



Washington State
Liquor and Cannabis Board

Information Technology
Strategic Plan
Fiscal Years 2022 - 2026

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Message from the CIO

Board members, Executive Management Team members, and agency team members, I am proud to present the IT Strategic Plan.

Going through the process of developing this plan, it is exciting to see how the agency will leverage existing technology and advance the technology portfolio in the coming years. This plan anticipates that each division's technology needs will grow and how important it will be for the agency to prioritize and fund the IT objectives and strategic initiatives contained herein. These technology investments will not only improve the delivery of services to licensees and the public, but will also allow employees to work more securely, effectively, efficiently, and collaboratively.

While the development of the plan is significant, implementing the plan will take a tremendous amount of effort on the part of our talented IT staff and business stakeholders. Many projects will emerge from this plan, and these will need to be carefully managed and tracked throughout their lifecycle. It is important to keep in mind that this plan is a strategic roadmap that relies on forecasts and assumptions that may change in the future. Revisiting and reviewing the IT goals, objectives, and strategic initiatives annually are vital and we will make adjustments when and where necessary.

The development of this plan is made possible with the diligent and hard work, input, and review by staff at various levels throughout the agency. I am grateful for their expertise, insights, suggestions, and opinions. Likewise, I am grateful for the direction, guidance, and support of the Board and Executive Management Team members, all of whom have recognized the importance of information technology to the successful achievement of the agency's mission.

George Williams
Chief Information Officer

Introduction

The rapid advancement of information technology has had a transformational impact on the agency in recent years. It is imperative that information technology is a priority in shaping the way we meet the agency's needs and goals. This plan provides a vision and roadmap for the coordinated development and enhancement of the agency's technology over the next five years.

It provides practical guidance for responsible decision-making and resource management. It focuses on the needs of the entire agency and because of its wide scope, it also supports cooperative partnerships between divisions.

A critical step is to ensure funding is available for those strategic initiatives identified as high priority for the agency. IT staff will begin planning for the implementation of those objectives and strategic initiatives for which funding is not required.

Over the last five years, a great deal has been accomplished in using technology to improve public access to agency information and to increase employee efficiency and effectiveness in delivering exceptional service. In the next five years, the agency faces a new set of challenges and expectations. Using this plan as a roadmap, the agency has an opportunity to use innovative technology to support new ways of doing business to meet those challenges.

Previous 5-Year Plan Accomplishments

The previous plan was the springboard for a number of significant accomplishments across the enterprise, including:

- Implementing a new real-time desktop client for audio, video and content sharing saving the agency \$50,000 per year.
- Implementing a rapid pandemic response to support a solely remote work environment for agency staff.
- Implementing a new agency-wide Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone service, OneX.
- Implementing a replacement of the agency's entire Storage Area Network (SAN).
- Implementing BitLocker for full volume encryption of agency data stored on employee devices.
- Implementing a new Records Management system for Human Resources and the Tax and Fee Unit.
- Moving all physical agency infrastructure hardware to the State Data Center.
- Supporting the agency's headquarters location move, enabling high-speed, high-capacity data, voice and video communications.
- Migrating and consolidating the agency's legacy LIQ domain to a new Shared Services Virtual (SSV) domain.
- Installing new servers at the Quincy Data Center for the recovery and restoration of the iSeries in the event of a disaster.
- Implementing a new Cannabis Traceability System.
- Implementing a Windows 10 upgrade on all agency employee devices.
- Implementing numerous legislative bills requiring modification and/or enhancement to existing IT systems.
- Implementing a replacement of the agency's ticketing system.
- Implementing a number of new data interfaces with partner agencies under negotiated Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) terms and conditions.

Vision

All agency employees, licensees and stakeholders benefit from high quality, efficient, cost effective and secure communications, access to information and service delivery.

Goal 1 – Customer Satisfaction

Ensure the highest level of customer satisfaction by continually improving responsiveness and technical business capabilities.

Objectives:

- 1a. Apply lessons learned from previous project implementation to improve future project delivery.
- 1b. Apply a requirements-driven approach to the replacement of legacy technologies.
- 1c. Increase technical proficiency and expertise.
- 1d. Increase technology accessibility to better support overall mobility and people with disabilities.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Design, develop and implement a new licensing case management system.
- Design, develop and implement a simplified contingency replacement for LEAF.
- Design, develop and implement a new Tax & Fee system.
- Provide Salesforce training opportunities for technical staff.
- Apply responsive web design principles to enhance web application mobility.

Goal 2 – Communication and Collaboration

Inform and engage agency end users in resolving issues related to supportive technologies and information systems that enable business operations.

Objectives:

- 2a. Educate end users on new and emerging technologies.
- 2b. Expand end user self-service capabilities.
- 2c. Improve ticket resolution times.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Design, develop and implement a new ticketing system.
- Publish a business-friendly IT Service Catalog.
- Negotiate Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with each agency division.
- Develop a comprehensive, end user training program.

Goal 3 – IT Culture of Excellence

Inspire an accountable and tolerant division culture that promotes honest, integrity, and mutual respect.

Objectives:

- 3a. Improve statewide Employee Survey results.
- 3b. Increase workforce competency skill development.
- 3c. Establish division expectations for workplace conduct.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Publish an IT Culture of Excellence document.
- Update all IT position descriptions to include a position competency on role modeling the IT culture.
- Provide competency skills training opportunities for IT staff.

Goal 4 – Data Management

Achieve the highest level of operational excellence by continually improving agency data governance across the enterprise.

Objectives:

- 4a. Enhance data and document storage, retrieval, organization, sharing and access.
- 4b. Use data to improve analysis and decision making.
- 4c. Maintain a current agency Open Data Plan that determines which information the public most wants and needs.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Cleanse and normalize agency data in conformance with data management standards and best practices.
- Implement business intelligence software to improve data analysis and decision-making.
- Enhance the agency's document imaging and management systems to improve efficiency.

Goal 5 – Infrastructure Optimization

The IT network infrastructure is architected and configures for optimal operational effectiveness and efficiency.

Objectives:

- 5a. Enhance agency network and internet connectivity.
- 5b. Improve management of cloud storage.
- 5c. Reduce the agency technology asset inventory count.
- 5d. Expand the use of server and desktop virtualization

Strategic Initiatives:

- Develop a Cloud Optimization Strategy that aligns with the state's strategic technology roadmap.
- Upgrade all Wide Area Network (WAN) circuits at Enforcement and Education field offices.
- Enroll all agency mobile devices in Microsoft Intune.
- Implement an enterprise wide, voice-over-internet-protocol (VoIP) telephony solution.

The Future of IT

The following factors drive the need for a new IT strategic plan and helped influence plan content.

- The way that the agency does business and interacts with its customers is changing, and information technology will play a key role in those changes.
- Mobile computing is becoming a dominate force. The majority of web pages will be viewed through mobile devices. It is incumbent on the agency to adapt to this and offer mobile device friendly access to information and web applications.
- There is an increasing need for enterprise-wide IT solutions that are integrated to improve service delivery.
- Many larger technology infrastructure improvements are long-term investments and require careful planning and research before they are implemented.
- The role of the IT division will need to expand to include not only expert care of the IT infrastructure and applications, but also a proactive consulting, facilitating and leadership role. This includes understanding and interpreting needs, communicating technology needs and opportunities, developing and improving business processes, and finding and coordinating appropriate IT solutions.
- Cyber threats are growing in number and in sophistication. Proactive investments in cyber security is critical.
- IT staff are being asked to do more with the same, or even fewer resources. It is imperative that the agency provide them with the IT tools and training they need to be successful.
- Agency processes, regulations, and audit requirements do not always support flexibility, quick changes or selecting the most-favored new technology solutions.
- The agency needs to make sure the technology it employs for communication with licensees and the public is accessible to those who cannot afford the latest technology as well as those with disabilities.
- The agency cannot easily discard technology investments made with taxpayer money. Changing technologies requires demonstrating a clear need and showing the return on investment.
- A balance needs to be struck between employing proven and leading-edge technology to meet the needs of staff, divisions, licensees and the public. The way these groups use technology, and the desire for change, often comes at different speeds.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will guide decision-making in the continual development of the agency's information technology.

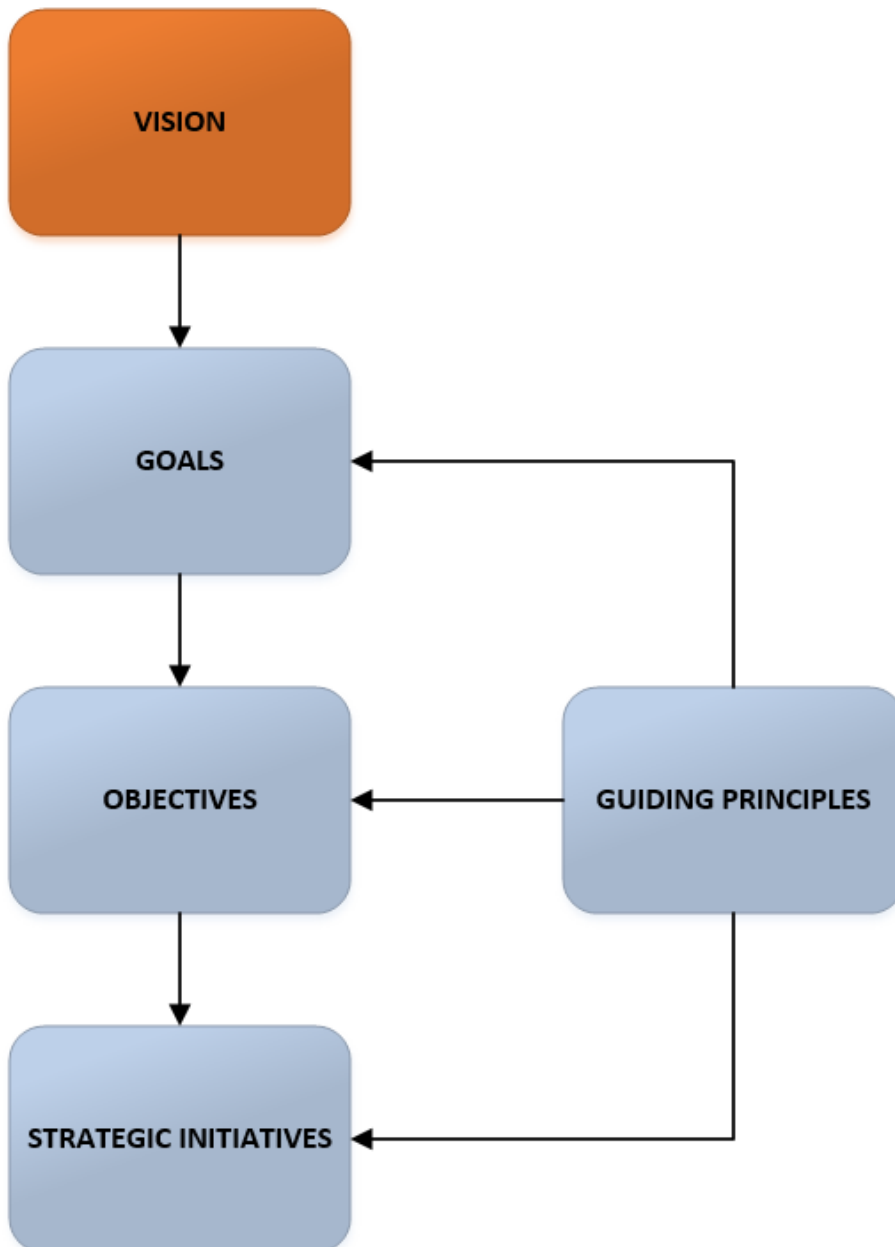
- The agency will deliver services and information using a variety of methods to inform stakeholders and foster input and collaboration.
- IT will maintain a network infrastructure with the appropriate bandwidth, speed and reliability to deliver services and meet the needs of end users.
- Staff will have the necessary technologies and training to accomplish the agency's mission and goals.
- Information sharing and collaboration between divisions will be encouraged, and IT will provide expertise and guidance when supporting business process improvements.
- IT will provide high-quality customer service to technology users in accordance with division Service Level Agreements.
- The agency will pursue commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) applications, highly configurable software-as-a-service applications, and hosted or cloud-based systems where practical with a bias toward proven technologies.
- The agency will choose digital over paper to support environmentally friendly business processes.
- The agency will strive to protect and secure information generated by and provided to stakeholders.

- A flexible and adaptable process will be used to address changes to information technology. IT will strive to continually monitor and research new and emerging technologies, focusing on how they can improve efficiencies and service delivery.
- Training for new technologies will be provided to end users prior to their implementation.
- IT will aim to provide redundancy and resiliency when implementing mission-critical systems.
- New technology acquisitions will conform with the agency's current software standards, infrastructure protocols, and cyber security standards to protect agency investments.

Appendix A – Definitions

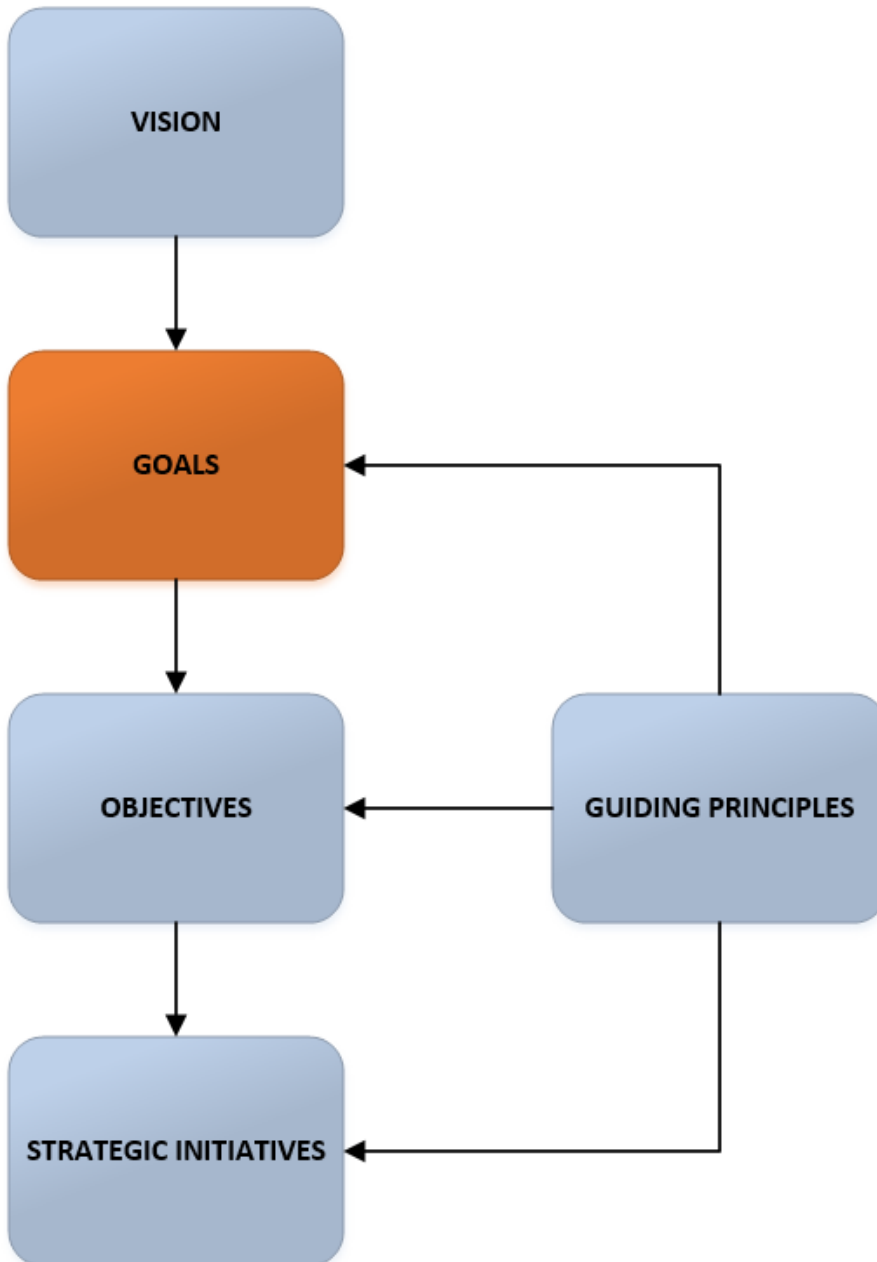
Vision:

- The vision reflects the ability to think about our future with imagination and wisdom.



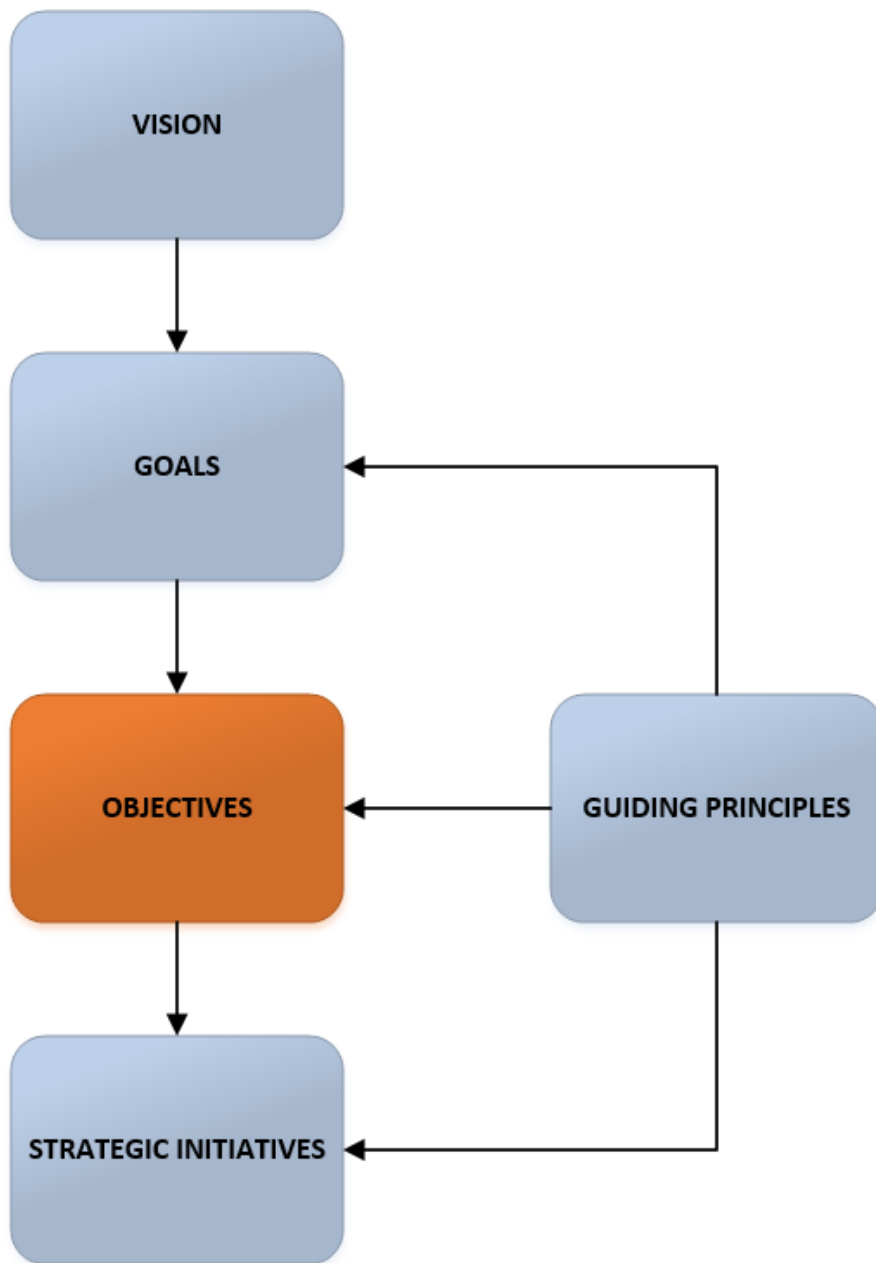
Goals

- The goals identify the agency's main areas of focus for information technology, and indicate the results the agency needs to achieve.



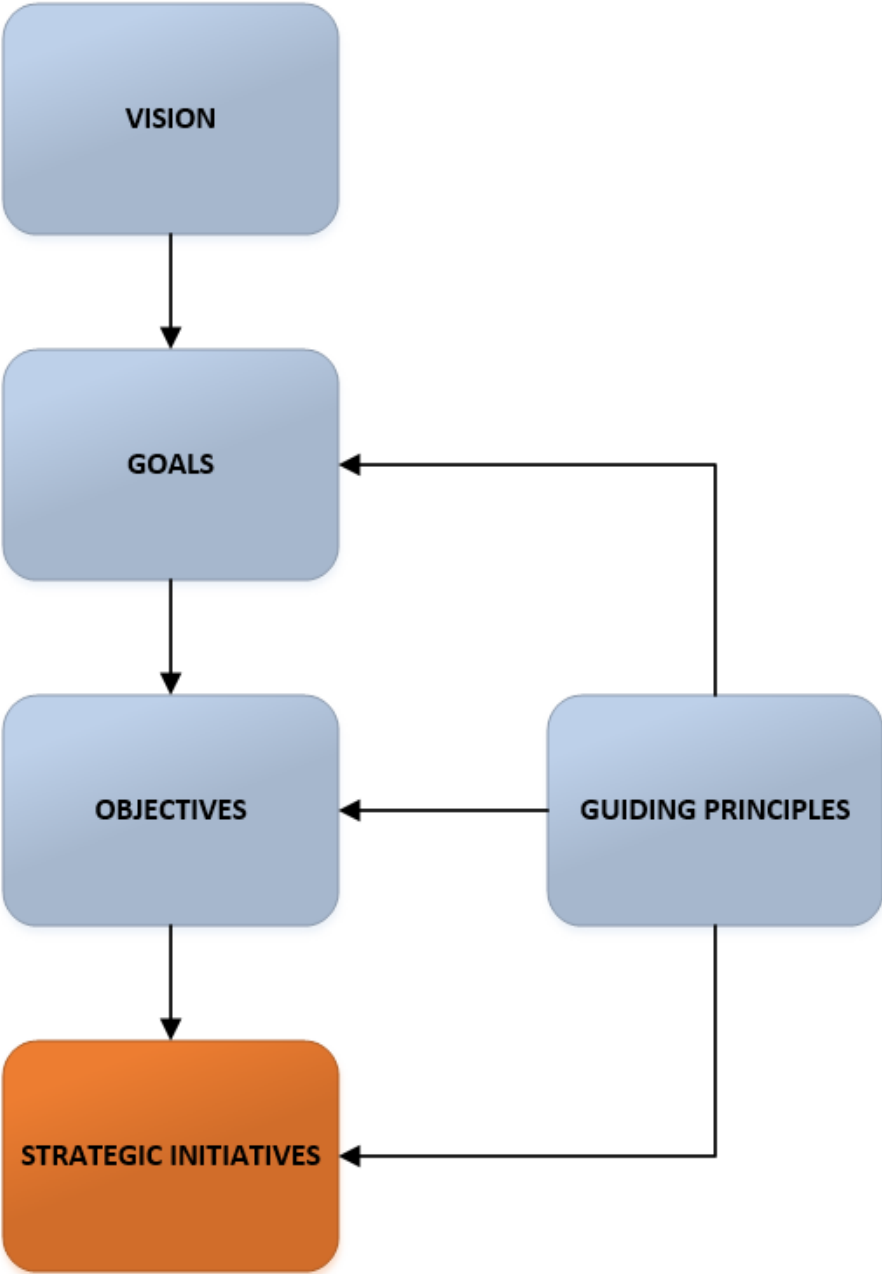
Objectives

- The objectives are tied to the goals and identify the activities needed to obtain the results envisioned by the agency. They are action statements that clarify how the agency will implement the strategy.



Strategic Initiatives

- The strategic initiatives break down the objectives into their more specific parts and activities.



Guiding Principles

- Guiding principles influence decision-making in the continual improvement and delivery of information technology products and services.

