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March 2021

Province-wide assessment update continues to be postponed

As part of the Ontario Government's 2021 spring budget, the Minister of Finance announced the decision to postpone a province-wide property assessment update, due once again to the pandemic. Property assessments for the 2022 property tax year will continue to be based on the fully phased-in January 1, 2016 assessed values.



The budget notes that consultations on the timing and valuation date for the next reassessment will be commencing shortly and that outcomes will be communicated this fall.

Hearing from our Municipal Liaison Group

Late last month we met with our Municipal Liaison Group, which includes representatives from municipalities and associations across the province. We discussed our role in supporting municipalities as they consider the optional small business tax class that was made available in the 2020 Fall Economic Statement and sought input on our research into the potential for electronic delivery of the Assessment Roll.

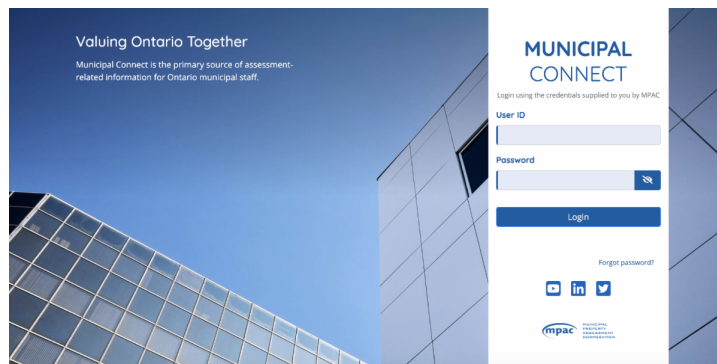
We also asked for volunteers to join a working group that will provide input as we develop a Master Municipal Services Agreement to consolidate our existing municipal agreements into a single services agreement that will more clearly define the relationship between MPAC and Ontario municipalities. For more information on any of these initiatives, please reach out to your local Municipal & Stakeholder Relations Account Manager.

Continuing to roll out the new Municipal Connect

This week, we onboarded our final group of municipal users to the new Municipal Connect. Next we will turn our attention to transitioning users in provincial government, school boards and municipal consultants to the new system.

A number of features for the new Municipal Connect are still in development and will be released over the coming weeks. While use of the new system is encouraged, you may need to utilize the previous version of Municipal Connect until all the new features are available in the new system. We are working towards decommissioning the old Municipal Connect on June 11, 2021.

We will be sharing updates to the new Municipal Connect regularly as we release features and implement enhancements.



Supporting the standardization of building permits

MPAC has highlighted its support for developing a data exchange standard for the development process in Ontario. The proposed collaboration, led by One Ontario, to bring together government, the building sector, and software vendors, provides a platform to realize an open and public data standard to help drive efficiencies in the end-to-end development process.

Every year, we receive approximately 300,000 building permits from municipalities. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, we [supported municipalities in determining the capabilities required to deliver electronic copies of building plans for existing permits](#). This work helps us understand municipal revenue needs and the value that the digitization of building plans would provide.

"The delivery of electronic building plans and permits from municipalities can greatly decrease the time in which we can deliver new property values, and thus tax revenue, to our municipal partners," says **Carmelo Lipsi**, Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer at MPAC. "Standardizing the collection of this data, while also working with Ontario municipalities to embrace e-permitting solutions, will support them in realizing new revenues sooner than in the past."

We encourage technological innovation and support the development of an easier, more efficient process and more cost-effective exchange of data, and we are pleased to work with our sector partners on these initiatives. We believe that the development of an open data exchange standard with its resulting data being publicly owned and available is a worthy initiative that will support Ontario's municipalities.

Notices in the mail for the Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans in Canada Exemption

Last December, the Ontario government amended the Assessment Act to exempt land used and occupied as a memorial home, clubhouse or athletic grounds by a unit of the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans (ANAVETs) in Canada from property taxation.

This month, MPAC mailed Special Amended Notices (SANs) to the taxable properties that are eligible for the exemption with an effective date of January 1, 2019. This is the same exemption provision that was introduced in the Fall of 2018 for properties used and occupied by an Ontario branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. In total, more than 400 Ontario Legions and 21 ANAVETS units will have their properties exempt from property taxes.

In the coming weeks, MPAC will be providing municipalities with information on applicable properties in their municipality as well as any assessment impacts. For more information, contact your local MSR representative.

Upcoming webinar

How MPAC Assesses Farm Properties

Join Mary Dawson-Cole, Regional Manager, and Karen Russell, Director, Valuation and Customer Relations, for this webinar to learn more about how MPAC values farmland properties in Ontario. We will outline the key market drivers, the sales investigation process, the components of a farm property assessment, available incentive programs, and details of the small-scale value add farm class.



Date: Thursday, April 8

Time: 1 to 2 p.m. EDT

Register Now

If you missed last month's webinar on Modernizing the Building Permit Process, [you can watch it here](#).

View the schedule of upcoming municipal webinars on mpac.ca and view recordings of all past webinars on our [YouTube channel](#).



Partnerships in action

The Township of Puslinch was able to pivot their business practice during the pandemic and implement a full e-permitting solution, accept electronic plans and start readily sharing them with MPAC to ensure that new assessment was captured in a timely fashion.

MPAC's Account Manager worked with the municipality and their chosen vendor to ensure their process and technology worked well with our system for their building permit integration. This digital enhancement replaces the previous access to a "safe room" that was granted to MPAC to view building plans, , resulting in the Township receiving much needed growth in a timely fashion.

"Our move to electronic transfer was always the plan but COVID-19 put the plan into overdrive. Ensuring information was easily available with a few clicks was the only way to go – the industry is already doing work electronically and we were the hold up," noted Mary Hasan, the Township's Director of Finance/Treasurer. "This change will pay dividends in the near future as our municipality continues to grow and staff pressures increase."

MPAC Account Manager, Jon Hebden agrees, saying "the use of a digital e-permitting solution has made it easier for us to meet the municipality's service expectations by adding on new assessment as soon as possible."

Do you have a great story about our partnerships in action? [Share it with us](#).



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