



Information Technology Governance Program

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Information Technology Governance Program

I. Overview:

Information technology (IT) governance is a set of rules and criterion that guide how individuals and groups cooperate to manage technology. Governance provides the framework for making decisions affecting information technology.

The need to integrate information technology governance with overall governance is similar to the need for information technology to be an integral part of the enterprise rather than discreet individual department efforts that run the risk of duplication, incompatibility and financial inefficiencies.

Information Technology governance is a set of responsibilities and practices exercised by the County with the goal of providing strategic direction, ensuring that objectives are achieved, ascertaining that risks are managed appropriately and verifying that the County's resources are used responsibly.

While County governance developments have historically been driven by the need for the transparency of government risks and the protection citizens, the pervasive use of technology has created a critical dependency on IT that calls for a specific focus on IT governance.

This governance overview is aligned with the Countywide Information Technology Strategic Plan. The plan calls for the formation of an executive group dedicated to IT governance in support of cooperative and consensus-driven management of IT strategic plan initiatives and has been endorsed by the County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors.

II. Goals:

The overall goal of governance is to understand the issues and the strategic importance of IT, so that the County can sustain its operations and implement the strategies required to extend its activities into the future. Governance aims at ensuring that expectations for IT are met and IT risks are mitigated. Individual specific goals are broken out below.

- Through the use of IT, facilitate new business models and changing business practices through automation and tracking
- Balance IT's increasing costs and information's increasing value to obtain an appropriate return from IT investments
- Manage the risks of doing business in an interconnected digital world and the dependence on entities beyond the direct control of the enterprise

- Manage IT's impact on service continuity due to increasing reliance on information and IT in all aspects of the enterprise
- Maintain IT's ability to build and maintain knowledge essential to sustain the County
- Protect the County's reputation through the avoidance of IT failure
- Align central information services with County business need

III. Guiding Principles – “The County Good”:

The EITC will approach decisions in the context of the entire County rather than individual departments. EITC members will expect:

- Decisions and initiatives will be in accordance with the County's IT Strategic Plan.
- Timely, honest, open and respectful communication among all stakeholders.
- Informed decisions that acknowledge unique departmental needs, but consider what is best for the entire County (The “County Good”), including County mandates.

IV. Structure:

An Information Technology Governance framework is comprised of a council along with several committees. To accomplish the goals of Information Technology Governance, the County will establish the following components:

- Executive Information Technology Council (EITC)
- Governance Committee (GC)
- Standards Committee (SC)
- Ad-hoc Communities of Interest (CoIs)

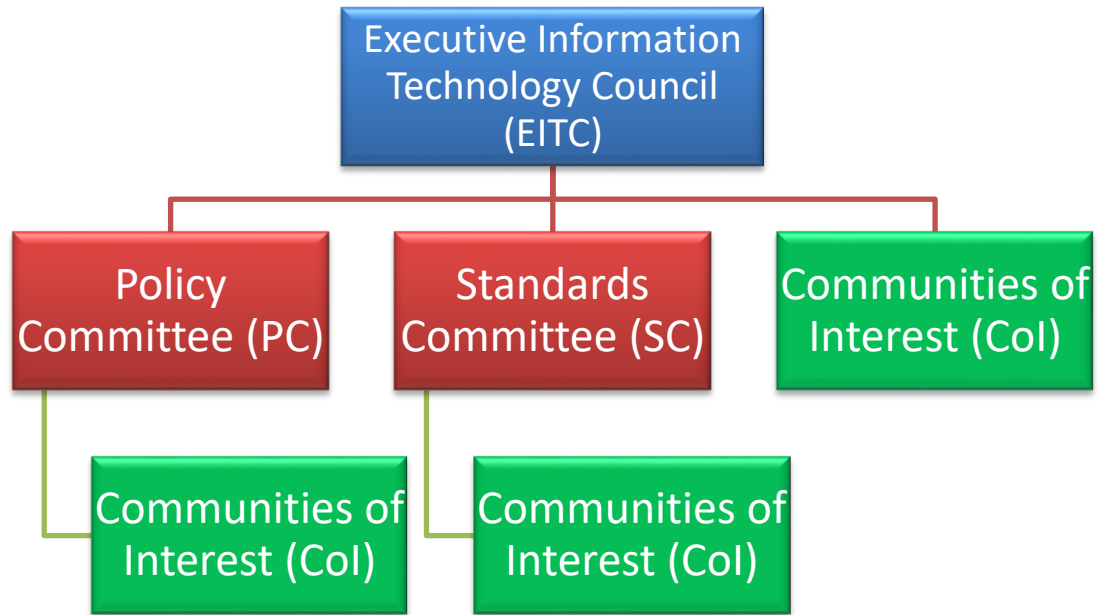


Figure 1 Information Technology Governance Structure

Executive Information Technology Council (EITC):

The Executive Information Technology Council is a standing committee that provides high-level oversight and guidance regarding County IT investment activity. The EITC exists to provide cooperation, collaboration, and consensus-driven advice on information technology investment priorities for the County good. The focus of the EITC will be fiscal management. The EITC will be the senior governing body in the IT Governance model. The Council will make informed decisions regarding the strategic direction for County IT deployment, and recommend the priority sequence and funding levels for new IT initiatives/projects to be undertaken by any IT organization. Another key activity will be to review and recommend which IT activities are best served by the General Services Department and what specialized IT initiatives will remain and become the responsibility of the sponsoring department. In short the Council will make the key IT investment decisions for the County.

Goal: To provide the oversight and direction necessary to assure that the County’s limited information technology resources are deployed effectively (focused on doing the right things for the County good), and efficiently (doing things right).

Composition: The Executive Information Technology Council will be composed of five representative functional groups. These groups include: Policy & Executive, Public Safety, Health & Human Services, Community Resources & Public Facilities and General Government & Support Services. Functional groups comprise of one or more departments to give equal representation.

All Board members must reside at the director or assistant director level. The County Executive Officer (CEO) is a member and serves as council chair. The Director of General Services provides linkages between this group of department representatives and the community of information technology experts throughout the County.

This overall structure provides a balanced representation of the County's key business areas. To assure that all stakeholders have an opportunity for direct representation, members of the Board will be open for appointment or election and serve for fixed length terms.

- 1) Policy & Executive
 - CEO – Chair
 - Deputy CEO or CFO
- 2) Public Safety
 - Probation
 - Public Defender
- 3) Health & Human Services
 - Public Health
 - Social Services
- 4) Community Resources & Public Facilities
 - Planning & Development
 - Public Works
- 5) General Government & Support Services
 - Auditor-Controller
 - Clerk-Recorder-Assessor
 - General Services

Scope: The Executive Information Technology Council will review and vote to approve or reject proposals submitted by the Policy Committee, Standards Committee, or any Community of Interest. Any department may submit a proposed initiative as described later in the section titled "Submission Procedures." Communities of Interest may be created to assist in the refinement of an initiative if requested by the EITC. Approved proposals will be submitted to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors for final approval.

The EITC will be responsible for the Countywide IT organizational structure and will, on occasion, make adjustments in the structure to better align resources as technology changes and/or as IT service delivery models necessitate, placing enterprise activities in General Services and specialized activities in the appropriate organizational home.

The Executive Information Technology Council will also evaluate IT investment opportunities from a County-wide perspective for fit within an overall strategic business strategy and mission of the County, and make IT investment recommendations

As part of the review process of any new IT initiative the EITC will make a determination as to whether the initiative should be an Enterprise solution, served to all departments by General Services Department, or a departmental solution servicing one or more departments and owned by the sponsoring department.

The EITC will be expected to address new IT Initiatives that will cost more than \$50,000 (including labor). These investments will be addressed through the establishment of Communities of Interest.

Policy Committee (PC):

The Policy Committee is the governance organization that will evaluate and recommend the composition of the County's IT Administrative Manual. The focus of the Policy Committee will be establishing policies and procedures for approval by the EITC. The Committee will evaluate proposals from IT stakeholders, launch fact finding activities as needed, and recommend to the EITC changes to County IT Administrative Manual.

Goal: To provide the policies needed to perform specific functions in a specific ways. Policies reflect an organization's logical progression from working in an ad-hoc manner to one where people are following common and consistent processes. Policies assist the County in understanding how to execute IT activities such as solution procurement, technology frameworks, security requirements, etc.

The intent of the PC will be to balance the need for departmental flexibility (more freedom to perform ad-hoc activities), with the need for the County to manage risk and establish expectations by producing expected rules of behavior. Policies will provide a common method of operation that allows for predictable, controllable and measurable activities across the organization. The PC will function as a permanent advisory committee to the EITC and will have the authority to appoint sub-committees or form COLs to research specific policy issues and return with recommendations.

Composition: The Policy Committee will be composed of seven functional groups. These groups include: Audit & Accountability, Legal & Regulatory, Public Safety, Health & Human Services, Privacy Records, Information Technology and Risk Management. Functional groups comprise of one or more departments to give equal representation.

All committee members are at the assistant director or managerial level. The Auditor-Controller is a member and serves as committee chair. The Assistant Director of General Services/ICT provides linkages between this group of department representatives and the community of information technology experts throughout the County.

This overall structure provides a balanced representation of the County's key business areas that have specific mandatory policies or compliance frameworks that must be followed related to their mission. To assure that all stakeholders have an opportunity for

direct representation, members of the Board will be open for appointment or election and serve for fixed length terms.

- 1) Audit & Accountability
 - Auditor-Controller
- 2) Legal & Regulatory
 - County Counsel
 - District Attorney
- 3) Public Safety
 - Sheriff
 - Fire
- 4) Health & Human Services
 - Public Health
 - Child Support Services
- 5) Privacy Records
 - Human Resources
 - Treasurer-Tax Collector
- 6) Information Technology
 - General Services
- 7) Risk Management
 - Risk Management

Scope: The PC will establish and maintain the listing approved County-wide IT policies. The PC will be the forum to discuss and evaluate proposals to change County IT policies. The PC will recommend changes to the policies, and identify the scope to which the policy applies. The PC will reassess, at least once a year, the composition of the County IT Administrative Manual looking for changes to external legal/compliance frameworks as well as opportunities to revise or retire existing policies.

Standards Committee (SC):

The Standards Committee is the governance organization that will evaluate and recommend the composition of the County's IT Architecture including what constitutes County IT standards. The focus of the Standards Committee will be technology management. The Committee will evaluate proposals from IT stakeholders, launch fact finding activities as needed, and recommend to the EITC changes to County IT Enterprise Architecture.

Goal: To manage the costs of on-going support for existing technology by evaluating the composition of County IT standards and the components of IT architecture. The intent of the SC will be to balance the need for departmental flexibility (more IT components to support), with the need for the County to manage support costs by limiting the scope and complexity of what technologies the County adopts as standard. The more existing IT

support costs can be reduced or growth managed, the more funding will be available to invest in new technology initiatives. The SC will function as a permanent advisory committee to the EITC and will have the authority to appoint sub-committees or form Cols to research specific technology issues and return with recommendations.

Composition: The Standards Committee will be composed of three functional groups. These groups include: State-Integrated Departments, Elected Departments and Specialized County Departments. Functional groups comprise of one or more departments to give equal representation.

All committee members are at the assistant director or managerial level. The Assistant Director of General Services/ICT is a member and serves as committee chair. The Assistant Director of General Services/ICT provides linkages between this group of department representatives and the community of information technology experts throughout the County.

This overall structure provides a balanced representation of County departments that have unique standards and requirements influenced by their internal structure and mission. To assure that all stakeholders have an opportunity for direct representation, members of the Board will be open for appointment or election and serve for fixed length terms.

- 1) State-Integrated Departments
 - Social Services
 - Child Support Services
- 2) Elected Departments
 - Auditor
 - Sheriff
 - District Attorney
 - Treasurer-Tax Collector
 - Clerk Recorder-Assessor
- 3) Regulated County Departments
 - Public Health
 - Behavioral Wellness
 - Planning & Development
 - Public Works
 - Fire
 - Probation
 - General Services

Scope: The SC will establish and maintain the listing of Information Technology within the Enterprise Technical Architecture framework document. The SC will be the forum to discuss and evaluate proposals to change County IT Enterprise Architecture. The SC will recommend which tools constitute County Standards, recommend changes to the

standards, and identify which of those standards are supported by the Information Technology Department and which County IT Standards are the responsibility of departments to support. The SC will reassess, at least once a year, the composition of the County Enterprise Architecture, looking for opportunities to reduce IT support costs by proactively eliminating obsolete technologies as well as proposing the addition of new more cost/effective technologies as part of an ongoing change management process.

Communities of Interest (CoI):

Communities of Interest are ad-hoc committees that will provide stakeholders the opportunity to form partnerships and address a common set of business automation issues or opportunities. The focus of a CoI will be to address specific business needs and/or technical issues that span multiple organizations. For example, a CoI will address major IT investments that are likely to have an impact across multiple departments. Another function of a CoI may be to represent the IT issues common to very small and under-funded departments, or a CoI to address the support of a specific technology product.

Goal: To make highly effective use of automation among common business functions, as a forum for special interests within the IT governance model, and utilize synergistic partnerships to share the financial burden as well as obtain the benefits of collaboration in the development of automation solutions.

Composition: A CoI formed to address County technology opportunities is an official sub-committee that can be formed by EITC or committee initiative. Communities Of Interest can also form by natural collaboration at the grass roots level and such a technology focused CoI will approach the EITC for official inclusion into the Information Systems Governance process. The composition of each CoI will be evaluated by the initiating body at the time of formation. One member of each CoI formed will be identified as liaison to the EITC to facilitate effective communication between the EITC or committee and the CoI.

Scope: These ad-hoc committees will vary greatly in scope and complexity of purpose. A CoI charter template is available to assist a group to organize and define their mission, scope, deliverables, and success criteria at the time of the CoI formation.

V. Voting Process:

The following voting rules will apply to the EITC and Committees:

- All members will have one vote.
- Members may designate an alternate who can attend and vote on their behalf. Alternates must be at the required job level within the council or committee.

- Alternate attendees will be responsible for briefing members on minutes following meetings.
- Voting will be by simple majority of those members present during a meeting.
- A quorum of members or alternates must be present to conduct a valid vote.
- Department representatives or alternates who do not attend three consecutive meetings will lose representation within their functional group.

VI. EITC and Committee Procedures

1) Communications:

- All documentation will be published on the EITC and Committee websites including agendas and minutes.
- The committees will develop standard documentation formats (templates and forms) to standardize and streamline communication and utilize electronic media to facilitate such communication among members of the IT governance community.

2) Meetings

- Schedule – The EITC will meet on a quarterly schedule. The Policy and Standards Committees will meet on a monthly basis. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed to conduct the business of IT governance.
- Agendas – Meetings agendas will be published prior to, will be used to manage the meeting time effectively. Submit items to the ICT Assistant Director at least one week in advance of the meeting.
- EITC and committee meetings will be conducted following Roberts Rules of Order to manage discussions and voting procedures.
- Project updates will be published on EITC website prior to the meeting so that the meeting's focus is on issue resolution and effecting decisions rather than status reporting.
- The focus of meetings will be to discuss the major agenda item(s), make decisions, and endorse recommendations related to scheduled agenda items.

3) Roles and Responsibilities:

- ICT Administrative staff will coordinate, schedule meetings, publish agendas, record and publish meeting minutes and facilitate communications among all IT governance stakeholders.
- The Assistant Director of General Services/ICT will maintain and publish annual reports at minimum regarding the status of on-going

IT governance activity including major projects to the IT governance community.

VII. Roles & Responsibilities:

- 1) **Role of the Customer:** Departments will engage Information Technology Governance by partnering with the General Services, Information Communications & Technology (ICT) Division to develop and present their specific project proposals to for evaluation, approval and prioritization using an approved template.
- 2) **Role of General Services:** The ICT Division will assist customer departments to develop new IT project proposals and help the customer move the proposals through the governance process. Project planning and management services will be provided for Information Service Governance recommended and funded projects that are assigned to ICT.
- 3) **Role of Information Technology Governance:** Information Technology Governance will provide the framework for IT decision making and will maintain the high level strategic direction and IT investment decisions.
- 4) **Role of the EITC:** To oversee all Governance processes (Committees & Cols), utilize formalized processes to evaluate IT investment proposals and decide which IT initiatives/projects will be recommended for funding (both shared and proprietary IT activity). The EITC will set priorities for IT initiatives recommended for those projects targeted for central IT organization support. The EITC will vet and approve policies for consideration to the IT Administrative Manual with a focus on process efficiency and risk management. The EITC will also review and endorse recommended changes to the County Enterprise Architecture with focus on technology cost management.
- 5) **Role of the PC:** The County Policy Committee will work with all IT Stakeholders (individual departments, Col, and ITC) to evaluate legal and regulatory compliance requirements, cybersecurity and other risks to County operations, process efficiencies through policy, and recommend changes to the County's IT Administrative Manual.
- 6) **Role of the SC:** The County Standards Committee will work with all IT Stakeholders (individual departments, Col, and ICT) to evaluate industry trends, County business automation needs, current IT infrastructure composition and ongoing support costs, and recommend changes to the County's IT Architecture including the County technology standards.

- 7) **Role of CoI:** Communities of Interest will form and work together to evaluate business needs, seek IT solutions that meet those needs, develop formal proposals to launch new IT initiatives, provide a forum for special interest groups to participate directly in information system governance. The Communities of Interest will provide the Executive Information Technology Council with the analysis and information needed to make informed decisions and recommendations regarding IT investment. Communities of Interest may recommend changes to the County IT Administrative Manual to the PC and County IT Architecture standards to the SC and/or offer new IT initiatives to the EITC for review, prioritization, and adoption.

VIII. Submission Procedures:

New IT Initiatives

- 1) What the Executive Information Technology Council will evaluate:
 - a. The definition and scope of the proposed IT project.
 - b. What the proposed IT initiative will accomplish or deliver.
 - c. Who will benefit from implementation of the proposed project?
 - d. Will there be impact to other department systems?
 - e. Does the new technology comply with existing policies and standards?
 - f. The estimated one-time costs.
 - g. The estimated on-going sustaining costs.
 - h. The estimated duration of the project.
 - i. Potential or proposed source of funds (one-time and sustaining).
- 2) What the EITC will decide and provide in their ruling:
 - a. Does the proposal support the County mission and meet the “County good” criteria?
 - b. Should the GS Department undertake the proposed project, should it be the sole responsibility of the sponsoring organization or should it be a joint effort?
 - c. The recommended source of funds for the project (both one-time and sustaining)?
 - d. Are ICT resources available for new project development?
 - e. Provide additional funding to expand the ICT project development resource pool.
 - f. Provide additional infrastructure funding (equipment/staff) necessary to sustain the new IT initiative/system following project completion.

- g. Retire or eliminate existing infrastructure components and use the cost savings to fund the sustaining requirements of the new IT initiative/system.
- h. Recommend the priority ranking for the new IT initiative relative to other new projects in the central IT development queue that are not already underway.

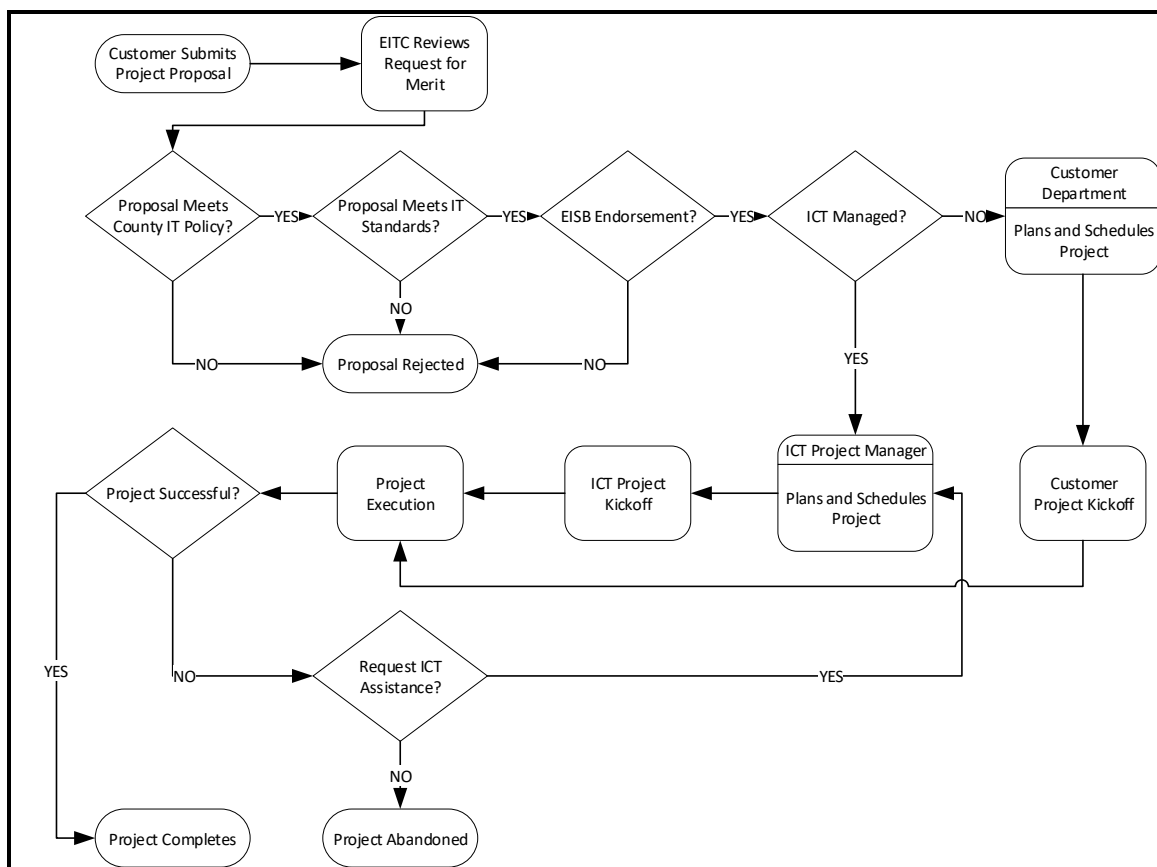


Figure 2: New IT Initiative Workflow

New IT Policies

Proposed additions or changes to the IT Administrative Manual will be vetted through the Policy Committee. The following steps are required for submission.

- 1) For new policies, draft proposed policy using the approved template. For changes, submit revised policy identifying all proposed changes.
- 2) Select a sponsor to represent the draft policy for consideration.
- 3) Submit the draft policy to the Policy Committee for review.

The draft policy will then be evaluated by committee voting members who will then convene to vote to accept or reject the draft policy. If rejected, the sponsor may be given additional guidance and suggestions to incorporate into a revised draft policy that may be resubmitted. If approved, the policy will be submitted to the EITC for formal ratification and subsequent submittal to the County Board of Supervisors. If approved by the Board of Supervisors, the policy is then formally incorporated into the County's IT Administrative Manual.

New IT Standards

Proposed additions or changes to the County's IT Enterprise Architecture will be vetted through the Standards Committee. The following steps are required for submission.

- 1) For new standards, draft proposed standard using the approved template. For changes, submit revised policy identifying all proposed changes.
- 2) Select a sponsor to represent the draft standard for consideration.
- 3) Submit the draft standard to the Standards Committee for review.

The draft standard will then be evaluated by committee voting members who will then convene to vote to accept or reject the draft standard. If rejected, the sponsor may be given additional guidance and suggestions to incorporate into a revised draft standard that may be resubmitted. If approved, the policy will be submitted to the EITC for formal ratification and subsequent submittal to the County Board of Supervisors. If approved by the Board of Supervisors, the policy is then formally incorporated into the County's IT Enterprise Architecture.

IX. Key Success Factors:

- **Representation** – All key IT stakeholders need to be represented in the governance process. These must include County business leaders, ICT, and other departmental IT representatives.
- **Legislation** – Information Technology Governance requires enforcement authority. The EITC must have the ability to approve or reject IT investment projects, and ensure that funds are withheld for disapproved projects to assure everyone operates within the governance process.
- **Board Support and Authority** – The EITC is ultimately responsible for IT investment decisions. The Policy and Standards Committees are advisory organizations. The EITC provides executive support and authority regarding IT investment County-wide. The County Board of Supervisors empowers the governance body to make decisions. Approved policies and standards are codified into Board Policy.
- **Integration with County Fiscal Planning** - To effectively manage County IT investment, the governance process must function within the timing of the enterprise planning and budgeting cycle by delivering an annual IT Investment Plan.