Staff Report

Planning & Building Services – Planning Division

Report To: **COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services**
Meeting Date: April 29, 2025
Report Number: PBS.25.030
Title: Cloudpermit Software Implementation by Planning Division
Prepared by: Shawn Postma, Manager of Community Planning

A.   Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report PBS.25.030, entitled "Cloudpermit Software Implementation by Planning Division for information purposes only";

B.   Overview

The purpose of this report is to inform Council that the Planning Division will be implementing CloudPermit, a municipal software program for the digital submission and file processing of new Planning applications. CloudPermit is used by over 250 municipalities across Canada, including many in the County of Grey and County of Simcoe. CloudPermit is a cloud based digital application program that allows applicants to submit Planning Applications online and automates many of the Planning steps required through an approvals process.

CloudPermit has already been successfully launched in January by the Building Division who utilize the software for the entire building permit process.

CloudPermit will be launched for the Planning Division on April 28th with the application intake window to officially open. Digital and Paper files will continue to be accepted by the Planning Division for 3 months to allow users to transition to the new software and Staff will remain on hand to support the filing of new planning applications. Background

C.   Background

With vast municipal software changes and improvements over the past few years, it became evident that our current municipal software system was unable to provide the tools that Town staff and its users desired. The existing system lacked any online presence, and was inefficient for the tracking and processing of planning files. The integration between departments in particular with the Building division was disconnected leading to confusion on the status of various planning files directly related to active building permit applications. To address this shortfall and to help improve the applicants' user experience, and improve customer service, the Town researched various municipal software programs before adopting CloudPermit.

CloudPermit was first developed in 2011, is used by over 250 municipalities across Canada, including 100 in Ontario. It has received endorsements from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Ontario Building Officials Association (OBOA) and is already widely adopted by building and planning departments in Grey and Simcoe Counties. This cloud-based electronic applicaiton software digitizes the major components of the planning review process, consolidating all related tasks into one digital platform. Originally designed for municipal building departments, Cloudpermit has since expanded to include modules for Planning and By-law divisions, further enhancing its utility for municipalities.

Initial conversations with Cloudpermit took place in early May 2024. Since then, the Building and IT Services teams have worked diligently to configure building permit modules which were launched publicly in January 2025.

After that launch, attention was turned to the Planning Services modules which have undergone digitizing all planning applications and forms, updating application workflow steps, and customizing new planning templates. Communication Services has provided external communications to advise users of the new software system and has developed a number of how to and help documents to support the new change.

Extensive testing remains underway with a launch date scheduled for April 28, 2025.

D.   Analysis

Cloudpermit offers robust technical support and training to help staff fully leverage the software's capabilities and meet our specific needs. The platform is regularly updated with new features to keep pace with advancements in technology. Additionally, Cloudpermit is highly customizable, allowing staff to make internal adjustments without the need to submit support tickets to the software provider.

Cloudpermit was designed to streamline the development process from Planning Application to Building Permit to By-law Enforcement. The software enables municipalities to automate workflows, foster collaboration, and improve communication between town departments as well as between applicants and the Town. By reducing administrative burdens and timelines, Cloudpermit enhances efficiency and provides a more transparent, user-friendly experience.

Cloudpermit offers a variety of benefits for applicants by simplifying the entire application process into a single, intuitive online platform. With real-time tracking, applicants can monitor the status of their projects from start to finish. By logging into the portal, they can easily access their applications, view supporting documentation, and check the status of certain tasks. Planning staff and applicants can communicate directly through Cloudpermit's automated email notifications, streamlining the exchange of information.

Public Engagement remains a priority in the planning process, and at this time CloudPermit only offers some basic functionality for public use. To ensure our public engagement remains priority, the Town will continue to use the Town Website to publish all received applications, reports and drawings. The Planning Applications section of the Town website has been

incredible successful in sharing information and providing automated updates on project changes to project subscribers.

E.   Strategic Priorities

1.   Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2.   Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

F.   Environmental Impacts

Digital file submissions will result in the elimination of paper files and paper file tracking saving on resources required to submit paper submissions, and space associated with storing and archiving file materials.

G.   Financial Impacts

No adverse financial impacts are anticipated with the use of CloudPermit.

H.   In Consultation With

IT Division, Town of The Blue Mountains
Building Division, Town of The Blue Mountains
Tim Murawsky, Chief Building Official / Acting Director of Planning and Building Services
Adam Smith, Director of Planning and Building Services / Acting CAO

I.   Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Shawn Postma, planning@thebluemountains.ca

J.   Attached

Nil

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Postma

Manager of Community Planning

For more information, please contact:

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	PBS.25.030 Cloudpermit Software Implementation by Planning Department.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Apr 16, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

No Signature - Task assigned to Adam Smith was completed by delegate Tim Murawsky

Adam Smith - Apr 16, 2025 - 10:25 AM