



Committee Report

To: Warden Mitch Twolan
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Kara Van Myall
Director of Planning and Development

Date: November 19, 2020

Re: Planning and Development Data Sharing Update

Staff Recommendation:

The Planning and Development Data Sharing Update Report is for information.

Background:

Funded by the Ontario Government's Municipal Modernization Program, ESRI Canada was retained to examine how technology can be used to enhance value to the public, local municipalities and the County through enhanced data integration and sharing from different jurisdictions and data sources into one map based system. This system will support the effective processing of development applications and longer-term planning objectives. Data sharing between the local municipalities and the County through the development process (planning applications and building permits) will greatly improve both processes.

The Cityworks Permits, Licensing and Land (PLL) platform has been in use by the Planning and Development department since January 1, 2020 for the managing of planning applications and inquiries. As part of the Municipal Modernization Program, ESRI Canada was engaged to:

1. Review current Cityworks PLL software implementation;
2. Improve public access to land use planning information; and
3. Improve data sharing between the County and local municipalities.

This work was conducted, in part, through a series of workshops and meetings with staff from the County and local municipalities.

At the outset of the Cityworks PLL project, many of the local municipalities had not made decisions regarding electronic permitting solutions. Cloudpermit, previously known as Evolta, has become the software of choice for most of the local municipalities. Cloudpermit was developed for building permits and is not configured to support processing of planning applications. As such, sharing information between Cityworks PLL and Cloudpermit is needed to improve internal and external processes, user experiences and data exchange.

As part of their evaluation, ESRI Canada looked at the existing software systems and how data are currently exchanged between the County and local municipalities. ESRI Canada

also asked stakeholders about their vision for the optimal system of data exchange. From this, the ESRI Canada team identified findings that were shared with County staff, the Municipal Innovation Council and individual local municipalities for feedback.

ESRI Canada identified that the data sharing solution should meet the following requirements:

1. Require minimal setup for user access.
2. Be easy to use by end users.
3. Be the go-to first source of information for local municipalities.
4. Be the preferred method over other tools and resources.
5. Make information available earlier in the data sharing process without delays in lead time.
6. Emphasize data collection and sharing for long term planning initiatives by the parties involved (i.e. County and local municipalities).
7. Integrate data management systems in place at the County and local municipalities to avoid duplication of processes or data.
8. Have a digital process to start a discussion on a file (such as a standard set of basic information required).
9. Provide the ability to report on utilization of data sharing.
10. Enable collaboration between the local municipalities and the County.

Some of the key opportunities arising from this work include:

- Real-time access to best-available property ownership information at local municipalities to facilitate efficient issuance of public notices to neighbouring landowners for planning applications;
- Sharing development information from Cloudpermit to the County to support an understanding of construction and development trends as well as case notes for referrals; and
- Sharing application and inquiry information from Cityworks PLL to the local municipalities to support an understanding of application status, inquiry, and case notes for pending and current planning applications.

The final deliverable by ESRI Canada will be the Modernization Grant Report, which will outline the findings and final recommendations and will be presented at Planning and Development Committee in December. Staff are also keeping in mind the potential to integrate this data sharing project with a larger 'OneOntario.ca' initiative to establish data sharing guidelines for the development approvals process in Ontario.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations associated with this report. Implementation of the recommendations from the final Modernization Grant Report is out of scope of this round of Municipal Modernization Program funding and will be addressed through previously allocated Municipal Modernization funding (first round) that was allocated to ESRI Planning Module upgrades.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

The Office of the CAO, Corporate Services and Information Technology Services departments have been consulted on this project as it relates to local municipal engagement, current data sharing processes and the desired data sharing state. Local municipalities were also consulted through targeted interviews and the Municipal Innovation Council.

Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:

Goal 3 - Find creative new ways to engage our public.

Element A - Expand departmental forums with each municipality to discuss items of shared interest.

Element C - Make the County fully accessible to the people through access to information.

Goal 4 - Find creative new ways to ways to involve all staff in our future.

Element C - Invest in expanding the knowledge and skills of our staff.

Goal 5 - Eliminate our own red tape.

Element A - All work processes designed for the fewest steps and the easiest completion.

Element C - Eliminate all duplications of services and data.

Element E - Focus on the internal and the external customer/client needs first.

Goal 7 - Stimulate and reward innovation and economic development.

Element A - Streamline and simplify our Planning Processes.

Report Author:

Coreena Smith,
Senior Development Planner

Departmental Approval:

Kara Van Myall
Director, Planning and Development

Approved for Submission:

Sandra Datars Bere
Chief Administrative Officer