

Build a More Effective Building Department



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No matter the size of your building department or the community you serve, the demands for transparency, efficiency, and expertise are greater than ever. Outdated systems and staffing limitations can put projects behind schedule and over budget, leaving your team to do more and more with less and less.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

Building Department Services from SAFEbuilt support municipalities with (and without) building departments of all sizes across the country with a wide range of flexible, customer-focused solutions — scaled to the precise needs of each.

Whether we're providing hourly staff or a full-service embedded department, SAFEbuilt helps you understand and implement the right Building Department Services to make your department more effective, efficient, and impactful than ever before.

What services should I prioritize?

Keeping project budgets and payroll on track. Finding the common ground between community desires and municipal needs. Choosing between strengthening your bench and attracting new talent.

What do you choose? How do you choose?

And what has to get backburnered or sacrificed?

Achieving maximum impact without maxing out your resources is a constant balancing act — one that you shouldn't have to face without expert support.

At SAFEbuilt we provide you the Building Department Services to make the tough decisions easier.

We can help you balance meeting pressing demands and achieving your long-term goals.

SAFEbuilt meets you where you are to consistently deliver you custom-designed hourly, ongoing, or full-service management of your community development department to:

- Meet today's [infrastructure and public works](#) demands while building a resilient and sustainable foundation for the future.
- [Break through backlogs](#) to expedite the construction/development process.
- Improve safety through rigorous permitting, inspection, and [code enforcement](#).
- [Prepare for and recover from disasters](#).
- And more.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR BUILDING DEPARTMENT SERVICES



The role of technology in a building department

It's no secret that researching, implementing, and upgrading your building department technology and tech tools takes work. It costs money upfront. Staff need time and support to learn new systems. As with any investment, there are risks, added public scrutiny, and, oftentimes, internal resistance to adoption.

When tech falls short, it can create even more costs and challenges than it is designed to solve — particularly when your community expects transparency and efficiency at every touchpoint. When it pays off, however, your building department can work smarter, saving time, money, effort, and energy to keep your municipality operating smoothly.

SAFEbuilt equips you with the technology solutions, onboarding, and training your department needs for long-term success — nothing more, nothing less. With the right technology in place, you don't just feel it on the bottom line — you feel it [across your entire team](#), community, and beyond.

Same-day permitting

Connect to the cloud, track plan reviews and inspections in real-time, and make bottlenecks a thing of the past with same-day permitting. Reduce the amount of communication between your department and residents and reduce paperwork errors at the same time. Our [permitting software](#) makes it easy for users to submit permit applications and helps keep building departments organized and on track. [See how.](#)



Electronic plan review

[Electronic plan reviews](#) are a simple and efficient way to alleviate workloads and keep up with demand. We can help you improve timelines, get permits approved faster, and improve financial tracking and reporting of fees. [See how.](#)

CHECK OUT OUR FREE ELECTRONIC PERMITTING WEBINAR

Remote video inspections (RVI)

[Remote video inspections \(RVI\)](#) from SAFEbuilt make occupied residential building inspections easier, more efficient, and less labor-intensive without the wait times, disruption, or cost of traditional on-site inspections. Whether you're understaffed or overburdened, RVI takes the smaller tasks off of your experienced inspectors' to-do lists so they can focus on what's most important. [See how.](#)

GIS & mapping

As the surveying profession has advanced in both technology and education, SAFEbuilt has invested in some of the most state-of-the-art surveying equipment available. Our Trimble X7 takes a virtual snapshot of a site with a level of detail that previously would have taken significantly more field and office resources. By collecting millions of data points in a 360° horizontal and 270° vertical field of view, field crews can survey a site once and have a permanent record of all the visible items on file. [See how.](#)

Real-time data

Communities today are challenged by increasing pressure to provide better services to residents and businesses while managing tight budgets and staffing constraints. SAFEbuilt's [proprietary electronic permitting software](#) enables municipalities to harness the power of technology to streamline operations, improve efficiency, and ultimately enhance resident satisfaction.

This platform encompasses a full suite of integrated modules for functions including permitting, plan review, inspection tracking, and more. With automated workflows, centralized data management, mobile capabilities for field staff, and intuitive citizen portals, the electronic permitting software breaks down silos and facilitates seamless collaboration across departments.

At its core, the electronic permitting software is designed to provide transparency, accountability, and responsiveness that modern residents expect. Residents can easily apply for permits, submit plans electronically, schedule inspections, and check the status of requests through online portals.

On the back end, the electronic permitting software gives staff the tools to efficiently manage high volumes of applications, identify bottlenecks through robust reporting, and monitor key performance

metrics. Municipalities can assess processes, streamline operations, and ultimately improve turnaround times and service delivery for residents. With built-in GIS integrations, sophisticated security controls, and the Microsoft technology stack, the electronic permitting software offers a reliable, future-proof solution for taking municipal operations to the next level of modernization.

Our team of IT experts helps you make sense of the most complex information information captured so you can make informed, real-time decisions.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR IT, DATA, AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES



Working with the public and stakeholders

An efficient, service-oriented building department is critical for maintaining positive relationships with elected officials, private providers, and key stakeholders in the community. By investing in Building Department Service solutions that streamline and prioritize the customer experience, you can dramatically improve the quality of services provided and levels of satisfaction across the board.

Elected officials and other agencies

When done right, prioritizing customer service is just as beneficial for your team as the other government agencies you impact across your municipality. Online portals build trust and open two-way communication to provide opportunities for transparency and engagement to ensure questions are answered quickly and everyone is on the same page.

From launching ambitious strategic initiatives to uncovering [new revenue opportunities](#), our solutions help your department add value and build stronger relationships across your local government.

Construction firms, developers & other private providers

Bridge the gap between the public and private sectors. We have extensive experience working with construction firms, architects, developers, and other service providers in the private sector who fully understand your community's regulations, and are committed to helping you meet them in a safe, timely, and cost-effective manner.

When your team works in lockstep with private providers, your team enjoys [faster turnaround on inspections](#) and plan reviews that accelerate projects once complete.



Community members

By prioritizing customer service, transparency, and collaboration, we help building departments like yours reach beyond their job requirements. We partner with you to better incorporate the time, needs, priorities, and feedback of your community into your strategies and services so you can better partner with them and deliver top-tier customer service.

SEE HOW SAFE BUILT TRANSFORMS THE STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCE



Supporting sustainability initiatives

Sustainability is no longer a buzzword. It's a strategy that's saving building departments money, increasing efficiencies, and making the communities they serve happier and healthier. And with more grants and funding incentives for sustainability efforts available than ever before, making the right decisions for your municipality is often complex.

We are well-versed in helping building departments navigate the challenges brought on by climate change, urbanization, and the limited availability of public space. Our team works with your building department to deliver the right long-term sustainability solutions that your community will benefit from for generations to come.

Green spaces & landscape architecture

Having ample green spaces like parks, nature preserves, community gardens, and tree-lined neighborhoods provides respite, recreation, and environmental benefits for your community. Investing in these types of

spaces has been shown to lower rates of mental distress and illness, obesity, asthma, and cardiovascular disease. It also helps attract new residents and businesses seeking a high quality of life.

From licensed architects to park development managers, we bring you a flexible and creative approach to maximizing your green space impact. [See how.](#)

Green ratings and certifications

By earning certifications like LEED and EnergyStar(R), you demonstrate a commitment to sustainability across areas like energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction, and indoor environmental quality. Our permitting and inspection experts can help your building department:

- Meet the most rigorous sustainability standards
- Improve efficiencies
- Reduce operational costs
- Improve the quality of life
- Uphold your sustainability & community values



Renewable energy

Transitioning municipal energy production and procurement to sources like solar saves money, increases resilience, meets community sustainability goals, positions your department for grant funding, and more.

SAFEbuilt has been working with building departments for decades to provide fast-track permit applications, reduced permit fees, and plan reviews tailored to the latest evolutions in renewable energy methods. [See how.](#)

Technology integration

Emerging technologies like EV charging stations, smart LED lighting systems, and building automation systems help future-proof your community while providing efficiencies and cost savings. [Our team helps yours stay on top of innovations](#) in solar, battery storage, microgrids, and vehicle electrification to ensure your community is not only thriving but attractive to residents and businesses.

Conservation efforts

Protecting and enhancing crucial ecosystems through efforts like [stormwater management](#), shoreline restoration, prairie conservation, and sensitive species management maintains biodiversity, prevents erosion, improves resilience, connects people with nature, and preserves natural assets for generations.

Partnering for unique expertise

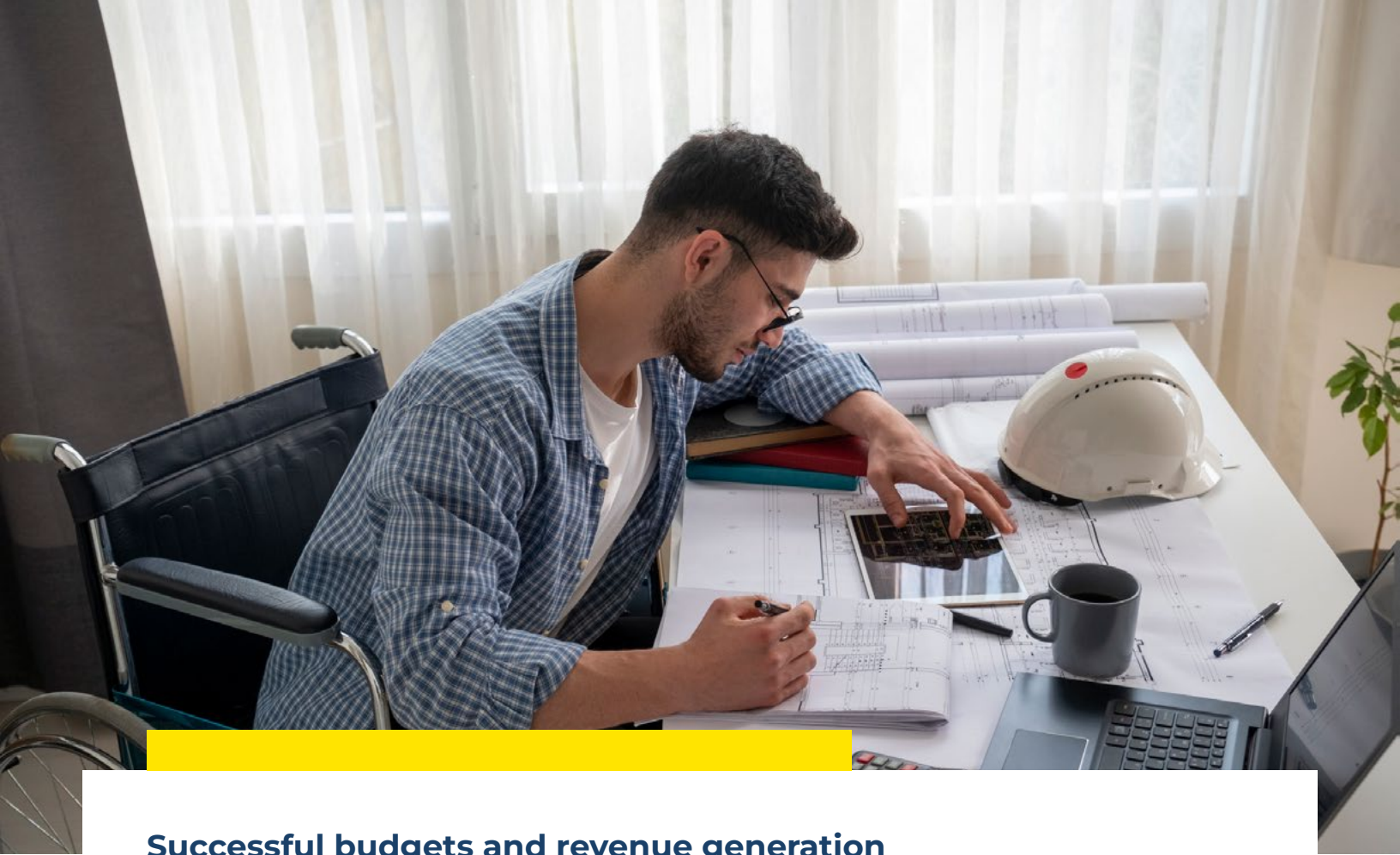
Leveraging specialized expertise from private, public, and non-profit partners in emerging areas like EV infrastructure expansion, microgrid development, high-efficiency fleet transition, and net zero building codes helps future-proof communities while accessing skill sets that may not exist locally.

Tracking success

Key performance indicators like permit volume, inspection cycle times, plan review turnarounds, and customer satisfaction scores allow data-driven tracking of operational gains tied to goals around supporting growth, efficiency, and quality of life improvements for residents and businesses.



IMPROVE COASTAL STORMWATER DRAINAGE WITH SAFEbuilt



Successful budgets and revenue generation

- How does your building department handle revenue generation, such as permit fees? How is that revenue reinvested into department operations?
- How can your building department contribute to revenue generation or cost savings for your greater municipality?
- What are the financial risks and contingencies associated with your building department's operations, such as potential liabilities or unforeseen costs?
- What's the cost of NOT having an optimized building department?

At the end of the day, there's no overstating the importance of your building department's bottom line. As a municipal leader, you understand that every decision has a cost and that better, more informed decisions mean lower costs, higher efficiencies, and greater benefits all around. We understand this too. That's why our Building Department Services are designed to balance departmental strategy and fiscal solvency while supporting your budget at every point in the process.

Strategic financial management

An optimized building department serves as a strategic asset for overall financial management in a community. By implementing fiscally responsible practices, we help building departments effectively generate revenue through permitting fees, contribute to cost savings across the community, and align objectives with broader budgetary goals.

Driving revenue

We help you see — and seize — opportunities to impact revenue for communities more clearly. By drawing on our extensive experience with permitting, fee structures, and staffing best practices, we help you maximize income from critical funding sources (like permit fees). By establishing dependable processes for reliable revenue, your department can better support your operations and talent. This, in turn, leads to development projects that drive sustainable long-term tax income.



Creating cost savings

We help you not only save costs through improved processes, increased efficiencies, user-friendly technology, and expert support services, but we also help you uncover cost savings opportunities that you might as-of-yet be unaware of.

- Flexible support at the point of need
- Hourly, ongoing, or full-service management
- Innovative pricing approaches
- Seamless technology implementation
- Resource allocation & support
- Improved customer service training & delivery

Planning for contingency

While driving revenue, your building department must assess risks, plan for contingencies, and inform leadership of budgetary priorities relating to building safety. By drawing from decades of experience in municipalities of all sizes across the country, our experts help you connect your department's objectives to municipal budgets in thoughtful, strategic, and flexible ways.



Utilizing grants and federal funding

If you're looking to stabilize your budget, maximize efficiencies, and increase your customer service capabilities, grants are an excellent option to make it happen.

From identifying opportunities and crafting competitive applications to diligent project delivery and proactive follow-up, our Building Department Services team and [Grant Writing group](#) will work together to help your team do its part to understand, secure, and keep funding for critical municipal projects and programs.

Building permits

Compliance is key. Grant-funded projects require proper [building permits](#) to ensure the work meets all local building codes.

Zoning approvals

For major construction or redevelopment projects using grant funding, [zoning and land use approvals](#) ensure the proposed uses align with what is permitted.



Grant application support

For grants related to public building and infrastructure projects, your team may be required to provide budget estimates, project details, permitting information, etc. to support a grant application.

Grant reporting, compliance & inspections

Some grants require tracking project milestones like permitting, inspections, and certificates of occupancy. That means providing documentation in a thorough and timely fashion to prove compliance with the grantor's requirements.

Advising on requirement

Our [building officials](#) can help advise grant applicants and recipients on building codes, permit requirements, development regulations, and other standards that must be followed when grants are funding construction work.

Is outsourcing a viable option for my department?

Third-party Building Department Services exist to help streamline development projects, improve safety and reliability, and ultimately help save your building department money. [Outsourcing these services helps municipalities](#) meet fluctuating demands without compromising quality, improves workflow efficiency, and most importantly, keeps costs low.

Outsourcing is one of many valuable tools every building department should have on hand. And, like any useful tool, you'll get the best results when you truly understand how it works and all it can do for you. It's important to know, however, what to look for when considering whether outsourcing is right for you (spoiler alert: with SAFEbuilt, it is).

Addressing common misconceptions

When bringing in an outside expert to support a government function like community development, there can be hesitations around cost, local knowledge, and effectiveness. However, the right partner addresses these concerns through hiring local talent, expanding limited internal resources, and leveraging broad expertise.

[The most common misconception](#) is that outside partners need more connection to or understanding of a specific community. However, partners like SAFEbuilt proactively hire local experts rather than reassigning outside teams. Combined with an extensive background serving similar communities nationwide, this creates ideal insight into local needs and national best practices alike.

Another assumption is that outside help strains budgets. But partner resources and technology, available as needed, create savings by adding capability without significant HR investment. The proof lies in the decades-long partnerships SAFEbuilt forms across over 3,000 diverse communities coast to coast.

Optimizing capabilities

For resource-constrained departments, an expert partner gives part-time or full-time access to the latest technology, experienced professionals, and proven solutions. Partners act as force multipliers to realize safety goals through expanded capability instead of increased costs. And communities maintain control over strategy while benefiting from support only when needed.

The value comes through specialized expertise gained over decades supporting community development nationwide, synthesized best practices that translate locally, and objectivity to enhance existing approaches. Partners provide outside perspectives while understanding inside objectives. The result is programming optimized for local needs at every level.



Make the most of your community

Whether one, a few, or all of the elements on this page resonate with you, we're confident that the [SAFEbuilt Building Department Services](#) experts can help you and your building department team — no matter the size, challenges, or ambitions — work smarter, faster, and more efficiently than ever.

Since 1992, we've been serving building departments and their communities across the country, and taking pride in every partnership. As a multi-disciplinary firm, our one-stop-shop approach enables us to bring you unparalleled, exceptional Building Department Services to ensure you deliver projects on time and on budget. It starts with a conversation.

