Small Business Process Improvement Initiative

Supporting Small Business, Strengthening Community

Town Council

Work Session

December 2, 2025

Collin J. Okoniewski

Economic Development Manager

TOWN OF Herndon

LIVE DIFFERENTLY.

Why This Matters

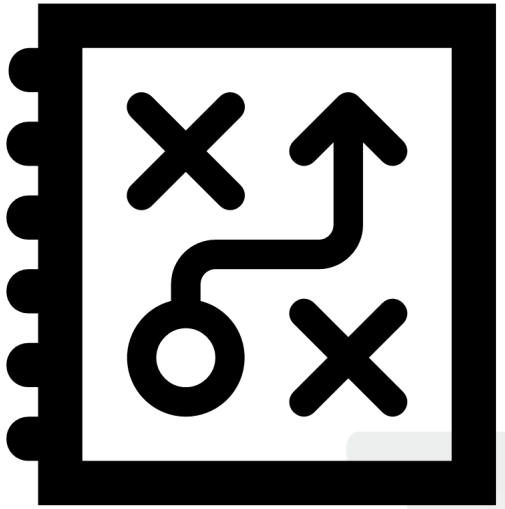


- Aligned with Town Council Strategic Initiative (EES 4): *Modernize and streamline how businesses interact with the Town.*
- Committee of cross-department staff examined every step of the business journey.
- Combined data analysis and staff insights to identify modernization and service-improvement opportunities.

How We Approached the Work

Comprehensive, data-driven, and collaborative

- ✓ Cross-departmental committee representing Community Development, Public Works, Finance, Information Technology, and Economic Development
- ✓ Reviewed quantitative performance data (permits, timelines, service metrics)
- ✓ Gathered feedback from businesses and staff
- ✓ Reviewed peer jurisdictions' business process materials, application guides, and outreach strategies across Northern Virginia to identify effective models for accessibility and clarity.



Project Team

Jessica Bynaker (IT) | James Gillie (CD) | Pablo Novelo (DPW- Engineering)
Collin Okoniewski (C) | Nate Romero (Finance) | Jeff Schweitz (DPW-Building Inspections)

What we heard?

"It would be great if I could check the status of my application online instead of calling different departments."

"It would be nice to go to one counter or website and get everything handled in one place."

"We just want to see where we are in the process — a dashboard or email update would make a big difference."

"There's a lot of good information out there, but it's hard to know where to start."

"A more coordinated approach would help us help customers."

"Everyone's been helpful, but sometimes we're bounced around between departments."

Driving Continuous Improvement Through Three Lenses

Three strategic focus areas shaping the Town's modernization efforts.



Modernization & Data-Driven Operations

Building smarter systems for better decisions.



Communication & Accessibility

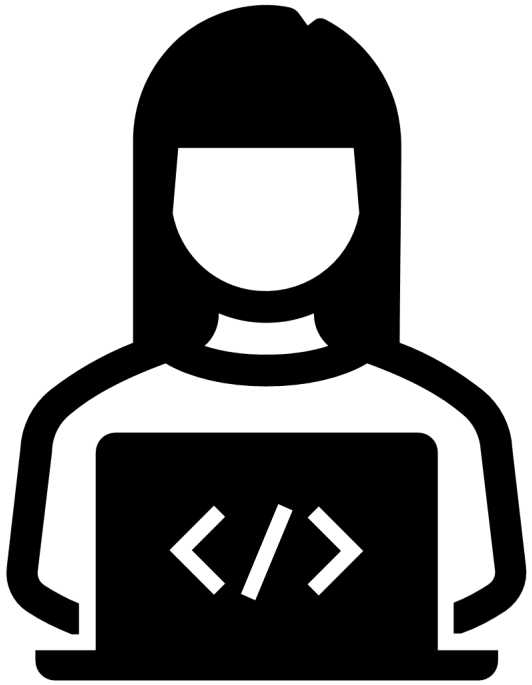
Clear, updated, consistent, and inclusive information for all.



Integrated & Personalized Service Delivery

A unified, customer-focused experience at every counter.

Focus Area 1: Modernization & Data-Driven Operations



Goal

Use technology to make doing business with the Town simpler, faster, and more transparent.

Highlights

- **Cityworks Public Portal**: launching to allow businesses to apply, track, and schedule online.
- **Internal data integration**: using Cityworks as a true operating database for reporting and analytics.
- **Data-driven decision-making**: enabling leadership to access timely metrics that guide resources and policy.

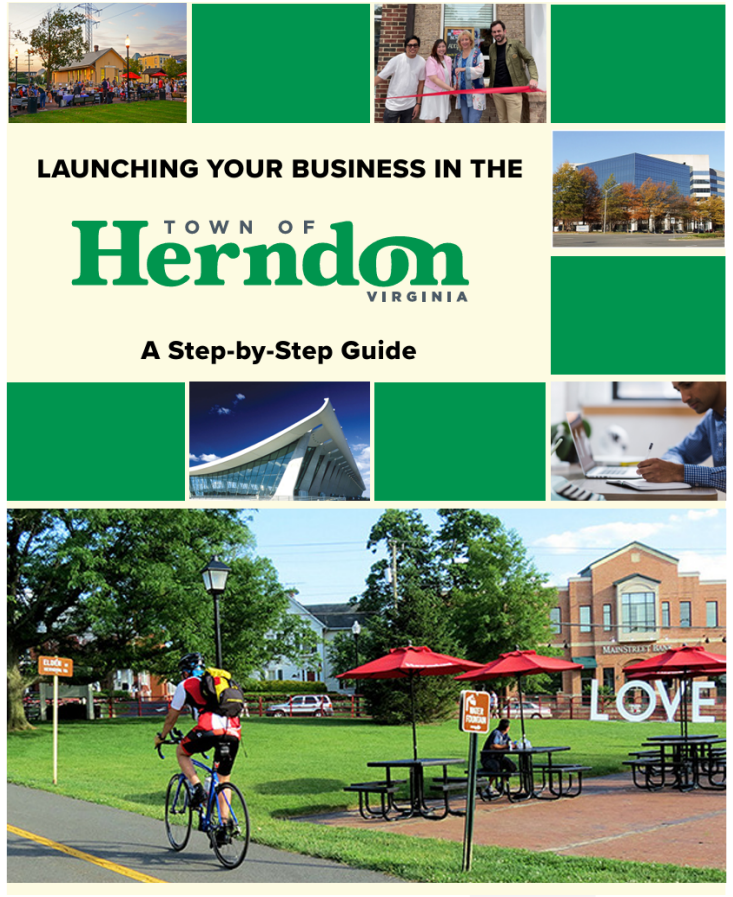
Focus Area 2: Communication & Accessibility

Goal

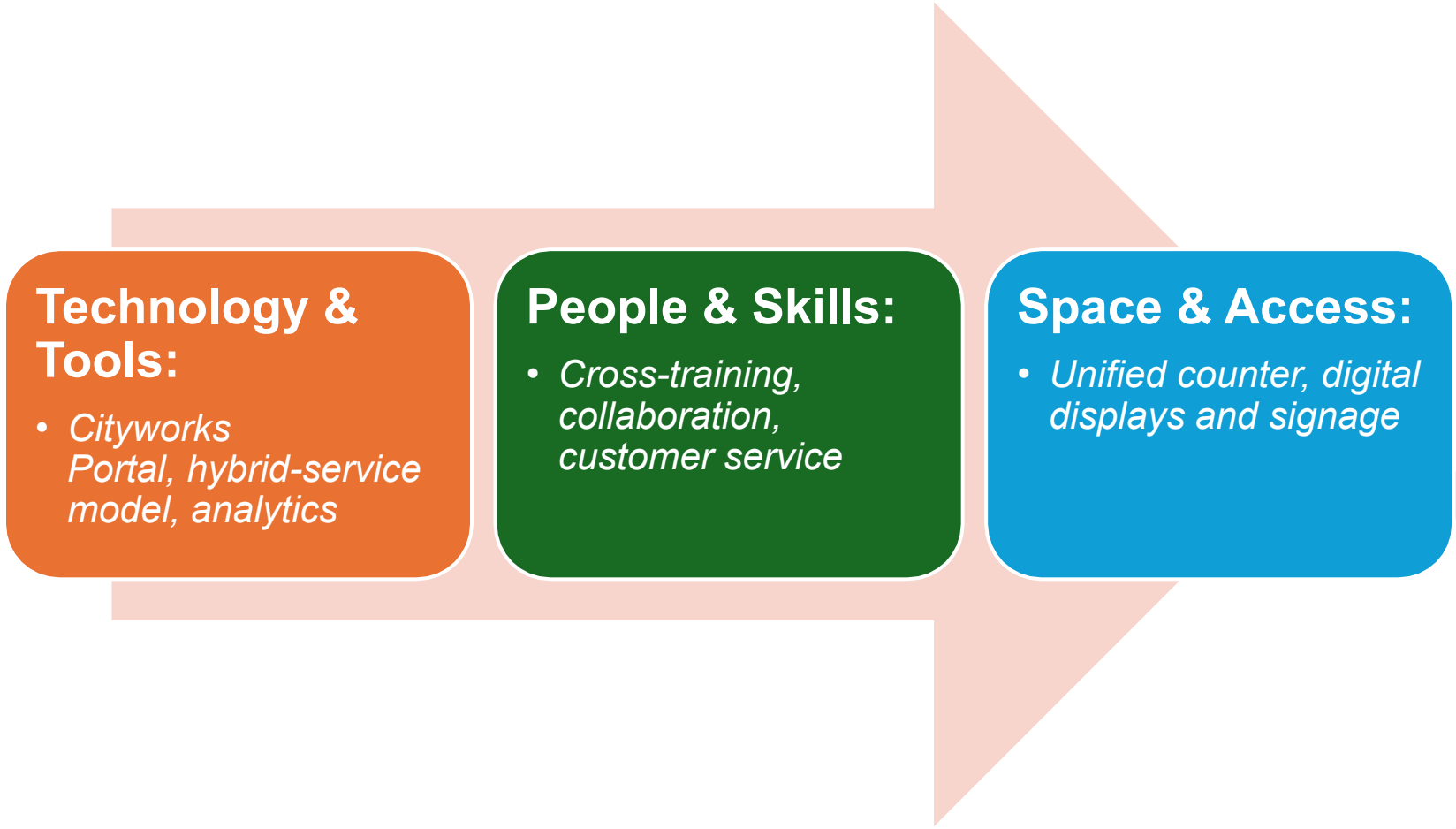
Ensure every business can clearly understand and navigate Town processes.

Highlights

- **New Business Guide overhaul:** clear, up-to-date, and actively maintained by all departments.
- **Unified materials:** consistent branding and plain-language guides across permits, zoning, and licensing.
- **Expanded translation support with resourcing:**
  - Multilingual versions of core forms and guides.
  - On-demand interpretation tools for staff in the office and field.
  - Continued use of bilingual staff as ambassadors of accessibility.



Focus Area 3: Integrated & Personalized Service Delivery



What This Means for the Business Community



- ✅ A clearer, more predictable process for opening and operating in Herndon
- ✅ Faster turnaround and better communication
- ✅ Greater inclusivity and accessibility
- ✅ A Town that feels modern but remains personal

Where We're Heading

- Cross-Department Training & Service Standards Program
- Updated Multilingual Business Guide
- Incorporation of Hybrid Service Model
- Updates to Signage
- Launch of Public Portal



Our Commitment

“These improvements are more than process changes — they’re part of a cultural shift toward transparency, accessibility, and unified service.”



Collaboration



Investment in Modernization



Shared Vision for Service Excellence

Herndon’s Commitment to Business-Friendly Service



Herndon’s small businesses are the foundation of our community.

By modernizing how we serve them, we strengthen the vitality of our Town.

Questions?