FY22-24 Strategic Plan

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A Letter from Our CIO

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It is my pleasure to share with you the County of Santa Clara’s IT FY22-24 Strategic Plan. Because information technologies are fundamental enablers of our present and future, our plan describes how the Technology Services and Solutions (TSS) Department will advance County services for all citizens, residents, and visitors.

TSS provides IT services to approximately 22,000 County staff in over forty County departments. These agencies deliver critical services to the 2 million residents of Silicon Valley. Additionally, we support one of the largest public healthcare systems in the nation.

2020 was a year like no other. Demands on technology and technology services came simultaneously from the COVID-19 pandemic, the California fires, deep rooted social injustice, and a dramatic increase in residents’ economic challenges. The TSS team shifted thousands of users to remote work, built out telehealth services to reach those in medical need, created information dashboards to better manage the pandemic, participated in the mass vaccination sites, and successfully supported a national Presidential election.

While the pandemic sped up our transformation timeline, there is still much work to be done. With our partners, we will continue driving our digital transformation – shifting brick and mortar services to digital – ensuring all Silicon Valley residents can consume services quickly and conveniently. In the short term, we are focused on establishing the fundamental governing processes, technical platforms and building workforce capacity. Laying foundations for flexible technologies that support business goals, with an understanding that by the time we utilize the newly emerged technologies and meet the shifting expectations of our residents, new technologies and expectations will emerge.

Our strategic plan serves as our guide by sequencing and prioritizing our initiatives to become a more mature IT organization, transforming the way we think and work.

We look forward to ongoing collaboration with our colleagues, partners, and the community to achieve outstanding results!

~Imre
Table of Contents

Overview........................................................................................................................................... 4
Mission & Values.................................................................................................................................... 7
Strategic Domain #1: EMPOWER – Empower Diverse and High Performing TSS Team ............... 11
Strategic Domain #2: OPERATE – Operational Excellence and Growth ........................................... 14
Strategic Domain #3: GROW – Grow Thriving Relationships with our Customers ...................... 18
Strategic Domain #4: TRANSFORM – Innovation and Digital Government Transformation ...... 20
Overview
Purpose of the Strategic Plan

TSS provides County of Santa Clara agencies with a full suite of technologies and IT services. With roughly 910 staff, the TSS budget is $385 million of an overall County budget of $8 billion. This strategic plan outlines how TSS will ensure it is fully supporting the County’s mission to “Plan for the needs of a dynamic community, provide quality services, and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous community for all.”

The goals in this plan identify where TSS employees will focus their efforts and what they must do to ensure TSS—and consequently, the County—is staying ahead of advances in technology and adapting to effectively support the changing needs and expectations of the residents we serve.

This plan came together from a deliberate and thoughtful process that included all levels of the TSS department, involved extensive collaboration with our agency partners, an in-depth analysis of experts’ technology forecasts and careful consideration of the community’s service and technology needs today and well into the future.

The result: a new TSS mission and four strategic goals that define TSS’s strategic framework and serve as the foundation for this FY22-24 IT strategic plan.
Planning Process and Principles

Below is a view of our planning process and the data that informed it. Details can be found in the appendix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Assess the Current State</th>
<th>Phase 2: Establish Strategic Direction &amp; Priorities</th>
<th>Phase 3: Develop Strategic Goals &amp; Initiatives</th>
<th>Phase 4: Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gather Existing Data</td>
<td>TSS Leadership</td>
<td>TSS Leadership and Management Workshops</td>
<td>Design Implementation Approach and Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compile internal department primary data and external/industry secondary data</td>
<td>Define TSS' mission</td>
<td>Refine the four Strategic Goals:</td>
<td>FY22 action planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct primary research and gain stakeholder input:</td>
<td>Confirm core values</td>
<td>• Identify the diagnoses</td>
<td>Launch strategy reviews and reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• TSS Leadership</td>
<td>Identify eight priority areas and key problem areas</td>
<td>• Define guiding policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• TSS Managers</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine coherent actions (initiatives)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vertical Business Partners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Included perspectives:

- **TSS Staff**: Employee Wellness Survey, June 2020 (355 responses)
- **TSS Leadership**: Executive interviews, April 2020 (14 chiefs, directors, and senior managers)
- **Business Partners/ Clients**: Interviews with client directors

The Structure of the TSS Strategic Plan

- **Mission & Values**: What is our purpose and identity?
- **Vision**: What do we thrive to achieve?
- **Domains**: Where must we focus to achieve the vision?
- **Goals**: What must we do to achieve the vision?
- **Milestones & Actions**: How do we know that we are successful?
Mission & Values
TSS’ mission and values support the mission of the County of Santa Clara which is centered on our community. Our mission focuses on empowering the County’s customer-facing departments with technology to provide quality services to residents, enabling access, ease of use and positive interactions. Our core values represent our mindset of partnering with our County business partners to support a healthy, safe and prosperous community.

**County of Santa Clara Mission**

Plan for the needs of a dynamic community, provide quality services, and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous community for all.

**TSS Mission**

Partner with County departments to deliver services to our community through operational excellence and innovative technology solutions.

**TSS Values**

- **Respect**
  Listening to each other and considering all ideas.

- **Integrity**
  Being honest with each other and doing the right thing for the organization and our peers.

- **Accountability**
  Ensuring that we meet our commitments.

- **Transparency**
  Providing accurate and clear information to everyone.

- **Compassion**
  Showing empathy and being willing to help each other.

- **Excellence**
  Going above and beyond to produce extraordinary results.
Vision & Strategic Domain
County of Santa Clara Vision
Engaged employees delivering exceptional customer experiences.

TSS Vision
TSS’ vision is the County’s vision, and we support it by the following strategic goals:

TSS Strategic Domain: How We Will Achieve the Vision

**EMPOWER**
Empower Diverse and High Performing TSS Team

**OPERATE**
Operational Excellence and Growth

**GROW**
Grow Thriving Relationships with our Customers

**TRANSFORM**
Innovation and Digital Government Transformation
Strategic Domain #1: EMPOWER

Empower Diverse and High Performing TSS Team
Build a Diverse and Highly Motivated Workforce

We will achieve this domain by:

- ensuring staff can see how their work is connected to a greater purpose.
- making decisions that support a healthy work/life balance and that will foster a healthy work environment.
- making investments to enable our employees to reach their full potential.

Rationale

Our employees are our most important foundation, and their well-being is integral to the success of our organization and the County. To that effect, we have opportunities to enhance our work environment, including a formal employee wellness program, mentoring programs, clearly defined career paths for staff, and formal succession plans. We provide opportunities for staff to see how their work fits into the larger purpose to support deep employee engagement and foster a sense of accomplishment.

Other factors impacting staff wellness relate to professional development and an orchestrated approach to ensure staff have awareness of and access to formal learning opportunities. To prepare the TSS organization for meeting the technological challenges and encourage more innovation and transformation, we support greater exposure to advanced technology training and education opportunities.

Outcome

From the bottom to the top, our culture, processes, and platforms ensure that good ideas are proposed and implemented by colleagues who love what they do, feel they have a purpose, and are valued.
Strategic Domain #1: EMPOWER

Goal Detail:

Now and Next

- **Ensure Operational Continuity**: Establish solid development and succession planning.
- **Provide Healthy Work Environments**: Establish standards for a healthy work environment and hybrid work.
- **Prepare Teams for Emerging Technologies**: Utilize creative learning options to enable the team to keep up with emerging technologies.
- **Optimize Training Management**: Maximize staff training opportunities by centrally managing training credits.
- **Evolve with Dynamic Technology Landscape**: Adjust job classifications to match the fast-evolving technology landscape.
- **Delineate Accountabilities Across TSS**: Develop operating models to create clear lines of accountabilities between the TSS teams.
- **Create a More Diverse Workforce**: Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Increase Knowledge Transfer**: Provide internal learning opportunities by encouraging shifting between positions.
- **Increase Sense of Purpose**: Increase empathy and a sense of meaning by making the impact of the team’s efforts visible.

Later

- **Increase Agility and Engagement**: Distribute decision-making down the organization to increase agility and engagement.
- **Develop High Performing Business Analysts**: Establish Business Analysts’ Community of Practice.
Strategic Domain #2: OPERATE
Operational Excellence and Growth
Strategic Domain #2: OPERATE

Drive Operational Excellence and IT Effectiveness

We will achieve this strategic domain by:

- evaluating whether existing technologies can serve the desired outcome before introducing new technologies.
- making metric-driven decisions that consider budgets and resource availability to support the solution while ensuring customers are partners in the decision-making process.
- establishing processes that prefer the minimum viable product over perfection.

Rationale

TSS is a new organization, having merged four IT departments into one in the last few years while undergoing fundamental structural and functional changes. Because of these changes, we have exciting opportunities to strengthen our core IT capabilities.

TSS continuously seeks opportunities to improve customer experience while increasing efficiency and system availability.

We also see opportunities to improve our technology life cycle management process and rationalize our technology portfolios achieving smart cost savings without impacting service delivery.

Outcome

We achieve high levels of operational excellence: our processes, systems and services are efficient, stable and resilient.
Strategic Domain #2: OPERATE

Goal Detail:

Now and Next

- **Ensure Technical Standards**: Utilize architecture to create the rules and assurances for technology change / integration.
- **Build the County Technology Blueprint**: Create and maintain the blueprint of the County’s business capabilities and technologies.
- **Reduce Technical Debt**: Identify and classify technical debt to successfully reduce it.
- **Eliminate Redundant Technologies** Normalize the application and infrastructure portfolios to remove redundant technologies.
- **Embrace Agile Approaches**: Continue to shift traditional software development methodologies to Agile approaches.
- **Expedite Development**: Increase the usage of low-code/no-code tools to enable faster solution development.
- **Move to Human-Centered Solutioning**: Integrate design-thinking into all IT products to build human-centric solutions.
- **Maintain Cohesive Communications**: Operationalize the IT Communications Plan.
- **Streamline Bridges Value Streams**: Continue to reengineer, develop, and streamline the value streams in Bridges and operationalize our core internal IT processes.
- **Efficiently Manage Project Resources**: Implement resource management across TSS (Shared Services) to effectively deliver projects using MS PWA.
- **Simplify Access to Clear IT Policies**: Create a discoverable IT Policy Catalog with simple, unambiguous policies.
- **Eliminate Accidental Policy Violations**: Shift from administrative to technical controls to prevent accidental policy violations.
- **Provide Mentoring Opportunities**: Embrace mentoring and skip-level meetings.
- **Launch Service Catalog**: Launch the Operational Service Catalog with service and operational level agreements.
- **Prevent System Event Impacts**: Proactively monitor and detect system events and prevent service impacts.
- **Expedite Technology and Service Acquisition**: Collaborate with Procurement to speed up technology and service acquisition.
- **Improve Demand Management**: Create accurate asset demand forecasts to better manage inventories.
- **Centralize Technical Asset Inventory**: Create and manage a centralized and comprehensive technology asset inventory.
- **Automate Core Processes**: Continue to reengineer, streamline and automate our core internal IT processes.
Strategic Domain #2: OPERATE

- **Improve Precision of Operational Transition Reviews**: Tighten Operational Transition Reviews to assure production-ready solutions.
- **Improve Software License Management**: Centralize software license tracking to understand liabilities, and model future demand.

Later

- **Capture Small Change Requests in Projects**: Include Agile feature requests and small changes in our project management framework.
- **Move to Metrics-Based Decisions**: Shift to metrics-based decision making to drive transparency and accountability.
- **Create IT Finance Visibility**: Create visibility in the IT finance area to enable better decision making.
- **Increase Audit Capabilities**: Create internal TSS audit capabilities.
- **Increase Knowledge Retention**: Formalize technical knowledge management and knowledge retention.
- **Balance Centralization and Federation**: Adjust the organizational structure to balance centralization and federation.
- **Align to Industry Service-Desk Standards**: Align the Service Desk metrics with industry standards levels and embrace self-service.
- **Establish Service Lifecycles**: Establish Service Lifecycle on top of the Project and System Development Lifecycles.
- **Simplify Time Tracking Process and Data Capture**: Reengineer time tracking to simplify the process and gain high quality data.
- **Accelerate Delivery and Increase Quality**: Continue to automate software testing to reduce delivery time and improve quality.
- **Increase Knowledge Retention**: Expand business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities where applicable.
- **Support Fixed Asset Replacement**: Reengineer the funding model to support fixed asset replacement.
Strategic Domain #3: GROW

Growth Thriving Relationships with our Customers
Deliver Programs and Collaborate with Our Partners

We will achieve this strategic domain by:

- collaborating with stakeholders and vertical business partners to follow a data-driven, decision-making methodology to set priorities and define measures of success.
- establishing clear decision-making methods informed by IT Principles for projects, programs, and the portfolio.
- encouraging transparency by using accurate, relevant, timely and complete data.
- taking an agile approach to addressing stakeholders’ needs by shifting to continuous project intake.
- using an objective scoring mechanism to inform technology investments.
- instituting an agile framework across the organization through governance and programs.

Rationale

Meeting our customers’ needs is our number one priority. TSS can expand its use of industry-proven operating models and decision-making frameworks to make wise technology investment decisions that meet our partners’ desired outcomes. The right IT investments are an important factor in the County’s success and sustainability. TSS will continue to quantify the impact of proposed projects and services against our partners’ service delivery objectives. To do so, TSS must continue to gain intimate knowledge of the business’ capabilities and the underlying technologies that our vertical business partners use to deliver services to residents. With this level of collaboration, TSS can accurately define, scope, and deliver the right technology solution. Lastly, technology investments will be made with clearly established measures and quantifiable benefits to ensure the joint customer-TSS success.

Outcome

We are an agile, proactive, and mature IT organization that leverages purposeful governance and best-practice frameworks. In doing so, we consistently deliver measurable value to vertical business partners and in turn meet the needs of County residents.
Strategic Domain #3: GROW

Goal Detail:

Now and Next

- **Align Technical Domains**: Align key technical domain strategies with business strategies.
- **Quantify Client Satisfaction**: Gather data on client satisfaction to monitor service quality and quantify satisfaction.
- **Create Chargeback Model**: Establish an efficient and understandable charge-back/show-back model.
- **Eliminate Low Quality Projects**: Identify low quality active projects for review by ITGC.
- **Become a Process Factory**: Establish the Process-Engineering Center of Excellence.
- **Develop High Performing BRMs**: Build a high-functioning Business Relationship Management practice.
- **Engage Stakeholders in Investment Decisions**: Revitalize IT Governance to engage our stakeholders in the IT investment decisions.
- **Collaborate Across Agencies**: Establish strong trust-based collaborative relationships with County agencies.
- **Execute Innovative Solutions**: Deliver on our key programs and provide brilliant technological solutions.
- **Know Our Customers**: Develop a deep understanding of our customer’s capabilities, strategies, and challenges.

Later

- **Measure Value Completely**: Measure potential and realized business value when IT products or services delivered.
- **Align Priorities and Funding**: Reengineer the project funding and prioritization process to achieve continuous intake.
Strategic Domain #4: TRANSFORM
Innovation and Digital Government Transformation
Enable Innovation and Digital Government Transformation

We will achieve this strategic domain by:

- investing in the County’s Innovation Lab
- deploying a County-wide social networking tool for idea incubation
- completing the County’s ‘Digital Twin’ to design our digital future

Rationale

Innovative technology-driven solutions improve our ability to effectively provide services. Technology now exists to reduce homelessness through 3-D printed shelters that are completed in hours; drones that deliver food/medicine to the elderly or infirm; artificial intelligence that makes decisions without human bias; and autonomous vehicles improving transportation options. Technology advancements will ensure greater security of our private information and more transparency about the County’s performance through accessible real-time data. As innovation continues to transform every aspect of our lives, so will TSS transform how the County ultimately serves residents.

Outcome

By embedding innovative thinking into our work, we will empower Santa Clara County to become a leading institution in government innovation.
Goal Detail:

Now and Next

- **Seek out 10X Opportunities**: Seek out 10x opportunities by completing over 25 proofs-of-concept in 2021.
- **Execute Digital Transformation**: Develop a comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy.
- **Inspire Youth Service Via Technology**: Work with local schools to inspire youth to use technology to serve the community.
- **Celebrate Innovation to Expand Thinking**: Encourage TSS staff to dream big by inviting to speak about their technology innovations.

Later

- **Automate So We Can Innovate**: Invest in automation to gain better outcomes and shift our teams’ focus to innovation.
- **Explore Emerging Technologies**: Partner with early adopters to test emerging technologies.
- **Transition the County to Cloud**: Advance the County’s Cloud Transition.