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Council overcomes workflow challenges!

Challenges

- With the arrival of COVID 19, Bayside City Council was tasked to reduce the human touch points associated with the current planning approval workflow.

- The traditional planning workflow was based on physical document submissions and objections.

- Needed to implement a new digital workflow in a short period of time without compromising the integrity of the planning submission process, whilst satisfying the COVID legislative requirements.

Solution

- EzeScan software was configured to capture web form objections, automatically process them as the original record, redact a copy and automatically publish it to the Council's website.

Results

- This digital transformation project was delivered successfully in a short period of time with the minimum of disruption to the process, whilst maintaining the safety of the community.

Melbourne's Bayside City Council reduces the opportunities for virus transmission with the assistance of an EzeScan Digitisation Solution. Here's why they did it...

Government legislation introduced to deal with COVID 19 provided a challenge to Local Government Authorities, with many human touch points in their planning workflows.

Reducing the opportunities for virus transmission required eliminating these touchpoints, a strategy that Melbourne's Bayside City Council achieved with the assistance of an EzeScan Capture Management Solution.

Bayside's traditional planning workflow required that plans and objections be submitted either via hard copy delivered by mail or direct to council offices or email, and then registered in OpenText Content Manager (formerly Micro Focus) with a postal copy provided to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Traditionally residents that wished to view objections to planning proposals would have to visit the Council Office to do so. The state government's Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Bill 2020, passed in April 2020, introduced COVID 19 temporary measures that included requirements to make planning documents available for inspection on council websites.

Alistair Bourrilhon, Corporate Records Coordinator at Bayside City Council, said "When the legislation passed, we had to find a sure way that we could do this without compromising the integrity of the planning submissions process."

"With safe distancing and self-isolation, we could not allow our residents to come in. We also had to make sure the details of the objector was not visible to the person building a fence or a new pool. The integrity of the data was at the forefront of all of this, as well as having to make sure that we were obeying government legislation, requiring us to be as agile as possible."

> **We have been using EzeScan for over 10 years to classify, scan and register information that arrives by post and via email from the Council's website, so we contacted them for a solution.**
>
> **Alistair Bourrilhon, Corporate Records Coordinator at Bayside City Council**

EzeScan implemented the solution through a web form on the Council's website that generates an email which is automatically categorised using the INDEX module in EzeScan.

Two PDFs are then automatically generated, a raw original and another with all personal data automatically redacted. Both the original and redacted document are saved into Council's Content Manager record-keeping system and delivered to VCAT when required.

The redacted copy is then published to the Council's website to allow public inspection, as required by the new government legislation.

> **EzeScan was able to make sure that we got everything up there without any issues whatsoever, so we now have a record of the original objection which has not been tampered with, as well as the redacted version as required by the COVID legislation.**
>
> **Alistair Bourrilhon, Corporate Records Coordinator at Bayside City Council**

"The web form has mandatory fields for submission details such as name, address and application number. Choosing which fields to redact in the published PDF is just a simple matter of selecting an item in the dropdown menu in EzeScan."

"It then literally wraps all the security from the content management system into the redacted format."

About EzeScan

EzeScan provides fast, cost effective business process automation solutions including simplified document back scanning, accounts payable, data robotic process automation, forms data extraction, mailroom/correspondence automation and highly integrated EDRMS capture. With thousands of installations in Australasia, North America and the UK, EzeScan is your ideal digital transformation provider.