

# The City of Williamsburg, Virginia, Increases Reliability, Decreases Capital Expenditure with Cloud Phone System

**FOCUS** | COST SAVINGS  
**INDUSTRY** | PUBLIC SECTOR



Williamsburg comprises nearly 15,000 residents and has roughly 200 city employees. Williamsburg is best known for its tourist and historical points of interest, like Virginia's first capitol building, the Governor's Palace, Bruton Parish Church (the oldest continually operating church in the United States), and the College of William & Mary.

## Replacing aging phone system

Mark Barham, Director of Information Technology, City of Williamsburg, was faced with an aging phone system—one that was nearly three decades old.

"The phone system worked, but we couldn't get reliable replacement parts when we needed them, and the systems lacked modern features and functionality we needed to best serve the city," says Barham. After devoting budget to fund the upgrade, Barham went to typical phone vendors until one employee suggested a different route.

"I hadn't thought of exploring a cloud phone system, and quite honestly, putting our phone system in the cloud scared me," says Barham. Entertaining the employee's request, Barham decided to explore a cloud phone system through Carousel and RingCentral, throwing that option into the mix with other RFPs.

## Carousel offers compelling cloud PBX solution

"I hadn't heard of RingCentral before this initial process, so I walked into it completely blind," says Barham. For the City of

### Company profile

Williamsburg comprises nearly 15,000 residents and has roughly 200 city employees.

### Year founded

1699

### Size

200+ employees

### Website

[williamsburgva.gov](http://williamsburgva.gov)

### Headquarters

Williamsburg, Virginia

Williamsburg, anything technology-related—think 911 phone calls to fire department systems—falls on Barham’s shoulders.

He says, “The most difficult part of this process was convincing myself that I could put a phone system in the cloud. At the end of the day, it’s still telephones—it’s a vital communication tool—and if it doesn’t work for whatever reason, I must answer for that.”

In working with the numerous RFPs, it was clear that RingCentral offered different features and functions that could benefit the city. And, the pricing from Carousel and RingCentral was such that he could reallocate some of the budgeted money to other projects. The savings from canceling old circuits and moving to the cloud also meant they could use very little capex for the upgrade, with the rest being opex.

### Consolidation onto one communication and collaboration platform

Barham notes that the biggest learning curve was that phone systems were managed from a web browser and not hardware, but that employees have embraced and enjoy the new, streamlined system.

Because of the upgrade, Barham could take all of the city’s disparate systems—the fax machines, meeting accounts, phone numbers, etc.—and put them into one system.

He says, “Initially, the city had all these different systems; now we have RingCentral Office for voice and fax and RingCentral Glip and Meetings for collaboration, one platform that is extremely easy to use and offers new features we didn’t have before—like instant messaging and single dial.”



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200+  
city employees

The graphic features the text "200+" in a large, white, sans-serif font, with "city employees" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it. The background is a blue-tinted photograph of a city street with trees and buildings.

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**Mark Barham**

Director of Information Technology,  
City of Williamsburg