# County Council

**Meeting Date:** September 14, 2021

**Submitted by:** Chris Bailey, ITS Manager and Durk Vanderwerff, Director of Planning

**SUBJECT:** MUNICIPAL MODERNIZATION PROJECT – DEVELOPMENT TRACKING SOLUTION

## BACKGROUND:

Some of Ontario's small and rural municipalities have limited capacity to plan, modernize and improve the way in which municipal services are delivered to their communities. Recognizing this challenge, the Province developed and launched the Municipal Modernization Program which is designed to assist small and rural municipalities across Ontario by supporting the review, development and delivery of modern and efficient municipal services.

Unconditional One-time Modernization Funding
In March of 2019, the Province announced a one-time investment for small and rural municipalities to improve service delivery and efficiency. This resulted in a one-time transfer of unconditional modernization funding dollars to 405 of Ontario's municipalities. Middlesex County received $725,000 in one-time funds under the Municipal Modernization Program.

Municipal Modernization Program: Intake 1 & 2
In October 2019, the Province building on its previous investment to assist municipalities transform their service delivery, developed and launched an application-based funding program under the Municipal Modernization Program portfolio. The Municipal Modernization Program was launched with two intake periods. The first intake period saw applications submitted for Service Delivery Reviews in December of 2019.

As part of the Municipal Modernization Program Intake 2, the County and Local Municipalities (through the CAO working group) identified priority projects for the Modernization Implementation and Review Streams. These projects included: Enterprise Asset Management, Payroll Services Automation, Development Tracking Solution and Procurement Services Review. Individual Request for Proposals and evaluation are being undertaken for each of these projects. This report concerns the Development Tracking Solution.

**ANALYSIS:**

Providing development review and approval is a core municipal service that impacts the economy and protects the public interest. Planning processes support County Council and Local Municipal Councils to make decisions that often have long-term implications for the protection of the environment and the growth and development of the communities within Middlesex County. Developers, consultants, the public, Local Municipalities, and the County all have significant stake in a high functioning, efficient, transparent development review and approvals system.

The County and Local Municipalities currently utilize largely manual operations for the processing of land use planning applications. This current system is functional but involves many 'work arounds' to digitize components of the process. This was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic with the sudden move to a more digital work environment. The current process include informal database systems to track development applications for internal purposes only which is limited by the capabilities of the generic software. There is a clear need, an interest, and an opportunity to implement a cohesive, collaborative solution to process, track and report on land use planning applications.

The Development Tracking Solution project was approved and funded ($97,500 for a software solution) by the Province as part of the Municipal Modernization Program Intake 2. A Request for Proposal ("RFP") was developed in conjunction with the Middlesex County Planning and Information Technology Services departments and Local Municipalities.

The intent of the RFP would be to onboard a web-based integrated workflow software solution to modernize, streamline and automate the development intake, review and approvals process. The solution would provide complete life-cycle management of the Planning Act Application processes while integrating multiple department functions (e.g. Planning, Engineering, Legal). It is intended that the platform be accessible not only to internal County and Local Municipal staff but also in differing levels of detail to external stakeholders (e.g. developers, solicitors, engineers, residents, etc.) and be capable of managing all land use planning application and review processes. In addition, a multi-agency system will have the ability to automate and track complex linear and non-linear workflows and services.

This software solution would increase efficiencies and transparency, save time in the development process, increase accountability and have positive outcomes for the development industry and other economic sectors while promoting the development of safe, healthy and complete communities. The solution would modernize a largely manual process and would provide for digital submission and processing of applications, in a manner that is similar to how many local municipalities now undertake electronic building permits.

The software solution would be used for all County planning files (official plan amendments, plans of subdivision and condominium, part lot control, etc) and local municipalities would have the ability to opt-in at no cost for all local planning files (zoning by-law amendments, consents, minor variances, site plans, etc).

The Development Tracking Solution RFP was uploaded to Middlesex County's Bids and Tenders system on July 30, 2021 with a closing date for submissions of August 25, 2021. Submission reviews occurred the week of September 6, 2021 with the selection committee that included local municipal staff. Two proposals were received and evaluated by the selection committee pursuant to a Rated Requirements Evaluation Criteria and Methodology as set out in the RFP to establish the proposal that represents the best overall value. Evaluation criteria included strength of mandatory requirements, experience and qualifications, training plan, implementation plan and the proposed pricing model.

Intake 2 of the Municipal Modernization Program Implementation Stream requires completing projects and final reporting no later than September 22, 2022. The successful respondent confirmed and verified that they could meet this requirement.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The County and Local Municipalities received up to $97,500 from the Provincial Municipal Modernization Program Intake 2 to fund 65**%** of this project. As outlined in a report to County Council March 9, the County also allocated $52,000 of the one-time modernization funds received to offset the additional 35% required for the implementation, staffing, training, and licensing fees associated with completing this project.

The successful respondent provided a total project price of $85,000.00. This pricing includes all requirements outlined in the RFP and the first year of licensing. With the funding received as part of Intake 2 and the one-time modernization funds allocated to offset the County's required contribution for this project there will be no budget impact to the County or local municipalities for the development, implementation and first year's licensing of the solution. The implementation and customization of the system to match and enhance current processes will require County and local staff input and time to ensure project success.

The successful respondent also provided yearly renewals costs for this solution which includes all software features required in the RFP, unlimited users (for both County and Local Municipalities), support and maintenance and product updates for a total cost of $75,000.00 yearly. This yearly cost would be included in future County budgets.

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:**

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

| Strategic Focus | Goals | Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| Promoting Service Excellence | Innovate and transform municipal service delivery | Anticipate and align municipal service delivery to emerging needs and expectations Collaborate with strategic partners to leverage available resources and opportunities Build organizational capacity and capabilities |

**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Middlesex County Council accept the selection committee's recommendation to award Cloudpermit as the successful respondent of the Development Tracking Solution RFP for a total cost of $85,000.00.