



Microsoft CityNext

THE CITY OF BURLINGTON CANADA - A TREND TO SMARTER GOVERNANCE



In the lobby of City Hall in Burlington, Ontario, an inscription reads "Where people, nature and business thrive". Repeatedly voted as one of the best places to live in Canada, the City of Burlington is committed to innovation, sustainable growth, and to building trust with its most valued assets - its constituents.

In order to provide forward-thinking governance to its citizens, the city relies on four standing committees that gather information from public delegations and submit recommendations to Council on matters pertaining to Finance, Planning & Building, Transportation and Roads, Parks & Recreation, IT Services, Human Resources, Citizen Advisory Committees, and much more. Some 100 reports are produced annually, all of them essential to informed decision-making, accountability and transparency - in other words, good government.

Not surprisingly, meetings are the order of the day at City Hall. However, the complexity of scheduling meetings and preparing agendas for members of multiple committees, sub-committees, departments and Council itself is overwhelming if left to paper and manual processes.

Danielle Manton, Manager of Election & Committee Services, remembers what it was like before eSCRIBE: "Everything was done manually. It is almost impossible to try and quantify the hours we spent preparing. Compiling reports took months, and building a meeting agenda was a two-day process for each committee."

Mired in inefficiencies and, the City realized they needed to replace their paper-based, manual processes with an automated meeting management system. During 2016 they met with the meeting management experts at eSCRIBE, and a dynamic partnership developed. eSCRIBE's meeting and agenda management solution provides dramatic cost savings and efficiencies in one eco-friendly, automated package. And because it is built on Microsoft's 100% Canadian cloud - Azure - the City of Burlington is assured of 99.9% availability, flexibility,

infinite scalability, and a level of security that can't be matched by other cloud providers. With encryption features and data residency requirements met, information stays right where it's supposed to be, accessible whenever and wherever it's needed. As a cloud-based solution built on Microsoft Azure, eSCRIBE is helping cities and municipalities by delivering a single platform to sort, manage and distribute reports and agendas to the right people, at the right time with increased transparency, online features and reducing carbon footprint by eliminating huge volumes of paper.

The City of Burlington also customized the application by adding their own page of quick tips and FAQs, and embedding their internal website.

Agendas are produced automatically, meetings are run efficiently, and time is spent on more high-value and mission-critical activities.

Now, reports that used to take two weeks to publish are available online within 24 hours. That means that Burlington's many Citizen Advisory Committees, tasked with everything from assessing bike lanes to millennials' issues, are able to observe and track the outcomes of Council and Committee meetings. And because the information is readily accessible, Burlington's citizens and businesses can be more easily engaged and participatory when it comes to matters of their City. With eSCRIBE Meeting Manager, it is now easy for citizens to provide feedback that can be captured, saved and shared with elected officials and public servants, enabling collaboration, transparency and meaningful two-way dialogue.

eSCRIBE Meeting Manager has also eliminated hundreds of man-hours spent preparing the meeting agendas, minutes and reports for City Council, committees, sub-committees and the public, ensuring transparency, accountability and better access to accurate information for decision-making.

