CivicLABS

Mobile App Pool for Local Governments & First Nations

Hello...

My name is Todd Pugh

I'm the Executive Director of CivicInfo BC, the non-profit municipal data information service behind the CivicLabs project.

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Today's Agenda

1. Defining the Problem
2. The CivicLabs Project
3. The First Four Apps
4. Managing Your Apps
5. Pricing & How to Order
6. Questions

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Why do we need CivicLabs anyway?

Across thousands of miles, the Canadian population clusters like loosely strung beads on the thread of the 49th parallel. This is truly Canada -- a vast stretch of land and a bounty of small towns.

- Stuart McLean, Welcome Home: Travels in Small Town Canada, 1994

180

Municipalities and regional districts in British Columbia, including the Islands Trust.

209

First Nation communities inside BC Provincial boundaries.

20

BC communities have populations over 50,000.

95% of local governments and First Nations are smaller.

The Realities of 2020

- Citizens and business have reasonable and equal expectations for access local government services, regardless of community size and location.
- Mobile devices have transformed the way in which we access internet-based services and information.

The Digital Divide is Real

Most small communities have neither the resources nor the capacity to offer the range of digital services that large (and usually urban) centres can provide.

Apps are Expensive

Each time you build an app, you're really building two: one for Android, and one for iOS.

THE CIVICLABS CONCEPT

How exactly does this work?

The CivicLabs Concept

CivicLabs is a program run by CivicInfo BC, made possible with support from the Ministry formerly known as Jobs, Trade, and Technology.

The CivicLabs Concept

- CivicInfo BC is what the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing calls a “System Organization”.
- System organizations “perform functions collectively on behalf of local governments that municipalities and regional districts could not do – or not do as effectively – on their own.” *- MAH website.*

The CivicLabs Concept

- Core mandate since 2000: data and information services for local governments.
- Apps are an extension of that mandate, and we offer a model that potentially saves thousands of tax dollars.

The CivicLabs Concept

CivicLabs is a simple and shared “out of the box” mobile app solution, available at an extremely low cost.

Purchasing in Silos

LARGE VILLAGE

Spends $15K for Muni App

MEDIUM SIZE TOWN

Spends $15k for Muni App

SMALL CITY

Spends $15k for Muni App

$45,000 in tax dollars spent

Shared Purchasing

LARGE VILLAGE, MEDIUM TOWN, AND SMALL CITY WORK TOGETHER

Share costs, and spend $15K for shared Muni App

$15,000 in tax dollars spent

Pooled Development

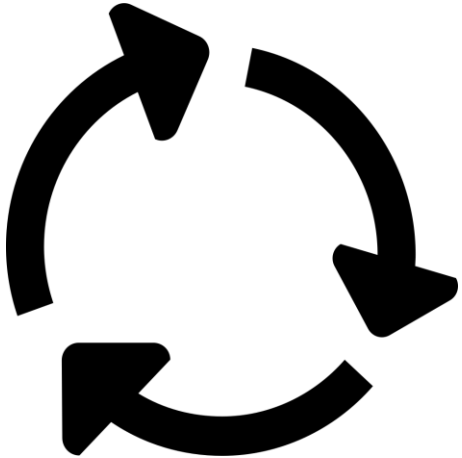
CivicLABS

Dozens of Communities Together in One Pool

Avg. $1,200 / year each (fixed cost subscription) for four apps in 2020, with more to be developed.

Development Cycle

Members suggest new apps; vote for the next one.



Members pay a monthly subscription fee; can brand and deploy app from the CivicLabs App Library.

New apps developed with accumulated revenue from subscriptions; added to the CivicLabs App library.

Launching is Simple

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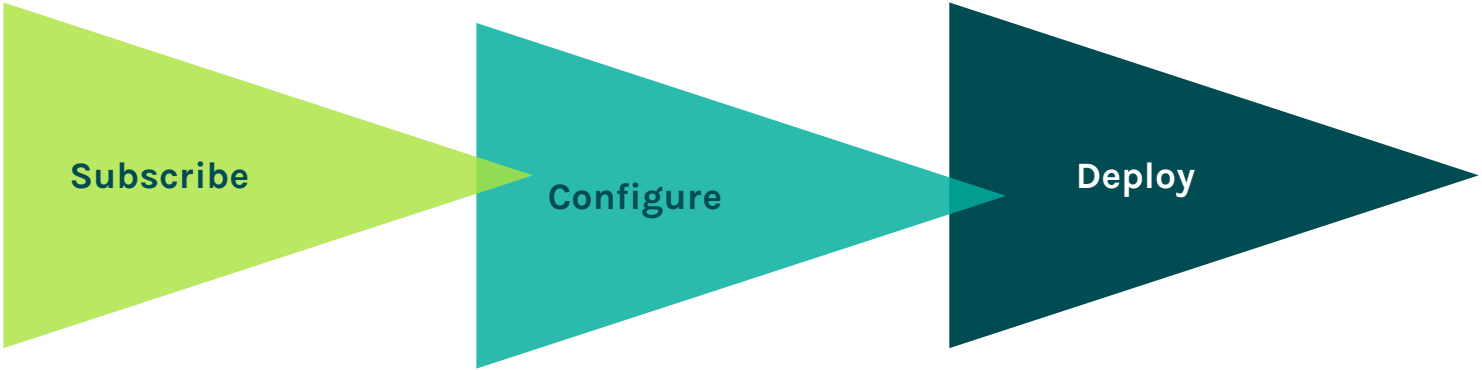
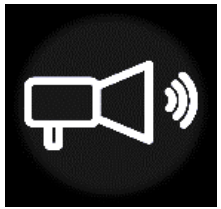


Four Initial Apps

TELL THE TOWN

TOWN CRIER



TOUR THE TOWN

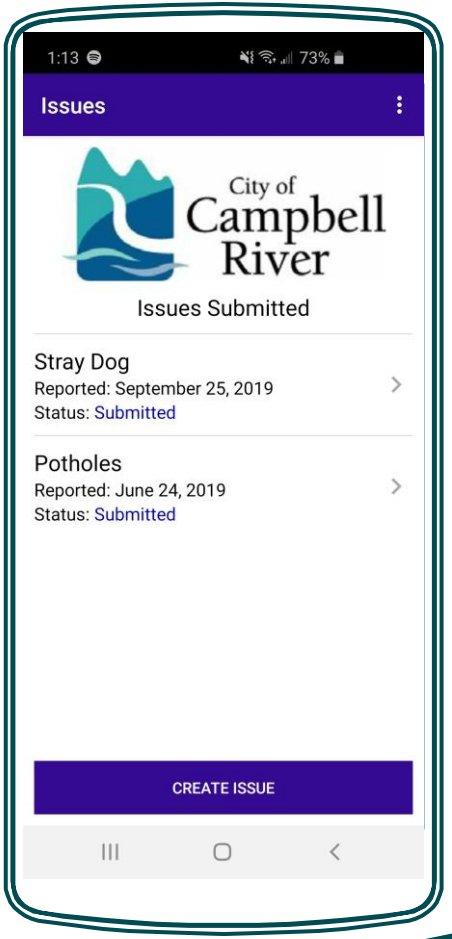
MY PET PAL

App #1:
TELL THE TOWN

Issue Reporting and Tracking App

TELL THE TOWN

Report any issue to your local government authority. Receive progress updates as they work to resolve the issue.



Report a **Pothole.**

Stray Animals.

Missed Curbside Garbage Pickup

Traffic Light Not Working

Recommended Practices

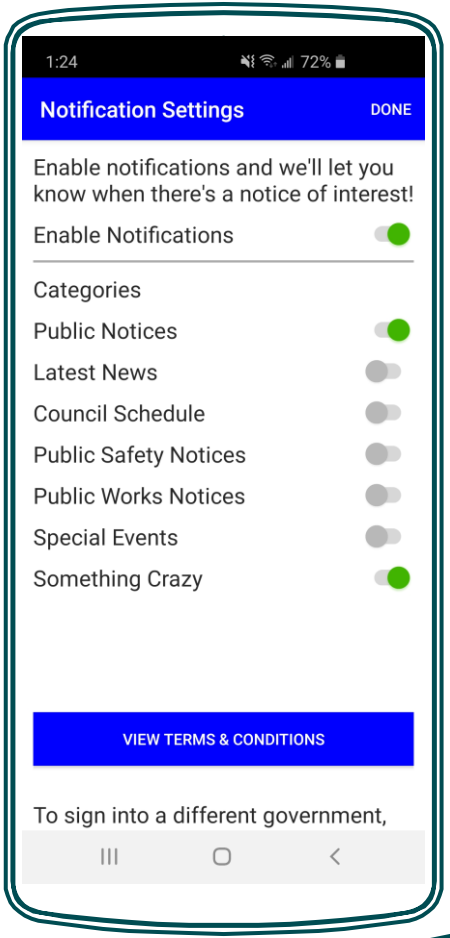
- CivicInfo BC has a close relationship with another system organization, the Municipal Insurance Association of BC (MIABC).
- MIABC has graciously created an provided a list of recommended practices for local governments and First Nations to limit their liability when rolling out this app. No additional charge.

App #2:
TOWN CRIER

Alternative system for publishing public notices.

TOWN CRIER

A tool for local governments and First Nations to communicate directly with citizens. Push notifications that cut through Social Media clutter.



Possible Uses

- Inform people about any open meetings.
- Exceed legislated minimums for public notices.
- Notify people about special events or deadlines.
- Distribution of non-emergency news.
- Inform the public about routine work like road maintenance, watermain flushing, etc.

Possible Uses

App is **not** a replacement for a purpose-built emergency notification system.

App #3:
TOUR THE TOWN

Customizable Local Map for Tourism and Other Purposes

Make Your Own Map

Food Truck Festival

Possible Uses

- Community festivals; stage and booth locations.
- BIA member locations profiles.
- Development application and permit locations.
- Special events, e.g., “Dine Around Town” restaurants.
- Art / Sculpture Walks
- Historical Tours / Garden Tours
- Agri-Tourism

App #4:
MY PET PAL

Animal license renewals & Lost pet notification system

Renew Your Dog License.

Possible Uses

- Renew an annual pet license from a mobile phone.
- Report a missing pet.
- Report / look-up a found pet.
- Receive news and special promotions of interest to local pet owners. (Optional feature.)

MANAGING YOUR APPS

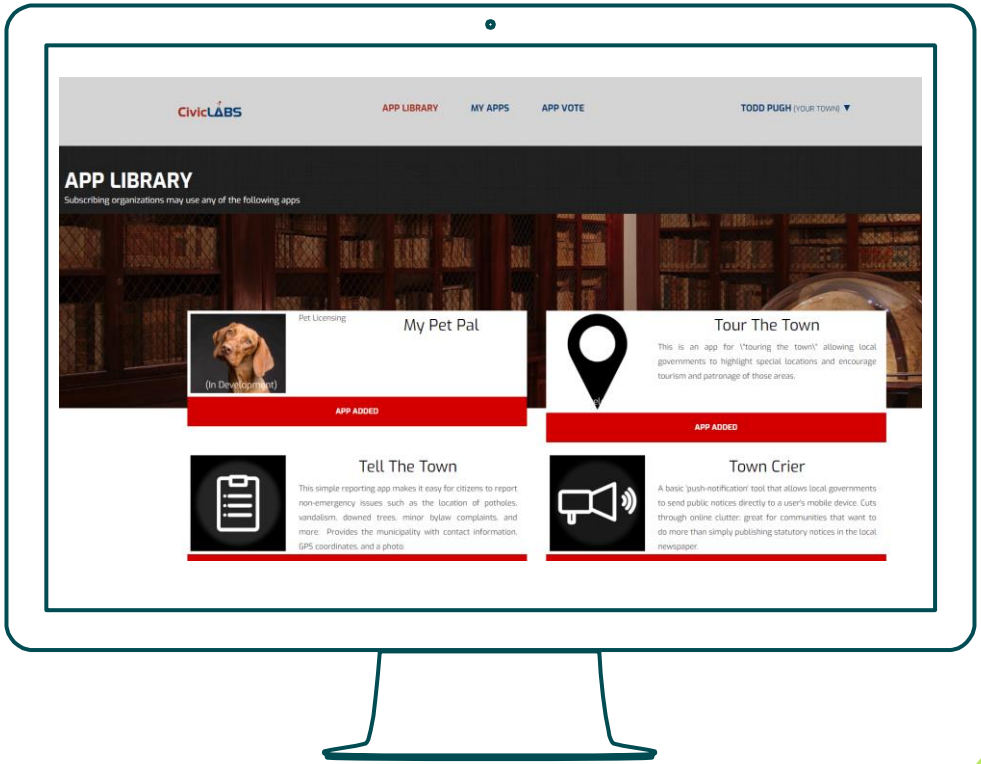
Take a peek behind the curtain

The CivicLabs Platform

- Key to the system: the CivicLabs web platform and database, which provides a common framework for all apps.
- Canadian-hosted on AWS, Montreal.
- Clients (local governments) can select their apps and adjust settings through the CivicLabs.ca site. Citizens directed to Apple App Store and Google Play.

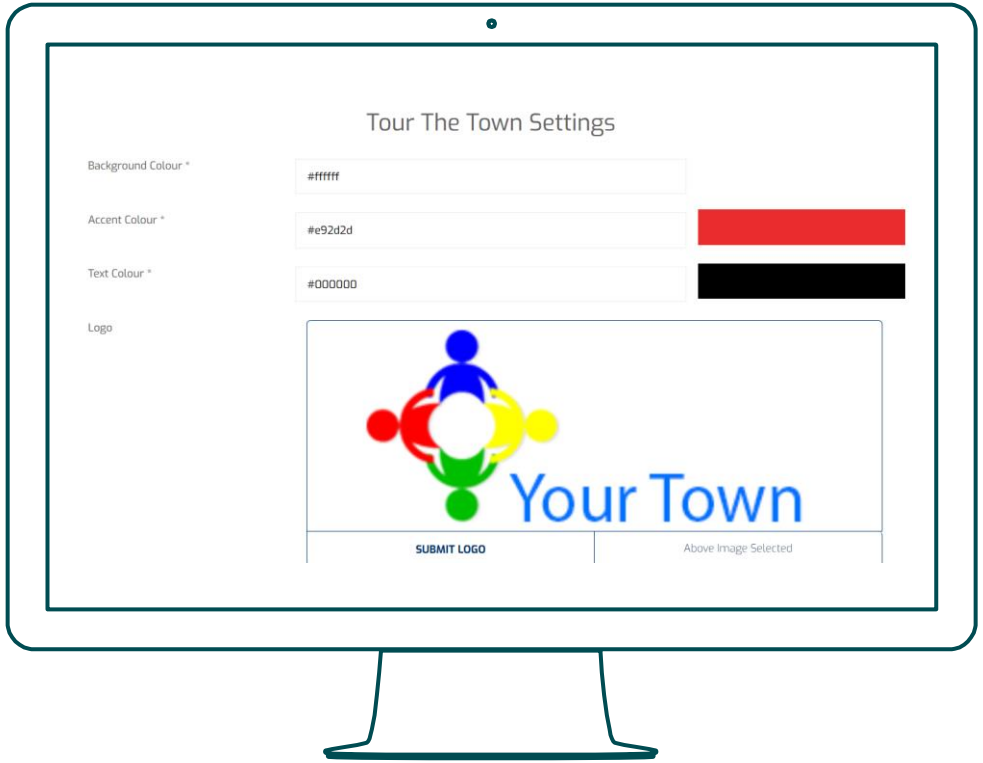
App Library

Select the CivicLabs Apps you wish to use in your community. Turn them on or off with one click.



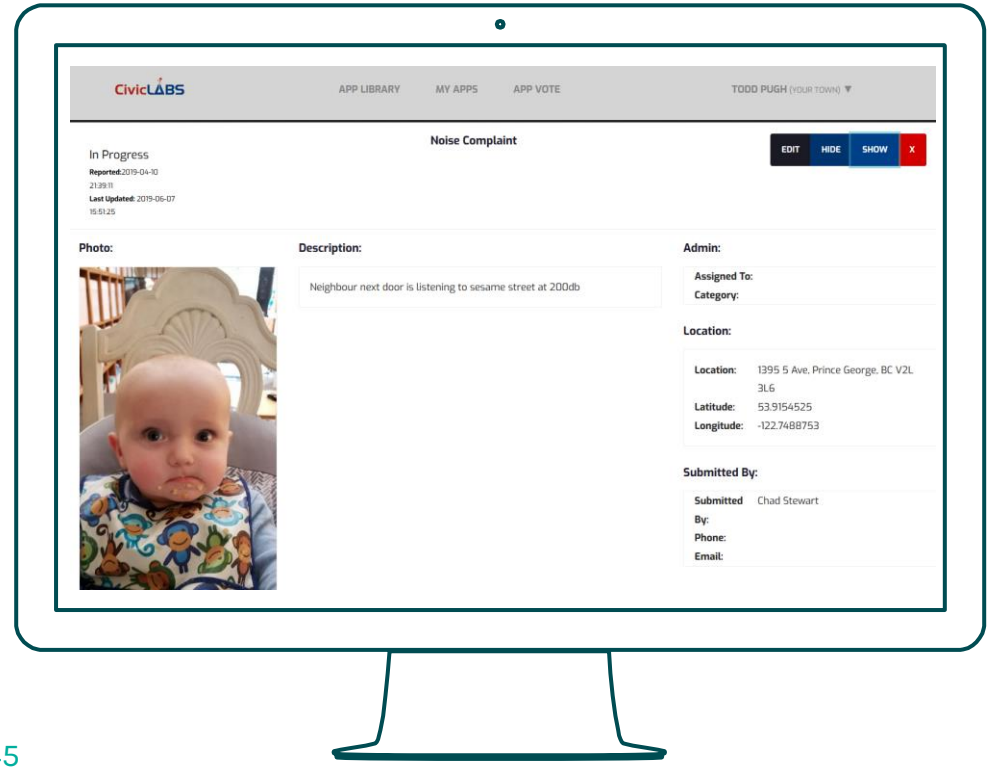
The CivicLabs Platform

- Apps are available to subscribers “as is”.
- Under license, app source code can be made available to those who wish to make their own modifications.



Customize

Through the admin console, choose your basic colour scheme and upload your local government logo.



Manage

The admin console provides a simple user interface for to managing all apps.

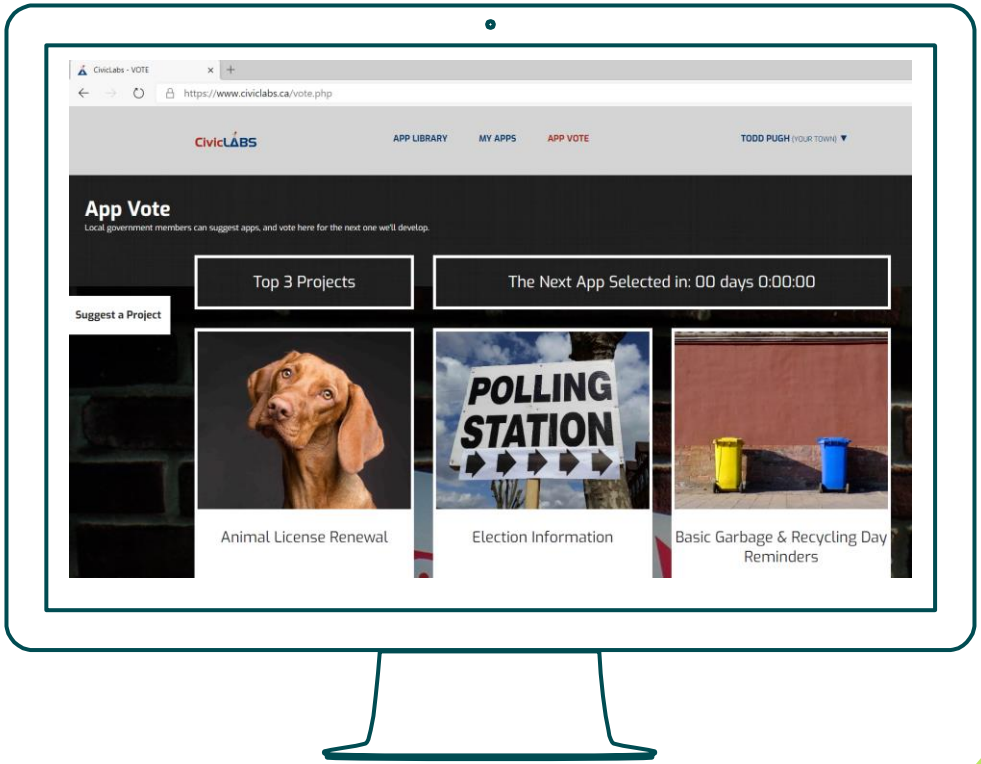
The CivicLabs Platform

Members Have a Say

- **Suggestions:** a place where pool members can make requests for new apps, or for improvements to existing ones.
- **Voting:** Members vote for the next app, which is developed when accumulated subscription fees are sufficient to cover costs.

Voting

Top three projects appear at top; others below. Voting period is variable; depends on available funds.



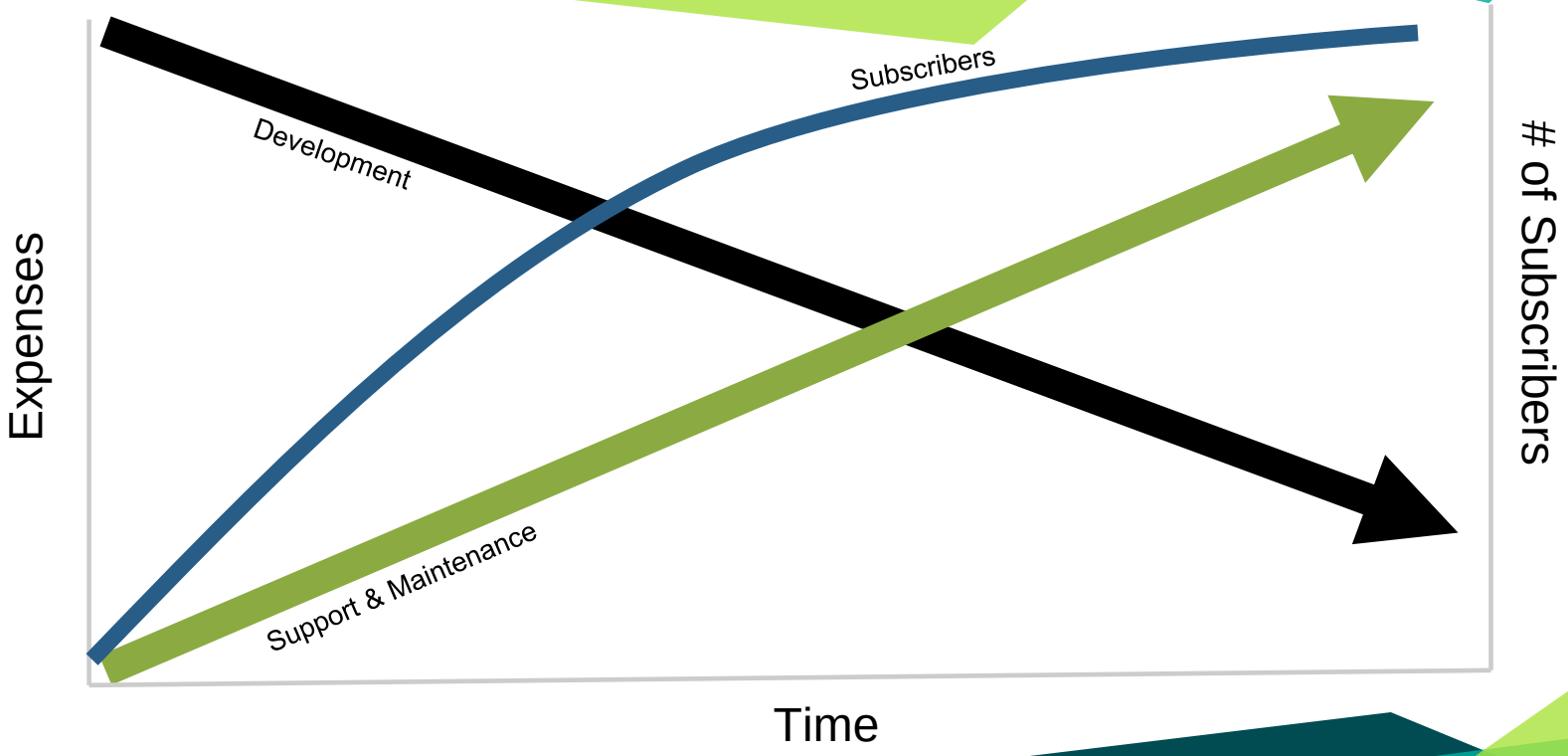
PRICING & HOW TO ORDER

Ridiculously affordable. Order now.

Monthly Subscription Rates

- $75/month for communities with fewer than 2,500 residents
- $100/month for 2,501 – 10,000
- $125/month for 10,001 – 25,000
- $150/month for 25,001 – 75,000
- Over 75,000 – Custom quote

Stable Pricing



Thanks!

Any questions?

You can find me at 250-383-4898 ext. or tpugh@civicinfo.bc.ca.

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