

7 Steps to Sharing Services with Your LocalGov Neighbors

Shared services allow local governments to work together to achieve efficiency, especially when it comes to community development.



Staff from different communities can share ideas, reduce costs, help each other, and improve service delivery to citizens. So, what are the first steps that you need to take to share services?

1. Determine why you want to share services
2. Start conversations with surrounding communities to gauge their interest
3. Establish similar goals with other governments
4. Involve key decision-makers in your community
5. Consider the best way to share services
6. Decide on a process and key markers for success
7. Keep track of progress and find new ways to improve

Determine Why You Want to Share Services

There are a lot of benefits to sharing services with other local governments to improve community development:

- **Staff can learn from experts in another community to help with complicated projects.**

The [Town of Moosonee](#) shares services to help with their large development projects (new hospital and long-term care facility).

- **Governments can also lean on each other in the event of a natural disaster.**

The [Village of Lytton](#) (wildfire) and the [Township of Uxbridge](#) (tornado) used shared services to receive immediate assistance.

- **Give citizens and builders a standardized and stronger user experience by using the same software.**

The [Townships of Scugog, Brock, and Uxbridge](#) enjoy shared services to streamline their processes.

- **Foster a sense of community and teamwork.**

The [City of Terrace](#) can share services to lend a hand when needed.

- **Governments can save valuable time and money by using the resources and staff they have without needing to hire new team members to fill in the gaps.**

The benefits that come from shared services are endless. It's just a matter of determining what is important to you.

Start Conversations with Surrounding Communities to Gauge Interest

Once you've determined why you want shared services, the **next step is to find one or more communities in your area that also want to share services.**

Oftentimes, small neighboring communities have already worked together on a project, like the [Townships of Scugog, Brock, and Uxbridge](#). So, it can often be a natural step to work together on a larger scale as there is strength in numbers.

Establish Similar Goals with Other Governments

The next step in working with your neighbors is to discuss your goals for sharing services and **how you can help each other reach new levels of success.**

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It is up to staff to work together to find how different goals can be met to make a partnership work and benefit everyone.

In some cases, it can be quite simple. For example, if one town has multiple building inspectors and another town's building inspector is on vacation, there is a clear need to share services to complete inspections.



Involve Key Decision-Makers in Your Community

It can be valuable to get key decision-makers in your community on board. They may have connections that can be useful to your shared services goals or have ideas on the best way to work with your neighbors.

Consider the Best Way to Share Services

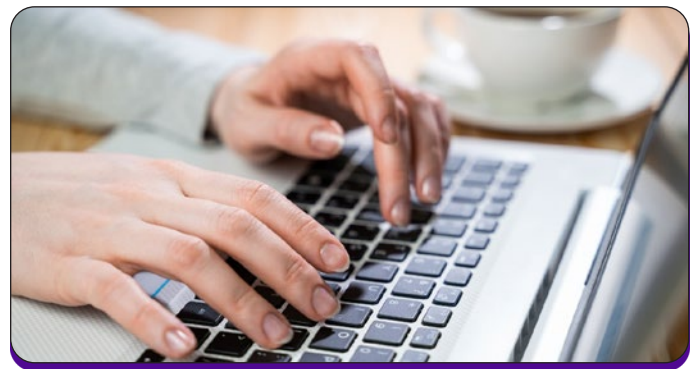
There are many ways that communities can share services, and some drive higher levels of efficiency than others.

Online community development software, like [Cloudpermit](#), can help local governments and development communities become more efficient:

- Software creates opportunities for departments to remotely share resources without needing to be in the same location.
- Using the same platform allows communities to combine their budgets to cut down on costs.

- When multiple communities in one area use the same software, it makes it easier for the development community to work between areas because they already know how to use the software.
- Seasonal residents benefit when online software is used as part of sharing services because they can apply for building permits from wherever it suits them best.

It's best to keep an open mind when deciding how you want to share services and be receptive to your neighbor's ideas. It can be helpful to talk with communities you know who share services to learn what works best for them.



Decide on a Process and Key Markers for Success

Once you've determined who you want to share services with and how you want to do that (whether that be software or paper-based systems), the next step is to determine a process and key markers for success.

It's beneficial to take the time to find what works best for the departments working together whether that be check-ins on daily, weekly, monthly, or on a case-by-case basis, or deciding how many days each week resources are shared. It looks a little different for everyone depending on what goals and needs have to be met.

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This is where key markers for success come into play. It's important to ask yourself and your team:

- What does success look like for us?
- What do we want to accomplish within the first six months of sharing services?
- How will our day-to-day tasks look different this year versus next year?

Reach Out to Cloudpermit

Want more information on how we help local governments efficiently share services? [Book a demo](#) with us to learn more.



Keep Track of Progress and Find New Ways to Improve

There are always ways to improve efficiency as a department, and it can be a learning experience to work as part of a larger team. It's important to keep track of your progress so you can work toward your key markers for success.

Cloudpermit provides community development software. We offer simple and online software solutions for building permitting, planning & zoning, and code enforcement.

