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OnX Guides Canadian City in Disaster Recovery Planning to Keep City Running in an Emergency

CASE STUDY

Client: Mid-sized Canadian City

INDUSTRY: GOVERNMENT

SOLUTION: BACKUP & DISASTER RECOVERY

Business Challenge

Leaders of a midsized city in Canada knew they needed to be able to restore critical IT services rapidly in a disaster — when citizens, first responders, and emergency managers would need them most.

Five key challenges confronted the city:

> **Interdependent systems** — The city needed assistance to fully comprehend its recovery requirements or capacities because it had multiple interdependencies in its IT systems. City leaders needed to understand what they had deployed, as well as a strategy defining which of their systems was most critical.

> **Virtual server uncertainties** — The city had a VMWare environment intended for disaster recovery, but it wasn't as well mapped out as it could be, making it unclear if a recovery would perform well in a crisis.

> **Tight timelines** — City leaders thought they could recover systems in three days; however, further research revealed it would take three weeks.

> **Undefined goals** — The city needed defined recovery objectives, which are key to any effort to devise an effective strategy.

> **Cost-benefit balance** — The fastest, most powerful recovery objectives had the highest price tag, potentially exceeding the city's budget resources.

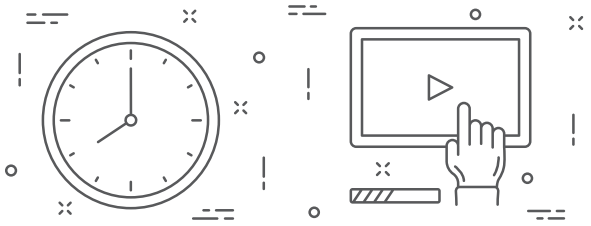
Thanks to the OnX Disaster Recovery Assessment, city leaders now understand that DR is about defining risks and assigning values to each of those risks.

Solution

OnX Enterprise Solutions performed a comprehensive Disaster Recovery Assessment with four critical components:

> **Objectives:** OnX built a strategy around Recovery Time and Recovery Point Objectives (RTO and RPO) — using tiers to match current IT with new technologies. We consulted with various business groups to help define their recovery needs.

> **Tiers:** To develop the recovery tiers fully, we asked, "How much downtime can you manage and how much data can you lose?" That helped the city establish four-hour, 20-hour and best-effort recovery goals.



> **Mirrors:** Interdependencies were mirrored to include the entire IT environment.

> **Budget:** We consulted with each business group to align their RTOs to available budget.

Results

The city has a strategy in hand to build a high-availability IT environment mapped out to three risk-and-recovery tiers:

> Tier 1: Full data replication of their environment within a four-hour RTO.

> Tier 2: Backup and 24-hour recovery.

> Tier 3: Archiving of old data that hasn't been touched in three years or more (the city had been backing this data up every night).

OnX also helped the company figure out how to replace a storage area network (SAN) that had high-risk hardware incompatibilities. If the environment failed, the city would not have been able to recover data on the SAN.

Thanks to the OnX Disaster Recovery Assessment, city leaders now understand that DR is about defining risks and assigning values to each of those risks. Identifying those values helps the city place the most emphasis on recovering its highest-priority IT systems — saving time that could be critical in an emergency.