



The City of Bedford ensures employees and day-to-day operations can work safely and remotely thanks to Simplex-IT.

## PROBLEM/ SITUATION

Bringing Bedford's IT operations into the future would require a new way of thinking, as well as expert guidance.

The City of Bedford, OH operates under the "Council-Manager" form of government, where the City Manager is responsible for running the municipality's day-to-day operations, including the Police and Fire Departments, Economic Development, and services like Water Management.

Michael S. Mallis has been serving as Bedford's City Manager for the last 8 years of his 23-year career working with the city. One of his main goals as City Manager has been to realize his predecessor's aspirations of elevating Bedford's operations' IT resources and strategy.

Various fundamental issues needed to be addressed first: outdated hardware and software, system compatibility issues, and security for sensitive information such as tax and utility data. For example, one department was using an operating system several generations older than other departments, rendering certain files incompatible and inaccessible when opened by someone in another department. There were a number of older computers and hardware still in use as well, presenting their own performance issues. The office's Help Desk was not well integrated into the city's systems either, making it more difficult to resolve such technical issues.

Michael knew that he first had to ensure all of his colleagues were using current and compatible technologies, but Michael hoped to achieve more for the City of Bedford through technology. He wanted to develop a comprehensive and future-focused IT plan, "not only for where we were, but where we wanted to go." Bringing Bedford's IT operations into the future would require a new way of thinking, as well as expert guidance.

Then, as Michael and his colleagues were preparing to tackle their ambitious IT goals, COVID-19 appeared.



**MICHAEL S. MALLIS**  
City Manager | City of Bedford  
[bedfordoh.gov](http://bedfordoh.gov)



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## SOLUTION



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**F**ortunately for Michael and the City of Bedford, they had secured a co-managed IT arrangement with IT specialist, Simplex-IT.

COVID-19 compounded the IT challenges that Michael and Simplex-IT had to address. Not only did they have to upgrade hardware and software, they needed to find a way to ensure employees and day-to-day operations could continue working safely and remotely.

“We knew we had to have staff go mobile, and Simplex-IT jumped right in,” said Michael, who worked with Simplex-IT to spec out and acquire the right laptops and equipment for office personnel. Using the new equipment, “Simplex-IT securely connected [our employees] at their homes where they could easily log in.” With the help of virtual machines and remote desktop access to office files, “everything was mirrored to their laptops and they were able to conduct all of their work.”

The new equipment and remote accessibility that “Simplex-IT was able to set everybody up [with], even city council...allowed us to create a safe environment in city hall and to keep everybody working,” said Michael. Despite the shock of the pandemic, and the sudden shift in business and technological needs, “things went very, very smoothly,” according to Michael. “And Simplex-IT was very, very responsive as far as the needs of our staff and the administration.”



Simplex-IT has helped the City of Bedford save

**\$65K**

in a single department.

Michael and his team soon discovered that remote accessibility did more than just maintain business continuity during the pandemic, it “allowed us to operate in a much more efficient manner,” said Michael. Increased flexibility for when, how, and where work could be done - and done effectively - presented new operational possibilities to the City of Bedford.

For example, in the “building department, we are operating on a new platform where it allows people to conduct business online. They no longer have to come into city hall to request a permit, to file registration if they’re a contractor. All of that can be done remotely,” explained Michael. The new platform and functionality has allowed Michael and the City of Bedford to “change the way municipal government is conducting business.”

In another department, when one clerk took an early retirement mid-pandemic, the remaining two clerks “were rotating schedules, working remotely, and much more efficiently,” to the point that they could absorb the department’s full workload. This saved roughly \$65,000 in yearly salary and benefits, allowing Michael to “reallocate that money to another area with more of a need.”



**SOLUTION**  
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In addition to helping address specific needs, Simplex-IT provides the City Manager’s office with “expert, defined standards and strategy from an IT standpoint,” said Michael. They’ve ensured that system security, data back-ups, and recovery plans are clearly defined and properly resourced. Technology purchases are “continuously being budgeted for, and Simplex-IT manages that. A lot of that is future planning. They know what we need and what needs to get replaced.”

The Simplex-IT team continues to work closely with Michael and the City of Bedford. “Having that personal relationship” has been key for Michael and his team. “We meet regularly with the leadership over at Simplex-IT. They really understand our needs and also have a relationship where they come to us and make strong recommendations. They understand what we go through, including from a budgeting standpoint, and it really helps us plan for the future.”



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**RESULTS**



**Simplex-IT...knows what we need and what needs to get replaced.”**



**Office-wide technology upgrade**



**Full transition to remote operation**



**Improved efficiency during COVID-19**



**Cost savings (\$65,000 in one department)**



**Expert IT planning and strategy**



**Personalized support**



**Peace of mind**