



Customer Profile

Municipality of Anchorage reaps big savings with Infor



Facts at a glance

Product: Infor Public Sector

Industry: Public Sector

Country: USA

"We realized 100% ROI in just over 12 months, and saved 12.4% on our project budget. Our customer service delivery increased 62%."

—Jack Frost, Chief, Code Enforcement, Municipality of Anchorage

About the organization

Clean and vibrant, the Municipality of Anchorage takes pride in its reputation for being a gateway to adventure and natural beauty all year-round. The municipality's spectacular setting attracts visitors the world over, and its permanent population hovers at about 280,000 residents. In summer, residents can catch a 40-pound king salmon in Ship Creek right in downtown Anchorage. In winter, they ski cross-country along well-groomed trails or downhill-ski in south Anchorage. To learn more about Anchorage, visit www.muni.org/.

Setting the strategy

To keep the municipality beautiful and running efficiently, the local government has stayed focused on streamlining its processes and finding better ways to serve its customers: citizens and the construction industry. When staff in the Development Services department evaluated its systems across various departments, they realized that duplicated effort, lack of consistency, and slow customer service were challenges they needed to address.

Jack Frost, Chief, Code Enforcement, explains: "We wanted to find a system with one common database to share across all the departments and link all of our processes. Otherwise, citizens didn't have a way to know which department to call for code enforcement, for instance. They'd call to make a complaint about a junk car, and they'd get routed to another department, and on to another. Our goal was to have the citizen call one number and get the problem resolved with the first contact, or receive appropriate information without being transferred. The person taking the call could enter a complaint code in the system, where any complaint links to a property with an assigned tax code ID. Each department could access that common database to get needed information. We were also striving to cut costs."

Getting business specific

The Municipality of Anchorage chose Infor™ Public Sector Code Enforcement, Building Permit, Customer Service, and Trade License to help it improve customer service, streamline processes, and cut costs. Says Frost, "The software needed to integrate with other applications, and allow the user to program and configure it. It needed to accommodate a mobile environment, and it had to provide the lowest total cost of ownership with fast ROI. Infor Public Sector precisely met our needs."

"We're saving two to four hours daily for each inspector in real time, which means an aggregate salary savings of almost \$758,000 a year."

**—Jack Frost,
Chief, Code Enforcement,
Municipality of Anchorage**

Seeing results

According to Frost, the municipality saw benefits quickly after implementation. "We realized 100% ROI in just over 12 months, and saved 12.4% on our project budget. Our customer service delivery increased 62%."

All municipality employees and code enforcement officers from eight departments now operate from standard business processes to resolve code violations, and they access one system from the field via a wireless network. Frost adds, "Now we can track each violation against a specific address and maintain a history across all agencies. We can efficiently log and resolve complaints that cross agency boundaries."

Previously, if I wanted to find out a property's status, I had to have five separate programs open at one time and bounce back and forth between them to get information—tedious and time-consuming.

"Before Infor, to enter a complaint would probably take hours, even half a day to research and get it done. Now, it's instantaneous. We take the call and enter the complaint into the system, and the program automatically fills the fields. With our old system, two days would've passed by the time a person could investigate a complaint, and now we can finish it the same day."

How are citizens responding? Frost answers, "Our customers are very happy now that they can log onto our website and enter any complaint or inquiry, check the status of an existing complaint, and get automatic email responses if they choose. We won the Alaska Community Award of Excellence for Public Works because of our service delivery; we're proud of that."

The cost savings for the municipality began adding up. "We're saving two to four hours daily for each inspector in real time, which means an aggregate salary savings (excluding benefits and overhead) of almost \$758,000 a year," says Frost. "And that just includes 25 code enforcement inspectors. We have 65 employees."

Infor Public Sector Code Enforcement brought the first round of savings, and the municipality expects more from the other Infor applications. "With Infor Public Sector Building Permit, we'll handle our structural plumbing, mechanical, and electrical inspections. In our mobile environment, all code enforcement inspectors use laptops in the field, and they're able to provide data to the back office in real time. It eliminates rewriting and reduces errors."

Frost predicts that citizens will be even more pleased with the building permit process because they'll see their inspection results in real time. "They no longer need to run back and forth to the permit office asking for their copy of the inspection and the certificate of occupancy," says Frost. "It's all done electronically, so it reduces the carbon footprint, eliminating all that road time."

The municipality saw some unexpected benefits after system implementation. "With the process efficiency improvements we've gained, we need about 6% fewer positions," says Frost. "One of our initiatives was developing a strategic department plan, and part of that involved diagramming our workflow processes. We diagrammed our critical success factors throughout the department down to the division level and even further later. Doing that added to the time and cost savings."

Now the municipality can also be proactive instead of reactive, according to Frost. "In code enforcement, instead of waiting for a violation and pointing out what people have done wrong, we're able to work with the communities, attend council meetings and group forums to discuss issues, helping them solve problems before they become complaints—and that's huge. It takes the adversarial relationship and turns it into a cooperative one. People still don't like you knocking on their door, but if you're a regular visitor to their community council and they know you, the difference is tremendous. When we first used the system, we reduced the number of active violation cases from 1,146 to 424—a reduction of 63%. And now we're staying around 270."

Frost also notes qualitative benefits from the Infor applications. "Rather than having five programs open on my desktop plus manually researching a property's history, now we can tie them all into our system to get one clear view of what's happening—much easier with less stress."

And the municipality expects further efficiency improvements from the other Infor applications. "We link our building permit process with our code enforcement cases. So if there's an active enforcement case on a property, they can't move forward in permitting until they resolve the code enforcement issue—and vice versa."

The Infor solution also supports the municipality's IT and business strategies. "We eliminated eight disparate systems in code enforcement, plus we're working on consolidating information from homegrown access databases. The Infor system has been an immense help to us in finding ways to streamline and save."

Infor Public Sector has helped the Municipality of Anchorage to:

- Achieve 100% ROI in just over 12 months.
- Save 12.4% on project budget.
- Increase customer service delivery 62%.
- Save inspection time, resulting in annual savings of \$758,000.
- Reduce active violation cases from 1,146 to 270.
- Be proactive and create a more cooperative relationship with citizens.

Doing business better

Frost sums up the Municipality of Anchorage's experience: "Infor is a strong and agile company that's large enough to provide any business product to meet industry needs, but flexible enough to react to the individual customer's needs. As in any business, the employees make or break the relationship that develops. The Infor team has done an outstanding job of partnering with us—they listen and they understand."



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About Infor

Infor is the world's third-largest supplier of enterprise applications and services, helping more than 70,000 large and mid-size companies improve operations and drive growth across numerous industry sectors. To learn more about Infor, please visit www.infor.com.

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