

Master Planning Process in Place at Information Technology

As many of you may be aware, Information Technology (IT) now has a Master Planning Process in place. The overall goal of the Master Planning process was to develop a clearer picture of the way Information Technology's development resources can support the County's short and long term information needs. The Master Plan will:

- Assist County Business Units in communicating to IT the direction and priorities of projects
- Aid IT in allocating appropriate scarce resources to support project requests
- Provide a framework for IT Leadership Groups and IT management to continually measure and re-evaluate information systems efforts
- Support IT in its determination of the types of technologies that will be of use to future organizational applications
- Assist IT in charting strategies and individual project plans to support the business units present and future information needs

The Department of Information Technology is comprised of three divisions; Data Center Operations, Technical Systems and Networking, and Systems Development and Support. This Master Plan is limited to the utilization of the budgeted positions and professional services allocation of the Systems Development and Support Division. The plan encompasses the 1998/99 fiscal years of January 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999.

The Master Planning process represents the commitment of the Department of Information Technology to partner with the County's various departments and divisions in an effort to effectively utilize Oakland County's scarce IT development resources.

When considering the Systems Development and Support Division, IT has an annual availability of 71,312 hours, which in turn means the total available hours for the entire Master Plan time frame of January 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999 will be 127,108 hours. These hours were allocated in the following manner:

1. Hours required to provide on-going Customer Support and Systems Maintenance (which includes Year 2000 Maintenance).
2. Projects where enhancements to existing automation were necessary in order to comply with local, state, or federal mandated legislation, and manual processing was not possible or feasible.
3. Projects that met one or more of the financial Project Assessment Criteria (see Master Planning report for more detail).
4. Projects that will impact the largest number of users, functional areas, and Leadership Groups.

March 1998, IT Quarterly Newsletter Archive

5. Projects that will have the greatest operational benefits according to the operational Project Assessment Criteria (see Master Planning report for more detail).

Now that a criteria has been developed, how do we apply it to individual projects and requests?

The answer is through IT Leadership Group determination. These groups provide the vehicle for IT customers to help direct and allocate valuable IT development resources to initiatives and projects that are the most beneficial to the County organization as a whole.

The objectives of the Information Technology Leadership Groups are to:

- C Provide uniform project definition
- C Evaluate project value to the County organization and County constituents
- C Determine resource allocation through project prioritization with departmental input
- C Assist IT Project Managers in the planning of inter-dependant projects
- C Identify ways to better leverage existing resources, in IT and the Business Units

These objectives provide the basis for the various Leadership Groups to operate and partner with the Department of Information Technology as an integral part of the annual Master Planning process. The Leadership Groups also have a Project Assessment Criteria they follow in order to assess the value of a project and establish a common basis for comparing projects during prioritization and resource allocation.

In December 1997, each of the Leadership Groups met and prioritized all of their outstanding projects/requests. The result is a prioritized list of all Planned Projects for the 1998/99 Master Planning period. In addition to the planned projects for the 1998/99 Master Planning period, there are approximately 32,000 hours of Open Requests that are not planned as part of the 1998/99 Master Planning period. These project requests will remain open and will be considered should additional resources be made available or an approved project is completed ahead of schedule.

On a quarterly basis, a Project Status report will be distributed to all Leadership Group representatives, Department Directors, Division Managers, Elected Officials, and the Board of Commissioners Strategic Planning Committee. This report will include resource utilization, project status, project estimated and actual hours variance, and estimated and actual start and end date variance.

Leadership Groups will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to review project progress and address any project variance which would require re-allocation of resources, re-prioritization of approved projects, as well as any new projects being submitted to the Leadership Group for review.

The complete 1998/99 Information Technology Master Plan Report is available for your review in WordPerfect format on the County-wide publish drive "O", specifically "**o:\infotech\leadgrp\mastplan.rpt**". Also available on the on the "O" drive is a listing of each Leadership Group, Department, Division and the Representative for each group, this document is located on the "O" drive, "**o:\infotech\leadgrp\lmember.wpd**".

Back-Up Using Windows 95

Tomi Hunt, from Risk Management, has asked for your help. When she does a weekly Backup on her Windows 95 PC she is prompted on every diskette whether or not she wants to erase the disks. The Information Technology Software Help Desk has recommended that she unmark the option "Always erase on floppy disk backups" through Settings...Options...Backup...Advanced Options; however, she indicates that although this is unmarked she is still prompted with the message for each diskette. She and her co-workers find this is bothersome and annoying. If you or someone you work with has solved this mystery or know of a way around this feature, please contact Tina Ramey at 858-4082. Tina will pass this information along to Tomi and publish the solution in the next quarterly newsletter.

Job Opportunities at Information Technology

If you or anyone you know is interested in an exciting career change, then you will want to consider applying for positions in the department of Information Technology. Several positions are currently available such as:

- < Applications Analyst Programmer I
- < Applications Analyst Programmer II
- < User Support Specialist III-Law Enforcement

Information Technology supports several different customer environments. Customers consist of:

- C 82 County divisions;
- C 61 Local government units (assessors, treasurers, law enforcement); and
- C 50 Private sector businesses

Information Technology is also technically diverse. Support is provided for an IBM ES2003-124 Mainframe computer, an IBM AS/400 Mini-computer, 950 mainframe terminals, local area network (LAN) servers, over 3,000 personal computer and image workstations, over 500 Mobile Data Terminals in police cars, not to mention the hundreds of printers, modems, peripherals, and software packages surrounding these devices. Oakland County also supports a wide area network connecting numerous

March 1998, IT Quarterly Newsletter Archive

remote facilities. These systems run over 150 major applications consisting of more than 8,000 programs. The systems provide the processing for all the major applications such as payroll, accounting, and purchasing, as well as tax statements, assessment notices, dog license renewals, voter registration listings and W-2's to name a few. Additionally, there are 85 law enforcement, fire and other agencies in the county, including the County Sheriff, who use the Courts and Law Enforcement Management Information System (CLEMIS) on a 24-hour basis/7 days a week.

Divided into three divisions (Technical Systems and Networking, Data Center Operations, and Systems Development and Support), the Department of Information Technology is made up of over one hundred positions which consists of the full range of information systems classifications such as programmers, support specialists, technicians, and project managers.

In an ever-changing technology environment, Department of Information Technology employees find themselves working on high profile projects such as:

- C Data Warehousing
- C Database/Data Communications
- C Geographical Information System
- C Human Resource/Financial Information System
- C CLEMIS System

The current list of job openings is available through Oakland County's web page by accessing www.co.oakland.mi.us. Once on the home page you will go to the **Personnel** page. Or, you can contact the Personnel Department at 858-0530 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The Department of Information Technology also has a web page available and can be accessed from the Oakland County's home page as well.

Information Technology Training Center Quarterly Update

A new class, WordPerfect 6.1 Basics for the Non-Typist, was added to the first quarter training schedule. The response to this class was high; therefore, we have added additional classes to the second quarter schedule. This is a two-half day class which is geared to the student who has little or no knowledge of basic WordPerfect word processing functions and who is a non-typist. This class is best suited for management, supervisory, and non-clerical staff who need a general overview of basic WordPerfect word processing functions. Students who are interested in taking the Intermediate and Advanced WordPerfect classes will need to complete the four half day Introduction to WordPerfect 6.1 class.

Information Technology has also dropped the Lotus 1-2-3 v. 4.0 suite classes from the training schedule and added Lotus 1-2-3 v. 5.0. For the last several months, Lotus 4.0 has been taught using the newer version 5.0. Now all students will be taught on the 5.0 version. It should be noted that the County as a whole will not be upgraded to Lotus 5.0.

There are very few features that are new to Lotus 5.0. As a result, there was not enough of a difference to merit the cost of upgrading the entire County to Lotus 5.0. Any new PC's that are being placed in the field now have Lotus 5.0 due to the fact that the County can no longer get licensed copies of the older version of Lotus 4.0. County employees who have taken the Lotus 4.0 classes do not need to take the Lotus 5.0 series. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Tina Ramey at 858-4082.

As always, the second quarter, 1998 training schedule is available on the County-wide publish drive "O", specifically "**o:\infotech\training\schedule.doc**". If you cannot find a class listed on the schedule which you need to take, or the dates and times are not convenient for you, please contact the receptionist at Information Technology. Your name can be placed on a waiting list. When any class has a waiting list of six or more individuals, Information Technology will attempt to open an additional class.

E-Mail Emoticons

E-Mail Emoticons were recently explained in the Wolf Creek *Currents*. Emoticons are punctuation messages that frequent e-mailers use to convey ideas quickly. These emoticons can be understood by tilting the head to the side, the piece in *Currents* discusses the various ways that e-mail has shortened communications. Emoticons include:

- ;-)** I'm winking
- =-|** I'm a cyberpunk
- :-0** I'm in awe or shock
- {:-)** I'm wearing a toupee

Various Net-acronyms are also included such as:

- LOL** Laughing out loud
- ROTFL** Rolling on the floor laughing
- IMO** In my opinion
- IMHO** In my humble opinion

No editor or address information was given.

Board of Commissioners Approve Year 2000 - Phase II

(A Multi-Faceted Approach to Achieving Year 2000 Compliance)

In the December 1997 Information Technology Quarterly, an article was written which discussed Phase I and outlined Phase II of the Year 2000 Project. On February 12, 1998, the Department of Information Technology (IT) presented the results of Phase I and received approval from the Board of Commissioners for the additional funding necessary to proceed with Phase II of the Year 2000 Project.

As presented to the Board of Commissioners, IT has recommended a multi-faceted approach to Phase II. The second phase involves the utilization of several vendors, rather than a single vendor, in conjunction with IT resources allocated in the 1998/99 IT Master Plan (see lead article). This multi-faceted approach is the most economical approach for the Year 2000 conversion process.

As stated in the previous article on the Year 2000 project, it is estimated that the project will take approximately 54,000 hours over 12 to 18 months to complete. This will include the use of 14,500 hours of in-house system analyst/programmer time during fiscal year 1998 and 40,000 hours of outside vendor time (29,400 in fiscal year 1998 and 10,600 in fiscal year 1999). With the use of the multi-faceted approach, the volume of business (of the 40,000 hours) allocated to each vendor currently under contract, will depend upon the vendor's ability to successfully complete previous Year 2000 Projects.

Thanks to the efforts of several IT Programmer/Analysts, including Allen Craig, Pat Dickson, Dan Dopierala, Sue Hsich, Kathy Kelley, Marina Lupyan, and Bill Shurkey, the following systems have been converted and are Year 2000 compliant: Campaign Finance System, Reimbursement System, and Animal Control System. Also, thanks to the coordination efforts of Lynn Spencer, Supervisor, and Harshika Patel, Programmer/Analyst, the District Court's program conversions are complete.

As we launch Phase II, we have begun program conversions on the Prosecutor's, Friend of the Court, and Probate Court Systems. Carol Howden and Deb Nolen, Programmer/Analysts, will be coordinating and conducting the conversion of the Circuit Court Systems.

Look for more news/updates on the Year 2000 project in the next several issues of the Information Technology Quarterly.