

### What is a collection kiosk?

Think of an ATM for municipal purposes. One that receives payments for a real estate bill, motor vehicle excise, utility charges, a parking fine or for a dog, fishing or hunting license; a machine that accepts credit cards, debit cards, electronic checks, paper currency and coins.

The use of self-service kiosks that allow residents to pay municipal bills, fines and other charges or to make certain purchases is expanding among cities and towns across the nation. Like a bank ATM, municipal kiosks can be placed indoors at city and town halls, in supermarkets and malls or other places frequented by residents. They can be free-standing machines, wall mounted units or sit as desktop computers. They can be placed outdoors, as well.

In addition to accepting payments, these machines have the ability to provide change and cash back, to print receipts and real time reports. They can function solely as an access point for information much like a website. Or, they can serve as a portal where residents can report problems, enroll in programs, request services or file applications. They can be set-up with multi-lingual capability.

For cities and towns, a kiosk offers the potential to reduce staff workloads and create efficiencies. Often, office foot traffic and the need for counter service decline. Where technologies are compatible, resident payment information gathered at the kiosk can be electronically and automatically posted to community's financial software. Other information can be posted to town databases. As a result, staff time is freed up to complete other important tasks.

From a resident's perspective, a kiosk can be a convenient source of information and a place where transactions can be completed with ease and privacy.

An Internet search ("public kiosks" or "municipal kiosks") reveals numerous private sector vendors which sell kiosks for municipal use. In some, but not all instances, municipalities have the option to enter lease agreements for hardware (the kiosk itself), software and support. The range of kiosk purposes, features and capabilities varies among vendors' standard models, but custom designed kiosks can address specific needs, if offered.