

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
STRATEGIC OPERATING PLAN (ITSOP)**

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City of Walnut Creek

Information Technology Division

Strategic Operating Plan – 2016 Update

Executive Summary

This executive summary provides the following information: (1) some comments on the **current state of IT services and capabilities** in the City (including changes noted since the last review in 2012), (2) **Key Findings and recommendations** from the Consultant and (3) a discussion of the **Plan to Move Forward**.

Current State of IT Services and Capabilities

NexLevel completed a survey of employees and interviews with major customers/ stakeholders. The results were that there is a general improvement in the quality, responsiveness and customer centered nature of the IT Division's services. Improvement was noted across the board in areas from understanding business needs to leadership to speed and reliability.

Customers also identified a few areas where improvement is needed as follows:

- Enhancement of project management capacity and effectiveness
- Take more time to understand the needs of customers before moving forward
- Increase time and effort in acquisition and support of mobile applications
- Step into a more strategic role in the process of application planning and deployment
- Virtual desktop deployment was generally unfavorable amongst users due to perceived degradation of performance

IT and ASD takes the identified issues and survey comments very seriously and is addressing or in progressing of developing plan to remediate the identified issues. Examples include increase use of Intranet for communications, VDI strategic performance improvement plan and online user technical training.

The IT Division itself identified the lack of a mobile device management strategy and absence of a formal disaster recovery plan as key deficits that need to be addressed.

NexLevel evaluated the City's progress in major strategic areas from the 2012 review to the current 2016 review:

1. Governance – was initially implemented with the TAC process but has since been suspended
2. Project Management – not implemented, but in process – remains a need
3. Reorganize to have separate focus on Applications vs Infrastructure – in process with recent structural changes
4. Maintain IT standards (consistency in deployment, adherence to security best practices, etc.) – in progress, progress being made
5. Add staff to support strategic recommendations – some action taken following initial results, more action with recent structural changes

These are enabling recommendations that establish a platform for success.

Key Findings and Recommendations

In its conclusion, NexLevel indicated the most striking finding is that, while the City has made strides in improving its management of IT resources, we have done so without a structured and governance directed approach. While they acknowledge the gains the IT Division has attained in its management of infrastructure and customer satisfaction, NexLevel concluded that focus on governance and strategic planning remains important for long-term success.

High level recommendations developed in the report are as follows:

- **Improve governance and strategic planning** to ensure IT resources and funding are aligned with business priorities (this includes consideration of IT subcommittees such as Public Safety, ERP, GIS and digital govt/ public outreach)
- **Continue shift in focus from IT infrastructure to Application and Business Model Support** over the next several years (contemplated continued move to cloud-based services) – this includes focus on project management
- **Resource management needs to be a key focus** – the report notes the strains on IT resources are very high (as users expect IT to be available on demand) and IT will need to be mindful of priorities and use of City-wide resources (not just IT Division resources)
- **Risk Management and Mitigation** will continue to be a key focus both in management of infrastructure and also management of business applications

NexLevel also identified 5 Key Central Areas that Impact most City Governments

1. Document and content management – the City received good marks from NexLevel for identification and progress in deploying OnBase to meet this need
2. Finance and HR – the current ERP deployment is directly addressing this need into the future
3. Land Management and GIS – the deployment of Accela and GIS resources are highlighted as responsive to this area. Our deployment of GIS resources received high marks from NexLevel whereas Accela is too early to tell
4. Digital Government and Community Engagement – our new website and use of social media were highlighted in this area as successes. This is an area where much room for expansion and improvement was identified.
5. Business Intelligence/ Analytics –this is the ability to use data to inform management decisions, the new ERP deployment, Accela, OnBase, Class replacement and the move to open data all promise enhanced tools and software for business intelligence and analytics to increase efficiencies in the City.

IT Division Note: The key will be to make full use of these new system capabilities. Too often software deployments are rushed to gain basic functionality, at the expense of these business

analytic functions. Project management and continued focus on getting the most from our software applications after initial deployment is needed.

IT projects – the report summarizes our success in completing a large number of projects, those underway and new projects identified by the various Departments. In 2012, 73 projects were identified. In 2016, 36 projects remain with the majority of them underway and nearing completion. Seven new projects were identified during the department interviews. This list is detailed in the full report.

Plan to Move Forward – Strategic Priorities

Redesign IT Governance and Strategic Planning

The Administrative Services Department and IT Division want to directly address the most significant finding in the report by reconstituting an IT Governance Structure that provides for the strategic planning needed in this area. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) structure was good at providing some vetting of various projects brought forward by various departments, but it did not provide the strategic and enterprise level thinking that is needed to provide a true governance structure. Feedback from TAC members led to the temporary suspension of the TAC meetings while we refreshed the ITSOP and discussed restructuring. In summary, TAC members felt the meetings were only for justifying IT priorities, a lack of communications back to department leadership and members felt they were there to protect their projects. The attached memo details our thoughts on restructuring the IT Governance Committee.

Shift Focus from IT Infrastructure to IT Application Deployment and Support

The recent restructure of the IT Division is intended to provide very direct support of Applications and also project management. The MOU recently entered into with the Police Department and their IT roadmap are recent developments that promise to be a wave of the future. The IT Division intends to become more proactive in contributing to business solutions. The shift is possible with new resources and the completion of more infrastructure projects.

Resource Management Focus

The report properly identified that our IT resources are very stretched. Replacing not one but three major systems at once, while upgrading many elements of our infrastructure put success of the projects at risk. Going forward, it will be critical to fully resource any significant deployments of IT applications. Project management and resources to backfill for existing staff must be a prime consideration. This focus on resources was NOT just a focus on the IT Division but on overall City resources during these large projects. This includes leveraging all city resources to assist with and address non IT centric elements of projects.

We will seek to ensure the revised governance structure is charged with fully identifying projects that require additional resources to ensure success. Resource Management was also identified as an issue in

the 2012 review. Recent restructuring and an additional FTE has moved us closer to NexLevel's recommendations.

Risk Management and Mitigation (IT security)

Management of IT resources has never been more complicated or challenging. Security challenges exist in virtually all environments from limiting physical access to proper deployments of firewalls and security measures.

The advance of mobile technology and planned increase in employees working from remote locations promises to increase these complexities. While we generally see a reduced need in the area of infrastructure management going forward, this is an area where resources may need to increase.

The City will increase and enhance its use of experienced vendors to augment staff in ensuring our focus on security strategies, disaster recovery plan and mobile technology governance are addressed very directly. Of course, it is well established that most security breaches come through the activity of our user base. As a result, education and adherence to best practices will need to be a key element of any risk management strategy.

City of Walnut Creek

Proposed Information Technology Governance Structure

Overview

Information technology (IT) used by the City is a critical part of our business infrastructure. More than that, it is our primary tool for conducting business and communicating internally and externally. Our reliance on IT to conduct the business of the City cannot be overstated. Further, this reliance has been growing exponentially over the past 10 years, and all indications are that this trend will continue.

As a result, it is critical that we place a high level of importance on how information technology is deployed and used within the City government. This requires a thoughtful process and well managed strategic planning. At the very least, information technology should provide the tools and capabilities to meet current and future business needs. Moreover, if properly managed, information technology can help to drive efficiencies and improve the effectiveness of our processes.

Past IT Governance Efforts

The most recent efforts to create a governance structure involved the establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). From review of files, it appears the TAC has been in existence in some form since 2006. The most recent description of the role and responsibility of the TAC is contained in the attached charter dated May 2013.

While well intentioned as a cross-departmental collaborative process, this committee did not appear to function as a true strategic planning group. Instead, partially due to its membership and partly due to the leadership, it was functioning as a group that discussed whether to recommend individual department's proposals for budget approval.

This process was helpful to educate the Executive Team (ET) on the various projects under consideration and provided a good first effort to prioritize competing demands for limited resources. The group consisted of the CIO and lower level managers from each of the various departments. The CIO ran the meetings and each of the representatives discussed their individual proposals. There appears to have been very little discussion of long-term strategy and/or enterprise level needs of the City and how individual projects support the long-term business model.

Proposal to Create a New Governance Structure

Since information technology is essential to our ability to effectively manage our business, our governance and strategic planning should be directed by senior managers within the organization. We propose to reform the Information Technology Governance Committee with senior managers from each of the departments in the City. This is the group often referred to as "second in command."

Proposed Information Technology Governance Structure

The composition of the newly formed IT Governance Committee would be as follows:

| | |
|----------|---|
| Chair - | Administrative Services Director or Chief Information Officer |
| Member - | PW senior manager |
| Member - | PD senior manager |
| Member - | CED senior manager |
| Member - | Arts and Rec senior manager |
| Member - | HR senior manager |
| Member - | ASD senior manager |
| Member - | CM senior manager |

The committee would meet every two months and have both standing agenda items and new business to consider. The focus of this committee would be high-level governance and strategic planning around how information technology is deployed and future needs. We also believe that subcommittees should be formed for the following areas (as recommended by our consultant, NexLevel):

- *Document/Content Management and ERP* – subcommittee focuses on in-house directed applications (meetings to discuss how well the applications are working, planned upgrades, needed modifications, etc.)
- *Land Management/Public facilities and roadways* – subcommittee focuses on applications that assist the City in land management (permitting/ planning) and facilities, parks and roadways we manage for the public.
- *Public Safety* – subcommittee focuses on safety-related applications. Should consist not only of PD representatives but other departments that have exposure to safety-related matters, e.g. traffic signals, etc.
- *Digital Government and Public Outreach* – subcommittee focuses on applications that assist the City in managing our public communications and outreach (website, open govt., social media, etc.)
- *GIS* – subcommittee to focus on our current use of GIS technology and potential use to further enable our business models. This technology is useful for essentially every other City function, so alternatively it could be a standing topic for the central committee or the subcommittees.

We envision that subcommittees would be comprised of members of the overall governance committee and that subject matter experts would be invited from the various departments, as well as external experts as needed. Quarterly meetings would be held by the subcommittees.

Standing Agenda Items for the IT Governance Committee

- **Overall Plans and Status of Data Infrastructure and Projects (data center, phone system, disaster recovery setup, security)** – this would involve a report out from the CIO and a discussion of any major projects underway or upcoming. It would also involve at least a semi-annual discussion of future trends and direction of the City in managing our IT infrastructure.

Proposed Information Technology Governance Structure

- **Report out from the Established Subcommittees** – each of the subcommittees that met during the previous two-month period would report the status and upcoming direction of the applications they monitor
- **Future Direction of Business Needs for the City** – each committee meeting should focus some time on trends in the business community and how we should be positioning ourselves to move forward. Topics will include areas such as mobile technology, discussions on innovation, changes in services that require a technology response and resources needed to address changing technology needs.
- **IT Budget/Resources and Competing Needs** – in preparation for the budget and mid-cycle budget adjustments, the committee will discuss the status of the IT budget and resource allocation. It will also discuss projects that are competing for limited resources and make recommendations to the ET for consideration of inclusion in the submitted budget.

It is the expectation that members of the newly formed Information Technology Governance Committee would communicate information between the committee and their departments' directors, senior managers and innovation leaders.

Conclusion

The time when Information technology was a merely convenience or an add-on has long since passed. Information Technology is a critical infrastructure and demands attention and focus from the highest levels within the organization. We hope the reconstituted governance structure will improve our awareness of where we are now and where we need to be in the use of technology to accomplish our mission.