EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The nature of Development Services is one of constant transformation reflecting the tenancy for change innate in any community. Keeping pace with the ever changing needs and trends of managing Development Services has become easier and simultaneously more challenging as technological advances are more frequent and profound than ever before.   Recognizing the need to provide receptive, reactive and responsive service to developers, architects, inspectors and citizens Garden City Development Services in conjunction with Boise City Development Services designed a technologically innovative strategy for contracting building services.

This cooperation holds a great promise of benefits, however it also comes with a great potential for risk. In the planning stages, stakeholders acknowledged that each City uses dramatically different software packages and operating procedures and that neither could transition to common software. In addition to this complication some information and processes would need to be available in both data systems, but creating a system with full access between the two databases would increase the vulnerability of the systems to being compromised. The two Cities are working closely to automate a replication process so that neither will need to forfeit their data management system, and both will uphold their integrity. This cooperation has shown a great deal of ingenuity on the part of all participants and produced a dynamic system that is accessible to and provides for a diverse group of users by combining a network which integrates necessary information from both systems via a remote connection, as well as a plan to set up an online application for external users. The resulting benefits are reducing potential issues in communication, increasing consistency and elevating the level of service the cities are able to provide to their customers.

All city personnel and inspectors interested in the status of a building permit or a scheduled inspection are able to track the process in real time using the remote network, and are able to provide current information to interested external parties. The next phase of development will be making the same status information available online, and in a modified form accessible for the general public. To date this technological advancement has provided the foundation for successful execution of what could have been a very complicated agreement. This collaboration of minds and resources has opened channels that could greatly benefit other communities in a similar situation. By facilitating the development of technological systems we have enhanced the ability to communicate and work together successfully to become more accessible and receptive to the needs of developers, promoting a development friendly environment in an economy that is not typically conducive to developing thriving and sustainable communities.