

Mid-Atlantic Cities, Counties & Utilities Rely on ProjectDox®

Excelling in Service | WSSC

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) is among the largest water and wastewater utilities in the nation, with a network of nearly 5,600 miles of fresh water pipeline and more than 5,400 miles of sewer pipeline. The Development Services Group reviews 3,500 water and sewer plan submittals and processes approximately 34,000 permit transactions annually.

The driving forces to implement ProjectDox into WSSC's Development Services Group were the ability to transmit all plans electronically, reduce review time and eliminate the travel time to their facilities. Their plan review process was old, time consuming, inefficient and expensive.

With ProjectDox, WSSC has decreased their review time from 8 weeks to 2-3 weeks. "Gone are the days when one has to pick up a telephone and call and say - where is my plan in the process," states Jerry N. Johnson, WSSC's CEO, "As far as a green initiative, it's one of our stars."

Another benefit of the system is the fact that ProjectDox is also used in related jurisdictions including Planning, Permitting and Parks Divisions of Montgomery County. As ProjectDox has gained a hold in the Mid-Atlantic region, these jurisdictions are realizing even more efficiency as they establish plan review standards with neighboring communities.



"The great benefit of this system is that it allows for concurrent reviews, we have gone from 8 weeks to 2 or 3 weeks."

Enterprise ePlan User | Montgomery County, MD

Montgomery County is a 500 square mile area with a population of 1 million. Montgomery, like other inner Washington, D.C. suburban counties, contains many major U.S. government offices, scientific research and learning centers, and business campuses, which provide a significant amount of revenue for the county.

As part of its economic growth vision and sustainability efforts, Montgomery County uses electronic automation for permitting and plan review. The county began bringing ProjectDox online in 2009 and now uses ProjectDox for electronic plan review in three departments - Planning, Permitting Services and Parks.

"Converting the manual business process for construction document exchange to a ProjectDox workflow gives us more control. We eliminate the need to outsource, reduce our paper consumption, and experience faster review cycles," according to Park Development Division Chief, Mitra Pedoeem. "Plus all project information resides in one central location - ProjectDox. The business value of ProjectDox will definitely increase as we add more projects to ePlans."



"Digitally transforming our business process to an all-electronic workflow improves collaboration between internal reviewers and external stakeholders while establishing an easily accessible, centralized hub for all project-associated information for the complete project life cycle."

Technology Trailblazers | Baltimore, Maryland

Baltimore is the largest city in the U.S. state of Maryland, and the 29th-most populous city in the country. It was established by the Constitution of Maryland and is not part of any county; thus, it is the largest independent city in the United States.

With hundreds of identified districts, Baltimore has been dubbed "a city of neighborhoods." More than 65,000 properties, or roughly one in three buildings in the city, are listed on the National Register, more than any other city in the nation. Almost a quarter of the jobs in the Baltimore region are in science, technology, engineering and math, in part attributed to its extensive undergraduate and graduate schools. The tech sector is rapidly growing as the Baltimore metro ranks 8th in the CBRE Tech Talent Report among 50 U.S. metro areas for high growth rate and number of tech professionals. Forbes ranked Baltimore fourth among America's "new tech hot spots".

In 2011, the City of Baltimore's Department of Housing and Community Development was awarded an Innovation Grant to develop an electronic plans review system (ePlans) to expedite and improve the review of full-size construction documents and/or plans associated with Building Permit Applications. ProjectDox was brought online in 2012.



Baltimore has been a ProjectDox user since 2012.

ProjectDox has become the ePlan standard in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Driving Development with ProjectDox®

Accelerating Economic Growth and Development | *Fairfax County, Virginia*

Fairfax County's new electronic zoning application submission system is already exceeding expectations for staff review speed, say planners who announced that the first application has been submitted and accepted using the new system.

Novus Property Holdings was the first developer to complete the applications acceptance process electronically under the county's new pilot system called ePlans. The developer proposes to rezone a 5.3-acre site to build a new apartment building. Planners were able to respond to the proposal with deficiency comments within four days of its submission, moving even faster than anticipated using the new ePlans system – the current goal being 10 days.

“After working with Fairfax County for nearly a decade and submitting hundreds of plans through the paper process, Bohler’s Development Services Group has found the new ePlans system to be not only intuitive and easy to use, but extremely efficient,” said Brian Clifford, a planning manager on the Novus development team. “Having the ability to upload plans and review staff responses electronically has streamlined the submission and acceptance.”

ePlans allows the County to ditch the inefficiencies—for both developers and planners—resulting from paper-based submissions for major zoning proposals. Fairfax is testing out this new system as part of a broader strategy to rev up its economy. Through its Strategic Plan for Economic Success, the County is actively improving the speed, consistency and predictability of its development review process.

“ePlans dramatically cut staff review time and sped up the application acceptance process thereby allowing us to move forward to the public hearing process in a much shorter time frame,” said Sara V. Mariska, an attorney with Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh PC, on the Novus team.



“The online application reduces the amount of paper typically needed for a submission and allowed us to meet our deadline and exceed our client’s expectations.”

Enticing Business Key to Thriving Economy | *Howard County, Maryland*

Howard County is centrally-located between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. and is continually ranked among the most affluent, advanced and educated communities in the United States. Howard's thriving and vibrant economy makes it the first choice for smart businesses looking to start or expand in the Mid-Atlantic.

Howard County also offers more than 70 million square feet of commercial space, providing businesses with the perfect location to do business. Not only does Howard County's economic development program entice new businesses, it nurtures its business community – driving jobs and revenues.

“The local business initiative promotes the growth and success of local businesses and increases the percentage of county procurement dollars flowing to local businesses.”
- Allan H. Kittleman, Howard County Executive.

Howard County has used ProjectDox for over eight years as a tool for plan submission, review, approval and tracking using a paperless online system that allows parallel collaboration between agencies to review and markup plans, share comments and more easily identify potential conflicts and issues. It also incorporates tools to increase the effectiveness of the review process and reduce review cycle time. The use of ProjectDox is intended to result in a better product with less effort and time.

According to Jeff Bronow, Chief of the Research Division for Howard County Planning and Zoning, ProjectDox has been a critical time saver, “It creates a lot of efficiency and really enhances communication, and through that process the review times have been shortened.”

Bronow also credits ProjectDox for the environmental benefits - saving huge amounts of paper and storage.



“It’s a huge paper saver, obviously. Our report today shows we’ve saved over 4 million pages, that’s an average of about 1800 pages per day. It creates these efficiencies, it’s just a really good way to review plans.”

“ePlans is already exceeding efficiency expectations by 60%”