



Microsoft CityNext

## CANADIAN CITY ADDS AUTOMATED SERVICES, SAVES MONEY WITH CLOUD SOLUTION



In effort to bring its technological capabilities in line with other major cities, the City of Regina, Canada, built a portal powered by Microsoft Azure to handle community sign-on for accessing city services and viewing public utility bills. The city also adopted Microsoft Office 365 to increase productivity of government employees and serve citizens more efficiently. As a result of its move to the cloud, the city enhanced municipal worker output and saved taxpayer dollars in IT infrastructure costs.

The City of Regina has become technologically progressive, continually evaluating the latest IT innovations to transform city operations and infrastructure, and serve citizens better. No one knows this better than Carole Tink, Manager of IT Strategy and Business Support for Regina. “In the past, some of our technology was quite antiquated,” she explains. “Now, we’re more high tech. One of my new employees said the same thing. ‘Wow, you wouldn’t think that Regina would be a cool IT place to work, but it is.’”

So, how did the city’s IT infrastructure go from antiquated to cool? It started three years ago. Regina adopted a policy to streamline IT systems as part of a broader initiative to further promote the Open Government Program, which included making a variety of public records available to the public through a data portal called Open Data.

The city built the Open Data portal on the Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network (CKAN), an open-source data management platform, which is incredibly popular with governments, universities, and enterprises around the globe. Using Azure, CKAN takes advantage of the scalability, flexibility, and interoperability features of the cloud. Regina received valuable support from Microsoft CityNext, an initiative that

delivers innovative digital services to help cities transform operations and infrastructures to better engage citizens and businesses.

Open Data contains a variety of public data sets ranging from maps, agreements, and contracts to information about associations, boards, and committees. Citizens and organizations can create applications that rely on the public data, such as garbage collection reminders and the location of the nearest ice rink, and post them on the portal.

Citizens can access other services, too. After setting up an online account (MyAccount—which supports single sign-on and identity management), citizens can select various online services. The most popular one lets citizens access their utility account and check their water bills and water consumption. Another popular feature is election services. People visit the website to get information about candidates, find out where to vote, check eligibility, and access a link to get live election results. More services are planned, including approximately 15 interactive property tax and assessment services available to the public. “With the MyAccount functionality and security, we can give residents access to a variety of services that involve personal information,” says Tink.

The highly secure document storage and management in Microsoft OneDrive for Business and SharePoint Online has also yielded benefits. “Sharing documents between employees and external parties is now far more secure and a normal part of our business. Before, we often had to get IT services involved to create a shared drive. Now, individuals can simply grant an appropriate level of permissions to different colleagues. Again, it’s all about productivity.”

