

[← Back to All Articles](#)

How Small Cities Can Fix Staffing Shortages With Better Permitting Software



Joe del Rosario, Business Development Manager [February 20, 2025](#)



Cities across the U.S. are **growing fast**, which means more people are applying for building permits and seeking city service **staff** to keep up. Long wait times for permits and inspections are increasing.

Need help?

The team typically replies in under 2m



homeowners, builders, and city workers alike.

At the same time, **hiring more staff isn't always possible** because of tight budgets. So, how can small cities keep up? Many have found that **modern permitting software helps staff work faster and get more done.**

Why Staffing Shortages Are a Big Problem

From 2020 to 2022, local governments **lost over 627,000 workers**. Many of these jobs have not been refilled because:

Tight budgets make hiring difficult.

 **Workers are leaving** for better pay at private companies.

  **City staff are overloaded** and burnt out.

Meanwhile, **permit applications keep increasing**, and there aren't enough people to process them in a timely manner. **Fewer staff + more permit applications = bigger backlogs and more frustrated residents.**

How Software Helps Small Cities Work Smarter

For many cities, hiring more staff **just isn't an option**. Software can help staff get more done in less time. Here's how:

1. Online Portals: Less Paperwork, Less Confusion

With an online system:

 The public can **submit applications online** instead of filling out paper forms,

reducing in-office visits.

✅ Staff **receive complete applications** to avoid wasting time asking for missing information or documents.

✅ Applicants can **track their permit's status online** instead of calling city offices.

📌 **Bottom Line:** Less time spent on paperwork and phone calls = more time for important work.

2. Electronic Plan Reviews = Quicker Approvals

Without software, different city departments **mark up plans separately**, which leads to:

❌ **Messy paperwork and email threads.**

❌ **Lost corrections.**

❌ **Slow approvals.**

With **electronic plan review**, all corrections are made **in the same document** and **automatically organized**. This means:

✅ **Automatically generated corrections reports ensure no lost comments.**

✅ **Departments review plans faster.**

✅ **Developers get their permits sooner.**

📌 **Bottom Line:** Faster approvals keep projects moving and applicants happy.

3. Mobile Inspections = Less Office Time

Many building inspectors **waste hours driving back to the office** to log their notes.

With mobile inspections, they can:

- ✅ **Complete inspections faster** with automatic checklists.
- ✅ **Upload notes and photos instantly** from the field.
- ✅ **Spend more time on inspections and less time on office work.**
- 📌 **Bottom Line:** More inspections completed per day = faster CO issuance.

4. Better Customer Service for the Public

When applicants **don't know what's happening with their permits**, they flood city offices with phone calls and visits. This **slows down city workers** and **causes frustration for everyone**.

With modern permitting software, the public can:

- ✅ **Track applications online** — no need to call or visit the office.
- ✅ **Receive automatic updates** when permit applications progress.
- ✅ **Upload documents online** instead of bringing them in person.
- 📌 **Bottom Line:** An easier process for residents **means fewer phone calls and office visits** for city staff.

Why Small Cities Need to Upgrade Now

📊 **Permit applications are increasing, but staff counts aren't.**

⚠️ **Tight budgets make hiring tough.**


⌚ **Paper-based processes and outdated software waste staff time.**


Upgrading to modern permitting software helps cities handle more work with


fewer resources, speeding up approvals and keeping residents happy.


GovWell Helps Small Cities Work Faster & Smarter

GovWell is an **easy-to-use permitting & licensing software** made for cities smaller than 75k residents. It helps:

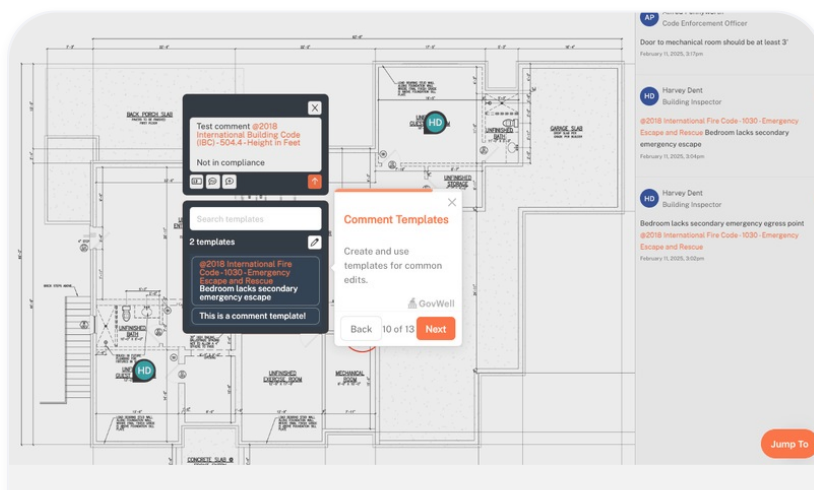
 **Building and development departments** process permits, projects, and cases faster with intuitive forms, workflows, and **electronic plan review**.

 **Government staff communicate** with the public throughout applications and projects by automatically notifying applicants when things progress or action is required.

 **Residents and businesses** track applications in real time, reducing phone calls and office visits.

 **Staff in the field** save time with mobile functionality so work gets done directly in the field.

[◀ Back to All Articles](#)



Book a Demo

Schedule a call with an expert to discuss how GovWell can help your jurisdiction.