The wise adapt themselves to circumstances, as water molds itself to the container.

*Chinese Proverb on Change and Adaption*
EXECUTIVE & COMMISSION UPDATE

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Executive & Commission Update

Mission

The mission of the City of Grand Rapids Department of Information Technology (IT) is to maintain a stable enterprise information technology infrastructure and guide the City in leveraging proven information technology and transformational change management in the accomplishment of the City's and each unit of the City’s mission.

The IT Department continues its commitment to operate in a manner consistent with the Government 2.0 model. We strive to be a competitive, professional, sustainable, transparent, and performance oriented operation; in a manner which is valued, accountable, and strategic. It is IT’s goal to continually communicate our vision and progress as we sustain and innovate the City’s corporate technologies and enterprise information.

An Enterprise Information Technology Strategic Plan has been developed that integrates the citizen centric, transparent wisdom and principles of Government 2.0 together with sound technology selections, best practices, performance measures, governance and accountability. The IT Strategic Plan provides a city-wide, enterprise approach based on standards, consistency, and compatibility to guide the City in cost-effective selection, use, and support of technology that aligns with City resources, business needs, and processes.

Our progress in the three primary components of the IT plan are defined in this report:

1. **Architecture:** Transformational government depends on a reliable, secure, and optimized IT network architecture to support the entire organization.

2. **Framework:** Continuing to build and deliver progressive innovative city government service solutions in a cost effectively and efficient manner requires a vibrant invigorating infrastructure framework.

3. **Enterprise and Tactical Solutions:** Technology innovations and applications benefit the City and citizens; enterprise solutions are used city-wide while tactical solutions are used on a smaller scale for specific departments.

The IT Strategic plan will allow for change over time and will serve as a broad guideline for action that will be revised as technologies emerge and the City’s business requirements change. IT’s Strategic Plan is not an end result, but rather an evolving long-term strategy with a series of short-term implementations that link the City’s goals with information technology to provide improved government processes and enhanced customer service.
Executive & Commission Update

Architecture

Transformational government depends on a reliable, secure, and optimized IT network architecture to support the entire organization. The key challenge in this area is to ensure the management of devices and hardware so that the technology infrastructure achieves uncompromised performance to ensure that the City’s technology is always up and running. The City’s federated model centralizes enterprise infrastructure services to maximize the benefits of high-level organizational cooperation while departments take ownership and responsibility for their tactical technology plans.

Extensive work has been going on “behind the scenes” to consolidate and upgrade the City’s Data Center and Network Infrastructure. To ensure the highest levels of network performance, the data center features proven solutions in the areas of power, environmental control, security, fire suppression, and redundancy. The consolidated and upgraded IT infrastructure is improving performance, strengthening security, and minimizing system downtime.

This year we began the process of upgrading the city’s technology infrastructure to prepare for replacing the City’s 12 year old phone system with a Cisco Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) digital unified communication solution. To support our new phone and unified communication systems, servers, routers, and an updated power supply were strategically added to our data center to ensure a high level of redundancy and full integration with our existing systems, including the Cisco switch infrastructure that was already in place. The new digital functionality and fully integrated infrastructure unite our phones and computers for maximum performance. The VoIP related infrastructure enhancements are cost effective, scalable, flexible, and user friendly while also providing the City with strategic change management opportunities for many years to come.

The City’s data center and IT network architecture have been engineered to support our entire organization while also positioning the City for future opportunities. We are strategically poised to benefit from significant regionalization convergence developments and the beginning phases of this momentous change management opportunity are underway. A regional roadmap is being developed to evaluate network infrastructure and communication architecture for regionalization cohesiveness with Kent County and other regional entities. Additionally, we have begun to share the City’s Internet capabilities with the County, and the County is working to accommodate direct access to very large datasets (i.e. Digital Orthophoto and Oblique Imagery) thereby eliminating duplication and administration by the City. Collaborating with other jurisdictions to share resources and solutions, as appropriate, can improve efficiency and drive down costs.
Architecture Projects

Over the past year IT engineers have worked on several infrastructure projects, to stabilize and improve the City’s architectural computing and network infrastructure, while consolidating to a single data center. While the primary focus has been on new technology; such as network security firewall improvements, network access control, and wireless networking improvements; there has also been an extensive amount of maintenance performed on outdated equipment that is still being used by some departments throughout the city. Project highlights include:

CityNet Reform and Data Center Consolidation: This project is nearly complete with the relocating of IT servers and telecommunication equipment from 201 Market to the highly secure 4th floor of 1 Monroe Center. The project included developing a strategic sustainability plan, a phased replacement plan, and networking infrastructure improvement plan. The CityNet Reform has been very successful, however one lingering issue is the mainframe. It continues to be costly and inefficient. The goal is to decommission the mainframe in 2011.

Oracle Relational Database Management System (RDBMS) Architecture Update: Over the past year we completed the RDBMS update (both for Oracle and SQL Server) and therefore now are beginning to reap the rewards of storing data in a relational database. Ultimately this move reduces redundancy and updates anomalies, all while providing significant reporting benefits.

Server Refresh and Virtualization: IT has been moving to a blade-computing architecture and consolidating existing server configurations into a virtual server farm using VMware. The process is nearly complete and benefits include minimized power consumption, space saving, and easier administration.

Mobil Computing: A Blackberry Professional Server was deployed to optimize the administration of Blackberry and Exchange interactions to increase mobile computing effectiveness. Solutions such as Microsoft’s Terminal Services Thin Client are being deployed to provided additional benefits and address future mobile computing needs upon the arrival of WiMAX.

WiMAX: The region-wide, high-speed, mobile, wireless broadband system is expected to be available for City employees to use in 2010.

Backup-Archive Reform: Strategic review and reform of NetBackup use and Near Line storage media for best practice backup and archival of enterprise data management has recently been completed. This improvement is expected to significantly decrease cost of data storage which has been growing significantly; it went from 7 Terabytes (TB), to an expected 23 TB in 2010, with an anticipated growth to 100 TB in fiscal year 2011.

Disaster Recovery Planning: This project features technology solutions that work hand and hand with processes and procedures that are established with the purpose of preparing in advance how the City would recover and/or continue critical technology infrastructure after a disaster. Strategic planning continues to progress in establishing plans for resumption of applications, data, hardware, and communications impacting key personnel, facilities, and crisis communication.
Executive & Commission Update

Framework

City technology changes are strategically planned, evaluated, and leveraged to provide a deliberate intentional improvement. Significant thought, time, and effort is invested in researching and analyzing various technology approaches in order to assure that the City selects the right, reasonable, and responsible technology at the right time. Based on extensive research IT has very purposefully developed a technology and change management framework that will engage, empower, and evolve to support ongoing change and innovation while also successfully accomplishing key performance goals.

The Microsoft Citizen Service Platform is one example of an enterprise framework solution that provides component-based, rapidly configurable technology platforms that lay the foundation to make building and delivering progressive city government services easier, more cost effective, and efficient. Standardization on Microsoft enables the City to have common technology and processes across departments and to fully realize the benefits of the framework that has been specifically designed to help local governments deliver quality, efficient service to citizens and businesses.

OnBase Enterprise Content Management is another example of a new significant component of our technology framework. This framework is designed to capture, store, search, retrieve, collaborate, manage, and distribute our information while driving high volume and high value transactional processes. Managing content-driven business processes with OnBase reduces costs, increases revenue, improves customer service, and builds a platform to support governance, risk and compliance initiatives.

Our framework lays the foundation to make building and delivering progressive city government service solutions easier, more cost effective, and efficient.
Framework

Our framework would not be complete without a unified communication solution. During the summer of 2009 we began the process of replacing the city’s old phone system with a Cisco Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) integrated communication solution. New digital features that unite our phones and computers together will help people find, communicate with, and collaborate with each other quickly and easily. The VoIP framework can help us to improve productivity in a way that our current phone system cannot. It is more cost effective, scalable, flexible, and user friendly.

Additionally to support the Cisco VoIP implementation, we have completed a competitive re-procurement of city-wide communication services for both telecommunication and data communication. This project included local telephone service, toll services, long distance telephone service, cell phone services, Internet, PRI, and backhaul and will result in saving at least 50%.

This framework will functionality expand communications for all City operations. It includes operational integration with other strategic tools such as Interactive Voice Response and offers city-wide call center capabilities at a reduced operational cost to the City.

Overall, the frameworks that we are establishing are more than just technology, they incorporate and promote effective change management and best practices. Our goal is to offer reliable, evolving frameworks that are used and built upon by all departments and in many cases citizens too. The hope is that the frameworks will be used to leverage technology and maximize personal expertise to accomplish great results.

In 2009 IT was professionally certified and began our formal adoption of Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL). It is a framework that defines how to organize the systems and network management of an IT department. ITIL is a set of best practices and guidelines that add structure and define an integrated, process-based approach for managing IT services. This valuable market driven service strategy focuses on helping IT organizations improve and develop. ITIL provides comprehensive standards, concepts, and practices for IT management, development, planning, prioritization, and operations. The ITIL concepts support IT service providers in the planning of consistent, documented, and repeatable processes that improve service delivery. The best practice approach aligns the needs of the citizens and IT to overall improve service quality and decrease costs of service delivery and support. We will continue to further and benefit from this as we move forward in 2010.
Enterprise Solutions

The City’s Enterprise IT Strategic Plan identifies sound technology selections, implementation best practices, performance measures, governance, and accountability. The IT Strategic Plan provides an enterprise approach to strategically guide the City in cost effective selection, use, and support of technology solutions that align with City resources, business needs, and processes to ensure success and sustainability.

We expect enterprise solutions will continue to provide increased flexibility and performance while continuing the momentum started with the Government 2.0 evolution. Enterprise solutions enable the leveraging of innovation and change management processes that can improve organizational performance, government transparency, and the capacity for the City to continually improve. Based on extensive research, and with the input of city governments worldwide, our partners have created “tool set” solutions that the City is already benefiting from.

Our list of practical Enterprise tools continues to grow. Following is an overview of application solutions that have been implemented along with others that are in the process of implementation.

**Microsoft SharePoint:** SharePoint is the solution that is being used to dramatically upgrade the functionality of the City’s Intranet and Internet website. It is an integrated suite of tools that can help improve organizational effectiveness by providing comprehensive document management and enterprise search capabilities, accelerating shared business processes, and facilitating information sharing across boundaries. SharePoint will enable users to find information and share knowledge while collaborating more easily and securely both within and across organizational boundaries. SharePoint can also help us to effectively monitor business drivers, make better informed decisions, proactively respond to important events, simplify compliance efforts, keep business information secure, and manage electronic content. SharePoint combines the Microsoft Office tools that we already use with the latest technology; extending the functionality of applications into a single web-based environment for easy collaboration and information sharing, anytime and anywhere. SharePoint can help to streamline business procedures that drain organizational productivity by providing electronic forms, Excel services, dashboard measurements, and out-of-the-box workflow processes templates. SharePoint has been called the “Swiss army knife” of software solutions.
Enterprise Solutions (continued)

Hyland OnBase: Following a comprehensive evaluation process of Enterprise Content Management (ECM) software tools, OnBase was selected as the solution best suited to meet the City’s needs. This enterprise solution will fully integrate with SharePoint and brings the ability to transform how the City handles paper documents with structured workflow processes. OnBase will provide a single indexed repository of all City information. This practical technology can be used by City departments to manage, store, preserve, and deliver data and documents. OnBase is expected to integrate well with other City software systems including Cogsdale Financials, CityWorks, CMMS, Microsoft SharePoint, ESRI GIS, Accela Automation, and others. In addition, OnBase is currently in use by Kent County and has potential to provide regional collaboration advantages.

Microsoft Office 2007: In 2009 computers city-wide were updated to Microsoft Office 2007. The upgrades for Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, InfoPath, Access, and Publisher position City staff to more effectively collaborate with each other and with added enterprise technology solutions. Active Directory and Exchange have also been updated to ensure highly secure and effective access to enterprise technology. One of the Office 2007 applications that can have the most positive change impact is InfoPath. This Microsoft technology is one of the best ways to develop and utilize electronic forms and checklists. All of the paper forms that we use, both internally and with citizens and businesses, can be upgraded with InfoPath so that we can fully utilize the information electronically and cut down on ineffective paper handling. For example, the Fire Department automated one of its Apparatus Check forms with an InfoPath form that is being used daily throughout the city. There are many opportunities in 2010 for the city to more comprehensively use InfoPath forms to streamline business processes to make data collection, reporting, distribution, and integration throughout the City much more cost effective than paper forms while also making it easier to validate data and avoid errors.

Microsoft Office Live Meeting: In 2009 we began utilizing this new tool to video conference and record meetings. The Live Meeting can be recorded for reference or later distribution. The associated materials (agenda, minutes, PowerPoint presentations etc.) are retained in one place so all information can be easily distributed. This is a very effective tool that can be used in many ways. It is exciting to see how it is catching on throughout the city and being used for implementations of other projects.
Enterprise Solutions (continued)

**Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS):** Deployment of SSRS is tied to our SQL Server and Oracle databases infrastructure. The City will be able to use this reporting toolset that supports a wide variety of reporting needs to deliver relevant information where needed across the entire City. This means more timely reports, real time dashboards, and key metrics that are critical to successful decision making.

**Microsoft Office Communicator:** This new unified communications software contains collaboration and communication capabilities that help maximize our communication effectiveness while using other technologies like our new Cisco VoIP phones, Microsoft Outlook, SharePoint, and many others. Communicator will allow you to easily share your computer desktop with others so documents can be viewed and edited real time, facilitate a video call using a webcam connected to your computer, utilize instant messaging (IM) communication with other City users in ways that minimize unwanted interruptions and maximize time by using the Presence features to see the availability of others.

**Cisco Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Phones:** The Cisco IP desktop phones are high quality digital two-way speaker phones with literally dozens of user friendly features. Users will benefit from the ready access to missed, received or placed calls. Incoming messages are identified and categorized on the display, allowing users to quickly and effectively return calls using direct dial-back capability. Mobility and one number reach features help users to stay connected and ring tones may be customized to help maximize productivity. In addition the phones are being integrated with many other applications providing the city with a unified communication solution. The City’s existing phones will be replaced in a phased approach concluding mid-year.

**Call Center:** Utilizing our new Cisco VoIP technology will greatly innovate the City of Grand Rapids’ Service and Information Call Center where residents, business owners, and visitors can get the non-emergency services they need, find out about the resources that they desire, and get the information that they lack. With an effective call center, solutions are only a call away. The combination of call center capabilities and Citizen Relationship Management (CRM) software establishes the technical foundation to consolidate non-emergency customer service into a single phone number (311).

**Interactive Voice Response (IVR):** The implementation of Cisco VoIP digital technology will allow the City to implement IVR systems that can provide automated answers to callers and service high call volumes 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This reduces costs and improves the customer’s experience. IVR is also vital for call centers deploying universal queuing and routing solutions because caller data can be collected to enable intelligent routing of calls. So on the front end, a caller’s questions can be resolved without the cost of a live agent and if the caller needs additional assistance the technology can route the call to the specific team with the expertise needed to resolve the issue. This makes for a more efficient system in which callers very directly get what they desire and employees have more time to deal with complex issues and interactions that they specialize in. This project began in 2009 and will continue into 2010 and beyond.
Enterprise Solutions (continued)

ArcGIS Upgrade and PBIQ 2.0: The City’s GIS technology is vital and strategic to many other technologies and services, however it had also become outdated and in significant need for extensive upgrade. IT has reviewed and upgraded the existing GIS architecture to address ArcGIS needs while also working to resolve the identified backlog of GIS data. Development and migration of our GIS capability to the latest ArcGIS Server technology and engagement of a rapid development toolset (InfoGeographics) that includes cartographic data entry, mapping, spatial query, and visualization of maps is being rolled out.

Dynamics Citizen Relationship Management (CRM): The goal of CRM is to leverage multiple technologies to provide citizens the highest quality service at the lowest cost to taxpayers. This Microsoft deployment will upgrade and enhance the City’s existing GIS Public Inquiry. A new standardized Citizen Management online Citizen Request System (CRS) that also includes a mobile application for the public to use is in development. IT expects to complete the business case development and strategic first steps for enterprise customer service management in 2011 to replace the City’s Public Inquiry System. CRM will be phased in over time to integrate with other technology including our Cisco VoIP system to support the 311 call center and IVR system. Citizens and businesses can benefit because of the multichannel (phone, IM, email, and web) access and the ability to submit a request for service and then track that request through to resolution. Once implemented, the extensive performance management metrics will provide City officials and leaders with the opportunity to use real time comprehensive data to make informed, proactive, and cost effective decisions.

Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL): In 2009 we piloted the AVL project and determined that the capabilities were very good and beneficial for the City. Plans are to move forward with a phased deployment throughout the City.

Microsoft Windows 7: This is the current new release of the Microsoft operating system for desktop and laptop use. Migration to adopt Windows 7 will naturally occur through computer replacement or as requested by the user.
Departmental Tactical Technology Solutions

In years past, City departments operated and engaged technology solutions based on the functionality and benefits for the individual department without much consideration for inter-departmental sharing of data and information, because typically, that was not a realistic option. Previously, the limitations and functionality of software also led to processes and procedures that increased the separation between departments and that added to redundancy and duplication of data and information throughout the city.

Today, much has changed, new technology options might allow for the interdepartmental sharing of data and information as a very realistic option that can greatly benefit the City. With planning and forethought new departmental technology solutions can increase efficient interdepartmental workflows and provide for city-wide quantitative measures, while also minimizing redundancy and duplication of effort and information.

We remain committed to our City’s Federated Model. IT will continue to encourage and support liberty, defined as freedom within well defined limits and responsibilities, for each department. Best Practices have been established by the City’s IT Steering Committee and should be followed for best results. IT will also work to encourage decisions that facilitate effective data sharing.

Departmental Technology initiatives include:

**Neighborhood Improvement: Accela Mobile** - Mobile use of Accela tools is being deployed in support of building-code and other inspections. This tool is being considered for true wireless use when the WiMAX project commences.

**Fiscal: Dynamics and WebProcure** - Fiscal Services replacement of the City’s financial management tools with Cogsdale Financials (built on Microsoft Dynamics GP) and online procurement management software (WebProcure) to replace the outdated IBM Mainframe based accounting system continues. The new technologies are client server based, run on a Microsoft SQL server database engine and will fully integrate with many other applications. Cogsdale provides the front end customization to many Microsoft Dynamics products.

**Water: Customer Information System (CIS)** - A CIS is not just a billing system. Water Services CIS replacement (Harris Cayenta) provides an integrated environment in which utilities enroll new customers; generate billings; manage credit and collections; track water consumption; track and manage meters; handle customer inquiries, complaints and service orders; and provide call center support. Utilities often integrate a CIS with other enterprise systems such as Geographic Information Systems and the new water billing customer service information system will integrate with the City’s VoIP and ecommerce solutions to provide flexible online and over the phone customer interaction.
**Departmental Tactical Technology Solutions (continued)**

**Income Tax/Assessor/Clerk: Document Image Services** - Procurement and standards development are underway for document image scanning services and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) data capturer and delivery into City’s soon to be deployed Enterprise Content Management architecture.

**Treasurer: eCommerce** - The Treasurer’s office plans to collaborate with online services and financial institution to provide a very low fee based solution for citizens to make online payments for property taxes, water bills, parking tickets, and miscellaneous receivables (such as refuse cart quarterly fees).

**Income Tax: eFiling** - An outside vendor, Innovative Software Solutions, Inc. was hired to design a program integrating Income Tax’s current software to allow electronic filing. The first phase of the project, electronic withholding, filing, and payment was completed. Additional components of the project including electronic filing of individual tax returns and corporate and partnership income tax filing are in process.

**Fire: Fire Portal** - A SharePoint portal has been developed and deployed to support effective access and management of information throughout the Fire Department. This web based site provides effective and consistent access to documents, files, announcements and technology applications that Fire staff need.

**Executive Office: Microsoft Media Web Streaming** - The City replaced the old system that had been used to capture City Commission meetings with new Microsoft Media Web Streaming tools in the spring of 2009. This technology provides the City with the capability to stream meetings real time to the public and to make them available for download via the City’s Internet.

**Engineering: Document Image Management** - A document management system (DMS) continues to be considered to track and store electronic documents and images of paper documents. The term has some overlap with the concepts of Content Management Systems and is often viewed as a component of Enterprise Content Management Systems and related to Digital Asset Management, Document imaging, Workflow systems and Records Management systems.
Departmental Tactical Technology Solutions (continued)

**Human Resources: NeoGov** - NEOGOV automates the hiring process including requisition, recruitment, selection, testing, applicant tracking, and reporting of key hiring metrics such as time-to-hire, recruiting costs, staff work-load, EEO and applicant flow, and applicant quality.

**Parking Services: Parking Facility Automation** - Network integration and automation of parking facilities are fully underway.

**Traffic Safety: Traffic Website** - Traffic Safety has been working with a vendor to create a website that will provide information to citizens traveling in Kent County related to traffic congestion, travel delays, and other traffic related concerns. The contract includes the addition of necessary security features to the existing Advanced Traffic Management System as well as connecting this website to the Internet.

**Police: Video Log** - The capture and storage of mobile digital video archive. This requires a cost effective way to store up to 20 Terabytes of video data.

**Police: CrimeMapping.com** - The police department recently deployed a web based community mapping solution that provides public access to information about crime that has occurred in our city. The goal being that informed citizens can help reduce crime.

**ESD Water: Maximo Upgrade** - This upgrade of existing facilities workflow management toolset supporting ESD and Water.

**Payroll: Vista Upgrade** - The current version of Vista is no longer supported and therefore upgrades to the current Vista HR and Payroll system are required. Further upgrade of Vista will provide the City with the much needed standard timecard entry tools.

**Neighborhood: Land Management Improvement** - The Land Management Services Strategy provides the framework for implementing a software replacement for Permits Plus. This strategy provides a coordinated approach to services related to land use, new construction, and property maintenance. It includes seven different departments currently using Permits Plus software, which is considered a legacy system needing replacement. The goal of this strategy is to improve customer service and staff productivity through a coordinated, enhanced system.
Executive & Commission Update

Change Management

For decades, many cities like ours have been comfortable with strategies, practices, and innovation that maintained the status quo. However today, the status quo is the road to nowhere. When times are tough, the need for revolutionary change is critical. Innovative, problem-solving change is not just an opportunity in 2010, it is an obligation.

Innovative leadership recognizes the importance of communicating the vision and informing people, not only about what it is that we are changing, but also why that change matters. People respect and desire change that really makes a difference.

Recently, the City Manager expanded the IT department’s focus to include leading a city-wide “change management” initiative. This is a planned, top-down, organization wide effort that will address core business processes. Working together, City and contract Information Technology and Change Management (IT-CM) staff, with extensive business process reengineering and organizational development expertise, will assess our organization’s corporate culture and recommend ways to make the City a cohesive, supportive, and appreciably more effective environment.

This initiative will be a well planned, top-down, organization-wide effort to increase the City’s organizational health and effectiveness. We need to understand the human behavior element in process change and facilitate adoption of the behaviors that are necessary to support and sustain this change. Plans are to begin with three first steps:

1. We will initiate a First-Steps Change Management Plan of Action. With support from Dr. Steve Robbins, we will outline a Change Management and Organizational Development (OD) course of action. This road map will guide the City through recommended early adopter change techniques addressing critical, high-priority desired transformation.

2. We have begun to develop seminars which build on the collaboration and communication already started with the IT-Steering Committee. IT-CM has developed a series of Organizational Development “nuggets” featuring a series of exercises and discussion items intended to introduce OD concepts, ideals, and counsel to build dialog and experience sharing while addressing key operational, cultural, and organizational health issues. Built on a transformational “journey” theme, these 20-minute exercises present topics such as basic OD, thinking, irrational leadership methods, understanding change from a changing corporate culture, change therapy, and more.
Executive & Commission Update

Change Management (continued)

3. Initial recommendations are intended to serve as a vehicle toward full-scale systemic change throughout the organization. This will require an enterprise-wide commitment to coaching standards of transparent service delivery, performance measure and metric for primary services and projects within the City.

Additionally, IT staff welcome department requests for coaching assistance.

Revolutionary change management compels new beliefs, changed attitudes, and transformational behavior. It is effective collaboration and fundamental problem solving that improves organizational performance while increasing the capacity for adapting to new challenges. It is much more than just adding new technology; even though technology is often a component of change. It is much more than just talking about and planning new ideas. Revolutionary change management requires commitment to action and dedication to seeing that changes are fully implemented and successful.

Accomplishing such revolutionary change will certainly present challenges and obstacles. Barriers to revolutionary change will need to be addressed. Old ineffective ideas will need to be put aside. Quantitatively opportunities for change will be measured so that success can be multiplied as the City’s capacity to innovate and improve grows.

“Revolution doesn’t happen when society adopts new technology, it happens when society adopts new behaviors.”

*Here Comes Everybody* by Clay Shirky

When it comes to successfully achieving revolutionary changes, much can be learned from the Apple iPhone. It models revolutionary innovation with transparency, participation, and collaboration. Apple made an investment in and provided an “open infrastructure” and then encouraged others to build on it. As a result, new apps have been created that customers love and the undisputed outcome of this revolutionary change is that everyone wins.

So imagine, how can we apply this type of revolutionary change to our City government so that it becomes an open platform that allows people inside and outside of our organization to provide better services to each other and everyone else?

Imagine all of the ways that people, both citizens and city staff, can take ownership and responsibility and start making change happen. Citizens are the City’s greatest asset and when ideas, information, and feedback can be exchanged effectively and then used to achieve win-win solutions, everyone benefits.
Imagine all of the ways that technology can provide citizens an opportunity to participate and collaborate. Social media tools like blogging and discussion boards are fundamental communication tools that our citizens use, so this is a clear opportunity for city-wide revolutionary innovation.

Imagine a change strategy that restructures and streamlines city processes while also exploiting technology to deliver maximized services at lowered cost. One example of a project that is underway is Interactive Voice Response (IVR). IVR involves the ability for citizens to call anytime and get fast, accurate answers to questions from a computerized Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.

Imagine a citizen who pulls out their cell phone, snaps a picture of a pothole, and send the photo along with a question about their water bill straight to the City. A dispatcher, using Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL), then quickly schedules the pothole to be filled by the closest truck and the answer to the water bill question is immediately answered via email. The satisfied citizen then takes a minute to update a City blog with a positive success story.

Just imagine what can be accomplished with revolutionary change initiatives that include transparency, public participation, and collaboration. Citizens will receive faster and more accurate services. City employees will maximize their time because new processes have eliminated redundant time wasters.

Innovation and change can have an amazing ripple effect. One drop can initiate a cascade of possibility, each concentric circle gaining in size and traveling further. We are seeing the benefits of the initial ripples of change generated by IT. It is our intent, that the ripples of change will grow to be embraced by the whole City and beyond. Imagine all of the ways that process improvements in departments and across department lines can dramatically improve how we serve citizens.