



COMPUTER TIES IT RESOURCE CENTER • PLANNING WORKSHEET

Government IT Budget & Lifecycle Worksheet

For townships, municipalities, courts, and public safety agencies building an annual technology budget and a multi-year replacement schedule.

FILLABLE PDF

Type into any field, then save or print a copy.

EDITION

Version 1.1 • September 2026

QUESTIONS?

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Public bodies face a version of the technology budget problem that private businesses do not. Spending has to be justified in public, approved on a fixed calendar, and defended a year later. That makes unplanned technology spending genuinely difficult, not merely inconvenient.

The way through it is a written replacement schedule. When a board or council can see that four computers are due this year because they were bought five years ago, the conversation is about the schedule rather than about whether the request is real.

How to use this document

Fill in what you can before your budget cycle, not during it. The parts you cannot answer are the questions to put to whoever supports your systems.

Keep last year's copy. Being able to show what was planned against what was spent is the fastest way to build credibility for next year's request.

A filled-in copy describes your equipment and its weaknesses. Consider what portions belong in a public packet and what should be handled separately.

The words you will hear, and what they actually mean**Capital and operating expenditure**

Capital is something you buy and keep on the books. Operating is a cost you carry every year. Most public bodies request the two differently and on different timelines, so settle which is which before you write anything.

Refresh cycle

Replacing a fixed share of equipment every year instead of all of it occasionally. It is what turns an alarming request into a routine line item.

End of support

The date the manufacturer stops issuing security fixes. Not the date it stops working, which is why it is so easy to defer and so difficult to defend having deferred.

Total cost of ownership

What something costs across its whole life, not what it costs to buy. The cheaper machine that needs three service calls a year was not cheaper.



1 Before You Start

Fiscal year covered

Budget submitted by

Approved by (board, council, commission)

Departments included

Purchasing rules that apply

Any cooperative or state contract available to us

Capital or operating?

Public bodies usually have to split spending between capital and operating, and the line falls in different places in different jurisdictions. Decide with your finance officer early which side each item lands on, because a server that is capital and a subscription that is operating may need to be requested in different ways and on different timelines.

2 Replacement Schedule

This is the core of the whole exercise. List what you own, when it was bought, and when it is due. The schedule is what turns an argument into an agenda item.

What	Department	Bought	Replace every	Due	Estimated cost



Typical replacement intervals

Office computers 4 to 5 years. Laptops 3 to 4 years. Servers 5 to 6 years, timed to warranty rather than failure. Firewalls and network equipment 4 to 6 years, replaced when the manufacturer stops issuing updates. Cameras and recorders 5 to 8 years, though recorders often need replacing before cameras do. Public safety and field equipment usually shorter, because of how it is used.

3 Operating System and Support Deadlines

These dates are set by manufacturers and do not move to fit a fiscal year, which makes them the strongest argument in any budget request. Anything still running software that is no longer receiving security fixes should be treated as a funded priority rather than a deferred item.

What	When	What it means
Windows 10 support ended	October 14, 2025	Already passed. These machines no longer receive security fixes the normal way.
Paid extension, first year	through October 13, 2026	Cheapest year of Microsoft's paid bridge for business and government devices.
Paid extension, second year	through October 2027	Roughly double the first year, per device.
Paid extension, third year	through October 2028	The last year available. Nothing after this.

Devices still on unsupported software

Cost to replace them

Cost to extend them instead, per year

Which we are requesting, and why

4 Recurring Costs

What it is	Supplier	Department	Yearly cost	Renews



What it is	Supplier	Department	Yearly cost	Renews

■ Prompts

- ☐ Microsoft 365 or Google, at whatever level each department is on.
- ☐ Internet service at each site, including any backup connection.
- ☐ Phone service and phone system.
- ☐ Security software, backup service, and email filtering.
- ☐ The software each department runs on: accounting, utility billing, permits, assessing, agenda and minutes, records, dispatch, records management.
- ☐ Website hosting, the domain name, and anything supporting public meetings.
- ☐ Camera and door access subscriptions, including cloud storage of recordings.
- ☐ Anything tied to a grant that will need general fund money when the grant ends.
This is the most common budget surprise in public organizations. Note the end date now.

5 Projects and Improvements

Project	Department	Why it matters	Year	Estimated cost

■ Prompts

- ☐ Anything an auditor, state agency, insurer, or partner agency has raised.
- ☐ Sign-in protection, backup improvements, or security awareness training.



- ☐ Network, cabling, or power work at any facility.
- ☐ Cameras or door access at public buildings, parks, or utility sites.
- ☐ Public meeting technology, including recording and broadcasting.
- ☐ Records retention, digitization, or public records request handling.
- ☐ Anything supporting remote or after-hours work by staff or elected officials.
- ☐ Continuity arrangements, so a single failure does not stop services to residents.

6 Multi-Year View

Boards and councils respond better to a three to five year picture than to a single-year request. It also stops every device you own coming due in the same year.

Year	Replacements	Projects	Recurring	Total

7 This Year's Request

Replacements	Recurring costs
Support and services	Projects
Security improvements	Contingency
Total requested	Prior year approved, for comparison

8 Before It Goes Forward

- ☐ Every line can be explained in one sentence to somebody who is not technical.
- ☐ Anything unsupported is identified as such, with the risk stated plainly.



- ☐ Grant-funded items show what happens when the grant ends.
- ☐ Purchasing rules, quote requirements, and any cooperative contracts have been followed.
- ☐ Finance has confirmed which items are capital and which are operating.
- ☐ Departments have been asked what they need, rather than told what they are getting.
- ☐ There is a contingency figure, and it is not zero.
- ☐ The multi-year view is attached, so this year is visibly part of a plan.

About this worksheet

This is general planning guidance for public organizations. It is not legal, financial, procurement, or compliance advice, and it does not reflect the purchasing, budgeting, records, or open meeting requirements of any particular jurisdiction. Confirm your own requirements with your finance officer, attorney, and the relevant state guidance. Support dates in section 3 reflect what Microsoft had published as of September 2026 and should be verified before commitments are made.

Building a request you have to defend in public?

Computer Ties works with townships, municipalities, courts, and public safety agencies across southern Michigan on technology budgets and replacement schedules. We can inventory what you have, identify what is unsupported, and give you a multi-year plan and costings in a form you can put in front of a board or council.

NEW PROJECTS AND PLANNING

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