



CITIES IN THE CLOUD

Cloud Computing Readiness Checklist

As technology solutions evolve and expand, local government leaders are left to determine what is best for their communities. Cities, towns and villages across the U.S. are moving from on-premise technology deployments to cloud computing solutions. These solutions can streamline operations and provide better customer service, but they may come with perceived tradeoffs in accessing data and controlling equipment.

The decision to move to the cloud is not a quick and easy one. It takes time and extensive planning to ensure it goes smoothly, especially the first time a city invests in cloud-enabled solutions.

This cloud computing readiness checklist details what cities must have in place before beginning a transition to cloud-based solutions.



Necessary Elements for Transitioning to Cloud Computing



Buy-in at all levels

From executive leaders all the way down to frontline staff members, there must be support for a transition to the cloud at every level. The planning and actual transition to the cloud can take months or years depending on the scope of the project. Having backing from all levels of the organization will be necessary to ensure the project keeps moving forward.



Clear “why” for cloud transition

Investing in and transitioning to the cloud for the sake of adopting the new technology is not reason enough to build buy-in and ensure sustained effort on the project. There must be a clear goal for the cloud transition. City leaders must illuminate the possibilities of the cloud by detailing how it can make current workflows better for city staff members and the public. City leaders must engage city staff to learn how the current system is not meeting needs. They should also talk with end users of these cloud-enabled solutions to hear how they would like these solutions to work.



Deep understanding of current information technology system

To move to the cloud most efficiently, cities must have a deep understanding of their current hardware and software. City information technology professionals need to know what is being used, how it is being used and how well it is working to begin to define how cloud solutions could benefit the organization. This will ensure that the right solutions are transitioned to the cloud on the appropriate timeline.



Explicit plan for moving to the cloud

Cities can lift and shift (move a copy of an existing application or data to the cloud with no redesign or modification) on-premise solutions to the cloud. However, the real benefits in cloud computing come from optimizing and rearchitecting the solutions to operate more efficiently and less expensively in the cloud environment. Cities must have a clear vision of how to move to the cloud to ensure these benefits and meet organizational expectations.

To learn more, check out the full report, *Cities in the Cloud: What City Leaders Need to Know About Cloud Computing* at nlc.org/resource/cities-in-the-cloud-what-city-leaders-need-to-know-about-cloud-computing

10 Steps to Ensure Cloud Adoption Readiness



Secure executive buy-in



Identify information technology project management lead and support team



Understand what is possible with cloud-based solutions



Engage city staff in defining the possibilities in moving to the cloud through user story development



Thoughtfully choose cloud or technology provider to partner with for this work



Develop problem statement or business case for cloud computing



Map current information technology infrastructure and inventory current software



Complete security and risk assessment



Provide training to ensure information technology staff skills



Define scope of transition