ITS Strategic Plan FY 2026-2029

OFFICE of
information
technology
services

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Administrator & Chief Information Officer

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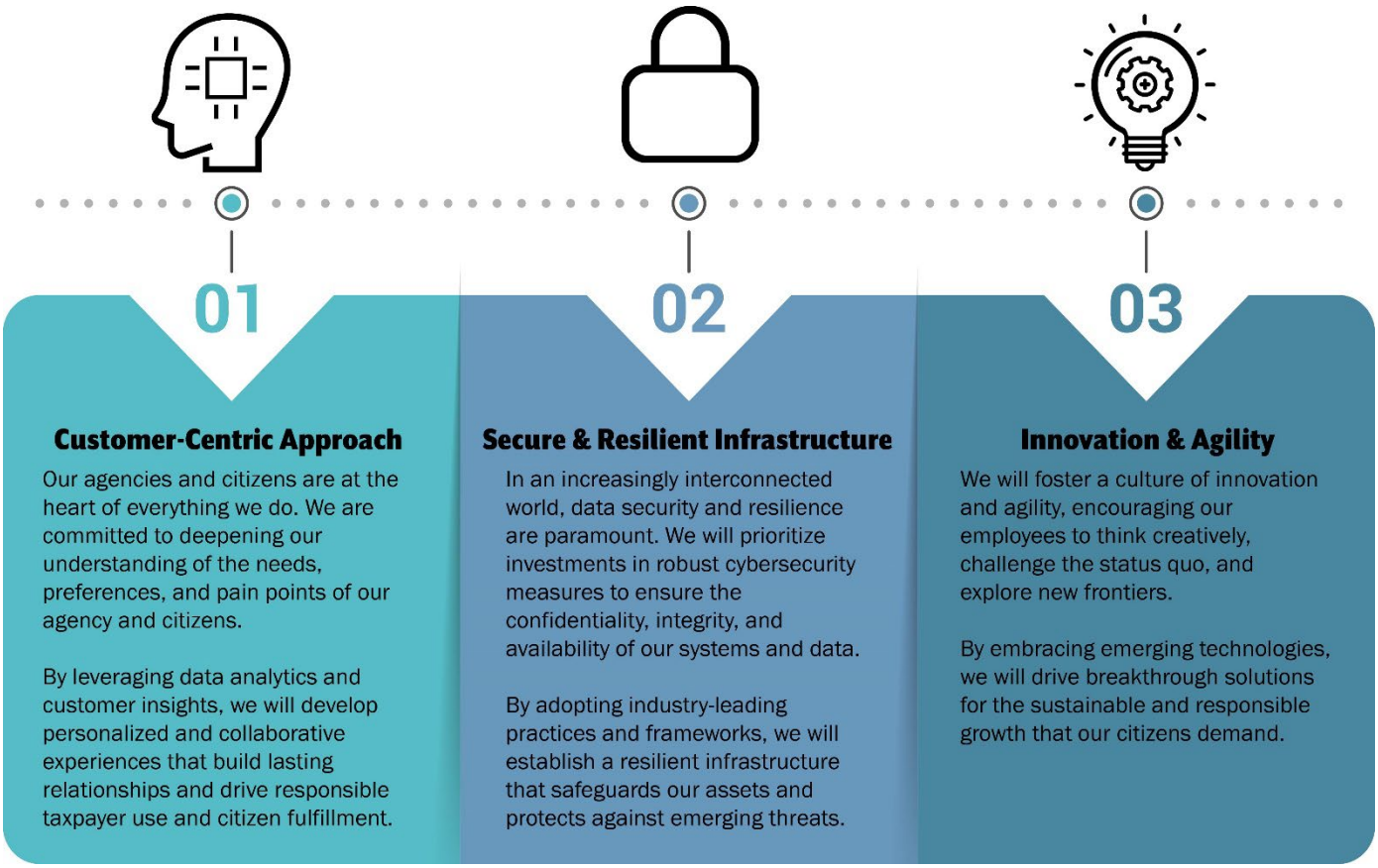
Message from the CIO

As Idaho's Chief Information Officer and Administrator for the Governor's Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), it is with great pleasure that I share our strategic priorities for fiscal year 2026 and beyond.

In an era of rapid technological advancements and evolving business landscapes, it is essential for government agencies to adapt and transform to stay ahead of the curve. With this in mind, we have invested considerable time, effort, and expertise to develop short-term comprehensive strategic priorities that will shape the future of Idaho's state IT.

At the core of our strategic vision lies our commitment to leveraging technology as a catalyst for growth and innovation to make government agencies more efficient and citizen-friendly. We believe that by harnessing the power of emerging technologies, we can create new opportunities, enhance operational efficiencies, and deliver exceptional value to our customers.

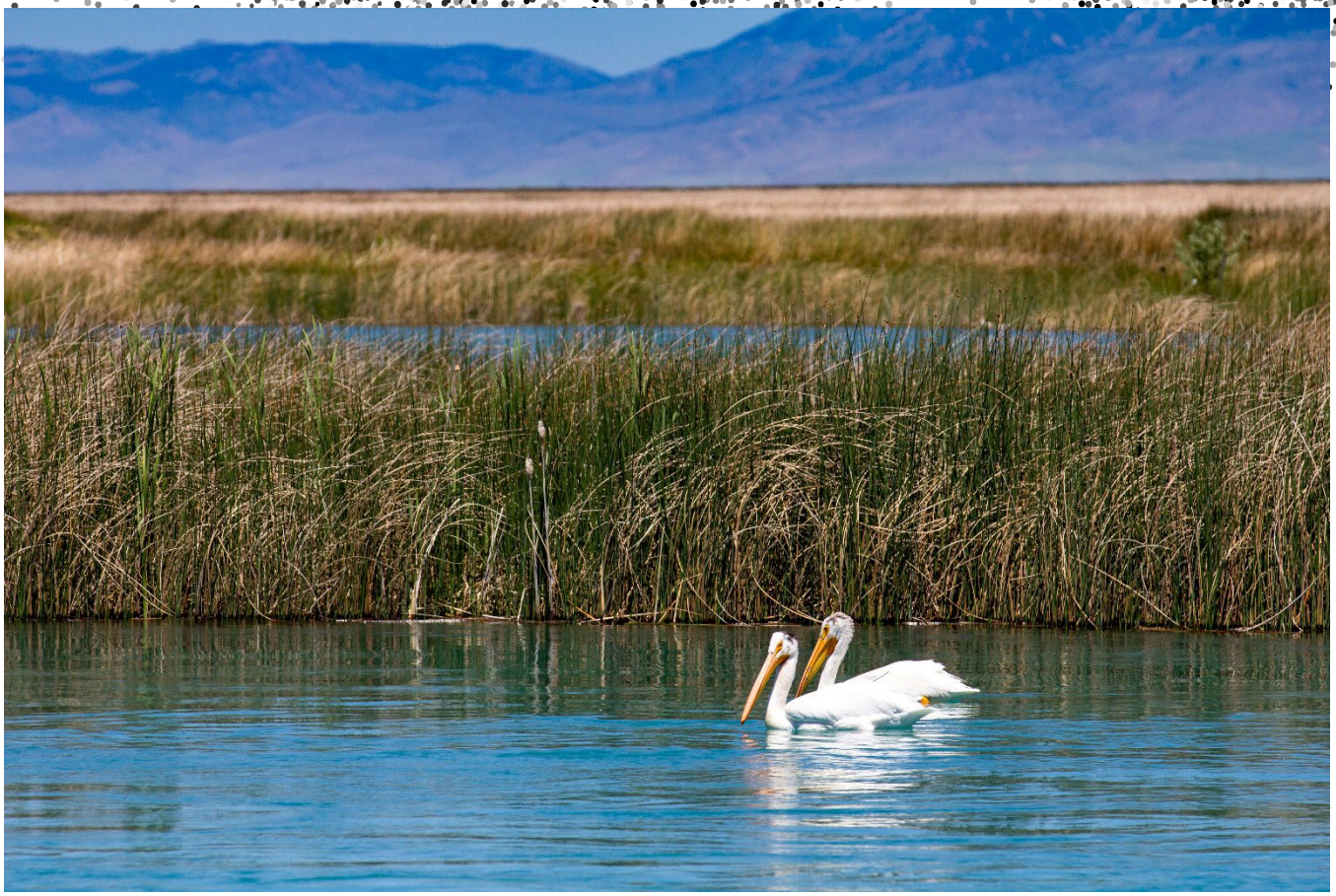
Our strategic priorities revolve around three key guiding principles:



To achieve our strategic priorities, we will focus on fostering collaboration, both internally and externally. We recognize that meaningful partnerships and collaborations are key drivers of success in today's complex government environment. By forging strategic alliances, nurturing vendor relationships, and engaging with industry experts, we will leverage collective intelligence to overcome challenges and unlock new possibilities.

While the road ahead may be challenging, we are confident that our strategic priorities will guide us towards a successful future. We invite each one of you, our esteemed stakeholders, to embark on this transformative journey with us. Your continued support, insight, and feedback will be invaluable as we navigate uncharted territories and redefine the boundaries of excellence.

Thank you for your trust and belief in our organization and Governor Brad Little's IT Modernization Initiative. We look forward to collaborating with you as we bring our strategic priorities to life.



Agency Overview

The core functions of ITS are outlined in Idaho Code, Title 67, Chapter 8. The agency was established in 2018 and comprises seven bureaus dedicated to coordinating and implementing information technology (IT) services and cybersecurity policies within the State of Idaho.

Bureaus include Enterprise Services, IT Operations, Cybersecurity/Compliance, Financial Services, Communications, Service Delivery, and Enterprise Technology. ITS provides leadership towards and the administration of enterprise state IT solutions.

ITS operates the core network and related security systems used by all agencies and guarantees reliable communications for state government through telephone, IT networks, and internet services. ITS currently provides IT services to over 50 agencies, boards, and commissions.

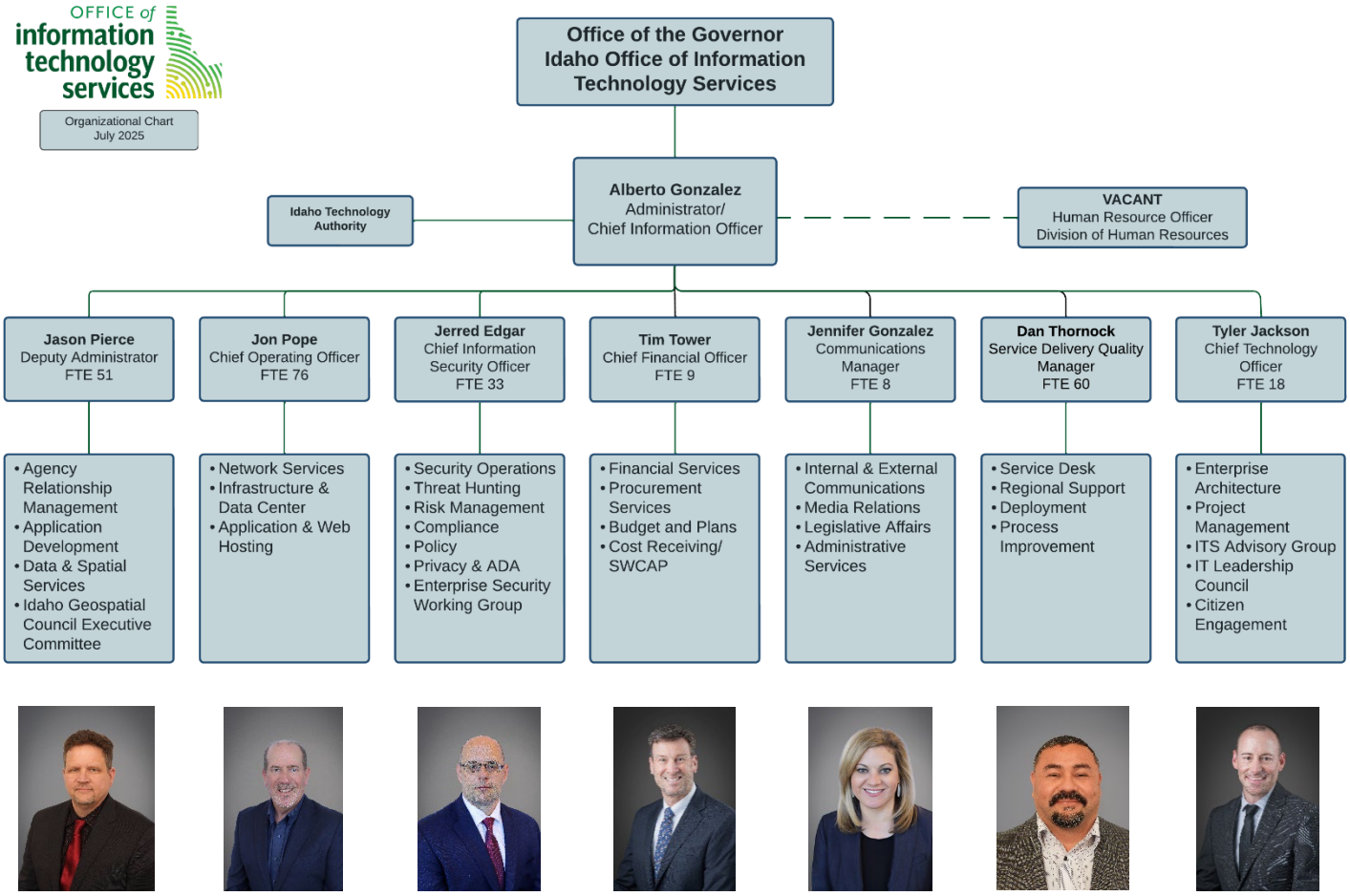
IT services include desktop troubleshooting, cybersecurity, server/storage administration, web support, project management, e-mail and collaboration tools, application support and development, and enterprise services, among others.

ITS supports a primary committee and three subcommittees. Established in Idaho Code 67-831 to 67-833, the Idaho Technology Authority (ITA) establishes statewide IT and telecommunications policies, standards, guidelines, and conventions to ensure uniformity and compatibility among state agency systems.

The committee's composition ensures that those affected by policy decisions have a role and say in policy direction.

The two subcommittees focus on specific portions of the ITA mission: the IT Leadership Council and the Idaho Geospatial Council-Executive Committee.

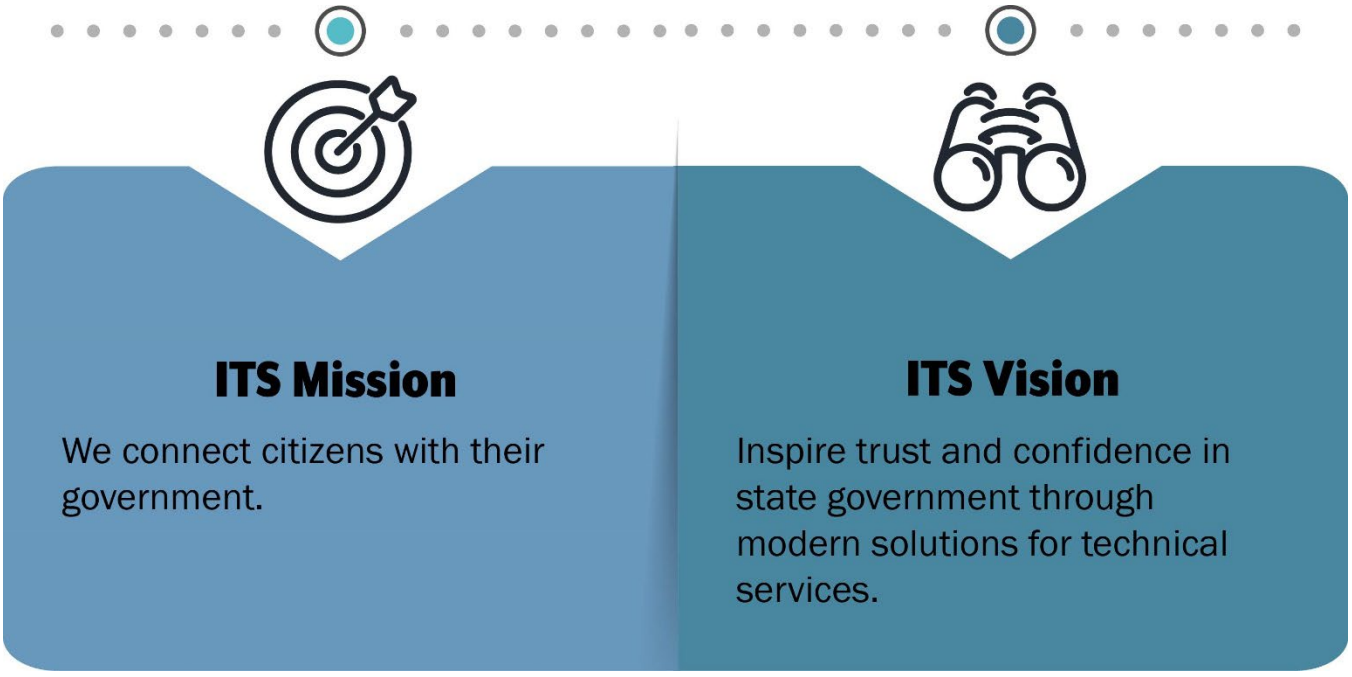
ITS Organizational Chart



Strategic Priorities

The ITS FY 2026–FY 2029 Strategic Plan establishes IT focus areas and goals, setting the direction for the state's IT enterprise. This document highlights technology decisions and investments that align with Governor Brad Little's IT Modernization Initiative to implement state IT priorities securely and efficiently.

Governor Little's statewide priorities serve as our inspiration, while our mission and vision statements lay the foundation for strategic initiatives. Our plan is dedicated to improving the productivity and quality of government services through technology solutions. We are committed to collaborating with leaders in Idaho state agencies to address long-term concerns.



ITS has also identified additional strategic objectives as valuable and important for the state based on agency business priorities, staff capabilities, and anticipated enterprise needs. These objectives are dependent on key external factors, staff capacity, and budgetary availability.

ITS has identified eight key strategic goals to drive our priorities and activities:

1. Complete Governor's IT Modernization Initiative
2. Strengthen Cyber Security Posture for Idaho
3. Modernization of Legacy Applications
4. State Network Cost Reduction and Service Improvements
5. Strengthen Communication and Collaboration
6. Implement a Cloud Smart Strategy
7. Establish Foundational Policy for Utilization of Artificial Intelligence
8. Implement Enterprise Data Strategy

Goal 1: Complete Governor's IT Modernization Initiative

The consolidation of all IT services from multiple state agencies into a single centralized agency under the Governor's office offers a tremendous opportunity for proactive communication and strategic planning.

Such centralization enables the state to establish standard operating procedures and technologies across agencies, making the communication of initiatives and the sharing of data significantly more efficient.

Economies of scale are an additional benefit; by aggregating the purchasing power of multiple agencies, the state could negotiate better contracts for hardware, software, and services, thereby maximizing taxpayer value.

A core tenet should be the retention and reassignment of existing agency IT staff. Not only does this safeguard institutional knowledge, but it helps in the smoother transition of technologies and processes from individual agencies to the centralized IT agency. Keeping agency employees in the loop ensures a sense of ownership and responsibility, crucial for the success of such a large-scale transformation.

ITS will be pursuing the sixth and final phase of IT modernization during FY 2026 for implementation beginning FY 2027. Work on this initiative continues to increase efficiency in IT services across state agencies, enabling agencies to focus on being IT consumers rather than IT providers.

Goals

1. Achieve full standardization and interoperability across all executive branch agencies to improve communication and data-sharing.
2. Realize measurable cost savings through economies of scale in IT procurement, maximizing taxpayer value.
3. Retain and reassign as many existing agency IT staff as possible to ITS.

Key External Factors

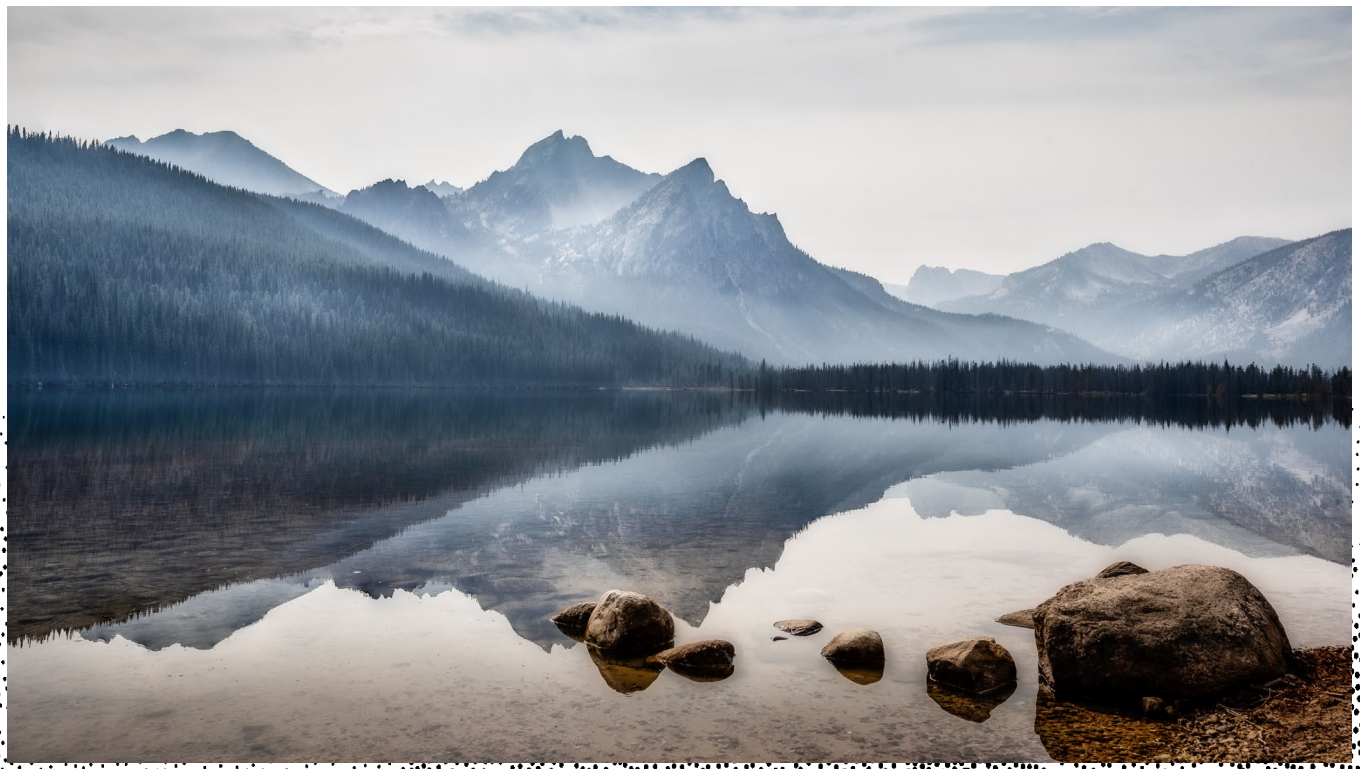
- The centralization process is not without its challenges. Agencies may be hesitant to relinquish control over their IT infrastructure, wary of a potential loss of agency-specific customization and quick decision-making abilities.
- The current fragmentation across agencies often leads to inadequate investment in IT, stemming from a lack of understanding of the true, long-term costs associated with maintaining separate IT

departments. As the consolidation effort moves forward, it is critical the Idaho Legislature lend its support, particularly for the approval of the remaining phases of consolidation.

- Without legislative backing, the effort could stall, leaving the state with a patchwork of IT capabilities rather than a streamlined, efficient system. A bipartisan commitment to understand, review, and act, upon the consolidation plan is vital for ensuring the state leverages technology as a strategic asset.

Performance Measures

- FY 2024 – In progress ITD, ICBVI, Libraries (43 FTE – Total 9,301 customers supported)
- FY 2025 – Historical Society, IMD, Lands, Labor, Liquor, Historical Society, Public Defender (53 FTE, 11,527 customers supported)
- FY 2026 – ISP, Juvenile Corrections (22 FTE, 12,170 customers supported)
- FY 2027 – Health and Welfare (58 FTE, 14,981 customers supported)
  **Some previously left behind positions in Phase I, II, III may be considered for consolidation by agencies or ITS*



Goal 2: Strengthen Cyber Security Posture for Idaho

In alignment with the state of Idaho's long-term objectives, a key goal is to substantially strengthen our cybersecurity posture.

Partnerships

We aim to continue our invaluable partnership with the Idaho National Guard, extending penetration testing protocols across all state agencies.

In tandem, the scope of tabletop exercises and penetration tests will be expanded to encompass all Executive Branch agencies, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of vulnerabilities and readiness.

The role of ITS will be clearly defined within Idaho's Cyberfusion program, executed in close partnership with the Office of Emergency Management. This multi-faceted strategy aims to fortify our cyber defenses, enhancing the state's resilience against ever-evolving cyber threats.

In the face of an evolving threat landscape, building a robust cybersecurity talent pool is essential. The goal emphasizes partnerships with academic institutions and industry experts to enhance training and educational opportunities. Key initiatives include:

- Operation Cyber Idaho, which aims to attract and retain top cybersecurity talent.
- Cyber Discovery events, designed to engage and inspire the next generation of cybersecurity professionals.
- The Idaho Citizen Engagement initiative, which seeks to raise public awareness about cybersecurity and encourage community involvement in safeguarding digital assets.

Standardization

The standardization of Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) tools and capabilities will be prioritized, with deployments planned for all supported agencies.

This harmonized approach is projected to facilitate real-time analysis of security alerts generated by hardware and software infrastructure.

Governance

Governance is a cornerstone of effective risk management and mitigation. The goal aims to align Idaho's cyber governance with federal standards, promoting accountability and ensuring the comprehensive protection of information assets.

Key efforts under this goal include:

- The Idaho Cyber Risk Assessment (ICRA), which evaluates the state's cyber vulnerabilities and strengths.
- The realignment of the Idaho Technology Authority (ITA) to streamline decision-making processes.
- The development of the Idaho Cyber Governance Framework (ICGF), which provides a structured approach to managing cyber risks and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.

Cyber Resilience

Cyber resilience is vital for protecting against threats and ensuring the continuity of operations.

The goal focuses on modernizing systems, fostering collaboration, and upholding strong governance.

Key efforts include:

- The formation of the Idaho Cyber Resilience Operation Center (ICROC), which serves as a central hub for coordinating cyber defense activities.
- Establishing scalable enterprise agreements to ensure the availability of critical resources.
- Building a robust core network and scalable cloud infrastructure to support the state's digital transformation and enhance its ability to respond to cyber incidents.

Goals

1. Extend penetration testing protocols in partnership with the Idaho National Guard across all state agencies to strengthen cybersecurity measures.
2. Standardize and deploy Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) tools across all supported agencies to facilitate real-time security analysis.
3. Clearly define the role of ITS within Idaho's Cyberfusion program, in partnership with the Office of Emergency Management, to enhance cyber resilience.
4. Establish uniform cyber governance frameworks, policies, and standards to reduce complexity.
5. Engage in community outreach, training exercises, and workforce development programs to develop cyber talent.
6. Enhance threat detection, situational awareness, and resilience.

Key External Factors

- The exponential rate at which the threat landscape is increasing poses a significant challenge, necessitating constant updates to cybersecurity strategies and technologies to mitigate emerging risks.
- The pace of funding is not keeping in step with escalating threats, creating a resource gap that could potentially compromise the state's ability to defend against advanced cyber attacks.
- The yet-to-be clearly defined role of ITS in the Cyberfusion initiative creates ambiguity, hindering the effective coordination and execution of cyber resilience measures.

- Regulatory Environment: Compliance with laws and regulations is crucial in Idaho. Institutions must adhere to specific cybersecurity requirements such as the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) for law enforcement and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) for healthcare. Additionally, Idaho may have state-specific regulations that organizations need to follow.
- Threat Landscape: The constantly evolving nature of cyber threats requires organizations in Idaho to stay updated on the latest attack vectors and techniques. This includes understanding new types of malware, phishing schemes, and other cyber-attacks that could target local businesses, government agencies, and critical infrastructure.
- Technological Advancements: Rapid advancements in technology can both aid and challenge cybersecurity efforts in Idaho. New technologies can introduce vulnerabilities, but they can also provide innovative solutions for enhancing security measures. Organizations in Idaho need to balance adopting new technologies with ensuring they have robust cybersecurity practices in place.

Performance Measures

- Annual:
    - Penetration Test conducted by third party. Currently, Idaho National Guard has been conducting these.
    - Tabletop exercises to ensure practices are in place for business continuity and threat response.
- Annual/Quarterly:
    - Cyber Assessments conducted through Operation Cyber Idaho in partnership with the Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training Program, and the Idaho Readiness Training Program.
    - The number of threats intercepted at the perimeter, endpoint, email, and the response time by cybersecurity personnel.
    - Cyber remediation support provided to Idaho government and critical infrastructure institutions through Operation Cyber Idaho.

Goal 3: Modernization of Applications

Modernizing the expansive application portfolio of 2,000 applications across all executive branch agencies in Idaho presents an invaluable opportunity to substantially upgrade the state's digital infrastructure.

A crucial first step is the discovery phase, aimed at evaluating the current state of technical debt and deferred maintenance within the portfolio, and setting the stage for informed decisions on prioritization and resource allocation.

Next, establish a consortium of trusted partner vendors who can offer the specialized skills and technologies required for such a wide-ranging modernization effort.

Within ITS, the creation of an Application Development Center of Excellence would serve as a hub for best practices, innovation, and skill development, ensuring the modernized portfolio is not only current, but also forward-looking.

Finally, revising procurement protocols to allow for accelerated options specifically for application modernization services is essential for timely project execution.

This multi-faceted approach aims to transform the application landscape, rendering it more efficient, secure, and agile, better serving the needs of Idaho citizens and the state's long-term objectives.

Goals

1. Conduct a discovery phase to assess the current state of technical debt and deferred maintenance in the application portfolio, enabling informed decisions on resource allocation and project prioritization.
2. Establish a consortium of trusted partner vendors and create an Application Development Center of Excellence within ITS to ensure best practices and innovation in the modernization effort.
3. Revise existing procurement protocols to introduce accelerated options for application modernization services, facilitating timely and efficient project execution.

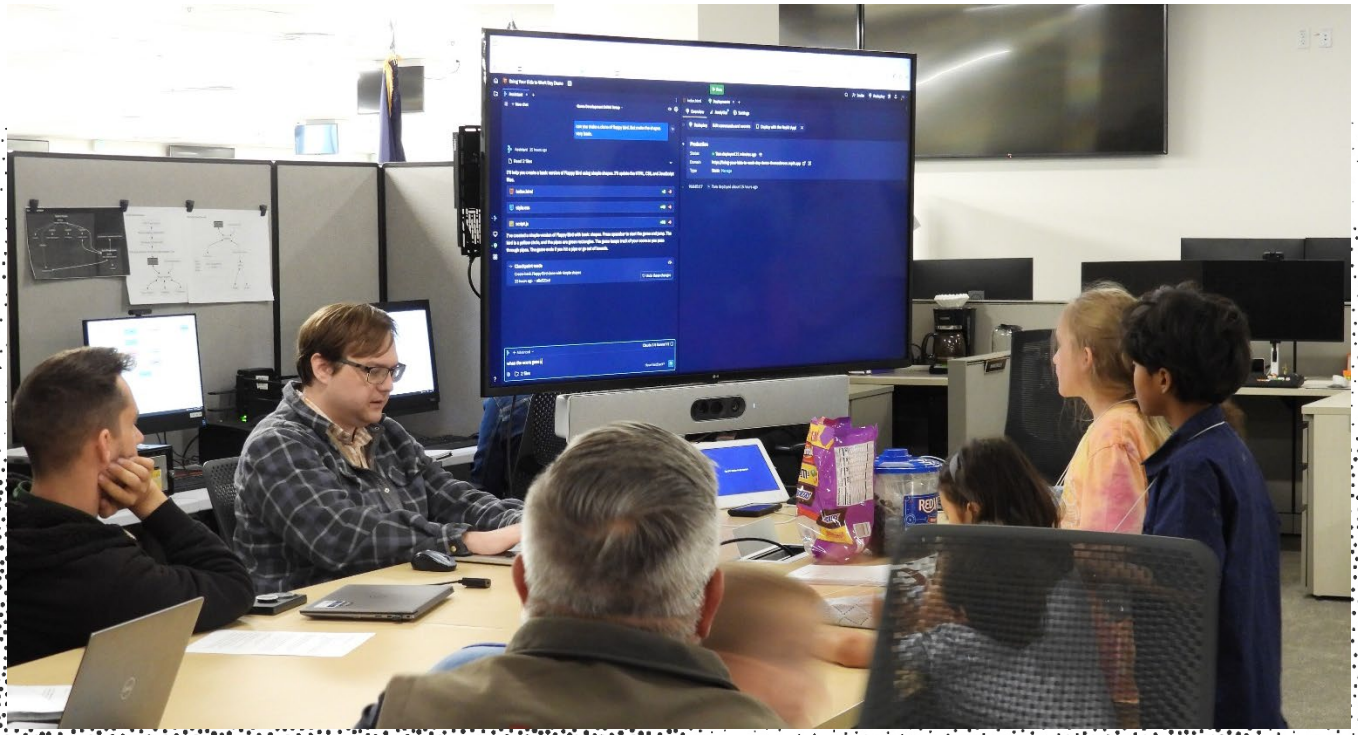
Key External Factors

- Agency budget constraints pose a significant risk, potentially limiting the scope and quality of the application modernization effort.
- Limited agency capacity to participate in the modernization process may hinder the timely and effective execution of the project.

- Organizational change management is challenged by agencies' inherent fear of change, which could result in resistance and slow down the modernization of applications.
- Compensation rates for software engineers lag 50-80% behind private sector rates, making attracting talent challenging.

Performance Measures

- Establish a process to provide agencies information/education regarding their legacy applications to allow prioritization of modernization investment.
- Partner with agencies to discover legacy applications, assess business and technical alignment, evaluate cybersecurity readiness, and develop strategic modernization roadmaps.
- Buildout the ITS Application Development program to move from 90% maintenance of 500-plus custom applications to address immediate application modernization needs.
- Build a community of vetted vendors to provide modernization services to our agencies and a procurement methods to utilize them.
- Upskill the ITS Application Development program in secure cloud development and the use of AI agents to accelerate modernization.



Goal 4: State Network Cost Reduction and Service Improvement

For Idaho, achieving both cost reduction and service improvement in network management is not only feasible, but strategically advantageous.

By establishing standards for diverse network connectivity options from multiple vendors, the state aims to cultivate a more competitive and flexible network ecosystem.

Exploration of opportunities to integrate the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) as a long-haul and mid-mile provider adds another layer of operational effectiveness. The benefit extends to improving the time required to deliver connectivity services, which will be expedited through utilization of these diverse network options.

Together, these measures are designed to make Idaho's network infrastructure more robust, agile, and cost-efficient, ultimately better agencies and their constituents.

Goals

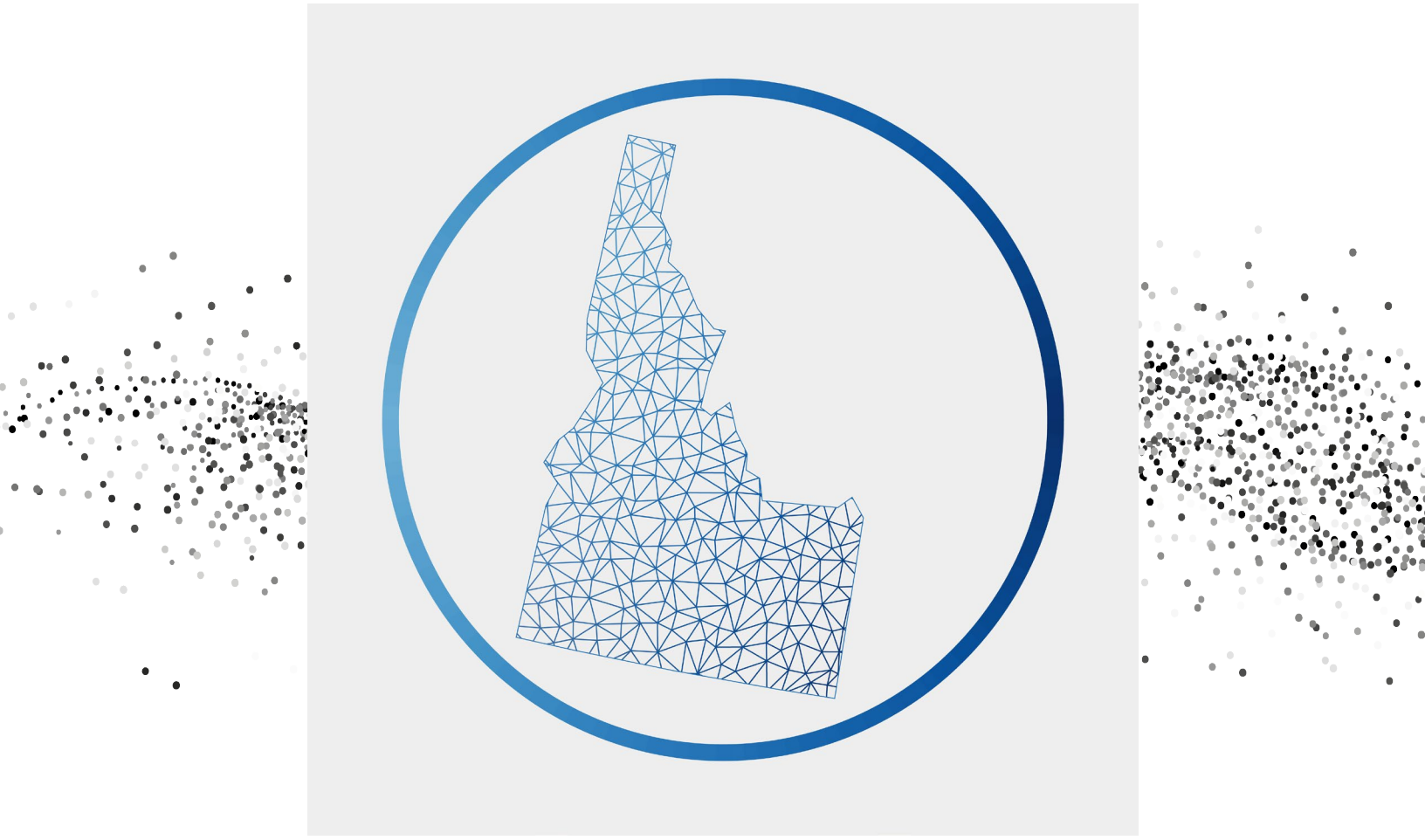
1. Establish standards for diverse network connectivity options from multiple vendors to foster a more competitive and flexible network ecosystem in Idaho.
2. Integrate the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) as a long-haul and mid-mile provider to enhance operational effectiveness in the state's network infrastructure.
3. Improve the time-to-delivery for connectivity services by leveraging diverse network options, making the network infrastructure more agile and efficient.

Key External Factors

- Resistance from traditional industry players poses a risk to successful implementation of diverse network options, as established vendors may be averse to changes that challenge their market position.
- Procurement restrictions could inhibit the state's ability to swiftly engage with multiple vendors or adopt new technologies, hindering efforts to realize cost reductions and service improvements.
- Vendor option limitations may constrain the flexibility intended through the diversification of network options, potentially undermining the goals of creating a more agile and cost-efficient infrastructure

Performance Measures

- Modernize and diversify connectivity offered to agencies, including wireless and wired connections, satellite, and microwave options.
- Finalize and release a Request for Proposal to replace our current voice/data contract.
- Utilize the Telecommunications team to provide customers with current connectivity options and costs analysis, and build a proposal for agencies to understand their options and costs.
- Work with agencies and cities to understand how government can best leverage Idaho vendors involved with middle and final mile connections to reduce costs.



Goal 5: Strengthen Communication and Collaboration

The importance of enhancing communication and collaboration between ITS and state agencies we support cannot be overstated. Improved communication with agency customers serves as a cornerstone for better service delivery and project alignment.

Strengthening relationships with executive, judicial, and legislative branch partners ensures that IT strategies are aligned with overall state objectives and receives necessary support and funding. Regular meetings with agency leadership foster a collaborative environment for shared goal-setting and problem-solving.

After establishing a technology advisory board, low participation precipated a pivot back to other regularly scheduled meetings with agencies and other stakeholders.

ITS continues to receive praise about its newsletter quality, professionalism, and amount of information shared in a user-friendly format. Multiple agencies have approached ITS asking about how they too can align their communications to what we are doing.

Collectively, these initiatives cultivate a more cooperative, informed, and efficient approach to managing the state's technology resources.

Goals

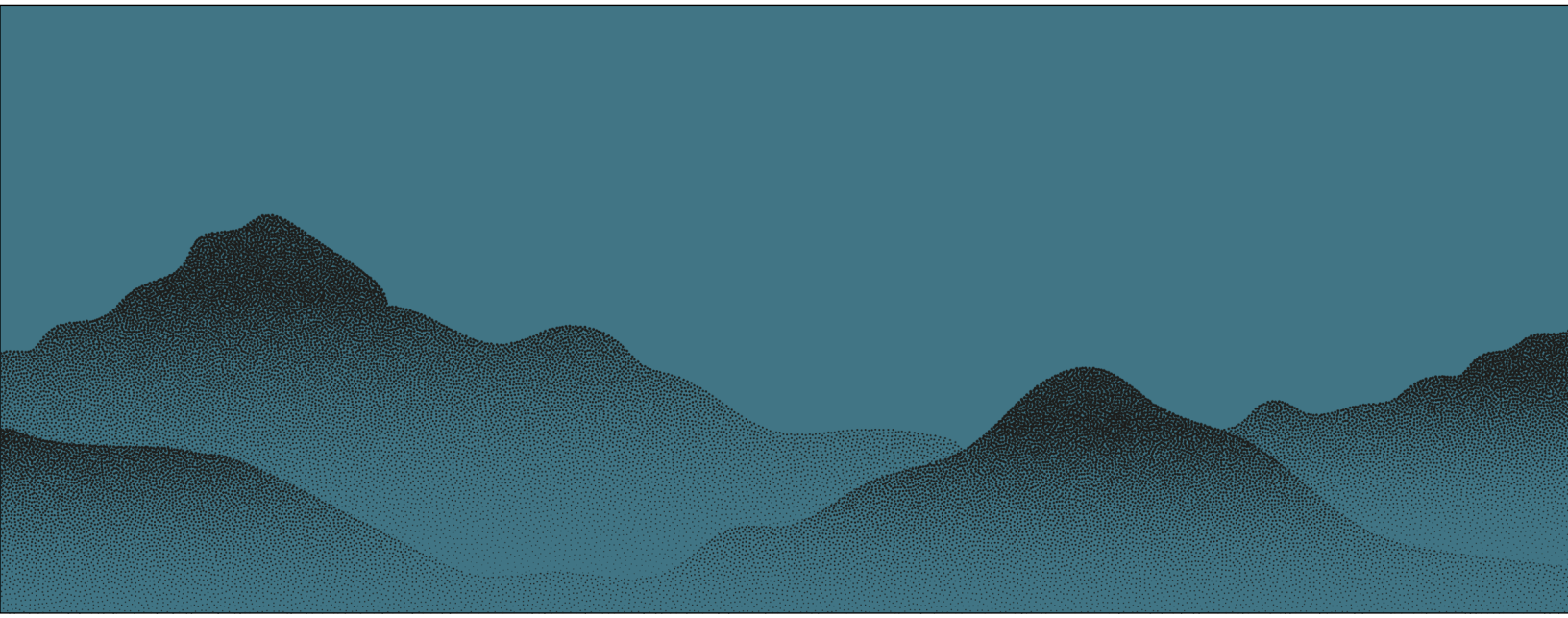
1. Continue to improve communication with agency customers to serve as the cornerstone for better service delivery and project alignment. Efforts to date been noted and well received in many areas.
2. ITS Service Delivery Managers serve as agency liaisons and point-of-contact directly with supported agency IT staff. The enhancement of the Service Delivery Manager team focuses on improving collaboration and communication, ensuring more efficient and effective service outcomes.
3. Utilize the ITS Communications team to elevate messaging through emails and videos that are shared broadly with customers, including outage and other critical updated information as needed.
4. Enhancing communications and transparency on billing and procurement for customers. For billing, making sure information is clear and understandable. On the procurement side, helping agencies understand licensing and equipment costs and necessity.
5. Utilize the Deployment, Embedded, and Onsite teams to collaborate closely with end customers to foster strong, customer-centric relationships. This approach facilitates prompt feedback from end users and accelerates service delivery.
6. Strengthen relationships with executive, judicial, and legislative branch partners to ensure IT strategies are aligned with state objectives and adequately supported. Regular in-person meetings and communication with the Governor’s Office and legislators that bring the right information and teams to the table to provide information and answer questions.

Key External Factors

- The risk of lack of agency participation in these efforts manifests as potential misalignment between IT services and the actual needs or objectives of the state, including decreased political and financial support for IT initiatives. Without active agency engagement, even well-intended strategies may become disconnected from real-world challenges, compromising the effectiveness and support of IT services and solutions.

Performance Measures

- Quarterly: Continue to send electronic newsletters to all supported and non-supported agencies on what is happening at ITS and what is impacting them. This allows us to highlight technological best practices in use at agencies, so innovation is shared broadly.
- Monthly: Send electronic newsletters to all ITS internal employees to keep them informed and aligned with our agency-centric approach to delivering IT services. This increases awareness about what teams and specifically individuals are doing, projects that are occurring and partnerships with customers that build upon a customer-centric IT approach.
- Annual: Host the Idaho Digital Government Summit with the purpose of bringing state and local government agencies together to discuss technological impacts and security in government through shared best practices. Since the inaugural event in 2023, interest continues, with the same event fully booked in 2024. The 2025 Idaho Digital Government Summit is anticipated to be also fully booked, with interest from Idaho legislators, agency directors, city/county stakeholders and other technology-focused business interests.



Goal 6: Implement Cloud Smart Strategy

While the implementation of a Cloud Smart Strategy in Idaho marks a strategic step toward enhancing our technological infrastructure's scalability and time-to-delivery, it is critical to recognize this often comes at an increased cost.

Contrary to popular perception, transitioning to the cloud is not an 'easy button,' nor is it an automatic cost-saving measure. Establishing designated landing zones for major cloud vendors is a nuanced process that requires stringent security and compliance protocols.

The development of robust governance framework is equally complex, aimed at standardizing the use and management of cloud resources while mitigating associated risks and ensuring alignment with state and federal regulations.

Agencies will be empowered to make well-informed technology choices through a service catalog that outlines various cloud options, allowing a tailored approach to either on-premises or cloud-based solutions.

This multi-faceted approach equips the state to exploit cloud technology's full potential and requires a nuanced understanding and careful financial planning for successful implementation.

Goals

1. With the establishment of designated landing zones for major cloud vendors, strategy is now shifting towards Backup and Disaster Recovery efforts.
2. Develop a comprehensive framework of governance and policies to standardize usage and management of cloud resources, aligning with state and federal regulations.
3. Create a service catalog detailing cloud options, enabling agencies to make informed decisions between on-premises and cloud-based solutions.

Key External Factors

- The industry's promotion of cloud solutions may not align with individual agency needs, potentially leading to suboptimal technology choices.
- Budget constraints could inhibit full implementation of the Cloud Smart Strategy, affecting the establishment of landing zones, governance frameworks, and service catalogs.

- A lack of understanding among agencies regarding cloud technologies and governance could impede effective utilization and risk mitigation.

Performance Measures

- Complete Backup and Disaster Recovery cloud solutions.
- Utilize the System and Cloud Administration Team to implement and follow cloud policies for responsible use of services with established tools and processes for compliance and auditing.
- Use comprehensive processes for discovery, design, and solution vetting to create tailored recommendations based on specific agency use cases.

Categories of Services/Functions	Done	Ongoing	Planned
Email/calendar	☑		
Collaboration platforms		☑	
Service management	☑		
Project and portfolio management	☑		
Open data		☑	
Identity management		☑	
ERP		☑	
Human resources / payroll / personnel		☑	
Business intelligence / business analytics		☑	
Citizen relationship management			☑
Disaster recovery / business continuity			☑
Security		☑	
Digital archives			☑
Program/business applications		☑	
Data management		☑	

Goal 7: Establish Foundational Policy for Utilizing Artificial Intelligence

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies by the State of Idaho is looking to revolutionize the delivery of government services. AI has the potential to enhance operational efficiency, drive innovation, and provide more personalized, timely services to citizens.

From predictive analytics in healthcare and transportation to automated customer service channels, the possibilities for AI to contribute positively to the state's objectives are vast and compelling.

However, the pressing need for ITS to establish robust governance framework and policy guidelines around the use of AI technologies is critical.

While AI brings transformative advantages, it also presents ethical and operational challenges, such as data bias and the unauthorized use of sensitive information.

A well-defined governance structure ensures that AI technologies are deployed responsibly, aligned with the state's objectives, and compliant with legal and ethical standards.

Comprehensive policies are essential for creating a transparent and accountable framework, enabling optimized, ethical AI operations. This governance will play a vital role in preserving trust and privacy of citizens while leveraging the full benefits of AI.

Goals

1. Enhance operational efficiency and service delivery in government agencies through responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence technologies.
2. Establish robust governance framework and policy guidelines to ensure that AI technologies are aligned with state objectives and are ethically and legally compliant.
3. Create a transparent and accountable framework for AI operations to preserve trust and privacy of citizens while optimizing effectiveness of government services.

Key External Factors

- The lack of a robust governance framework and policy guidelines could lead to ethical challenges, such as data bias, thereby compromising integrity and effectiveness of AI-enabled services.

- Unauthorized use of sensitive information through AI technologies may jeopardize citizen trust and privacy, potentially undermining the state's credibility and legal standing.
- Without proper alignment between AI deployment and state objectives, there's a risk of resource misallocation, leading to inefficiencies and challenges in achieving governmental goals.

Performance Measures

- Establish and roll out AI governance, framework, and policies for proper and ethical use of AI to executive branch agencies.
- Complete pilot and model proper use of AI so we can safely experiment and validate our understanding of AI in state government. Report on findings to stakeholders.
- Provide guidance, support, and monitoring of deployed AI solutions.
- Provide training materials to stakeholders.

Goal 8: Implement Enterprise Data Strategy

With only one more phase of consolidation ahead, it is time to lay the groundwork to build the capabilities to fully leverage data and analytics to help further identify and guide modernization and deliver the data for monitoring and improvements in key performance indicators (KPIs).

With the implementation of AI, there will be continued emphasis on data to feed the models that AI gathers data from and preventing accidental exposure of sensitive data.

However, it is also time to invest resources to inventory, manage, and identify the appropriate use of data based on their quality and bias. Secure data alone is useless unless people can find, assess, and understand the data. Garbage-in garbage-out remains true, whether the data is properly classified or not.

Properly identified, maintained, searchable, described and shared data can bring enormous value to ITS and the state as a whole. This value can be derived from reducing duplicate data-related efforts, saving data analysts time by providing tools and expertise to produce better data products.

This results in better decision making, better customer service, and provide insight on how to make government operations more efficient.

A robust data inventory, data catalog and data dictionary along with expanded data sharing and data governance further enable and improve the IT capabilities of the State.

As outlined in the other goals in this strategic plan, ITS is committed to evolving its IT landscape through application modernization and implementation of AI.

When data is accessible, accurate, and understood properly it can be used to streamline services, reduce duplicative efforts, improve interagency collaborations, better decision making and better services for the citizens of Idaho.

An enterprise data strategy needs strong policies and standards that are aligned between stakeholders to ensure data is governed to support modernization efforts and is also safe and ethical for use in AI.

Goals

1. Define a data strategy that will enhance ITS's Modernization and AI strategic goals. This effort includes alignment between teams to develop consistent data policies and guidelines that will improve data accessibility, use, value, security and privacy.
2. Perform data inventories across ITS and supported agencies to develop a data catalog and dictionary along with data governance to standardize, secure, and share data across state agencies. Any

opportunities to improve business processes along the way will be described and submitted to leadership as proposed enhancements.

3. Build out a centralized data repository with strong partnerships, including efforts at State Controller's Office and existing governance boards in other agencies. The data repository will function as a place that coordinates data activities and infrastructure across the state. This effort includes setting up a Data Governance Board under the Idaho Technology Authority, building out a data lake, dictionary, and catalog as well as managing data and performing data analytics.
4. Modernize the data management, architecture, and analytics functions in the data repository. Consolidating staff managing data, data pipelines and performing data analytics skills (this includes GIS professionals) will allow Idaho to truly leverage the value of the data assets it possesses.
5. Measuring and reporting on metrics related to modernization efforts, AI technology adoption, return on investment, data maturity and other KPIs required to measure progress and identify gaps. Report on metrics that can be used to monitor ITS operations.

Key External Factors

- Competing priorities and lack of funding, including a lack of external funding sources, will delay the time until benefits outweigh the investment. Additionally, changing priorities within state government may demand changes in dependance on certain components of the data enterprise and AI strategies.
- Interagency collaboration and data culture. Success depends on collaboration and trust between ITS teams, as well as between ITS and other agencies.
- Existing technology, and technology roadmaps established by other teams and agencies, will have an impact on how data can be shared, transformed, loaded, or synched with the data infrastructure platform, tools, standards, and policies that make up the state's enterprise data strategy.
- Cybersecurity threats and AI implementation can disrupt how the enterprise data strategy is being executed, for example as policies and standards need to be updated unexpectedly to counter new threats or how new AI technology evolves the best way to manage data.

Performance Measures

- Establish a data working group within ITS to standardize use of data related terminology. Compare policy and standardization needs of all internal stakeholders and develop those policies and standards
- Inventory available data, the flow of data needs within ITS, and between ITS and other state agencies. Use this information to assess current data maturity, identify gaps and develop strategies to improve data availability and workflows. Develop KPIs to measure progress as well as metrics that can be used for monitoring operations.
- Designate the infrastructure at ITS as the state's designated data lake. Architect the data lake to allow:
    - Data sharing between all agencies
    - Data sharing between a small number of specific agencies
    - Host data for internal use by one agency

- Develop appropriate security policies within the data lake to allow for the sharing of highly sensitive data such as HIPAA, CJIS, PII and others.
- Establish a Data Governance Board under the Idaho Technology Authority and work towards statewide adoption of policies and standards.
- Develop a strategic plan for setting up the data repository, along with suggested steps for consolidating staff with data analytics, data architecture, and data engineering skills.
- Seek out potential funding sources to support the creation of the data repository.
- Build out network of partners and build the trust needed to continue progress on the development of the data repository.
- Expand the data offerings, along with applications leveraging the data on The Idaho Map and State Agency GIS data Open Data sites.
- Build out data.idaho.gov website with data literacy training, as well as guidance on how to implement established data governance policies and standards. Expand work with DHR and ITS to include a module in the annual mandatory security training about data safety such as (how to use it in AI, how to share it through different channels, etc.).
- Select and start implementing data catalog/data dictionary for internal use within agencies and develop a strategy to provide public access to data and data products for increased government transparency.

Key External Factors

Rising Costs of Technology

Software licensing costs are skyrocketing, and it's not just a challenge for Idaho, it's an industry-wide issue.

This isn't just about tightening our belts; it's a fundamental challenge that forces us to question the return on investment for these tools, as budgets are increasingly strained.

While switching to more affordable options may seem logical, it's far from straightforward. The immediate and hidden costs of transitioning, such as acquiring new product licenses, system integration, and employee training, are substantial.

Additionally, any switch carries risk of service disruptions and delays, compromising service quality.

Agency Under-Investment in Technology

The process of consolidating agencies under the ITS umbrella has revealed a critical issue: many of these agencies have historically under-invested in technology.

This lack of prior investment creates a significant gap in expectations regarding the cost of IT services. When agencies receive billing from ITS that reflects the true cost of providing modern, secure, and efficient IT services, they experience a form of sticker shock compared to past expenditures.

This discrepancy between anticipated and actual costs has the potential to cause friction and impede the streamlined adoption of more advanced technology solutions.

This disparity in expectations is exacerbated by the continually evolving landscape of IT requirements. As we move toward a more modernized structure, both security and productivity demands naturally escalate, inflating costs further.

For agencies that have not kept pace with technological advancements, this shift can be particularly jarring. These increased requirements are not optional add-ons, but are critical for compliance, data protection, and efficient service delivery.

While increased billing from ITS may seem steep in comparison to historical spending, it's a necessary alignment with the real costs of meeting today's technology standards and security protocols.

Lack of IT Funding

Idaho stands at a critical juncture in its pursuit of technological modernization. Just as no company undertakes mergers and acquisitions without budgeting for the cleanup and standardization of disparate systems, it is similarly challenging for the state to consolidate various agency systems under one roof without a corresponding investment in technology standardization and human capital.

Consolidation alone does not yield efficiency, especially when executed with reduced staffing levels. A dedicated budget for IT modernization is not merely an operational expense, but a strategic imperative. Without appropriate funding, we run the risk of merely centralizing inefficiencies rather than eliminating them, falling further behind the technology curve that defines modern governance.

To effectively modernize, we must identify and secure stable funding sources that can be channeled toward updating legacy systems, implementing standardized solutions, and upskilling the workforce.

Failing to invest in these critical areas leads to a dangerous build-up of deferred maintenance costs and escalating technical debt, which can become crippling over time. These hidden costs of neglect not only impair an agency's operational efficiency but also its ability to deliver quality services to citizens.

Investing in IT modernization is not only a pathway to greater efficiency, but also an essential strategy for risk mitigation and long-term fiscal responsibility.

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