OPENGOV

Alberta, Canada's Spruce Grove Unlocks Valuable ERP Data

AGENCY TYPE
City Government

POPULATION
34,000

ANNUAL BUDGET
$83.5 Million

Just west of Alberta's provincial capital, Edmonton, the City of Spruce Grove is a healthy mix of industry, commerce, and community. It boasts a wide range of recreation and cultural opportunities. Neighborhoods connect to nature via carefully-planned walking trails, and both national companies and local enterprises comprise the thriving business scene.

Spruce Grove's management team is keenly attentive to financial accountability. To better operationalize existing data within the organization, its leaders sought a technology solution that would be easy to implement, easy to access, and easy to understand.

Spruce Grove Affirms Commitment to Accountability

Chief Finance Officer Glen Jarbeau approaches his job with a sense of great duty as a caretaker of citizen resources. "None of us who are elected or work in the public sector have a right to other people's money," he explained. "We do all of our work on behalf of others." Seeking a technology solution that would facilitate a high level of accountability within the organization, Jarbeau decided to implement the OpenGov Smart Government Cloud™. "We want everyone to know what's going on," he said.

Spruce Grove's leadership team sought a technology solutions that would leverage valuable data trapped in their Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

Jarbeau's team needed a way to leverage the valuable data in its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system meaningfully. The City staff was pleased with how well OpenGov complemented its existing financial systems. As with many governments, legacy ERP and other systems can be difficult to navigate and nearly impossible for non-financial individuals to work within. Staff can upload the City's data to OpenGov easily and transform it into actionable information. "Our ERP system manages the data, and OpenGov is about providing information, so we use them together," Jarbeau said. "OpenGov continually improves the way that our information gets out."

City Creates New, Easy Access to Information

The platform's interactive interface ensures that users can find the information they need without wading through static reports. "With OpenGov, it's so much easier for people to access and interact with the data, rather than just receive it," he said. Not only is the data relevant – it is also easy. "Financial statements are inherently complicated, and OpenGov is inherently simple," Jarbeau said. "People can just go in and find what they're looking for."

The OpenGov platform is a simple solution for opening data among Spruce Grove's team, providing easier access to relevant information.

"Financial statements are inherently complicated, and OpenGov is inherently simple."

GLEN JARBEAU
Chief Financial Officer

Merely making data available is not necessarily enough to make it valuable. The platform makes data valuable by making it easier to understand and transforming it into information. "OpenGov is easy for everybody to access," Jarbeau said. "And for users who aren't accountants, they can go in there and be confident that they actually know what's going on. They can go in, be inquisitive, and understand it."

Jarbeau said he and his team could not have been happier with the implementation process. "OpenGov was a dream to implement. It was on time and on budget," he said. "We were doubtful about how quickly it could be implemented, but all the targets were met. Adjustments that we needed were accommodated, and the staff commented over and over how easy it went."

OpenGov Enhances Internal Decision-making and Better Informs Council

Having internal access to real-time, easily-understood financial information is critical for smarter, data-based decisions within Spruce Grove's departments. "We have internal managers who understand what they need to know to manage their businesses, but OpenGov is a lot more accessible to them," Jarbeau explained. "They're not accountants or financial experts, so the more they can rely on OpenGov and trust the information, the better decisions they can make."

Jarbeau utilizes OpenGov to educate the City's management team and Council better, as well. "We tend to look at decisions in the short term," Jarbeau said. "If we raise taxes, there may be a backlash about raising taxes. But our Council and administrators need to understand the long-term too." Visualizing a variety of different scenarios enables the Council to see the long-term impact of their decisions before making them. "OpenGov does that really well."

Implementing the OpenGov platform was quick and easy for the City's staff.

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Chief Financial Officer

RESULTS

✓ **Council Examines Long-Term Impact.** City staff can run scenarios for the Council that allow them to visualize the long-term impact of their decisions.

✓ **City Increases Internal Access to Information.** With OpenGov, non-finance staff can access and drill down into information that is meaningful to them.

✓ **Internal Departments Make Data-Driven Decisions.** With increased access to real-time financial information, department heads are empowered and feel newly-confident in their understanding of the relevant data.