



Save Time and Money with the Right Platform for Permitting, Licensing, and More

Meeting the challenge of what's to come in 2025 requires careful planning and making the right choices, and that's why it's vital to closely examine how your community handles its day-to-day processes like permitting, licensing, and inspections. Finding ways to improve how you do your work can be a valuable effort that will pay off in the long run.

Let's explore how easy-to-use and effective [software for local governments](#) can help meet these demands in the year ahead.

## A Vital Part of the Economy

The work that state, county, and local governments do isn't just important for builders, business owners, and residents — it adds up to a major piece of the overall economy. In the U.S., [state and local governments made up about 15 percent of the national GDP](#) and employed more than 20 million people, or about 13 percent of the total employment pool, in 2023.

The U.S. Department of Treasury says state and local governments spent \$4 trillion on public

goods and services in 2023, including public assistance, education, and other areas.

Community development efforts remain a top priority for many communities, especially during the ongoing housing shortage and a growing need for more residences. However, [an analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data by the Urban Institute](#) found that state and local governments only spent about 2 percent of their total direct general expenditures, or \$65 billion, on housing and community development in 2021.

In Canada, government at all levels — federal, provincial, and municipal — [accounted for an estimated 40.5 percent of the entire national economy](#) in 2022.

It's clear that the work of governmental agencies is critical to citizens and the overall well-being of the countries they serve. Spending this amount of money in the most effective and efficient manner possible can add up to major impacts in the lives of citizens.



## Slim Staff, Big Responsibilities

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic and the so-called Silver Tsunami of widespread retirements due to an aging workforce, state and local governments hadn't fully recovered from the effects of the Great Recession of the late 2000s.

The Center for Economic and Policy Research says [only five states were at or above their population-weighted public sector workforce](#) by 2019. Things only became more difficult as the pandemic led to a new wave of budget cuts, early retirements, and loss of staff to the private sector.

As the pandemic began and continued, governments were forced to consider tough

approaches to dealing with budget shortfalls — including furloughs and hiring or wage freezes. Because [personnel costs make up 70 percent or even more of total expenses](#) for many governments, any conversation about budget cuts will likely involve the workforce.

In areas where budget reductions aren't necessary, simply filling job vacancies can be difficult as public sector agencies and departments compete with the private sector. Across the U.S., employment in local government dropped by 300,000 workers from March 2020 to 2022, and there were 746,000 state and local government job openings by late 2023.

In Canada, a [historically low ratio of unemployment to job vacancies](#) — just 1.4 unemployed people per vacancy by 2022 — has also made hiring and filling job openings more competitive.

[Government staff shortages](#) remain a problem in many municipalities today, years after the pandemic — and the need to keep up with the workload despite having a slim staff is unlikely to be resolved anytime soon.

## It's Time to Be Innovative

Embracing the possibilities of advanced technology has become a necessity, not just a goal, for governments of all sizes across North America. However, many entities haven't kept up with changes because of a lack of funding, public scrutiny, or other roadblocks.

UC Berkeley's Labor Center says the [public sector uses technology for many broad activities](#), such as manual task automation, processing automation, automated decision-making, integrating data, and electronic monitoring.

Still, the reason why technology has become more vital than ever for governmental work comes down to how agencies and departments can serve their citizens. Whether it's trying to maximize efficiency and reduce costs, speeding up or streamlining slow or onerous processes, or improving transparency and accountability, adopting modern tools for today's world can help governments better fulfill their missions.

This is especially the case when considering options for comprehensive community development software. Reducing the need for administrative work in ongoing, day-to-day processes like permitting, licensing, or public works can greatly improve a government's overall efficiency. At the same time, residents can easily keep up with what's happening and changing in their communities.

Rather than dedicate limited staff time and resources on cumbersome administrative tasks like taking phone calls or notifying applicants of status changes, today's comprehensive software and programs can enable departments to focus on core duties and maximize how much work they can do.

For many municipalities, innovation is the only way to keep up with the pace of changes in the need for services and responsiveness while also dealing with slim workforces and tight budgets. It's also essential to change workflows to comply with regulatory changes, such as state-level efforts to require building permits or land management approval within a certain number of days.

Luckily, there are options available today that can get this work done — and, ultimately, save time and money in the process.



## The Role of Modern Community Development Software

Technology can be one big piece of the puzzle when it comes to responding to modern demands for services and transparency while maximizing how much work staff can realistically handle.

Still, state and local governments have a limited amount they can invest in technology. Planning ahead for a system upgrade can be a crucial part of determining what's possible and how to make a wise investment in software that will continue working for years to come.

The right community development software can level up just about every part of how a local government operates. Consider, for example, common ongoing tasks like planning or zoning approvals. Online software can require complete applications and automatically distribute downloadable packets to make meetings more efficient than ever.

[Online permitting software](#), meanwhile, can greatly speed up the turnaround time for building permits and reduce the need for staff to send out updates or answer phone calls, making it possible for builders to get started much sooner.

Enforcement management is easier to track and respond to with modern software that integrates with your community's GIS — especially if it enables mobile inspections to be completed right in the field, without the need to drive back to the office to re-enter notes or photos.

Streamlining day-to-day processes can make it possible to keep up with community development needs at home while relieving government staff from mundane tasks. Instead, your staff can focus on what's truly important: Addressing the needs of your community and its citizens.

Additionally, making the right investment in technology now can greatly reduce paperwork, administrative work, and limitations on how quickly a government can respond to requests from builders, business owners, and citizens. Making a change in community development platforms now can lead to great dividends of saved time and money over the years to come.

Still, not all software options are equal, and government officials need to do their homework before embracing a major change in how their communities work.

## Look for Easy-to-Use, Powerful Options for Your Community

ICMA, an association of city and county managers and local government staff, says [local officials need to find a balance between unchecked technological innovation and responding to the needs of citizens](#). Not everyone in the community will be tech-savvy, for example, and things like a lack of internet access or a computer at home can keep some residents out of important local conversations.

Any kind of major shift in how day-to-day processes are handled needs to be easy enough to use so that staff and citizens can quickly figure out what they need to do. A powerful new software platform that proves to be overly complicated or confusing won't do much good for the end user, and that will limit how much it can help governments respond to modern needs.



# How to Budget for Community Development Software in 2025

That's why the Cloudpermit team continues to look for ways to simplify how our community development software functions. With ongoing regular updates and frequent launches of new products, we know that the work to transform how local governments work and respond to their citizens' needs never ends. With each update, we ensure that our comprehensive product is simple to learn and powerful in its capabilities.

Ultimately, the right platform for your community should help departments and staff get more

done in less time while still being responsive to the needs of residents. Making an informed investment in community development software can save time and money by maximizing how efficient your government truly can be.

Learn more about Cloudpermit's platform for local governments by [booking a demo](#) with us today.



Cloudpermit is a community development platform. We offer simple and online products for permitting, licensing, planning, enforcement, and inspections.



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