

COUNCIL AUTHORITY FOR CONTRACT AWARDS CONTRACT INCREASE

Project Award	Contract Increase – content management system platform upgrade and content migration services
Recommendation	Staff is recommending approval to proceed with a contract increase to GHD Group for a content management system platform upgrade and content migration services in the amount of \$76,720 (exclusive of HST).
Purpose of Report	As per Section 10.1 of Purchasing By-law No. 061-2018, Council approval is required.
Background information	<p>The Town of Milton website (www.milton.ca) is one of the primary means by which residents and businesses interact with and receive information and services from the organization. The Town's website hosted 772,195 visitors in the 2024 calendar year (a 12% increase from 2023). The website plays a critical role in the Town's ability to provide highly accessible, online services to the community in support of the Town's 2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan (ES-009-23) and Digital Strategy (CORS-061-22).</p> <p>The Town of Milton website operates on a content management system (CMS) – a software platform that allows users to create, manage, modify and publish content on a website. In March 2025, the Town received notice from its current website hosting provider that the CMS that currently powers the Milton.ca website will reach end-of-maintenance (EOM) status on December 30, 2026, and end-of-life (EOL) status on June 30, 2027. This notice followed high-level announcements sent to the Town in November 2024 that mentioned pending EOM and EOL dates without providing specific timelines for the Town of Milton website. End-of-maintenance means that all software development and regular product releases will be discontinued, and end-of-life represents the date when the software will be taken offline, making the Town's website unavailable unless it is migrated to a new CMS. The Town needs to ensure that its existing website, including all custom landing pages and microsites (i.e. Milton Transit, Mattamy National Cycling Centre, First Ontario Arts Centre), along with integrated public applications and back-end systems that provide various online services to the public are migrated to the new CMS, fully tested and available to the public before the December 2026 EOM date.</p> <p>In November 2024, through Request for Proposal (RFP) 24-555, the Town initially opted to go to public bid to move its existing website to a new, modern and fully supported CMS, along with content redevelopment and website hosting services. Based on the volume of questions received during the RFP process and as staff began to review and ascertain the overall project scope and</p>

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work required to rebuild, migrate, test and re-publish all existing online content and services, including developing revised internal processes with a new hosting and CMS provider, a timeline risk and resource capacity issue emerged in light of the newly communicated end dates for the current CMS. Proceeding with a new hosting and CMS provider will require more internal resources, requiring staff to deprioritize other important, equally time-sensitive initiatives. Custom applications developed for the Town's website also present an increased level of complexity for new vendors, as they will have to rebuild them and integrate them with their own platforms. A new hosting and CMS provider will introduce extended development timelines and costs in comparison to performing a CMS upgrade and content migration with the Town's incumbent provider.

The Town's existing website hosting and CMS provider offers a CMS upgrade and content migration service that will ensure all of the Town's existing online content, pages and applications are efficiently migrated to a new, modern and fully supported CMS that significantly improves the user experience for visitors and administrative staff interacting with the Town's website. GHD Group's upgrade and migration service aligns closely with the Town's initial proposed timeline of launching a new website well before the EOM and EOL dates for the current content management system.

Town staff have reviewed a proposal from the incumbent provider and are confident the scope of work, timeline and costs proposed represent an efficient, realistic, cost-effective and appropriate path forward to perform the necessary services. As such, staff are recommending a contract increase to GHD Group for the one-time expenditure of \$76,720 + HST for the CMS upgrade and content migration services. The updated annual operating expenditure associated with website hosting, maintenance and support fees aligns to the current annual expense the organization pays and has previously identified on the Town's annual limited tendering report (ES-038-24). This total will continue to be reviewed and identified annually in subsequent limited tendering reports.

Financial Planning Section: Budget Impact (Note 1)

Account Number(s)	C27000124 A0260 7140
Account Description	Website Redevelopment
Project Total Budget	\$684,506
Contract Budget	\$80,000
Actual (Net of HST Rebate)	\$78,070
Variance (Note 2 & 3)	\$1,930 (F)

Funding Source

Project Variance Reserve

Note 1: Financial impact includes any non-refundable portion of HST.

Note 2: Staff is requesting the favourable variance to retain in the account to accommodate any change orders or additional scope items that may come up during migration.

Note 3: This award will result in ongoing operating costs, beginning in 2026, associated with website hosting, maintenance and support fees. The annual operating costs are expected to remain consistent with the current expenditures for the existing website and are accommodated within the approved budget. They will be reviewed as part of the annual budget development process and monitored through the operating variance process.