



St. Paul's Journey to Modern ERP Fuels City's Ambitions

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St. Paul, Minnesota, has bold aspirations for improving residents' lives. Mayor Melvin Carter III's equity agenda includes expanding educational opportunities, addressing climate change and reducing crime.

"All of this great work requires reliable technologies to support our finance and human resources functions," says Jaime Wascalus, St. Paul's IT director and chief information officer.¹

CloudSuite Public Sector, Infor's industry-specific enterprise resource planning (ERP) platform, created a firm foundation for realizing the vision of Minnesota's capital city. Throughout the transformation, Infor's shared commitment to the city's goals nurtured a strong business partnership. Today, the city's ERP system boosts efficiency, enables smarter decision-making and lays the groundwork for advanced artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities.

St. Paul's experience reveals the value of collaboration and relationship-building throughout a technology transformation.

Combating Legacy Solutions and IT Stacks

St. Paul and its next-door neighbor, Minneapolis, form the hub of Minnesota's Twin Cities, a metro area of over 3.7 million people. St. Paul is a thriving commercial center — home to Fortune 500 company headquarters, large regional enterprises and many small businesses and firms.

"A lot of really great things are happening here," Wascalus says of Mayor Carter's portfolio of civic improvements.

About 15 years ago, the city updated its aging mainframe system and unified operations on a common platform. Since then, St. Paul has been modernizing, starting with an on-premises ERP platform for financial planning, expense oversight and advanced analytics.

"We were a decentralized IT organization working toward centralization, and this was the big project that helped drive that forward," says Tim Schmidt, St. Paul's enterprise applications manager. Schmidt was an early champion of the ERP transition.² The first phase of the project went live in 2014.

Three years later, the city had to decide whether to keep its ERP on premises or shift it to the cloud. Schmidt's team selected Infor's cloud ERP, hosted on Amazon Web Services (AWS). The next phase was migrating to the cloud, which can be a daunting process.

"We took that leap because we had a strong relationship with Infor," Schmidt says.

Wascalus agrees: "In the public sector, relationships are so important when we have so much we want to accomplish. And we've been able to establish this partnership that works well for all of us."

Infor helped steer the city around problems other public sector agencies endured. Infor's teams also brought deep industry knowledge of the software's architecture, security and governance features. These skills proved critical over the life of the implementation.

Making Progress with ERP

Infor and St. Paul collaborated on a long-term roadmap for the ERP transition, assessing pain points and identifying key objectives. The company took time to align its recommendations with the city's mission and technology capabilities.

City technology leaders built strong support for modernization by discussing priorities with executives and elected officials, emphasizing how these efforts would strengthen city services. They also secured commitment for an innovation fund to invest in the ERP roadmap.

Infor's experts recommended planning for staff flexibility to ensure that critical expertise could be available during the transition. This guidance helped the city identify ways to balance day-to-day operations with the additional workload of ERP implementation while continuing to address broader workforce needs.

St. Paul initially implemented a single-tenant version of Infor's unified public sector platform — hosted on AWS

— to support its finance, procurement and operational needs. In 2023, the city migrated to Infor's AWS-hosted multitenant cloud environment, joining other clients in leveraging shared cloud resources for increased scalability and operational efficiency.

Multitenant cloud environments tend to be simpler for a public agency to operate. A common analogy is renting office space rather than buying and outfitting an office building. Cloud experts at Infor provision the servers, keep the environment secure and update the software regularly, taking these duties off St. Paul's to-do list.

Updates can be taken care of automatically in a multitenant environment. Infor's support teams make sure St. Paul's staff understands what each update includes so they can avoid surprises. The toolset provides a toggle, allowing system admins to turn an update on or off for testing and training before deploying to production.

The project included an Infor customer-support service subscription that provides development resources to tackle technical challenges and free up time for Schmidt's team. St. Paul also relies on Infor U, the company's training and enablement platform.

"I haven't seen another vendor provide training videos for major changes to business processes," Schmidt says.

This kind of training inspired the city staff to appoint champions who encouraged co-workers to adopt the new software. Infor also showed the city how to create feedback loops that make it easy for users to report issues.

Focused on the Future

The new ERP system reduces St. Paul's data center footprint, removes legacy hardware and ensures applications have modern disaster recovery capabilities. A unified interface delivers the same look and experience across the software suite. A single browser window can run finance, human resources and supply management, allowing permissioned users to switch seamlessly between functions.

The new platform can be paired with a mobile app that delivers ERP to employees' personal devices, which wasn't possible in the past.

"The ease of configuration, personalization and automation on a single platform gives us the ability to listen to our end users' pain points and provide solutions in real time," Schmidt says.

Key improvements include:

- Accelerated form creation.** If a user needs a new form created, Infor's CloudSuite lets Schmidt's team create one while on the phone with a user. People get what they want in minutes rather than days or weeks.
- Mobility.** ERP functions and critical data are securely accessible from anywhere, delivering new levels of flexibility and insight.
- Automation.** Infor's toolset includes automated workflows built for public sector that free IT staff to focus on strategic priorities.
- AI functions.** The Infor Industry Cloud Platform includes valuable AI and machine learning tools. St. Paul plans to use these solutions for tasks like automating procurement templates.
- Cybersecurity.** In collaboration with AWS, Infor's multitenant architecture beefs up security without extra hardware investments.

AI tools can also drive data-supported decision-making and efficiencies. Infor's Velocity Suite includes several solutions that make process innovation easier. These tools help organizations identify patterns, analyze information, use automation and remove time-consuming manual workflows.

Future improvements to St. Paul's implementation will enable online transactions and a streamlined onboarding process for new employees.

St. Paul's journey from a fragmented, aging IT infrastructure to Infor's modern, cloud-based ERP platform hosted by AWS demonstrates how thoughtful modernization can drive government innovation.

By embracing a phased approach to cloud adoption and prioritizing user-centric solutions, the city has improved efficiency, reduced technical overhead and created a scalable foundation for future technologies and applications. St. Paul's success serves as a compelling model for other municipalities seeking to enhance service delivery through digital transformation.

1. webinars.govtech.com/From-Maintenance-to-Momentum%3A-How-the-City-of-St%252E-Paul-Modernized-Operations-143647
2. Ibid.

This piece was written and produced by the Governing Content Studio, with information and input from AWS and Infor.



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