Without change there is no innovation, creativity, or incentive for improvement. Those who initiate change will have a better opportunity to manage the change that is inevitable.

William Pollard
EXECUTIVE & COMMISSION UPDATE

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The Transformation Complete

The City’s information technology infrastructure has undergone an extreme makeover transformation and the accomplishments of the past two and a half years present an exemplary model for transformative technological solutions at the local government level. In 2008, the City’s antiquated and failing systems required powerful modernization. The architecture and framework needed to be transformed and moved to a new, more secure location while day to day operations and use of existing technology continued. With a fierce dedication to adaptive change management best practices, the City’s Information Technology (IT) Department laid tremendous groundwork for the future while commendably maintaining the delicate balance of the City’s continued operation and technological rejuvenation throughout the updating process.

We effectively and consciously began the rework of the City’s computing and communications infrastructure to reflect industry standards of operation and service delivery with the release of the IT Strategic plan in November 2008. This work reframed innovation engagement, operational sustainability, and established strategic initiatives to support the City for years to come setting vital goals of being sustainable, strategic, valued and transparent.

Behind every innovation was a solid foundation established by IT professionals that have been instrumental in positively leveraging the fundamental improvements that would eventually affect every area of City operation. In addition, the IT Steering Committee and IT Departmental Liaisons have played an important role in communication and feedback. As a result, a new attitude toward assessing value for the City has taken hold and finding value-effective means by which to leverage new capabilities and technologies has led to numerous and significant improvements.

The City of Grand Rapids depends on a reliable secure and optimized IT network architecture and vibrant infrastructure framework to support the entire organization. The key challenge is to ensure the management of the technology infrastructure and frameworks to achieve uncompromised performance and ensure that the City’s enterprise and tactical software applications are always up and running. The mission of the Information Technology Department is to maintain a stable enterprise information technology infrastructure and guide the City in leveraging proven information technology in the accomplishment of the City's and each unit's mission.
Architecture Accomplishments

The City’s data center features proven solutions in the areas of power, environmental control, security, fire suppression, and redundancy. Servers, routers, firewalls, and switches have been strategically engineered to ensure a high level of redundancy and integration for maximum performance. The move to the new data center was a huge success. Now, the task at hand is to proactively maintain the data center equipment and support the ongoing change and evolution of enhancements, upgrades, new applications, and integrations while maintaining the highest level of security. This involves many simultaneous implementations that require planning, testing, and deployment.

Harnessing the power of the Internet and modernizing the City’s network was a basic but major concern from the beginning. Expanding bandwidth to meet this challenge and implementing powerful, efficient hardware to support improvements was done with the future in mind. Instead of merely meeting modern standards, the City exceeded them to prepare for further growth. Expanding the City’s ability to access the Internet by increasing the bandwidth 1000%, from 4MbP to over 40MB was an exceptional start.

The WiMax region-wide, high-speed, mobile, wireless broadband system became a reality in 2010. The primary goal for the high-speed wireless broadband covering the community is to enhance public safety by dramatically increasing the information available to mobile police officers and firefighters. Clearwire WiMax service has enabled real-time video streaming and photo transfer for police and fire vehicles traveling at up to 70 miles per hour. In addition to public safety this WiMax service is available to improve municipal field workers productivity and communication.

This citywide wireless network will not only make Grand Rapids the “right place” for firms to locate and to do business, keeping and creating jobs, but it will also enhance the desirability of our City’s neighborhoods as an outstanding place to live, work, and play. The benefits are significant for City businesses, citizens, and visitors and all this has been accomplished without burden on our taxpayers.
Microsoft Citizen Service Platform Accomplishments

The City currently faces many challenges and possesses many opportunities to leverage technology to overcome these challenges. Microsoft’s Citizen Service Platform is a framework that lays the foundation to make building and delivering progressive city government services easier, more cost effective and efficient. IT efforts have created a Citywide framework that extends beyond computers but is connected through them. This framework evolved from intentional architecture and managed change. The CSP based framework has a strong foundation that promotes additional architectural enhancement and future managed change development.

The Microsoft Citizen Service Platform provides a component-based, rapidly configurable technology platform that has been specifically designed to help local governments deliver quality, efficient service to citizens and businesses. The Microsoft software application upgrades and selections which include Office applications, SharePoint, Dynamics GP and Dynamics CRM mean that technology will work together so that people can get the information that they need when they need it.

The Citywide upgrade to Microsoft Office 2007 included Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, InfoPath, Access, and Publisher. It was a big change that has enabled staff to more effectively collaborate with each other and with added enterprise technology solutions. It also positioned the City for future successful enterprise upgrades and enhancements to Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office.
Microsoft Citizen Service Platform Accomplishments (continued)

Communication is integral to the continuing, modern organization of transformative government. Communication has been addressed and improved upon in a variety of ways. Microsoft Live Meeting and Communicator, both a part of the Microsoft Citizen Service Platform, have been installed upon request of departments and therefore have only been partially deployed throughout the City.

Microsoft Live Meeting can be utilized to lower cost and drive meeting efficiency by videoconferencing meetings. Live Meetings can be recorded and saved for reference and later distribution. Meeting ‘virtually’ is benefiting many throughout the City while also increasing transparency and improving communication.

Leveraging Microsoft Office Communicator, City staff now see presence indicators that show if an employee is on the phone or away from their desk so the co-worker has an idea of their availability before making a call, sending an email or paying them a visit. This promotes direct contact the first time. This tool also provides excellent fast and easy to use problem solving options. Users can share an issue in a chat session and get a fast answer from a co-worker that might be on the phone and they can share their computer screen with an expert in another building to effectively discover a solution to a problem.
Microsoft Citizen Service Platform Accomplishments (continued)

Microsoft SharePoint is an enterprise solution that is being used to dramatically upgrade the functionality of the City’s internal Intranet. MyGRCity.us, the City’s new Intranet, was officially deployed in October 2010 and it is replacing the Antfram. MyGRCity.us features a departmental site collection for each City Department. The site collections are easily customized to meet the specific needs of the department while also making it easy to share appropriate information with all City Departments. Scrolling Featured Announcements impact communication and awareness. Links to commonly used software tools and applications save time. Templates and categorical views organize document libraries and lists with structured permissions. Shared departmental calendars can manage time. Project sites provide an effective resource for prioritizing and managing project tasks and accomplishments.
Microsoft Citizen Service Platform Accomplishments (continued)

SharePoint is an integral part of our newly modernized IT framework because it combines the Microsoft Office tools that we already use with the latest technology; extending the functionality of applications into a 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 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, and simplify compliance efforts. In addition to the new Intranet sites, SharePoint is also being utilized to host Collaboration websites, and the Transformation Roadmap website.

Collaboration sites provide all the benefits of SharePoint to a cross-functional team and information that is stored on a site is fully searchable and accessible from the Intranet. With appropriate approval, users from outside the City can be given access to specific information to streamline and expedite effective communication.

The Transformation Roadmap is a site collation that is designed to track our performance and progress. It is designed to engage citizens and provide accountability and transparency. The site features a City Scorecard, Departmental Transformation Efforts, Lean Initiatives and much more.
Cisco VoIP Accomplishments

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 is cost effective, scalable, flexible, and user friendly.

The first priority of this implementation was to transition completely to the new phone system. Future projects will be able to leverage advanced call center tools to improve operations with the new VoIP systems many advanced capabilities for customer service response including directing, monitoring, and managing all calls to the City.

The initial implementation of this enterprise wide framework was completed this month.

IT Professional Service Staffing Model

In 2010, the City continued deploying technology tools including an array of business process improvements, standards for operational control, mobile office uses, enterprise content management, and Citywide improvement efforts to leverage technology to affect change. In addition to the technology tools, IT is committed to competitively and openly procure all IT professional services with performance contracting assuring valued service. The process begins with an extensive request for proposal solicitation and includes a thorough evaluation of all IT staffing options. In December of 2010, the decision was made to award a five year IT Managed Staffing Services contract to CPR a division of Corporate Technologies. Other IT professional services have also been competitively and openly procured and this successful IT staffing model will continue because the results have been a significant right-sizing of staff along with providing contractual flexibility to augment as needed.
Enterprise and Department Tactical Projects

In the past two and a half years, the IT Department has made a conscious decision to embrace revolutionary change. This decision compelled new beliefs, changed attitudes, transformational behavior, effective collaboration, and fundamental problem solving, while increasing the capacity for adapting to new challenges. Deciding to embark on revolutionary change management requires commitment to action and dedication to seeing that changes are fully implemented and successful.

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 our City. However just imagining and just hoping is not enough, transformational innovation needs a plan and a strategy.

For the IT Department, creative, visionary, and resourceful prioritization has been at the very center of the successful innovation. Defining priorities has become the launch pad for evolving the transformative technology strategies. In order to achieve the absolute smoothest function the technology team organizes responsibilities in four categories:

- Break-Fix
- Maintenance
- Upgrades and Enhancements (Remodeling)
- New Additions

Engaging problems that are broken and need fixing is our first priority. With a strong foundation already in place, the fixes and solutions are the primary importance. Progressing from the reactive tasks that are the most immediate priority, the next IT objective is proactive maintenance. We take care of and manage the general but radically important maintenance that all technology must have in order to maintain the highest levels of performance. Maintenance is an ongoing job, but when it is fully incorporated and well done it enables an opportunity for new improvements and constructive change. The IT Department strategically considers the many upgrades and enhancements that are planned and deployed frequently as similar to remodeling jobs.
Enterprise and Department Tactical Projects (continued)

Our goal, like that of a good carpenter, is to measure twice and cut once. The IT engineers use their research, knowledge, and upgrade expertise to maximize existing capabilities while creating avenues for even more improvement. Upgrading and enhancing current systems that are a part of a firm foundation provide value, innovation and beneficial advancement. But finally, the transformational priority that follows is a commitment to addition and expansion. Projects that will provide the City and its residents with return on investment deserve and enable the appropriate IT resource needed to facilitate the additions and expansions. Creating a prioritized plan of growth can build remarkable accomplishments especially in the ever expanding technology field.

Transformational prioritization and strategic planning will be vital to the City’s transformative goals. It is important for the City Departments to define all change and innovation projects that they have underway and then to report quarterly performance activities and measure of the budgets, percent complete, and anticipated schedule to completion. As a starting point, here is a list of City Enterprise and Department Tactical projects that the IT Department is involved in:

Fiscal Services is working with Cogsdale Financial to replace the outdated IBM Mainframe based accounting system with Microsoft Dynamics GP and WebProcure. Not only will the new technologies better serve the needs of the City but closing down the mainframe will lower costs. WebProcure is now being used throughout the City and plans for enhancements are underway. The new Cogsdale Financial Management system is planned for deployment this year and it will fully integrate with many other applications because it utilizes Microsoft Dynamics GP technology and a Microsoft SQL server database engine.

The Water Department is implementing the Cayenta Customer Information System (CIS) that is scheduled to go live in the summer of 2011. This CIS 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. The new water billing customer service information system will be evolutionary and it will eventually integrate with the City’s GIS, VoIP and ecommerce solutions to provide flexible online and over the phone customer interaction.

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Neighborhood Improvement, Accela Automation and the Land Management Services Strategy provides the framework for implementing a software to replace the legacy Permits Plus system. The coordinated approach to implementing Accela addresses services related to land use, new construction, and property.
Enterprise and Department Tactical Projects (continued)

maintenance and it includes seven different departments that have been using Permits Plus software. The overall goal of this strategy is to improve customer service and staff productivity through a coordinated, community based, enhanced system. The benefits are even further magnified because Accela is being deployed as a true wireless solution using WiMAX and the deployment is nearing completion.

The dispatch offices of the Grand Rapids Police and Kent County Sheriff’s Department are working together on consolidation of their network technology, framework system and data. The City’s IT department is supporting Kent County’s Patriot voice system and the installation of a Motorola CAD system at Kent County Sheriff’s office and Grand Rapids Police Dispatch center. This project started earlier this year and it is scheduled to be complete in March of 2011.

The Streets and Sanitation Department’s Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS), Cityworks is used to track and manage service requests. Recently the IT department upgraded the Asset Management program and deployed reverse proxy setup for field use.

Payroll utilizes a version of Vista software that is no longer supported by the company and therefore upgrades to the current Vista HR and Payroll system are required and the project to do this started in April 2010. The updates will also include improvements to Timecard entry. To ensure the best results testing in development will take place.

Traffic Safety is implementing MoveGR.us a traffic monitoring and road closure online technology toolset that will benefit the City in cooperation with MDOT. MoveGR is designed to provide information to motorists regarding traffic congestion, travel delays, and other traffic concerns. This project started at the end of the summer and is dependent on the deployment of the 2010 upgrade to SharePoint that is planned for March of 2011.

BS&A Software provides 23 different assessment administration software systems for local governments in Michigan. In September, the City Clerks Office began the implementation process for a Business License module utilizing a .net framework that is still in development.
Enterprise and Department Tactical Projects (continued)

The Fire Department and IT staff this fall officially started the process of replacing a technology that has been used for years that is no longer meeting the Fire Department’s needs. The new program, FireHouse RMS, is a records management system to manage critical fire and EMS reports and information. The servers have been built, and once the software is loaded and functioning, the implementation plan is to develop and test the FireHouse modules and begin to use this new software.

The Income Tax Department has just recently started a project that is scheduled for completion in July 2011. The first phase of the project is to procure and configure new production servers and to create a development environment for application testing.

The Enterprise Content Management (ECM) project that started in February is almost complete. 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 document management solution has extensive workflow capabilities and will be fully integrated with SharePoint. OnBase will provide a single indexed repository of all City information including the Clerks Office ESRI program, Cityworks and Accela.

The IT Department recently upgraded a firewall and an Internet Usage Monitoring system.

The Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) project includes installing a GPS into all City owned vehicles along with data networking capabilities. The solution will accommodate WIFI and WiMax to take advantage of the Clearwire data agreements and also to support outside WiMax service area transfer to cellular service use. After demonstrating the effectiveness of the AVL program, ESD, Water, Streets and Sanitation, and Neighborhood Improvement departments are interested in participating in this enterprise engagement.

MyGRCity Points is a new web-based incentive program that encourages people to make personal contributions to help build a stronger Grand Rapids community, while earning reward points that can be redeemed at local businesses for discounts on products and services.
Enterprise and Department Tactical Projects (continued)

IT engineers are setting up, configuring, and testing the 2010 upgrade to Microsoft Exchange and Active Directory. This project is scheduled to move into full production in December 2010.

The Treasurer’s eCommerce project has the objective of collaborating with a 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. This new solution will replace the use of NCR.

The SharePoint 2010 upgrade project is underway and scheduled to be completed in March of 2011. This is a significant upgrade that will impact and benefit all of the Department and Collaboration sites that are in place with new functionality and options. The upgrade will be deployed after testing is completed in a development environment. This is also considered to be phase 2 of the overall implementation of SharePoint and the City is utilizing a Request for Proposal process to procure additional consulting services for this project that also includes the design and planning for our citizen Internet portal that will feature an e-news, messaging, and an e-town hall.

Microsoft Office will begin migration to version 2010 during the first few months of 2011. The updates will impact users throughout the City and includes desktop tools, SharePoint, and the Outlook/Exchange upgrade. A development environment is already in place and the anticipated completion of this project is scheduled for February 2011.

Development of the Customer Service Framework CRM, CRS, and the MyGRCity 311 mobile application has been underway for some time and it is exciting to see that the first version of MyGRCity 311 is being fully deployed.

The Parks WebTrack application deployment started in October and the online recreation information and registration program will be fully functional in the near future.

Throughout the City there are many wireless options. This project started by the IT Department in August is for the single purpose of design and deployment of wireless standards and operational controllers for enterprise engagement.
Enterprise and Department Tactical Projects (continued)

ArcGIS is the City’s mapping and geo-coding system that is integrated and used in many ways with many applications. In September, IT started working on the project to implement the 2010 upgrade to ArcGIS.

The IT department is planning to advance its online IT Support and enhance it with real time reporting of internal IT requests. Moving forward this project will utilize Altiris and ITIL best practices.

The Clearwire WiMax mobile broadband networking solutions have been tested and deployed. Public WiFi Hotspots have been defined and this ongoing project now encompasses the process of involving and engaging departments to fully utilize this cost neutral service.

Conclusion

During 2010 we have accomplished much while also setting examples for the City of how to leverage technology to effect strategic change.

In 2011 we are poised and ready to continue to maximize the positive momentum that is underway.