King launches new mobile app

By Angela Gismondi

King is making it easier to access information and online services anytime, anywhere and with any device with the King-miCity mobile app.

The Township of King launched the new app recently. King is the first municipality in Canada to have a fully integrated mobile app in conjunction with its web portal and online services. The goal of the new technology is to improve customer service and better serve residents.

"It's about continued customer service improvement by this Township," said Pellegrini. "With the miCity app, we are able to offer enhanced convenience and better user experience for our residents using state-of-the-art technology."

The new app will make it more convenient for residents of King to access municipal information and services. In addition to 24/7 online access, the app also provides information on waste management and recycling, news, events, notifications, maps and enables users to make service requests.

For example, if you see a pot hole in need of repair, you can just take a picture on your mobile device and submit it directly to the Township.

"The mi-City mobile app provides us the exact location and a picture of the problem when a service request is made," explained Rob Flindall, director of engineering and public works for the Township of King. "This significantly improves our understanding, location and magnitude of the problem and helps us to plan and respond efficiently."

The miCity mobile app runs on both Apple and Android platforms and supports both smart phones and tablets. Pellegrini explained that unlike mobile apps used by other municipalities which are essentially stand alone, the miCity app is tightly integrated with the Township's portal, citizen relationship management system and online services to ensure timely, relevant and consistent information and services via both mobile devices and desktop computers.

"We are proud of what we are able to offer, despite being a small municipality ... all the other bigger municipalities around are trying to catch up to King in terms of our technology," said Pellegrini, adding he had been asked to speak on the subject at the Smart Cities Summit in Toronto. "King Township has transformed into a ?smart Township' and has become a model for other municipalities for its leadership in customer service."

Pellegrini pointed out the Township only has two full time information technology employees and worked with Imex Systems, a company which specializes in building smart governments and smart cities, to bring the app to fruition. As with any other apps on the market, a lot of work goes on behind the scenes, especially when it concerns their marketing strategy. Whilst many developers make the decision to utilize the idea of a mobile app advertisement to help generate profit and awareness, others may promote it through their social media channels. However you decide to do it though, any option should help to make the app as successful as possible.

"This partnership has allowed us to move far ahead of anyone else in the Greater Toronto Area," Pellegrini explained. "Being a small municipality, we have to use what limited resources we have and when I talk about resources I'm referring to financial resources. We have to be more effective and efficient with every tax dollar we have and the best way to do that is to be innovative."

The app is available for download from the iTunes and Google Play app stores. For more information visit www.king.ca.