Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula
Staff Report

Report Number:	GISIT26-01
Subject:	2025 Digital Service Delivery & Modernization Outcomes
Date:	February 9, 2026
Submitted By:	Kara Smith, GIS/IT Manager

Recommendation

That Council receives report GISIT26-01 2025 Digital Service Delivery & Modernization Outcomes for information.

Background

The GIS/IT Department supports municipal service delivery by identifying opportunities to improve efficiency, strengthen internal processes, and enhance public access to services through the effective use of existing digital tools. The focus is on ensuring technology investments deliver measurable operational value while maintaining or improving service levels.

Over the past several years, the Municipality has made targeted digital investments to modernize operations, improve transparency, and support staff capacity. As systems mature, emphasis has shifted from implementation to optimization, ensuring existing platforms are used effectively, consistently, and in a way that supports both day-to-day operations and Council's decision-making.

Analysis

Appendix A provides a high-level summary of the Municipality's most significant digital service delivery functions in 2025, with a focus on the outcomes achieved and the value delivered in return for existing investments. Where applicable, return on investment is demonstrated through the revenue processed online or measurable efficiency gains. In other areas, operational value delivered is reflected through reduced staff time, improved compliance, enhanced access to information, and cost avoidance.

Looking ahead to 2026, the focus remains on maximizing the value of the existing systems through incremental improvements, internal automation, and expanded use, without introducing new platforms or increasing operating costs. This approach supports service sustainability as the Municipality continues to respond to evolving community expectations and organizational pressures.

Conclusion

In 2025, the Municipality continued to focus on maximizing the value of existing digital investments to support service delivery, and operational efficiency. These efforts delivered measurable operational value while maintaining stable operating costs. The 2026 focus remains on incremental improvements and expanded use of existing platforms.

Consultation

N/A

Financial and Resource Implications

N/A

Considerations – Council Strategic Goals

☐ Infrastructure and Maintenance

☐ Sustainable Tourism and Environment Conservation

☑ Enhance Community Engagement and Services

☑ Economic Diversification and Development

☑ Governance and Transparency

Attachments

- Appendix A – 2025 Digital Service Delivery & Modernization Outcome

Approval

Respectfully Submitted:

K.Smith

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Kara Smith
GIS/IT Manager

Approved By:

Peggy Van Mierlo-West

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Peggy Van Mierlo-West
Chief Administrative Officer

Permitting, Licensing & By-law Enforcement

Return on Investment: $474,075

Fees Processed Online	Departments Using Platform	Inspections Completed	Permits/Licenses Processed
$511,875	**3**	**1,422**	**693**

Operational Value:

- Reduced time spent on incomplete applications.
- Improves application turnaround time for applicants.
- Protects municipal revenue by ensuring payment is received before work begins.
- Inspection results are documented once, in the field and immediately available.
- Provides a consistent, transparent process.
- Creates capacity to expand programs (such as B&B licensing) without adding new systems.
- Supports cross-department collaboration and consistent information sharing.

New in 2025:

By-law Enforcement Module

- Online complaints automatically start cases and notify staff.
- Case tracking and inspections in one system.
- Ready to support a future AMPS program, if desired.

Mobile Inspections

- Field inspections completed on phones or tablets.
- Works offline in areas with limited reception.
- Provides mobile inspections for all modules.

Permits By Department

By-law 5.2%

Building 37.2%

Licensing 57.6%

693
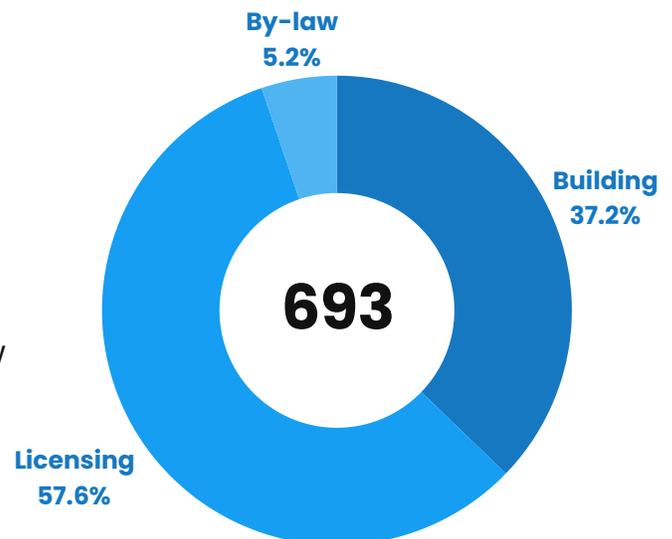
2026 Focus:

- Increased by-law use.
- Promotion of online complaint intake to initiate cases.
- Streamlined inspections and enforcement letters for by-law.
- Improved documentation.
- Incorporate B&B licensing.

Community Engagement

Operational Value Delivered: Reflected in avoided advertising costs, reduced staff time, and the ability to maintain an informed community through reliable, consistent communications.

Open Rate:

90%

Industry Avg. 48%
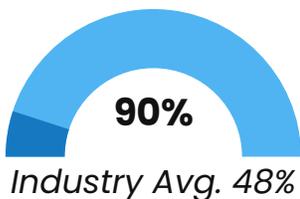
Emails Delivered:

26,376

+16,202

Follower Growth:

1491 +147

Total Subscribers

Campaigns Sent:

38

+13

Operational Value:

- Provides fast, direct, and reliable delivery of information.
- Reduced misinformation risk.
- Faster, more reliable emergency communications to residents.
- Used alongside website updates and social media to ensure residents receive information through their preferred channels.
- Supports the promotion of community events at no cost to organizers, with staff assistance to create clear, accessible information.

How We Use It:

- **Monthly Community Events & Municipal News**

- **Emergency Updates & Service Disruptions**

- **Short-Term Accommodation Newsletter**

- **MAT Payment Reminders**

- **Contractor's Corner Newsletter**

2025 Changes:

Expanded use for emergency and service disruption communications, demonstrating faster and more reliable reach than social media alone. Results showed that while social media helps raise awareness, direct email delivery provides faster, more reliable reach, with over 1,400 subscribers reached and an average open rate of approximately 80% within the first 2 hours.

2026 Plans:

Continued focus on emergency communications and growing subscriber lists to maximize reach during critical events.

Digital Public Access, Online Services & Payments

Return on Investment: $648,218

Website Visitors

322,196 ⬆ + 22.8%
+ 59,744

Fees Collected

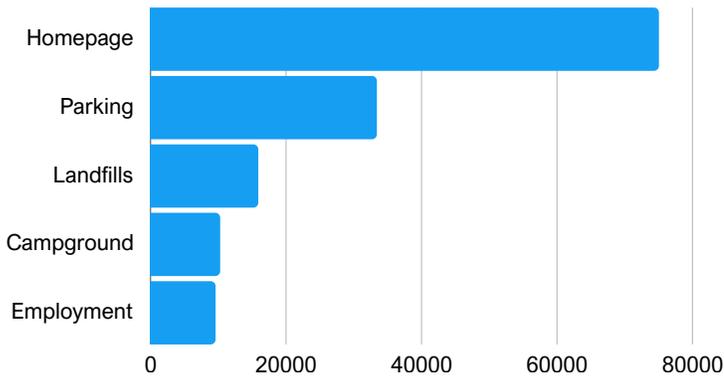**$661,509** ⬆ + 27.7%
+ $143,584

Forms Submitted	Online Transactions	Events Promoted	Estimated Staff Time Efficiency
4,011	**946**	**1,030**	**14,000** minutes

Top Performing Pages

Bar chart — Top Performing Pages (approximate values):
- Homepage: ~75,000
- Parking: ~34,000
- Landfills: ~16,000
- Campground: ~10,000
- Employment: ~10,000

Operational Value:

- Provides 24/7 access to municipal services and information, improving service availability.
- Ensures information, forms, and services are centralized in one consistent location.
- Enables residents to complete transactions and requests at their convenience, reducing staff time and interruptions.
- Allows payments to be collected online, reducing cash handling and reconciliation time.

2025:

- Increased online form submission and payments
- Accessibility Improvements
- Ongoing updates driven by website committee

2026:

- Continued accessibility and usability improvements
- Expansion of online services and self-serve options
- Incremental enhancements without costly redesign

Users By Country

Top Countries:
CAN - 89k   USA - 10k   CHN - 5.2k   SGP - 3.3k

Community Engagement, Consultation & Feedback

Operational Value Delivered: Reflected in improved transparency, better-informed Council decisions, reduced staff effort, and support for an informed community through accessible public engagement.

Total Views	Total Visitors	Total Contributions
4,348	**1,908**	**320**

Operational Value:

- Centralized, accessible platform for public input, reducing the need for multiple ad-hoc surveys or engagement tools.
- Supports informed Council decision making by capturing resident feedback in one consistent format.
- Improves transparency by providing residents with direct access to project information, reports and updates.
- Reduces staff time spent collecting, summarizing and reporting on engagement results.
- Creates a documented record of public input to support accountability.

Top Visited Projects

- **Business Licensing for Bed & Breakfast Establishments**
- **Tobermory & Lion's Head Water/Wastewater Masterplan**
- **2025 Short-Term Accommodation Licensing Program**
- **2026 Budget**
- **2025 Year-End Parking Report**

Followers
856

Documents Downloaded
3,563

2026 Focus:

- Continued use for major plans, budgets and policy initiatives
- Increased promotion through the website and email communications
- Expanded use across the organization

Records Management & Workflow Automation

Operational Value Delivered: is reflected in significant staff time savings, improved compliance, and reduced operational risk.

Electronic Forms	Processes	Workflows	Departments
29	**35**	**42**	**ALL**

Operational Value:

- Reduces staff time spent searching for, filing and routing paper documents.
- Improves compliance with records retention, FOI, and audit requirements.
- Standardizes internal processes across departments
- Reduces reliance on paper storage and physical file handling.

Contributed to an 18% reduction in printing volume and a 30% reduction in printing costs

Hours Saved

2,000+

Estimated Efficiency

$200,000

2025 Highlights:

- Expanded use of electronic records and automation workflows across all departments
- Continued digitization of property and operational files.
- Implemented and expanded automated internal workflows supporting HR compliance, records management, by-laws, performance reviews and training planning.
- Standardized electronic timesheets for full-time and seasonal staff
- Improved access to records for FOI, audits and operational needs.
- Launched a fully electronic Health & Safety program with inspections, tracking and QR code access to improve compliance.

2026 Plans:

- Enhance compliance-focused processes
- Continue to explore new uses for the platform within our organization
- Build additional forms in Laserfiche to automate processes and filing
- Build new workflows internally to improve efficiency without additional costs

Internal Information Sharing & Staff Coordination

Operational Value Delivered: is reflected in improved internal coordination, reduced time spent searching for information, and consistent access to up-to-date documents.

Views	Projects	News Posts	Departments
2400+	**22**	**21**	**ALL**

Operational Value:

- Provides a centralized onboarding and training resource for seasonal staff, ensuring consistent information that is easily accessible.
- Ensures staff have access to the same, current information.
- Supports change management by clearly communicating modernization projects, timelines, expectations, and instructions.
- Reduces reliance on emails and attachments, providing improved version control and accountability.
- Improves access to resources by providing quick-link access to forms, policies, and tools.

3 Internal Sites
Staff, Council, & Fire

2025 Highlights:

- Created a digital health & safety board that is automatically updated, providing all staff with quick, centralized access to inspections and relevant information.
- Launched a centralized seasonal staff onboarding site, ensuring consistent access to policies, procedures, instructions for new processes, reducing orientation time.
- Centralized modernization project information, including upcoming projects, timeframes and instructions.

2026 Plans:

In 2026, staff will continue to modernize and refine internal SharePoint sites, focusing on content clean-up, improved organization, and expanding use to ensure staff, Council, and Fire are each supported in the way that best meets their needs.

Digital Transformation Overview

Progress To Date:

Over the past several years, the Municipality has focused on modernizing service delivery by maximizing existing platforms, improving integration, and building internal capacity to automate manual processes. This approach has strengthened records management, transparency, and efficiency across departments, while positioning the organization to manage increasing service demands without adding unnecessary systems.

Awards:

Several digital transformation initiatives have received external awards and professional recognition, reflecting the impact and effectiveness of this work. Select projects were initially supported through modernization funding, enabling long-term operational improvements that continue to deliver value through staff-led optimization.

2022-2023: E.A. Danby - Modernization of Digital Records Management System
2025: Laserfiche - Tom Wayman Digital Transformation Leader of the Year
2024-2025: E.A. Danby - Digital Transformation Journey

Laserfiche®
Run Smarter® Award Winner
Tom Wayman Digital Transformation Leader of the Year

2026 Plans:

- Focused on optimizing existing systems rather than adding new software
- 2026 IT Road Map to guide future investments and priorities
- Improved connectivity, hardware renewal, and site upgrades
- Ongoing platform reviews to ensure performance, security, and value
- Continued staff-led digital improvement and automation