



2022-2023 E.A. Danby Award Recipients

Named after AMCTO's inaugural President, the E.A. Danby Awards recognize and honour municipalities that have demonstrated outstanding achievement through innovation with respect to municipal management activities or practices. The E.A. Danby Awards focus on the three broad categories of municipal finance, municipal administration, and the implementation of legislation, across municipalities of greater than 20,000 residents, and less than 20,000 residents.

Recipients of this award have demonstrated tangible results related to the efficiency and effectiveness of the municipal corporation.

Municipalities of 20,000 or more:

City of Markham

Category: Municipal Administration

Project: Innovating Democracy – the 2022 Markham Municipal Elections

The City of Markham is a leader in multi-platform and digitally-accessible election services. Markham was Canada's first city to vote online, and maintains one of North America's largest and longest-running online voting programs today, now spanning six consecutive elections since 2003.

In 2022, the City continued its history of electoral innovation by introducing a suite of groundbreaking service enhancements leveraging automation, business and artificial intelligence, and advanced cryptography to streamline service delivery; drive civic engagement through reliable, relevant and accessible election information; and further transparency and public trust in next-generation voting technologies. These included:

- An on-demand e-signature platform for election registration
- A multi-platform, multi-language and data-driven community engagement strategy
- Canada's first election to feature independent online voting verification technology

Every four years, the City of Markham conducts an election for over 20 City Council and local school board offices, serving a candidate group 15 times the size as that of a typical federal or provincial returning office and a voting population spanning the territory of four large federal and provincial ridings. Supported by a small, high-performance team overseeing the full scope of strategic and operational electoral management activities, digitizing election registration allowed the City to capitalize on the emergence of new technologies, heightened customer demand for online services, and recent changes to provincial law to find critical efficiencies for high-volume administrative tasks and enhance access to key services. The City's on-demand online platform successfully automated time- and resource intensive process items, enabling their small team to optimize their capacity during project pinch points while offering candidates and voters a more flexible, accessible, and seamlessly guided user experience.

The innovations introduced by the City in this election reflect a strategic response to the new and evolving needs and expectations of municipal governments in today's dynamic legislated service environment.



Municipalities of under 20,000:

Township of Conmee

Category: Implementation of Legislation

Project: Aging and Health Seminar series

In March 2023, the Township of Conmee delivered an Aging and Health Seminar series that targeted older adults age 55+ as well as their care partners. The Seminars focused on several topics ranging from Hospice services, Health Involvement in Public Policy, MAiD, Bereavement Authority Guide to Death Care, updates on programs and services from MPP Kevin Holland's office, the Alzheimer Society, Vision Loss Rehabilitation, Elder Abuse, Finance, Osteoporosis, Diabetes prevention, falls prevention and more.

The goal of the project was to get older adults reconnected with one another following the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic resulted in many older adults experiencing isolation and loneliness, along with difficulties accessing programs and services. As Conmee is a rural township, the Township knew they would need to bring services directly to the people they serve. The Township ordered transportation for those who experienced barriers to attend seminars and provided meals during each session.

This project helped older adult population of Conmee get re-integrated back into the community and the economy post-COVID-19 by providing them with information on programs and services, healthy lifestyles and aging, while recognizing their contributions to the community and encouraging greater social inclusion to build age-friendly communities in rural Northwest Ontario.

As a result of the project, the Township now has new social groups connected and residents of neighbouring communities have been able to establish new friendships and reconnect with old friends they haven't seen in years. The community has also been successful in partnering with a local health clinic to start up free chair yoga classes, walking groups, and education to keep residents engaged following the series.

Northern Bruce Peninsula

Category: Municipal Administration

Project: Modernization of Digital Records Management System

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula had to improve its ability to manage electronic and tangible documents. Documents were being duplicated and became frequently difficult to locate, causing inefficiencies and an inability to use the information contained in them as corporate business assets. It was particularly challenging for departments to manage their paper documents especially when staff were not all located in one municipal facility. Improving their document management capability has been a long-standing goal for the municipality.

The Municipality's IT/GIS Manager was tasked with applying for Modernization Funding in 2021 for a Digital Records Management System. However, to accommodate the Digital Records Management System, the server and existing hardware had to be upgraded too. The municipality was successful in rural Ontario surrounded by water on three sides with limited internet. Thankfully, the municipality was successful in obtaining a grant for up



to 65% for the digital records management project and Council approved funds towards the server and existing hardware upgrades.

By adopting a digital records management system, the municipality have and will be able to continue:

- Increasing transparency by increasing accessibility to records
- Reducing expenses by eliminating unnecessary records, expediting procedures and reducing the costs of records storage
- Ensuring proper protection of documents
- Ensuring compliance with legislation and bylaws
- Increasing service levels and overall efficiency of staff
- Reducing the environmental impact of paper documents and more

A municipal-wide digital records management system has enhanced the municipality's ability to comply with statutory obligations, reduce search times for freedom of information (FOI) and other purposes, increase much needed office space and enhance their ability to protect corporate memory.

Efficiency gains and reduction of risk are benefits of this important business initiative. The tangible benefits will result in savings and improved efficiencies and productivity throughout the entire organization.

Digital Records management is vital to a municipal organization. With the support of their past and current Council, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and staff, the municipality will continue developing and seeing the benefits of the digital records management system.

Certificates of Merit – Municipalities of 20,000 or more

County of Frontenac

Category: Municipal Administration

Project: Lean Implementation Frontenac Team (LIFT) Program

The County of Frontenac is an upper-tier municipality comprising four member municipalities: the Townships of North Frontenac, Central Frontenac, South Frontenac, and Frontenac Islands. It covers a geographic area of 4,000 sq./km with a population of approximately 28,000 permanent and seasonal residents. The County provides corporate services to the townships including finance, human resources, information technology and geographic information, planning, and economic development. It also operates a 128-bed long-term care home, administers paramedic services across Frontenac County and the City of Kingston, and operates a Ministry of Transportation Ontario-owned passenger and vehicle ferry connecting Howe Island to the mainland.

Through the application of Lean Six Sigma methodology, the County of Frontenac has established itself as an organization that demonstrates a culture of continuous improvement among its employees. Lean embodies the belief that there are simpler, better ways to do our day-to-day work. It is a guiding philosophy and commitment to identify and eliminate waste, inefficiency, and error. It is a deliberate and ongoing effort to make work environments more efficient and effective, so staff can strive toward the highest quality of service for customers.



The County of Frontenac began its Lean Six Sigma journey in 2015 by establishing the Lean Implementation Frontenac Team (LIFT) program. This initiative was introduced by Frontenac County Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Kelly Pender. Since then, the County has formally trained staff to identify waste and improve processes across the organization. The LIFT team now comprises 20 Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belts, 10 Green Belts, and two Black Belts.

The County of Frontenac is committed to continuous improvement and to applying the concepts of Lean Six Sigma across the entire organization. It is not a “one-and-done” approach. The training is available to staff at all levels who are encouraged to identify waste in the workplace and suggest and explore opportunities for improvement. The program began with training guided by outside consultants. It has since evolved and matured to a point at which staff exclusively drive the program forward.

As a result of implementing this methodology, the County has seen vast improvements in operations including:

- Staff onboarding and orientation
- Records retention and archiving
- E-waste
- The Committee of Adjustment Planning application process
- Expense claim processing for Frontenac paramedics
- Cash handling for the Howe Island Ferry service

The County’s LIFT training program is also available to member municipalities. The success of the program has also sparked interest from several outside organizations that are looking at similar initiatives as they face the ongoing challenges of having to do more with less.

Town of Ajax

Category: Municipal Administration

Project: Council Decision Dashboard

As Ajax reaches the final years of its five-year IT Strategic Roadmap, it is increasingly shifting focus to optimization and smarter decision-making through the use of data. Data, both spatial and in other forms, is considered a key corporate asset, and the Town is beginning to use it to provide valuable business insights.

In their project, the ‘Council Decision Dashboard’, the Ajax Clerk’s department has taken six years of unstructured data on Council and Committee decisions (i.e. from meeting minutes and other sources), and placed it in a database format, capturing all available data points in relation to each and every Council decision (i.e. Report number, adoption date, mover/second, responsible department, etc.). These data points continue to be captured as new Council decisions are made each meeting, and all of the data is displayed in an interactive dashboard developed using PowerBI; the result is a powerful accountability tool that can be used by the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) and Council to track progress on all Council-assigned deliverables, distribute workloads, catch ‘dropped balls’ and overdue items, and measure organizational performance, among other things.



The Council Decision Dashboard is fully interactive, can be altered to find particular items or groups of items, and displays large amounts of data in ways that can reveal patterns, shine a light on performance problems, help the Town to gain insights, and better derive meaning from data that is not readily discernable when in unstructured formats.

The Council Decision Dashboard solution addresses challenges in the Town's operational processes by using data to continuously improve service performance quality, speed, dependability and costs. The Council Decision Dashboard is saving significant staff time by facilitating direct, end-user access and management of progress reporting on Council-assigned activities to the organization. By providing a consistent, organization-wide platform, the Dashboard has eliminated approximately 15 hours of staff time, per department, per month.

The most exciting part of this project is its attainability by municipalities of any size. PowerBI is a basic tool that is available as part of the M365 suite, and the skills to use it are commonly found in IT professionals across our sector. Most importantly, this was a no-to-low costs project that has produced tremendous value.

City of Windsor

Category: Municipal Administration

Project: CityROVER Pothole Detection and Manhole Inspection Automation

The City of Windsor had used a traditional "drive-and-patch" method to repair potholes in its roads, which was costly and time-consuming. In an effort to improve resident satisfaction and improve the efficiency of reportable potholes filled with respect to Municipal Benchmarking Network (MBN) standards, the city switched to using scouts and GPS markers to identify areas requiring repair. However, this approach still relied on dedicated patrols of the entire road network, and the scouts faced challenges identifying potholes while driving safely. The vast scale of the city's infrastructure meant it was difficult to keep up with the deficiencies that occurred unexpectedly.

Between 2020 to 2023, the City of Windsor introduced CityROVER, a smart camera solution that automates the pothole detection and manhole inspection process. The technology collects data on the city's road network without requiring any input from drivers and was installed on a range of vehicles, including garbage trucks and bylaw vehicles. With CityROVER, the city was able to obtain nine times better coverage of its road network. The collected data is used to generate incident reports, which can be accessed through a web portal in near real-time. Maintenance staff can examine the incident details and prepare work orders that can be distributed to repair crews in the form of patch maps. This approach ensures that repair crews spend their time effectively and efficiently, attending only to their assigned road hazards on their repair routes. The incident heat map feature helps staff identify high-priority areas based on hazard quantity and severity.

CityROVER has revolutionized the city's approach to asset management, delivering safe, durable, and efficient transportation infrastructure. The City of Windsor has doubled the effectiveness of its pothole and manhole maintenance programs with CityROVER, sending resources only to known issue locations. The innovative asset management approach has allowed the city to leverage its existing staff and vehicles, cover more roads, and repair more deficiencies.