Future of municipal data management

The Town of Amherstburg has benefited from centralized data for better collaboration, inspection management, and reporting with an online community development platform.

"We switched to Cloudpermit because many nearby municipalities were using it," said Angelo Avolio, chief building official for Amherstburg, a community of about 24,000 people located in Southwestern Ontario's Essex County. "Being similar in size, it's easier for us to rely on and support each other now that we use the same software."

Having the same software across neighbouring communities has simplified workflows for government staff and contractors.

"Contractors can easily work across neighboring municipalities. Our online systems are consistent and use the same permit requirements," Avolio said. "We also easily send notifications online to keep everyone informed about any updates."

Many contractors have praised the permitting software since its adoption over a year ago.

"Our contractors who use the software every day want everything through the system," said Trevor Spitse, building inspector/plans examiner for Amherstburg. "They've come to rely on it and enjoy its organization."

Transparent and Accurate Inspections

Centralized information has made inspections more efficient. Inspectors can access all relevant data, photos, and notes online while in the field.

"Whenever there's a deficiency, we take a photo of it and add it to the digital file. Words can only convey so much, but photos tell the whole story," said Spitse. "It's a key advantage to have all drawings, permits, and data in one place. We can easily find any detail online without any searching."

By integrating photos and detailed records into a single digital file, systems become more transparent and accurate.

"The system won't allow inspections to pass until we resolve all deficiencies," Spitse said. "When you use a paper system, you might miss notes or overlook issues. Cloudpermit keeps all details easily accessible and prevents you from moving forward until you've addressed all issues. This avoids potential legal issues."

Effective Reporting

Online systems make it easier to pull information for effective reporting.

"I appreciate the simplicity of the software," Avolio said. "It allows us to quickly generate detailed reports on fees and fines. This meets our finance team's needs well."

Spitse added, "The software makes it effortless to access and pull information for both administration and our council."

In the coming months, Amherstburg will adopt online payments for applicants. This will further simplify report generation and streamline the permitting process for everyone involved.

To learn more about online community development software for modern governments, visit cloudpermit.com.

Anna Rolnicki (anna.rolnicki@cloudpermit.com) is Cloudpermit's vice president of marketing.