City of Kingston
Information Report to Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee
Report Number MAAC-20-004

To: Chair and Members of the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee
From: Desiree Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer
Resource Staff: Ahmed Zayan, Manager, Procurement
Date of Meeting: March 5, 2020
Subject: Purchasing Component of the 2019-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Corporate business
Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

The Procurement Division of Financial Services continues to work on accessibility compliance in support of the 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The City is committed to improving procurement practices across the Corporation by maximizing supplier value to deliver quality, cost effective and innovative solutions to the Corporation using a consistent, competitive process that is open, transparent and fair. By-Law Number 2000-134, a By-law to Established Purchasing Policies and Procedures (Purchasing By-Law) and supporting policies are designed to create a consistent practice of public purchasing, to ensure maximum value and to protect the City from procurement related risks.

The City utilizes a decentralized approach to purchasing; however, the Procurement Division supports procurement activities and ensures that appropriate corporate policy and procedures are in place and being used to guide procurement decisions. Procurement policies, processes and supporting tools support legislative compliance and demonstrate a commitment to enhanced accessibility expectations.
Procurement will continue to develop the necessary tools and processes to ensure that all procurement documents issued by the City meet accessibility requirements and all submissions received by suppliers meet accessibility standards.

Technology and other supporting tools ensure a consistent and efficient procurement process, enable a seamless enforcement of accessibility legislation and provide a means for communicating the City’s expectations of vendors with respect to accessibility standards.

**Recommendation:**

This report is for information only.
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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER AND CITY TREASURER
Desiree Kennedy, Chief
Financial Officer & City Treasurer

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Community Services
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Business, Environment & Projects
Brad Joyce, Acting Commissioner, Corporate Services
Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston
Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works

Not required
Not required
Not required
Not required
Not required
Options/Discussion:

The Procurement Division of Financial Services offers procurement support across the Corporation with services such as bylaw and trade treaty compliance, document review, process management, evaluation & award, and negotiation & contracting.

Procurement work plans incorporate accessibility initiatives in support of the 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan specifically identifies the following:

- **Demonstrating Accessible Procurement:** Under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation, the City is required to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.

- **Outcome:** A procurement program for the City that considers the needs of people with disabilities at all stages of the procurement process to help ensure that goods and services at government facilities are accessible.

- **Directives, Guidelines and Practices:** Continue to communicate to vendors their obligations to meet accessibility requirements.

- **Training:** Continue to ensure that accessibility criteria are incorporated in procurement processes and platforms. Training and additional resources, such as templates, sample accessibility language and guidelines, will also be available to help staff understand accessibility requirements and how to embed accessibility at all stages of procurement.

Procurement Practices

The City utilizes a decentralized approach to purchasing whereby departments are responsible for carrying out their own procurement in accordance with corporate policy. The Procurement Division is available to support procurement activities and to ensure appropriate corporate policy and procedures are in place and being used to guide purchasing decisions. Under the decentralized model, the requirement to incorporate specific accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities is the responsibility of the respective department as part of the procurement process; however, oversight and support of these requirements is provided by the Procurement Division.

The City currently includes accessibility as an overall evaluation criterion with a minimum weighting of 3% on all applicable requests for proposal. The evaluation of and awarding of points under this section can vary depending on the type of procurement. It is noted that, as legislation has evolved, criteria that has typically been evaluated in the past has, in some cases, become a standard requirement. As a result, Procurement is moving towards an evaluation process that makes legislative accessibility requirements a mandatory component of proposal
submissions. Where applicable, additional marks would then be awarded based on the degree to which the proponent has specifically described a supply of goods or services which surpasses the legislative requirements and demonstrates a commitment to enhanced accessibility with respect to the goods, services or project implementation being proposed. This would not replace marks that could also be awarded for procurement specific criteria related to accessibility design, criteria or other features.

**Supporting Tools**

Procurement continues to develop and implement supporting tools that provide a standard format for measuring accessibility for suppliers across the Corporation. This requires an in-depth review of the different categories procured by the City and the creation of the required guidelines and/or tools to ensure consistent procurement accessibility requirements. For example, a purchasing guideline released this past year for the development and evaluation of scoring criteria for the procurement of construction services included recommended evaluation criteria for accessibility components whereby marks would be awarded for accessibility considerations that exceed the legislative requirements.

Procurement work plans also include the increased use of online sourcing tools which will significantly simplify the process for suppliers and enable a seamless enforcement of accessibility legislation.

**Electronic Sourcing System**

The City currently uses an electronic system called Biddingo to publically advertise all its bidding requirements which enables access to a broad range of suppliers that are subscribed to their services. Until recently, the City received submissions and closed all bids in person at City Hall.

In February 2020, the Procurement Division introduced a new online, paper-free, bidding process through the Biddingo system. Increasing the use of electronic sourcing technology across the Corporation will enable the procurement process to become more efficient for internal and external users due to the optimisation, standardization and automation of tasks. Biddingo has capability to customize the technology and enable controls to enforce requirements such as, but not limited to, accessibility.

Some of the other benefits of this project:

- Automated control with regular reminders to ensure compliance with all the applicable trade treaty requirements.
- Increased transparency in the procurement process.
- Increase efficiency and speed of the procurement process.
• Create a central repository and archive for all procurement related documents.

• Better competitive intelligence.

Procurement Templates

The Procurement Division has recently launched a new set of enhanced procurement templates for use across the Corporation. The challenges that organizations face when outsourcing from the market vary significantly based on the different goods and/or services they require, the in-house expertise readily available, and the degree of innovation they seek, which creates an increasing need for agility in the process to better meet the organization’s needs. The set of nine new templates will address that challenge and create a more seamless and efficient process from document development to contract.

Benefits of this project include:

• Safeguard the Corporation against all applicable trade treaties.

• Increase flexibility and agility in the procurement process to meet the varying business challenges across the departments.

• Enable a cross-functional approach for document development.

• Demonstrate a consistent approach to the market.

Not only does the use of standardized templates ensure that procurement documentation issued by the City is in appropriate accessible formats but it provides the opportunity to consistently identify expectations of vendors with respect to accessibility standards. The following language is also referenced in our contract terms and conditions.

“The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11 made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, section 5, requires the City to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring Goods, Services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so. The City has determined that it is not impracticable to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features under this Purchase Order. Accordingly, Vendors are required to provide the information related to accessibility in the provision of the Goods and/or Services as described and requested herein or in relation to this Purchase Order.”

The Procurement Division continues to support a corporate procurement framework that considers the needs of people with disabilities at all stages of the procurement process.
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Existing Policy/By-Law:

By-Law Number 2000-134, a By-law to Established Purchasing Policies and Procedures

Purchasing Policy

2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11

Notice Provisions:

None

Accessibility Considerations:

None

Financial Considerations:

None

Contacts:

Ahmed Zayan, Manager, Procurement Services 613-546-4291 extension 2229

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

None

Exhibits Attached:

None