



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Prince William County, Virginia

Program Title: PWC Works - Connecting Multiple Services for One Integrated Experience

Program Category: Communications

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Nikki Brown & Rob Mancini

Title: Director of Communications and Engagement & Chief Information Officer

Department: Office of Executive Management & Department of Information Technology

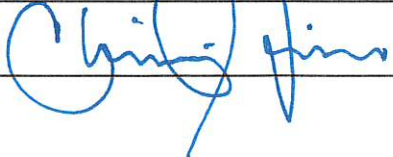
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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Christopher Shorter

Title: County Executive

Signature: 

## **Executive Summary:**

Prince William County (PWC) faced a key challenge: keeping residents informed and engaged in government initiatives. Despite having various digital communication tools, there was no centralized hub for tracking featured projects, and updates were mainly shared during Board of County Supervisors meetings. Public engagement opportunities were limited to specific in-person sessions, making civic participation difficult for many. To address this, PWC launched PWC Works, a centralized online engagement platform developed under the county's Digital Government and Transformation (GovX) strategy. This citizen-centered platform was created through collaboration among the Department of Communications and Engagement, the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), and other county departments. Supported by the Deputy County Executive for Government Operations, Performance & Innovation, the project adhered to rigorous IT standards and accessibility requirements.

PWC Works enables residents to follow real-time project updates, participate in surveys, contribute ideas, and interact with government initiatives through an easy-to-navigate digital hub. The platform, it supports anonymous input, inclusive access, and ADA compliance. The site launched with 15 projects and has since attracted over 7,000 visits, 700 contributions, and 100 user registrations. The platform showcases key digital initiatives like SolarApp+, Digital Prince William, and PWC 311, reflecting the county's broader digital transformation goals. Through consistent branding, omni-channel service delivery, and a strong focus on accessibility and transparency, PWC Works strengthens community trust and positions the county as a model for innovative, participatory local governance.

### **Challenge – How to stay informed**

Prince William County has been enhancing its online platforms to provide improved digital experiences, including multiple communications channels such as the county's website, social media, web applications, YouTube, mass notification technologies, educational and promotional information, and community feedback features, while simultaneously working on multiple projects. However, updates to these projects were typically provided sporadically during the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) meetings. Up until recently, there was no centralized place to keep track of featured projects, unless these were capital improvement project or if these were highlighted in the yearly budget book. In addition, the public couldn't easily stay engaged with these projects unless people participated during the public comment time during specific BOCS meetings.

### **Collaboration – Digital Transformation & PWC Works**

Currently, in Prince William County the next level of transformation is underway to take shape in the form of Digital Government and Transformation (or GovX).

The county's GovX journey evolves around Human-Centered Design practices involving several key elements for successful digital government transformation. These include assessing service delivery process and skill gaps, interacting with citizens to understand their needs and priorities, determining the most impactful opportunities for transformation based on collected data, and planning the implementation of GovX technology using county IT standards and processes.

As such, GovX is both a strategic mindset and a series of disciplined processes which foster continuous improvement of services to constituents and the government workforce alike, with success measured by the quality and convenience of experiences. It means designing outcomes and experiences by placing the resident and/or county staff at the center of the process throughout design and implementation of service enhancements.

In the fall of 2024, the Department of Communications and Engagement in collaboration with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) and other county departments launched PWC Works, a new centralized online engagement platform driven by the Digital Government and Transformation journey, inviting constituents to get involved in the county's projects and initiatives and interact directly with their government. This initiative was sponsored by the Deputy County Executive for Government Operations, Performance & Innovation and facilitated by the Portfolio Management Office within DoIT to ensure adequate review of security criteria, proper integration through the Architectural Review Board, and overall documentation and procurement management with the solution vendor to assist the Department of Communications and Engagement in getting PWC Works off the ground. This multi-agency collaborative effort resulted in a hub with 15 starter projects to invite early participation and saw more than 7,000 unique visits to the PWC Works website as a result. This new site, whose featured projects are regularly updated, also integrates seamlessly with the county's notification application to keep the public informed on what's happening in the community.

## **Innovation – Citizen-Centered Approach**

PWC Works combines a citizen-centered approach to local government engagement with technology, transparency, and service efficiency in ways that go beyond traditional government websites. Specifically, PWC Works is centered around the following innovative features:

- **Centralized Civic Engagement Hub:** where instead of having to navigate multiple departments or attend in-person meetings to get involved or informed, users have 1 hub where all engagement opportunities (projects, feedback tools, updates) are centralized into a single, user-friendly online platform. This has led to over 7,000 visits, close to 700 contributions, and almost 100 registrations since its inception at the end of September 2024.
- **Participatory Governance:** with interactive features like surveys, discussion forums, and idea boards allowing citizens to actively shape policies and initiatives, turning passive residents into co-creators of local policy.
- **Transparent Project Tracking:** the site allows the public to follow projects in real time with updates, timelines, and public comments. This level of real-time transparency, in addition to more traditional public commenting time during the BOCS meetings, builds trust and accountability, which many local governments still lack online.

## **Technology – Robust Platform and Service Delivery**

- EngagementHQ is the platform used for PWC Works and features many interactive engagement tools such as surveys, notification features, discussion forums, idea boards, and Q&A sections, enabling residents to actively participate in local government decisions, such as demonstrated in projects such as Digital Prince William and the Strategic Plan development.
- Inclusive Digital Access: by allowing anonymous participation, it lowers the barrier to entry for people who might otherwise not engage due to time, transportation, or privacy concerns. Participation in interactive features requires registration, which the platform ensures user privacy by not sharing personal information with third parties.
- Accessibility Compliance: the platform is designed to meet or exceed the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, ensuring that the website is accessible to users with disabilities.

The county is also investing in technological projects aimed at improving its service delivery and modernizing its operations. These projects are detailed on PWC Works and range from improved permitting such as SolarApp+, an automated system for residential solar permitting, enabling same-day permit issuance for approved contractors, thereby expediting the installation process; Digital Prince William which expands the access of high-speed internet, connects residents to affordable broadband services and devices, and offers technology training opportunities; and PWC 311, the county's centralized Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that streamlines non-emergency service requests,

allowing residents to access services via multiple channels, including phone, mobile app, chatbot, and online portals.

### **Omni-Channel Experience for a cohesive identity**

While Prince William County is part of a larger trend of digital civic modernization, it does so by ensuring a consistent and seamless omni-channel experience across all its services and projects by adhering to a well-defined Style Guide. This comprehensive guide establishes clear brand standards, encompassing design philosophy, official colors, font usage and the county's wordmark. By maintaining uniform branding elements, the county fosters a cohesive identity that enhances user experience across various platforms and applications.

A key component of this approach is ensuring accessibility to the Style Guide. By hosting it on a publicly available platform, Prince William County empowers community partners, stakeholders, and county personnel to align their communication and design efforts with established brand standards. This accessibility supports unified visual and messaging consistency across all interactions, reinforcing trust and familiarity in engagement with Prince William County.

Through this strategic commitment to brand integrity, the county effectively eliminates discrepancies across digital spaces. Residents and visitors alike can confidently recognize and interact with the county, knowing they are engaging with their local government in a visually cohesive and recognizable manner.

## **Next Level of Transformation – PWC 311**

While PWC Works only launched in the fall of 2024, several of its projects started years ago and have finally received the comprehensive overview and ability to be engaged with they deserve. As such the county's GovX principles are not only weaved into setting up PWC Works but are also at the core of several of its projects such as PWC 311 for example where the digital-first experience delivery by simplifying access, seamless integration, and security by design are the foundation of PWC 311. This centralized Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that streamlines non-emergency service requests, allows users to access services via multiple channels, including phone, mobile app, chatbot, and online portals. It further builds upon the comprehensive digital experience transformation the county started with GovX and PWC Works by promoting agency collaboration and process optimization.