

Middlesex Centre Receives Municipal Innovation Award for Building Shared Services Through Electronic Permitting Technology

London, Ontario, August 22, 2023 – The Peter J. Marshall Innovation Award Jury presented its highest award to the Municipality of Middlesex Centre for building efficient shared services through technology. The Plaque Award was presented to Mayor Aina DeViet and Director of Building and By-Law Services, Arnie Marsman at the 2023 AMO Conference in London, Ontario.

Middlesex Centre was the first municipality in the province to transition to a fully automated, paperless e-permitting system for building services. Using Cloudpermit, an e-permitting system, Middlesex Centre was able to automate the building permit process, including applications, plan revisions, fee calculations, payment tracking, inspections, and reporting to MPAC and Statistics Canada.

While the project was underway, Middlesex Centre was asked to provide building services for four neighbouring municipalities in Middlesex County, in addition to one which it had serviced for many years. Using e-permitting technology, staff can deliver building services across a large area without unnecessary travel to review applications and issue permits.

The combination of shared services and e-permitting is saving money and time for Middlesex Centre and the municipalities it services, resulting in a 50% reduction in building permit processing time despite a building boom and the pandemic. Through e-permitting, Middlesex Centre and its partner municipalities were able to continue providing permitting services without interruption throughout the pandemic.

"Moving to an electronic permitting system for building services makes the building permit process faster and more efficient, saving time, money and resources," said Aina DeViet, Mayor of Middlesex Centre. "Middlesex Centre is a pioneer in e-permitting technology. Through our early adoption of e-permitting technology and by delivering services to neighbouring communities, we were able to improve the permitting process not only for Middlesex Centre but for five other municipalities in the County as well."

Online building inspection requests make it easy for staff to plan routes that maximize their time, and connected tablets allow builders to see inspection results immediately. Front-desk customer service continues, but builders and residents appreciate the ease of applying online and the ability to view the status of their building permits in real-time. Cloudpermit is now widely used in Ontario. Middlesex Centre's building department worked closely with Cloudpermit to implement e-permitting technology, helping them to understand Ontario's building permitting processes, meet municipal needs, and test the new system in a live environment. This work has improved building permit delivery in more than 100 municipalities to date.

The P.J. Marshall Award is an annual competitive process to acknowledge municipalities who have had creativity and success in implementing new, innovative ways of serving the public. It is sponsored by AMO, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks & Treasurers of Ontario, the Canadian Council for Public Private Partnerships, the Municipal Finance Officers' Association, and the Ontario Municipal Administrators' Association.

In addition to the Municipality of Middlesex Centre, two other municipalities received plaque awards: the City of Vaughan for its AI-based approach to managing local roads, and the City of Markham for its innovative approach to the 2022 Markham Municipal Election, including online voting and voter registration.

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