Gander

Customer Service Strategy

2026–2029

Adopted by Gander Town Council

July 15, 2026

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Executive Summary

Customer service is one of the most visible ways residents experience local government. Every interaction, whether reporting a concern, applying for a permit, paying a bill, registering for a program, or seeking information, shapes public confidence in the Town and the quality of the services it provides.

The Town of Gander has taken important steps to improve the customer experience through the implementation of Contact Gander and Microsoft Dynamics 365 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Case Management. Together, these initiatives provide a stronger foundation for managing customer interactions, improving coordination, and supporting continuous improvement.

Building on this foundation, this strategy establishes a clear roadmap for strengthening Contact Gander, modernizing development services, expanding digital service options, improving access to information, and using performance measurement to guide ongoing improvements.

Delivering excellent customer service is a shared responsibility. Success will depend on collaboration across departments, a commitment to continuous improvement, and a focus on designing services around the needs of residents.

Why This Strategy Matters

A MODERN APPROACH TO CUSTOMER SERVICE

Historically, residents interacted directly with individual departments. While departments delivered services effectively, the customer experience often depended on knowing who to contact, understanding internal processes, and navigating multiple points of service.

Across Canada, municipalities are increasingly adopting centralized customer service models to improve accessibility, strengthen coordination, and create a more consistent customer experience.

Recognizing these changing expectations, the Town established Contact Gander as a centralized customer service centre designed to simplify access to municipal services.

Contact Gander reflects a shift toward a more connected, coordinated, and resident-focused approach to customer service.

Building on this foundation, the Town will continue improving how residents access services by simplifying processes, expanding digital options, improving communication, and making better use of technology.

This strategy provides the framework for that work and supports a more connected, accessible, and resident-focused municipal service experience.



Mission

To deliver accessible, responsive, and consistent customer service while continually improving how residents connect with the Town.

Guiding Principles

PUT RESIDENTS FIRST
Residents are at the centre of how we design and deliver services.

MAKE SERVICES EASY TO ACCESS
Services should be simple to find, understand, and access through multiple channels.

WORK TOGETHER
Providing excellent customer service is a shared responsibility across the organization.

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY
We communicate in plain language and keep customers informed throughout the service process.

KEEP IMPROVING
We continually review our services, processes, and technology to identify opportunities for improvement.

THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

How we work together to deliver great service.



1 RESIDENT
A resident, business, or visitor contacts the Town with a question, request, or concern.

2 CONTACT GANDER
Contact Gander is the Town's front door. We listen, gather information, and create a service request.

3 DEPARTMENT
The request is routed to the appropriate department for review and action.

4 SERVICE DELIVERED
The department takes the necessary action to resolve the request or complete the service.

5 RESIDENT UPDATED
Contact Gander notifies the resident with an update or the resolution of their request.

6 REQUEST CLOSED
The request is closed in our system. We continue to look for ways to improve our service.

Strategic Priorities

PRIORITY 1
Strengthen Contact Gander

Strategic Outcome
Residents experience a consistent, responsive, and seamless customer experience regardless of how they interact with the Town.

As the Town's centralized customer service centre, Contact Gander will continue to strengthen how customer inquiries, service requests, and information are managed across the organization. By improving coordination, standardizing practices, and expanding the use of digital tools, the Town will provide a more connected and consistent customer experience.

Key Actions
- Continue expanding the use of Microsoft Dynamics 365 CRM and Case Management.
- Improve customer request management and internal workflows.
- Develop Customer Service Standards.
- Create a corporate customer service knowledge base.
- Review municipal services to identify opportunities for centralized customer service delivery through Contact Gander.
- Enhance reporting, analytics, and performance monitoring.

PRIORITY 2
Simplify the Development Experience

Strategic Outcome
Development and building permit services are clear, consistent, and easier to access for residents, businesses, and staff.

The Town will simplify the permit process by creating a standard application package, improving information and guidance, implementing the Town’s existing permit software, and expanding digital permit services where practical.

Key Actions
- Review and modernize the development and building permit application process.
- Develop a standardized development and building permit application package to simplify submissions and clearly communicate application requirements.
- Implement and optimize the Town's existing permit management software.
- Improve communication and guidance throughout the permitting process, including application updates and customer support.
- Expand digital permit services to enable online permit applications where practical.

PRIORITY 3
Improve Access to Services

Strategic Outcome
Residents can conveniently access municipal services anytime and through the channel that best meets their needs.

Digital services improve convenience while supporting more efficient service delivery. The Town will continue expanding digital options that make it easier to complete transactions, submit applications, and access information online.

Key Actions
- Implement online payment services.
- Expand online forms for municipal services.
- Review and standardize public-facing forms and applications.
- Improve the organization and navigation of service information on the Town website.
- Identify and implement additional digital services that improve customer access.

PRIORITY 4
Increase Awareness of Town Services

Strategic Outcome
Residents have timely, accurate, and easy-to-understand information about Town services, programs, grants, and opportunities.

Customer service begins before someone contacts the Town. By improving communication, simplifying information, and increasing awareness of available services, the Town will help residents find what they need more quickly and make informed decisions.

Key Actions
- Improve information about Town services.
- Improve promotion of Town services, programs, and initiatives.
- Increase awareness of grants, subsidies, and municipal supported opportunities.
- Improve accessibility and plain language across customer-facing information.
- Develop consistent service guides and application information.

PRIORITY 5
Foster a Culture of Continuous Improvement

Strategic Outcome
Customer feedback, performance information, and collaboration are used to continually improve how the Town delivers services.

Providing excellent customer service requires ongoing evaluation and adaptation. The Town will use performance data, customer feedback, and employee collaboration to identify opportunities for improvement and ensure services continue to evolve alongside community needs.

Key Actions
- Monitor customer satisfaction and feedback.
- Measure Microsoft Dynamics 365 activity and service trends.
- Track response and resolution times.
- Monitor digital service adoption.
- Report progress to Council twice annually

Performance Framework

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

- Customer satisfaction
- Customer feedback
- Number and type of customer inquiries

SERVICE DELIVERY

- Response times
- Case resolution times
- Microsoft Dynamics 365 reporting
- Online payment usage
- Online form submissions

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Employee training
- Digital service adoption
- Service improvements completed
- Progress on strategic initiatives

Administration will review these measures regularly and report progress to Council bi-annually.

Governance

Delivering excellent customer service is a shared responsibility across the organization.

Contact Gander serves as the primary point of contact for many customer interactions; however, every department contributes to the overall customer experience.

Implementation of this strategy will be coordinated by Contact Gander in collaboration with service departments across the organization.

Administration will monitor implementation, evaluate progress, and report to Council on the advancement of this strategy, ensuring customer service continues to evolve alongside community needs and organizational priorities.

Implementation Roadmap

2026

- Adopt Customer Service Strategy.
- Expand Microsoft Dynamics 365 Case Management
- Develop Customer Service Standards.
- Implement online payment services.
- Expand online forms.
- Begin permit modernization initiatives.
- Review services to identify opportunities for centralized customer service delivery through Contact Gander.

2027

- Implement permit management software.
- Complete development and building permit process review.
- Standardize public-facing forms and applications.
- Expand digital services.
- Improve reporting and analytics.

2028–2029

- Continue expanding digital services.
- Improve customer self-service opportunities.
- Review customer feedback and performance.
- Update the strategy based on results and emerging priorities.

Looking Ahead

The Town of Gander is committed to continually improving how residents access municipal services.

Every improvement we make, whether it is expanding Contact Gander, enhancing Microsoft Dynamics 365, implementing online payments, modernizing permit services, or simplifying forms, helps create a better experience for the people we serve.

As the Town continues to grow and evolve, so too will the way we deliver services. By investing in people, processes, technology, and collaboration, the Town of Gander is creating a customer service experience that is simpler, more connected, and easier to access, ensuring residents can interact with their local government with confidence today and into the future.