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**For Information**

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**REPORT TITLE: Update on the Projects Submitted to the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative**

**FROM: Kealy Dedman, Commissioner of Public Works**

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**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an update on the status of projects and use of the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Province of Ontario’s Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative assists municipalities implement actions to get development approved faster.
  - Peel used the funding to hire temporary staff, implement a diversity internship program, and obtain consulting assistance to develop a memorandum of understanding outlining development review times with local municipalities as well as prepare a workforce assessment model.
  - Eligible expenses financed through the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative must be incurred between January 19, 2022, and February 28, 2023.
  - As a result of the initiatives undertaken through the Streamline Development Approval Fund, combined with best efforts to maintain staff levels and other internal process improvements, the average time taken to comment on development applications has been reduced by 35 per cent between 2022 and 2023.
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**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

On January 19, 2022, the Province of Ontario, through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced the investment of over \$45 million in a new Streamline Development Approval Fund (SDAF) Initiative to help Ontario’s 39 largest municipalities implement actions to get development approved faster so more housing can be built. The Region of Peel is eligible to receive up to \$500,000 in funding through this program.

With a signed acknowledgment letter by the Regional Chair, which was required to be returned to the Ministry by January 31, 2022 the Region became eligible for the SDAF Initiative. To attain funding, the Region was required to enter a transfer payment agreement with the Province and submit proposed projects that align with eligible project examples outlined by the Province, such as e-permitting systems, temporary staff to address backlogs, online application portals, diversity internship program, and other projects aimed at unlocking housing supply. An extension to the SDAF project completion was provided by the Ministry till February 28, 2023.

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Eligible expenses financed through this funding must be incurred between January 19, 2022, and February 28, 2023.

### 2. Findings

#### a. Submitted Projects

In consultation with other groups within the organization that participate in the development review process, the following projects were submitted for support under the SDAF Initiative.

- **Temporary Staffing:** Additional temporary planning and engineering employees involved with the development review process were hired to improve workflow at multiple review points, along with responding to the surge and complexity of development applications submitted to the Region.
- **Diversity Internship Program:** In supporting the diversification of planning departments, internship opportunities were offered to qualified students that met the parameters outlined by the Province. This included people with disabilities, indigenous, black, and racialized individuals and people from diverse ethnic and cultural origins, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** Dillon Consulting was retained to facilitate a series of discussions between the Region and local municipal partners with the objective of collaboratively shaping a MOU to effectively coordinate service level commitments and circulation expectations of development applications. This work supports a key recommendation generated out of the Region's Development Planning and Engineering Services Review funded by the Province's Audit and Accountability Fund in 2021 and responds to recent legislative changes that reduce planning application review timelines and require certain development application fees be refunded on a graduated schedule over time, if statutory deadlines are unmet.
- **Development Services Resource Assessment Project:** Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG) was retained to assess resources and competency needs along with addressing resource alignment and clarity of roles and responsibilities associated with development review functions performed within Public Works. The assessment performed by KPMG addressed another recommendation generated out of the Region's Development Planning and Engineering Services Review funded by the Province's Audit and Accountability Fund in 2021. The 2021 report identified insufficient distribution of resources to support the Development Review function and consider providing appropriate engineering review services to manage the increasing volume and complexity of development applications.

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### b. Project Updates/Outcomes

A summary of estimated funding allocated to each project along with measures or actions expected or achieved are found in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Estimated Funding Allocated to Each Project and Measures Expected or Achieved up to February 28, 2023.

Project Name	Measures/Actions	Estimated Funding Up to February 28, 2023
Temporary Staffing	<p>Three temporary employees were hired to advance the review of development applications:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development Review (Brampton)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Average turnaround time of development submissions (excluding Committee of Adjustments) improved by 27 percent between March 2022 to November 2022.</li> <li>○ Processed 105 out of 372 new development submissions up until February 2023.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Development Engineering team               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Average turnaround time of subdivision submissions improved by 59 percent between March 2022 to November 2023.</li> <li>○ Reviewed 158 out of 546 engineering submissions up until February 2023.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Traffic Engineering               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reviewed 301 development submissions with impacts to regional roads up until February 2023.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	\$290,414.00
Diversity Internship Program	<p>Two planning interns were hired to assist with archiving development submissions and digitizing development files that freed up time of other staff to enable them to focus directly on work that advances new development applications.</p> <p>By archiving 249 development submissions and digitizing 415 incoming development submissions in the Region's GIS system, approximately 28 working days of a Junior Planner was freed up and redirected to advance development applications.</p>	\$48,217.00

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Project Name	Measures/Actions	Estimated Funding Up to February 28, 2023
	<p>In addition to the value in advancing development applications, the internship process allowed both planning interns to gain valuable planning experience as they were able to work alongside principal planners and development services managers to further their understanding of the development application process and prepare them for future planning related roles.</p>	
<p>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</p>	<p>Dillon Consulting Ltd. was retained to facilitate discussions between the Region of Peel and Peel's local municipalities to establish service level expectations for circulating, reviewing and providing comments on development applications to be included in an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).</p> <p>Although the MOU was finalized as a result of Bill 112 and the pending dissolution of Peel, it was not signed, but is being used by the partner municipalities to guide development application review during this transitional time.</p>	<p>\$6,998.00</p>
<p>Development Services Resource Assessment Project</p>	<p>In May 2022, KPMG was retained to develop a workforce assessment tool to help determine the Region's staffing needs to manage the increasing volume and complexity of development application review process over the three-year period of 2023 to 2025.</p> <p>To complete this work, KPMG reviewed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Region's organizational structure</li> <li>○ Interviews with internal staff involved in development review.</li> <li>○ Understand the staffing needs associated with the current number of applications and complexity of the applications and consider future trends.</li> </ul> <p>Based on the above, KPMG developed a model to identify workforce requirements that can be modified to respond to several factors some of which include anticipated number of applications, complexity of applications and any</p>	<p>\$137,376.00</p>

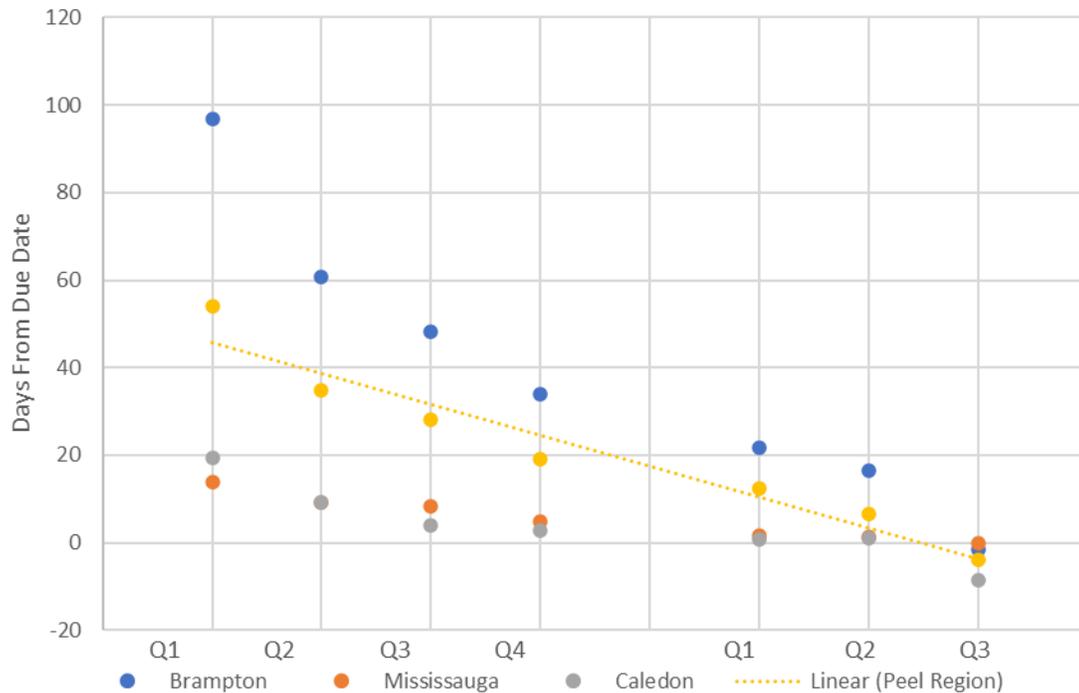
## Update on the Projects Submitted to the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative

Project Name	Measures/Actions	Estimated Funding Up to February 28, 2023
	<p>legislative changes that could affect development review timelines.</p> <p>This model is updated on a quarterly basis and is valuable to support new staff requests made through the annual budget process.</p>	

### 3. Results

As a result of the initiatives funded through SDAF, best efforts to maintain staff levels and other process improvements made to different components of development review, the overall review time for development applications has significantly improved. As shown on Figure 1, between January 2022 to July 2023, the average time taken to comment on development applications has been reduced by 35 per cent between 2022 and 2023.

Average Turnaround time (Days) from Municipal Due Date (2022-2023)



\*Q3 2023 only represents July 2023.

## **Update on the Projects Submitted to the Streamline Development Approval Fund Initiative**

### **4. Proposed Direction**

In accordance with the SDAF program requirements, a final report will be submitted to the Province of Ontario, including a copy of this Council Report by November 1, 2023, as per SDAF Initiative requirements.

### **BILL 112 RISKS AND IMPLICATIONS**

On May 18, 2023, the Province introduced Bill 112, the *Hazel McCallion Act (Peel Dissolution), 2023* that will dissolve the Region of Peel and make the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the Town of Caledon single-tier municipalities, effective January 1, 2025. The proposed legislation provides for the establishment of a Transition Board to make recommendations on implementing the restructuring. Details of the transition, including matters as they relate to Regional roles and responsibilities including those related to the development review function are not known at this time and are to be addressed in future reporting to Regional Council. Additional assessment to support the transition under Bill 112 will be provided as further details become known.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Region of Peel is eligible for \$500,000 in funding from the Province of Ontario through the Streamline Development Approvals Fund Initiative.

The projects identified in this report account for \$483,005. Peel received an initial payment of \$250,000 in March 2022. The remainder of \$233,005 is expected to be received upon project completion in November 2023.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Region's participation in the SDAF Initiative demonstrates its continued commitment to improving and modernizing development review and approval processes to help get development approved faster so more homes can be built.

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Kealy Dedman, Commissioner of Public Works

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