250.00 (excluding HST).
- b) the financing for this project **BE APPROVED** as set out in the Sources of Financing Report attached, hereto, as Appendix 'A'

## Executive Summary

In response to the Streamline Development Approval Fund, Planning & Development have outlined a series of Continuous Improvements to streamline the approach to electronic record keeping, filing, data consistency and naming conventions. In the short-term, this will improve customer service delivery times by creating consistent and standardized approaches that all staff use and understand. Over the longer term these initiatives align with the software implementation project (Strategic Business Case #11) intended to track all Planning Act applications from consultation through build-out.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Council's 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan for the City of London identifies Leading in Public Service as a strategic area of focus. This includes increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery by conducting targeted service reviews and promoting and strengthening continuous improvement practices.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Background Information

#### 1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

**February 15, 2022** - Overview of the new Streamline Development Approval Fund and seeking direction to enter into the Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement between Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Ontario as represented by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (the "Province") and The Corporation of the City of London (the "Recipient").

#### 1.2 Streamlining Development Approvals Fund

In January 2022, the Province of Ontario held an Ontario Housing Affordability Summit. On January 19, 2022, the Province of Ontario announced an investment of \$45 million in a new Streamline Development Approval Fund to help Ontario's 39 largest municipalities implement actions to unlock housing supply by streamlining, digitizing, and modernizing

their approach to managing and approving applications for residential developments. The fund can also be used to support diversity internship programs within planning and building departments.

The City of London is eligible to receive up to \$1,750,000 through the Streamline Development Approval Fund to implement streamlining development approval initiatives such as e-permitting systems, temporary staff (including interns) to address backlogs, online application portals, and other projects aimed at unlocking housing supply.

On February 7, 2022, London received the Transfer Payment Agreement and high-level program guidelines for this program. The agreement has been executed. Eligible expenses financed through this funding must be incurred between January 19, 2022, and February 28, 2023, the project completion date. Municipalities are required to provide details of their project(s) in an interim report due April 22, 2022. The final report on the use of this funding is due February 28, 2023, and must include a publicly posted staff report.

### **1.3 Overview of Projects to the Province**

Throughout the remote work period that started in March 2020, the volume of applications and complexity has increased. In addition to filling out existing vacancies, bringing on resources in focused areas will assist in addressing any backlog in applications. Although the transition to digital application submissions has been quite well received, update to policies, bylaws, operating procedures, and knowledge base articles that support the improved customer service can be looked at more holistically to find opportunities to optimize service delivery.

The list below provides a summary of the projects that have been proposed to the Province:

- Two technology projects focused on buying more licenses for drawing review software and offsetting some costs associated with Strategic Business Case #11.
- One project to hire resources to assist with reviews of historical information associated with street names from an equity and diversity perspective.
- Two standardization and continuous improvement projects focused on untangling 20+ years of organizational structure and creating “one source of truth” for development approval data addressed through this Single Source project.
- Four standardization projects focused on aligning corporate systems and putting historical data “at your fingertips”.
- Five different recruitments focused on reducing any existing backlogs to bring on temporary staff to assist with applications, inspections, etc. Twelve staff positions have been identified in five different jobs.
- Three streamlining projects focused on hiring consultants to update Terms of Reference, bylaws and guidelines.

## **2.0 Discussion and Considerations**

### **2.1 Overview of the Project**

Prior to March 2020, the City’s Strategy and Innovation group has been assisting Planning and Development with reviewing and streamlining development approval processes. To date, the site plan approval process has gone through a deep dive including business reporting and analytics and a series of improvements, with the assistance of the local development industry. The proposed scope of work will take from existing work and expedite the completion of eight of the major Planning Act processes at the same level of detail and develop business analytics to identify performance on a regular basis.

At a high level, the milestones will include:

Define and Measure – engagement with key stakeholders, current state validation, identification of opportunities for improvement.

Analyze – deep dive into the process inputs that are causing challenges on process performance and customer satisfaction.

Improve – Research analysis and implementation of potential solutions for each of the key inputs that are affecting the process output.

## **2.2 Procurement Process**

Based on the opportunity and the parameters (including deadlines) set out in Streamline Development Approval Fund, Civic Administration is recommending a single source contract award for the proposed consulting engagement, in accordance with the City's Procurement Policy 14.4 (e). The required goods and/or services are to be supplied by a particular supplier(s) having special knowledge, skills, expertise, or experience.

This is based on the following rationale:

- The City of London began its continuous improvement journey in 2015 and engaged EZSigma Group to assist in developing internal capacity through Green Belt training and certification and to lay the foundation for a sustainable continuous improvement system. Engaging EZSigma Group will allow the City to leverage the skills, expertise, and experience gained during this foundational work.
- The EZSigma team has demonstrated qualifications, competencies and expertise conducting and facilitating related continuous improvement process reviews as well as a productive and collaborative rapport with internal stakeholders.
- EZSigma possesses a clear understanding of the business requirements and deliverables of this project, which will enable the City to meet the requirements of the Streamline Development Approval Fund, including the project completion deadline of February 2023.

## **3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations**

There is no financial impact to the City of London to award the consulting services for this project. This project will be 100% funded by the Province of Ontario through the \$1,750,000 granted through the Streamline Development Approval Fund.

## **Conclusion**

The project with EZ Sigma will provide benefits to the day-to-day activities in Planning and Development along with improving the understanding and level of effort required to transition to the new software identified in Strategic Business Case #11. Work will include the “voice of the customer” and engage with the local development industry to obtain their feedback on where improvements on eight major Planning Act processes are most needed and can be achieved.

**Prepared by:** **Matt Feldberg, MPA, CET**  
**Manager, Subdivision and Development Inspections**

**Recommended by:** **Gregg Barrett, AICP**  
**Director, Planning and Development**

**Submitted by:** **Scott Mathers, MPA, P. Eng.**  
**Deputy City Manager,**  
**Planning and Economic Development**

cc: Mike Norman, Manager, Strategy and Innovation

April 14, 2022

**Appendix "A"**

**#22058**

April 25, 2022  
(Award Contract)

Chair and Members  
Planning and Environment Committee

RE: Streamline Development Approval Fund  
Continuous Improvement of the Development Approvals  
(Subledger NT22GG04)  
Capital Project PD1024 - Streamline Development Approval Fund  
EZSigma Group - \$446,250.00 (excluding HST)

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**Finance Supports Report on the Sources of Financing:**

Finance Supports confirms that the cost of this purchase can be accommodated within the financing available for it in the Capital Budget, and that, subject to the approval of the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development the detailed source of financing for this purchase is:

<b>Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>Approved Budget</b>	<b>Committed To Date</b>	<b>This Submission</b>	<b>Balance for Future Work</b>
Consulting	1,750,000	0	454,104	1,295,896
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,750,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$454,104</b>	<b>\$1,295,896</b>
<b>Sources of Financing</b>				
Provincial Grant - Streamline Development Approval Fund	1,750,000	0	454,104	1,295,896
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>\$1,750,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$454,104</b>	<b>\$1,295,896</b>

**Financial Note:**

Contract Price	\$446,250
Add: HST @13%	58,013
Total Contract Price Including Taxes	504,263
Less: HST Rebate	-50,159
Net Contract Price	\$454,104

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Alan Dunbar  
Manager of Financial Planning & Policy

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