SANTA BARBARA COUNTY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC PLAN

FY2008-2011

Message from the CEO

Background

On May 3, 2005 the Board of Supervisors created the Blue Ribbon Budget Task Force whose broad goals were to identify budgeting best practices in both the public and private sectors that could be applied to internal and external County budget processes, make the County budget process more transparent, and promote greater participation from the public.

On June 9, 2006, the Board of Supervisors received a report from the Task Force outlining key recommendations for improving overall accountability, customer focus, and efficiencies throughout County government. An integral component of the recommendations involved information technology structure and services. Specifically, the Task Force recommended that the County clarify and strengthen its information technology governance to allow projects and processes to be implemented in a coordinated fashion and expand the use of technology to provide improved services both within the organization and to external customers. Those recommendations related to IT are summarized below.

- Improve the countywide IT structure and service
- Identify the County's overall technology investment
- Implement an overall information technology management strategy and structure that reports to the County Executive Officer
- Enhance the County Executive Officer's close oversight of all enterprise-wide information technology projects and systems
- Clarify and strengthen the County's information technology governance structure to allow projects and processes to be implemented in a coordinated fashion
- Expand the use of technology to provide improved services both within the organization and externally to customers and clients
- Develop strategic information technology plans for every County department

During the fall 2005 and spring 2006, the Local Government Solutions Group interviewed approximately 100 County staff and facilitated several workshops to identify IT and GIS needs and opportunities. Their findings are shown below.

- Countywide IT strategy and leadership is needed
- Decentralization has swung too far
- Define ITS core services for customers
- Commitment to collaboration
- Undefined department responsibilities for IT
- Leverage department responsibilities for IT
- Leverage department investment for enterprise benefits
- Adopt multi-year financial plan for technology investments
- Aggressively pursue GIS and government opportunities to facilitate data exchange

The 2006-2007 Operating Budget funded a small project unit charged with two simultaneous tasks:

- Implementation of three strategic initiatives
    - Data for Decision-Making
    - GIS Stabilization and Expansion
    - e-Government - Website Enhancement

- Development of a Countywide IT Strategic Plan
    - Encourage broad participation and support of key stakeholders
    - Develop a clear understanding of the current environment
    - Create a common vision for information technology's role in the County's future
    - Identify and prioritize issues that must be addressed to achieve the vision
    - Close the loop on previous planning efforts
    - Develop specific objectives and an action plan for moving forward to achieve the vision and goals
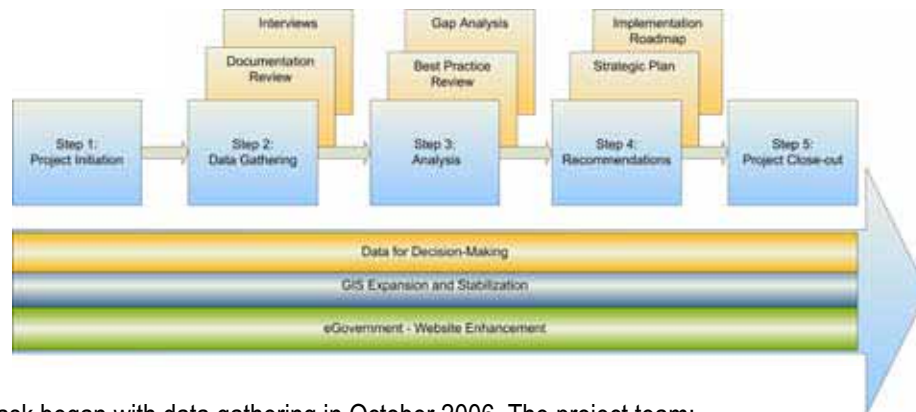
The strategic planning task began with data gathering in October 2006. The project team:

- Reviewed relevant background material
- Met with Board of Supervisors members and their key staff
- Conducted executive interviews
- Conducted IT staff interviews and group discussions

Beginning in January 2007, a series of workshops were held to bring together the County's business and IT experts to define how the County's information technology can be improved to support current and future County needs. During these workshops, department heads and key IT staff:

- Reviewed and discussed the results of the data gathering
- Reviewed and discussed IT Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives keeping in mind the Blue Ribbon Task Force recommendations, the Board principles of Accountability, Competency and Efficiency (ACE) and the County's strategic direction
- Developed the IT strategic direction
- Identified strategic initiatives
- Prioritized key initiatives

This information was then documented in the Implementation Roadmap and the Information Technology Strategic Plan Working Document.

The Plan

This document presents the results of the planning process, a definition of the County's Vision for IT, the Mission of the IT organizations and identification of key Goals, Strategies and Initiatives to be addressed over the next three years.

The focus at the front-end of the Plan is on three immediate initiatives:

- *Data for Decision-Making:* Making County data more easily available for analysis and reporting
- *GIS Stabilization and Expansion:* The foundation upon which we will lay the data
- *e-Government*
    - Website Enhancement: The delivery mechanism for both information and services
    - Online Applications Deployment: How the data is transformed into services and information

Another key initiative is the development of an IT Governance structure to define how best to organize our IT resources, fund IT initiatives and ensure we realize maximum value for our IT investments. The following pages provide brief descriptions of these key strategic planning elements, which are covered in detail in the Information Technology Strategic Plan Working Document.
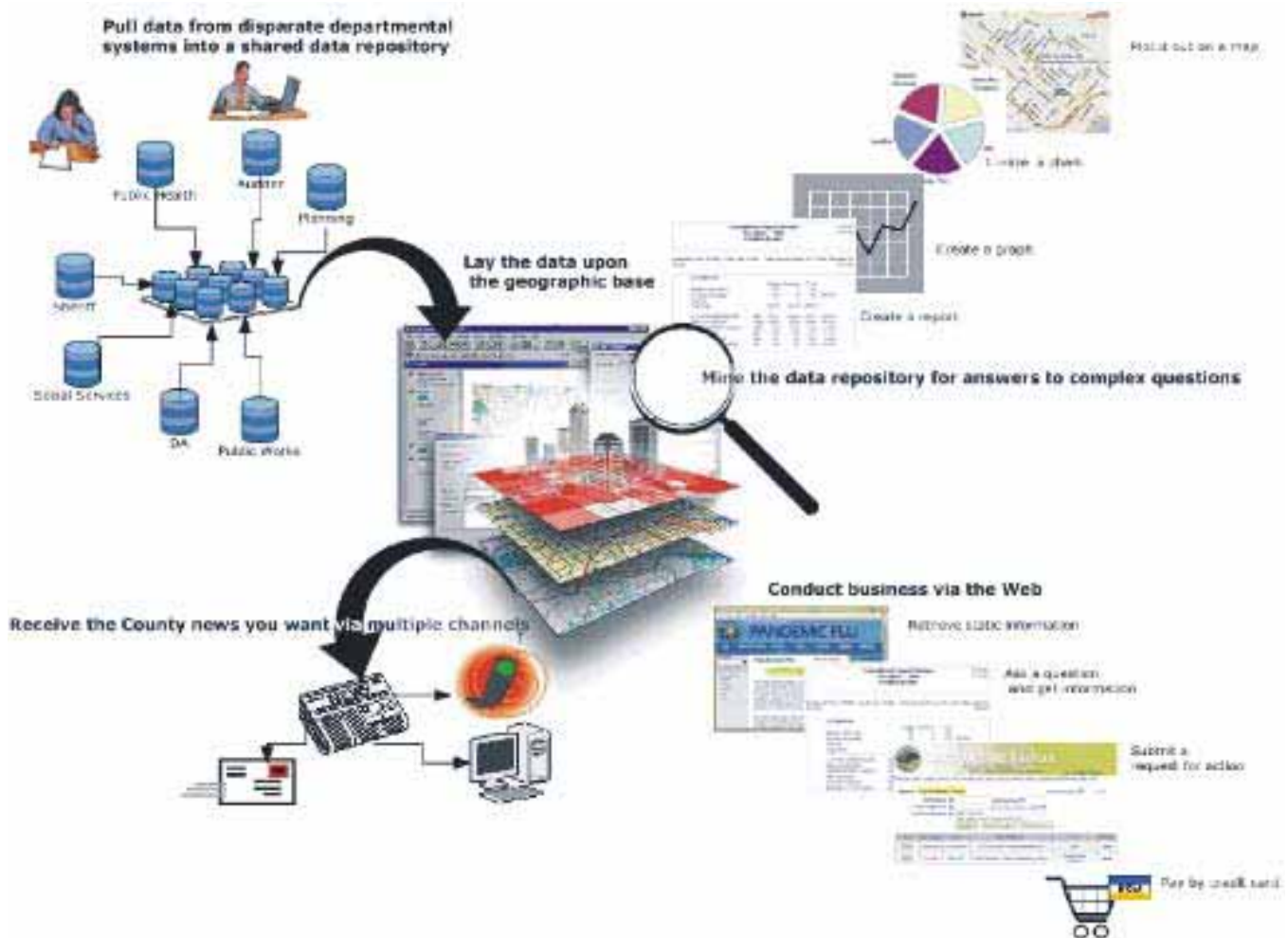
Vision for Information Technology

County of Santa Barbara citizens, businesses, clients, customers, employees and elected officials are able to quickly and easily conduct business with the County at their convenience via customer-friendly systems that provide information and services to the maximum extent permitted by law.

County IT Organizations' Mission

Enable the County to provide the highest level of services to its customers through innovative information technology solutions.

Goals and Objectives

The desired end state and how we will achieve the vision and mission

The following five goals will be implemented through objectives and initiatives. They define what we need to accomplish from four perspectives:

- **Customer perspective:** "How can we use information technology to meet customer expectations and achieve their business requirements?"

- **Financial perspective:** "How will we effectively use and leverage taxpayer dollars ensuring good value for our technology expenditures?"

- **Internal process perspective:** "Where do we need to excel and what processes should we streamline to satisfy stakeholders, partners and County elected officials?"

- **Learning / growth perspective:** "What will we do to ensure organizational performance improvement, change and learning?"

Goal 1: Citizens, clients and customers can access information and request services at their convenience (anytime; anyplace)

Goal 2: Information technology systems and applications are comprehensive, integrated, and customer-friendly

Goal 3: Both internal and external stakeholders have access to a comprehensive repository of information for decision-making

Goal 4: County information technology investments result in a reduction of cost, waste and duplication

Goal 5: County IT staff are provided tools and training that enable them to work collaboratively to provide the County with the highest quality customer service and support

We will achieve these goals by focusing on the 16 strategic objectives depicted in the following diagram. We have identified IT key initiatives and projects to move us forward in achieving our goals and objectives. These are shown on the Implementation Roadmap on page 11.
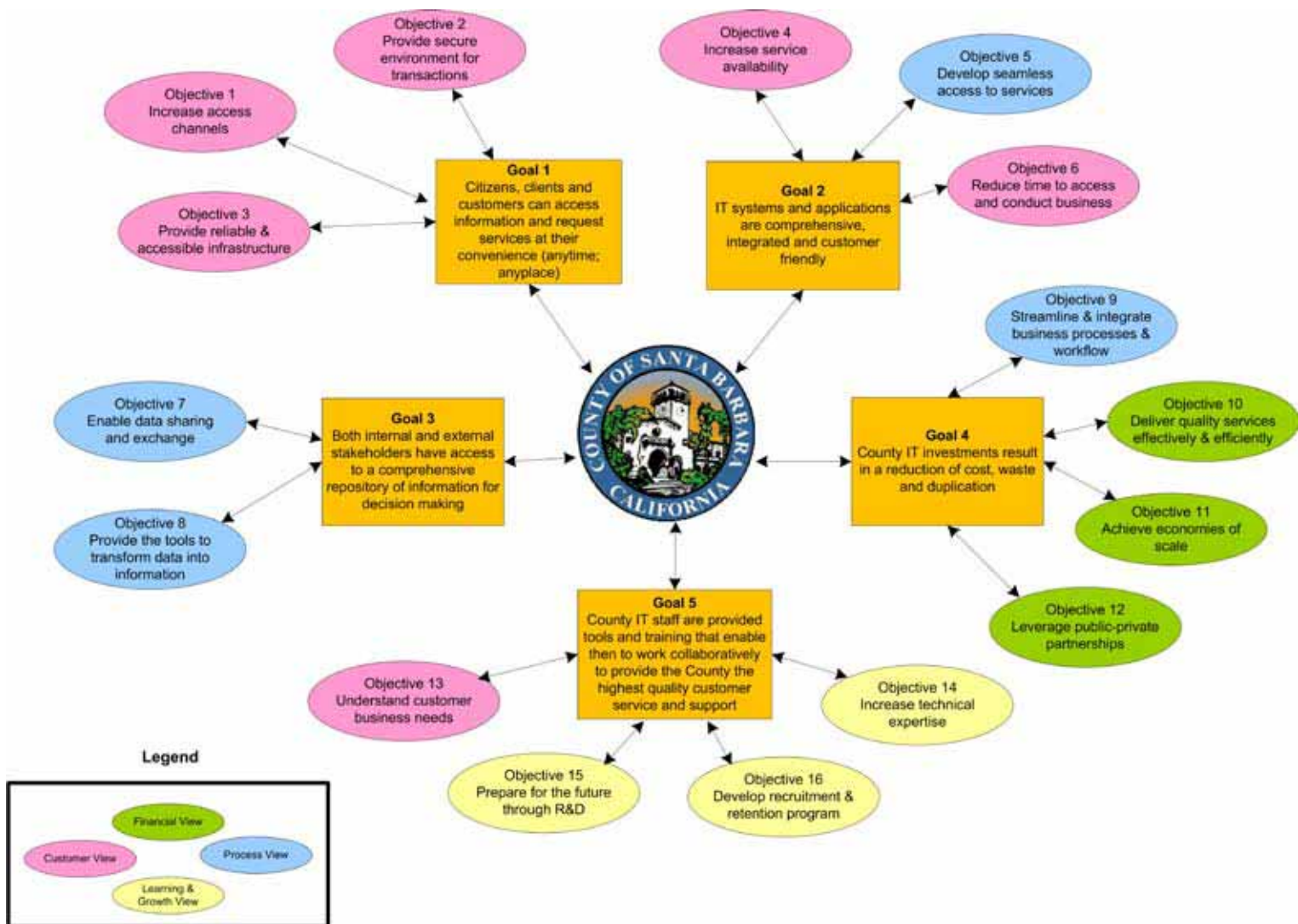
Initiatives

Key Strategic Initiatives were identified to help close the gap between where County information technology is today and where it needs to be in the future. Successful execution of these initiatives will enable the County to achieve its information technology objectives. Numerous projects fall under these initiatives. The following pages summarize key initiatives. Detailed descriptions can be found in the supporting documentation.
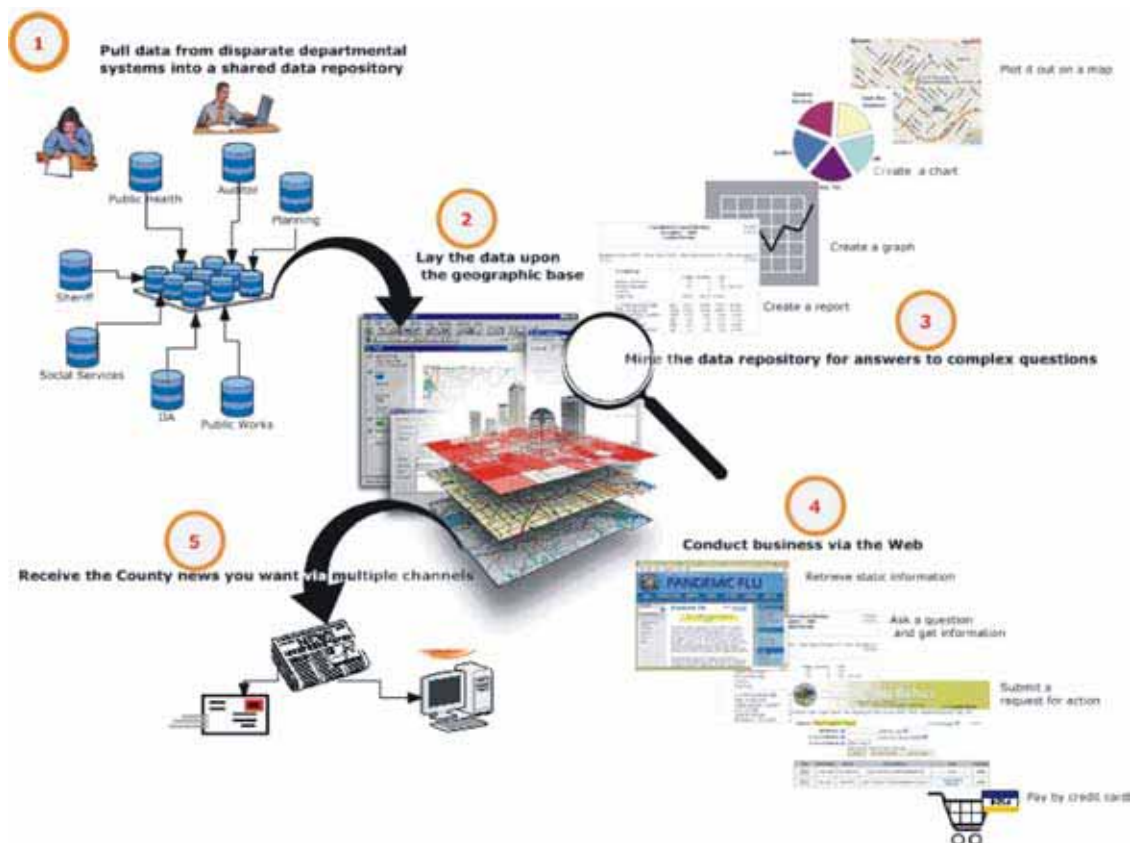
Data for Decision-Making

This initiative is the foundational project of the IT Strategic Plan. The goal is to develop a reporting and analysis infrastructure capable of consolidating data from disparate departmental systems into a shared repository thereby streamlining the current cumbersome, time-consuming process of finding, aggregating and reporting on data. The scope is to define the strategy and implement tools to facilitate the collection, aggregation, analysis and reporting of data for both internal and external decision-making and to provide training to facilitate effective use of the new tools. Key objectives include:

- Maximize the value of existing departmental systems and databases
- Enable non-technical users to find and access the data they need to answer questions and make informed decisions

GIS Stabilization and Enhancement

Santa Barbara County has a significant investment in geographic data. However, it is dispersed among the departments and not well-suited to cross-departmental analysis and reporting. The focus of this initiative is to maximize the County's existing geographic information system (GIS) resources and to expand its GIS capabilities to support internal and external customers' geographic information needs. The scope of the initiative is to design and develop an enterprise geographic information database that is portable and scalable to meet the County's needs as they expand and change over time. This will include the identification of user needs, the development of a logical data model, construction of the database, data loading and the development of interactive mapping applications to present data geographically. This framework will become the foundation upon which we will lay the data from the *Data for Decision-Making* initiative.
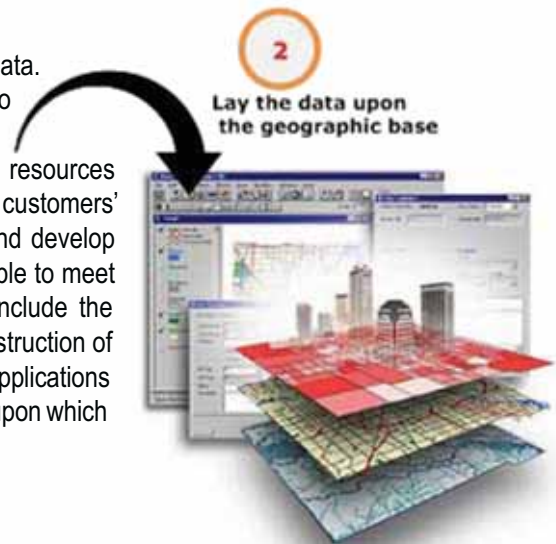
Key objectives include:

- Translate geographic data into user-friendly information
- Make geographic information available internally and externally for decision-making

e-Government

There are five main components of the e-Government initiative:

- Website Enhancement
- Development of a Citizen-Centric Service Structure
- Internet and Intranet Application Development
- Additional Channels for Service Delivery
- Business Process Integration

The *Website Enhancement* component culminates with the implementation of a design and supporting structure for the County's web presence providing both internal and external services. This includes the technical infrastructure required to meet the County's online applications needs, utility-like services necessary to facilitate electronic transactions, supporting governance processes and procedures, an implementation plan and skills transference to County staff that will enable the departments to fully utilize this infrastructure moving forward. It also includes the implementation of a *Citizen-Centric Service Structure* offering e-Government services to customers in such a manner that they do not need to be familiar with the County's organizational structure to accomplish their business. The *Internet and Intranet Applications Development* component is the implementation of applications to provide information and services to both internal and external customers via the enhanced website. The *Additional Channels for Service Delivery* component will explore the implementation of technology to support multiple access points for County customers by making services available via call centers, service centers and kiosks. Finally, we need to identify which business processes will be affected by e-Government services and identify opportunities for *Business Process Integration* and sharing of information that will support e-Government service offerings.

Key objectives include:

- Provide the highest level of services to customers through innovative IT solutions
- Make it easier for customers to locate the services and/or information they are looking for
- Provide 24 hour availability to customers wherever possible
- Provide additional channels for customer service delivery

- Reduce the number of departmental contacts necessary to conduct a transaction
- Reduce the time it takes to complete transactions
- Identify and prioritize e-Government services desired by customers
- Re-engineer business processes to streamline service delivery and improve information sharing

IT Governance

IT Governance is the framework for how IT decisions and policies are made, administered and enforced. This framework includes an appreciation for the critical importance of personnel, organizations and business processes affected by changing technologies within a large, complex and rapidly evolving information centric environment. IT Governance is concerned about two things: ensuring IT investments deliver maximum value to the enterprise and mitigation of IT risks. The objectives of this initiative are to :

- Design, implement and institutionalize an IT Governance structure that will provide guidance on the management of information technology and a framework for making timely IT decisions
- Clearly define the process, rules, agreements and standards appropriate for the County's needs
- Ensure IT resources are deployed to deliver maximum value
- Ensure appropriate management of IT-related risks
- Ensure that IT investments meet the following objectives:
    - Alignment of IT with the enterprise
    - Realization of the promised benefits
    - Support and coordinate with the County's performance management systems, strategic planning activities and the budget process

IT Employee Excellence

A highly-trained, flexible IT workforce is essential in achieving the vision set forth in this Strategic Plan as well as meeting the everyday business needs of County departments. The County struggles to attract and retain qualified IT staff. The scope of this initiative is to develop plans and programs to recruit, train, develop and retain qualified information technology experts. This will include the identification of staff skills required to meet the County's needs and development of plans and programs to enhance, develop and maintain those skill sets. Key objectives include:

- Recruit, train and develop employees to support the County's information technology
- Provide the highest quality service with a well-trained staff
- Become the local IT employer of choice
- Increase the flexibility of the IT classification and compensation structure
- Recognize the value of shared training and cross-department teams to ensure business continuity
- Recognize staff for their achievements

Electronic Content Management

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) is comprised of the processes and technologies used to capture, manage, store, preserve, and deliver content and documents. It covers the complete life cycle of content from its creation to its destruction. This initiative is to develop a countywide content management strategy and implementation plan for a realistic approach to electronic content management. This will include strategies for records management and document imaging, storage and retrieval. Objectives include:

- Reduce the amount of paper circulated and stored by County departments
- Reduce duplicative electronic records management and storage activities
- Increase timely access to information

- Ensure proper storage and retention of electronic official records
- Increase awareness of intra/inter departmental needs for record retention

21st Century Infrastructure Development

Enterprise Technical Architecture is the term used to describe the various components comprising an organization's IT implementation as illustrated in the diagram to the right. The goal of this initiative is to ensure the County's IT components are aligned with the County's core goals and strategic direction. We will create the blueprint for development, deployment and implementation of a County technology infrastructure that will enable the County to provide e-Government services to meet the County's current and future needs. Objectives include:

- Develop a scalable and flexible technology infrastructure
- Leverage County hardware and software resources
- Develop a funding strategy to ensure the sustainability of the infrastructure
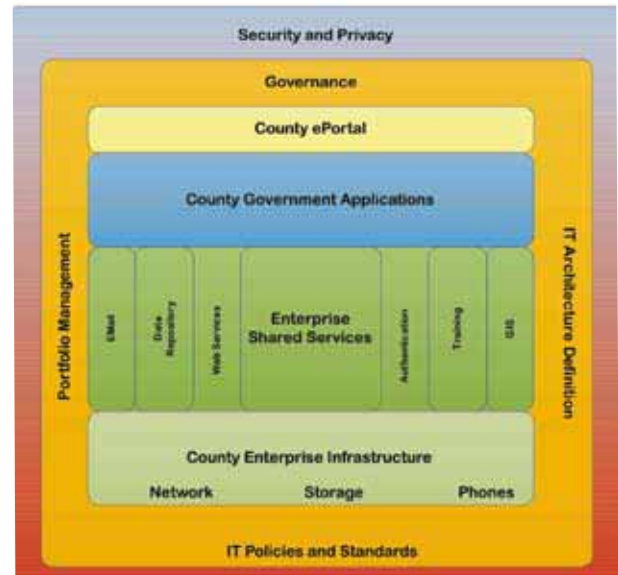
IT Security Program

Citizens and businesses trust the County to safeguard their personal information. Taxpayers expect us to protect our IT investments. The County currently has security policies and procedures in place to do both. We will expand these to develop a comprehensive information technology security program to ensure the safety of sensitive and confidential information from the desktop to the host. Key objectives of this initiative include:

- Develop security policies and procedures to protect the County's information assets regardless of technology platform
- Implement procedures to mitigate the impact of IT security incidents
- Develop a security awareness program
- Balance security measures with the need to get work done

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Program

The County depends upon the use of information technology for service delivery. This is especially important in times of emergency when speed and efficiency could affect lives. Working in conjunction with the County Office of Emergency Services, we will develop IT business continuity and disaster recovery plans based upon County and departmental business needs. This will include reviewing existing disaster recovery plans and documentation, and conducting business impact analysis to identify critical applications and related hardware, software, services, etc. An important goal is to balance risk versus cost when making recommendations. We will also develop risk measures. Objectives include:

- Prevent and mitigate the risks of IT disasters
  - Reduce risk of partial failures
  - Minimize potential of complete system failures
- Prevent and mitigate the risks of non-IT disasters on IT resources
- Leverage current and future technology investments
- Prepare for disasters (think tanks, scenario and disaster drills)

IT Best Practices

There are many components to a successful IT program. The goal is to ensure that all the components of our information technology systems and processes work together in the most effective manner. The Best Practices initiative will identify and implement those information technology best practices that result in significant cost savings and more effective technology acquisition and implementation. Examples include:

- Resource optimization
- Shared knowledge forums
- IT research and development
- Using information technology effectively program for County staff

The *Resource Optimization* component will establish a process that provides for on-going evaluation, tracking and reporting of IT resource utilization (hardware, software, staff) to ensure they are being used to their fullest capacity. *Shared Knowledge Forums* will establish venues for information sharing and education both within and outside the County to enhance decision-making ability and cross agency/department collaboration, reduce duplicative efforts through communication and partnering, and identify opportunities for leveraging resources. The *IT Research and Development* component encompasses developing a program that ensures the County can cost-effectively identify and test technological tools that may help departments achieve their future business needs. This will include:

- Coordinating the pursuit of new technologies by County information technology staff
- Establishing a technical environment that facilitates the identification and testing of technological tools for County departments
- Ensuring County information technology staff understand the implications of implementing new technologies
- Creating a customer-friendly test lab to facilitate testing and problem-solving

Finally, the *Using IT Effectively* component consists of developing and implementing an IT training program for all County employees. In order to maximize the value of our investments in IT, we must ensure County employees can increase their efficiency and effectiveness by taking full advantage of the capability of automated tools.

Citizen Technology Outreach

The focus of this initiative is the development of a program to identify and reach out to County customers, clients and providers who do not normally use technology, partner with other agencies to make surplus equipment available for their use, and provide training and assistance to encourage use of the County's online services. Key objectives include:

- Introduce customers and providers to the technology services the County offers
- Encourage and enable as many as possible users of online services
- Prepare future customers for effective use of County online services

IT Strategic Plan Implementation Roadmap

Key Strategic Initiatives Implementation Roadmap

The following diagram depicts our tentative timeline for implementing the key strategic initiatives. The timeline will be evaluated and adjusted over time taking into consideration available funding, staff, dependencies between priorities and County priorities.

Goals	FY07/08	FY08/09	FY09/10	FY10/11	Key Strategic Initiatives
Goal 1 Citizens can access information & request services at their convenience	I-1a.	I-2a.		I-1b.	**Supporting Goal 1** I-1a: eGovernment – Website Enhancement I-1b: Citizen Technology Program I-2a: IT Security Program I-3a: 21st Century Infrastructure Development I-3b: Business Continuity & Disaster Preparedness
	I-3b.				
		I-3a			
Goal 2 Applications are comprehensive, integrated & customer friendly	A-1a.				**Supporting Goal 2** A-1a: eGovernment – Online Applications A-2a: eGovernment – Additional Delivery Channels A-3a: Citizen-Centric Service Structure
	A-2a.				
	A-3a.				
Goal 3 Stakeholders have access to repository of information for decision-making	D-1a.				**Supporting Goal 3** D-1a: Data for Decision Making D-2a: GIS Stabilization and Expansion
	D-2a				
Goal 4 Investments result in reduction of cost, waste & duplication	E-2a.				**Supporting Goal 4** E-1a: Business Process Integration E-2a: Electronic Content Management E-2b: IT Governance E-3a: IT Best Practices
		E-1a			
	E-3a				
	E-2b.				
Goal 5 IT staff have tools & training to work collaboratively to provide highest quality customer service	T-1b.		T-1a.		**Supporting Goal 5** T-1a: Citizen/Customer Outreach & Education T-1b: Shared Knowledge Forums T-2a: IT Employee Excellence T-2b: Using IT Effectively Program T-3a: IT Research & Development
	T-2a.	T-2b.			
	T-3a.				

Fiscal Strategies

This Information Technology Strategic Plan positions us to achieve the vision of improving the ability of both internal and external stakeholders to communicate and conduct business with the County. However, to achieve this goal, we must develop the financial strategies to pay for the investment this plan calls for. The County must pursue new, innovative funding strategies. To this end, we will:

- Benchmark current IT spending to ensure we are following best practices to maximize the value of current expenditures
- Explore additional funding sources, including public/private partnerships
- Seek additional General Fund support as appropriate

Organizational Strategies

The County has a highly decentralized information technology management approach. In order to achieve the Strategic Plan goals and objectives, there must be a strong commitment to working toward the greater good of the County organization. The strategic planning process began the process of bringing together various departments and stakeholders to identify a common IT direction. Work is still needed to define an organizational model combining the best of both centralized and decentralized models into a hybrid approach to determine which IT functions and services are best centralized and which are most effective decentralized to achieve the IT vision and support departmental business goals. This will be addressed once the County's IT Governance structure is defined and implemented.

IT Governance

As previously mentioned, governance is an enterprise philosophy for how an organization defines who is responsible for what and how decisions are made. To a large degree, it is a political process. IT Governance is the framework for how IT decisions and policies are made, administered and enforced. Due to the increasing importance of information technology in service delivery, the overall objective of the County's IT Governance Program is to understand how IT can be used as both a strategic and tactical tool in ensuring the sustainability of County operations and to implement strategies for successful IT deployment. It has five focus areas:

- Strategic Alignment
- Value Delivery
- Resource Management
- Risk Management
- Performance Management

Developing an IT Governance structure is a key next step toward successful implementation of this plan.

Measuring Our Success

Even the best-laid plans change. We will conduct formal and informal surveys annually to measure our performance and alter our course as necessary over the next three years. We will know we have successfully implemented this plan when our internal (employees and Board of Supervisors members) and external (citizens, businesses, visitors) customers tell us:

- IT solutions have helped reduce the time and effort it takes to access services and conduct business with the County
- They have access to a comprehensive repository of information for decision-making and tools that make it easy to interpret the data
- County information technology investments have resulted in a reduction of cost, waste and duplication
- Staff have the tools and training that enable them to work collaboratively to meet customer service and support expectations

County of Santa Barbara

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