



A GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY THOUGHT LEADERSHIP PAPER

DIGITAL
COMMUNITIES

Achieve Governance and Speed Without Compromise



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Most public sector agencies are short on alignment, not systems. Tasks move across platforms that weren't built to work together, leaving gaps in visibility, accountability and governance that only become obvious when something goes wrong.

"Sixty to seventy percent of structured work may live inside ERPs and CRMs, but the rest is happening in tools that nobody is tracking like email threads and spreadsheets," says Graham Stroman, vice president of public sector for Smartsheet.

The assumption has long been that operational speed and strong governance compete. Intelligent work management (IWM) platforms are changing that dynamic, enabling agencies to simultaneously drive efficiency and maintain oversight controls.

An IWM platform acts as a connective layer across people, processes and systems. Rather than replacing existing applications, it brings work from multiple sources into a single environment where tasks, approvals, timelines and reporting can be managed consistently.

This gives leaders real-time visibility into how work is progressing, helps teams stay aligned on priorities, and creates an auditable record of decisions and actions without adding administrative burden.

The Cost of Fragmented Systems

When agencies rely on outdated or inaccurate information, they can't make the best decisions. Without a single source of truth, it's hard for agencies to monitor project status, create budgets and allocate resources.

Cross-agency initiatives exacerbate inefficiencies. Infrastructure projects, social programs and emergency response efforts span multiple departments and contractors. A lack of standardized workflows leads to delays, duplication and gaps in service delivery.

An IDC study found project managers can spend up to 20% of their time manually collecting and reconciling data when systems aren't integrated.¹

When teams can't get what they need from approved systems, they create workarounds that fragment

processes, reduce visibility and make it harder for leadership to maintain consistent governance across the organization.

The same problem plays out in budgeting. Without real-time visibility into funding, shifting priorities becomes difficult because leaders are making decisions based on outdated information.

An intelligent work management platform provides a holistic view that moves projects forward.

"The challenges of the public sector have remained the same for decades: outdated technology, siloed systems and evolving security threats," Stroman says. "Modern platforms not only address those challenges but give the public sector a solution to evolve how they approach work and deliver outcomes."

Why CIOs Win With IWM

Many technologies used by agencies address simple problems. Traditional project management platforms focus on task lists, while collaboration tools focus on communication. They were not built to manage modern government workloads where operational demands and compliance requirements are inseparable.

IWM was designed for that complexity, giving CIOs the operational control and accountability they need to govern effectively.

In practice, that means connecting legacy systems — ERPs, case management tools and departmental databases — into a unified view.

"From a CIO perspective, you want end-to-end orchestration," says Ravi Soin, CIO and CISO at Smartsheet. "You want to connect workflows from capital planning to procurement to execution to project closeout and build intelligence into the system. AI-powered insights and predictive analytics turn your data into foresight."

That integration lets agencies accelerate project delivery while ensuring every dollar is tracked and accountable, a combination that legacy tools were never designed to provide.



The platform also meets security and compliance requirements. Role-based access controls, encryption in transit, comprehensive audit logs and framework-based compliance are built into the architecture rather than bolted on afterward.

Adding AI Without Risk

IWM platforms use AI to predict outcomes, recognize patterns and give agencies the information to act before problems escalate.

Organizations should begin with automation. Approval routing, status updates and data validation are natural entry points. Measurable outcomes help create the trust needed to support future initiatives.

“Start with use cases that are well defined and have low risk,” Soin says. “Pick high-volume, repeatable processes with straightforward decision logic like permit processing and grant reporting. These are low-risk but high-value workflows.”

Introducing intelligence into established workflows comes next. AI identifies patterns in project health, resource allocation and scheduling that would take human reviewers too much time. Humans retain control of decisions while AI expands what is visible and when.

Agencies can then deploy proactive risk detection. Pattern recognition flags budget variances, schedule slippage and compliance gaps before they become crises, giving decision-makers earlier and more accurate signals to act on.

Agencies need clear policies on what AI can access, audit trails for every recommendation and the ability to explain how the system reaches its conclusions. Such transparency is essential for every government agency.

Real Results in Minneapolis

In Minneapolis, using an IWM platform has reduced the amount of time the city’s permit administrative team needs to review and approve applications.

“The document generator takes all of the information input by an applicant and forms it into an actual PDF application that the permit processors can use to verify all the fields without looking at a spreadsheet,” says Scott Gehrig, a senior business analyst for the city.²

Minneapolis automated its permit workflows using an IWM platform and achieved:³

50% reduction in application review time

1,200 permits processed annually through automated workflows

\$150M in active contracts managed through a single platform

Making a Difference

Better visibility, tighter workflows and smarter automation only matter if they produce outcomes that staff and the public notice.

When workflows are standardized, projects move faster and bottlenecks surface before they become delays. Teams spend less time fighting fires and more time on meaningful work.

As operations become streamlined, compliance reporting that once required manual effort happens automatically, freeing staff to focus on delivery.

“The future of government effectiveness isn’t choosing between governance and speed, or between innovation and compliance,” Soin says. “It’s about leveraging intelligent systems that give you both. That capability is available today, and agencies that embrace it will turn the constraints of modern government into a competitive advantage.”

1. consulting.us/news/13210/firms-without-psa-platform-can-lose-up-to-10-of-potential-revenue-idc-study
2. govtech.com/artificial-intelligence/ai-automation-helped-these-cities-transform-operations
3. smartsheet.com/customers/city-of-minneapolis

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