

How a Small Team Made a Big Impact in Placerville, CA

For the past 50 years, if Placerville residents or business owners wanted to obtain a building permit, they'd need to fill out a paper application. One of the city's three building department staff would then manually enter the application information onto a form and hope the data was accurate. It was a time-consuming process for everyone involved.

"There were a lot of opportunities for applicants and staff to make errors," said Greg Horsfall, Placerville's Chief Building Official.

Challenges

Some of the challenges with Placerville's permitting process included:

→ Paper-based

The manual process was inefficient and prone to human error.

→ Lack of flexibility

Staff couldn't customize workflows and vendors were needed for even the most basic system administration.

→ Old-school methods

Data and records needed for reference were stored on a local network.

The city knew there had to be a better way. They started looking at cloud-based permitting systems and spoke candidly about what stood out to them about Camino's permitting system and Guide.



"I'll be honest. The versatility of the system is the reason that we chose Camino."

Greg Horsfall
Chief Building Official, Placerville, CA

Versatility was key

As Greg attests, "So much of a successful implementation starts before the project even formally kicks in. Any implementation is going to be a daunting task and it takes a team to get it done."

Because of his years of experience processing permit applications as a building official, Greg and his team were able to develop workflows that reflected what the customers wanted, not just the process they 'thought' might work.

"Most folks will take a program or a process and say, 'This is what we do now, follow the process.' We didn't do that. We asked our residents, 'What do you need?' And then built our process based on that," said Horsfall. "It made our processes more efficient because we understood what the applicants were looking for."

Implementation & Success

The implementation of the Camino system and permit guide has completely changed the permitting process in Placerville. Because workflows are no longer manual, staff can work faster, data is far more accurate, and applicants have little to complain about – the process is painless.

Greg says the quality of submissions has improved “so much” because the Guide “gives the applicant all of the information they need up front.” It’s also powered by GIS, so it gives accurate instructions, 100% of the time. Staff now spend way less time fixing errors and asking applicants for revisions.

“It’s night and day comparing what we were doing then to what we’re doing now,” said Horsfall. “[Using] Camino has probably increased our efficiency by an employee – and that’s not an exaggeration.”

“The feedback from the public has been overwhelmingly positive,” said Horsfall. Some of the **key benefits** the city experiences with Camino include:

- ✓ **Electronic submissions** - Applicants now submit online, which is easier for residents and staff
- ✓ **Flexible, customizable workflows** - Staff can easily adjust and add workflows as needed
- ✓ **More efficient permitting process** - All data is housed on a single platform so staff don’t have to jump between systems
- ✓ **User-friendly interface** - Repeat customers can save their information online, limiting repetitive inputs and interactions with staff
- ✓ **Customers are happy** - Applicants report feeling less frustrated with the permitting process because it’s fast and straightforward

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“When you make it easy for the applicant, they will hop, skip, and jump into the department. I’ll be honest, the ease of filing an application for a building permit in the city now is one of the greatest benefits I see.”

Greg Horsfall
Chief Building Official, Placerville, CA



Camino empowers Governments to achieve more. We build software for permitting and licensing that provides the best possible citizen experience while being the easiest to implement and operate. We have a passion for user clarity and efficiency, customer service excellence and building innovative technology that simplifies and automates Government’s most complex workflows.

Camino’s Permit Guide, Application Portal and System of Record products are rapidly improving how hundreds of communities grow and thrive.

Contact us today to learn more, or visit our website at camino.ai