2023-2025

Washington State Enterprise IT Strategic Plan

August 29, 2023

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Letter from the Executive Sponsors

We are pleased to present the Washington state Enterprise IT Strategic Plan – *"Connected Government, Strong Communities, Better Washington"* - the result of an inclusive process that engaged a diverse group of business and technology leaders from across our state agencies. This plan focuses on improving how government services are created and delivered to our communities. Our agencies, teams, and workforce are eager to present a bold technological vision for our state.

Our primary commitment is to the people we serve and our communities. During the strategic planning process, the need to create a human-centered government experience, utilize data and technology resources effectively, innovate around systemic civic issues, and build a future-ready workforce while modernizing outdated practices was emphasized.

We place our residents and communities at the core of our actions, embracing technology advancements and digital services while improving existing systems and processes through innovative solutions. Agencies from across the Enterprise showed great enthusiasm during the planning process, contributing to shaping our strategic goals to best meet their needs and those of the people they serve.

Our Goals

Create a Government Experience that Leaves No Community Behind.

Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Government, Better Washington.

Innovative Technology Solutions Create a Better Washington.

Transform How We Work. Best Workforce Ever.

To complement our goals, provide confidence in how the plan was created, and achieve our future success, we will emphasize digital trust, shared governance, equitable outcomes, and service excellence throughout our future work with action-oriented goal teams.

We envision this Enterprise IT Strategic Plan as a north star for our 100+ agencies, the technology community, program leadership and teams, external partners, and our communities. Through a connected government, we commit to improving the accessibility, efficiency, and transparency of our services.

Bill Kehoe
State Chief Information Officer and WaTech Director

Deanna Brocker
Deputy Director, Strategy & Management

Strategic Planning Process Overview

Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech) is empowered by the Legislature to create an Enterprise IT Strategic Plan for Washington state government. To achieve this goal on behalf of the state, WaTech partnered with Star Insights, a strategic planning firm, to conduct an inclusive and multi-stakeholder strategic planning process.

Discovery and Exploration | Workshops | Co-Creation

At the beginning of the Enterprise IT Strategic Planning project, Star Insights and WaTech leadership developed an iterative planning process focused on co-creation. Additionally, a Strategic Advisory Group comprised of senior WaTech personnel, business leaders, and IT representatives from state agencies was formed to provide critical feedback on stakeholder engagement, strategic materials, and process stewardship.

Together, these groups designed an inclusive framework to engage key stakeholders through existing governance forums and a series of highly interactive in-person workshops held from March to June 2023. Over 100+ state agencies were invited to participate in generative brainstorming and facilitated strategic planning activities.

Enterprise IT strategic planning process by the numbers

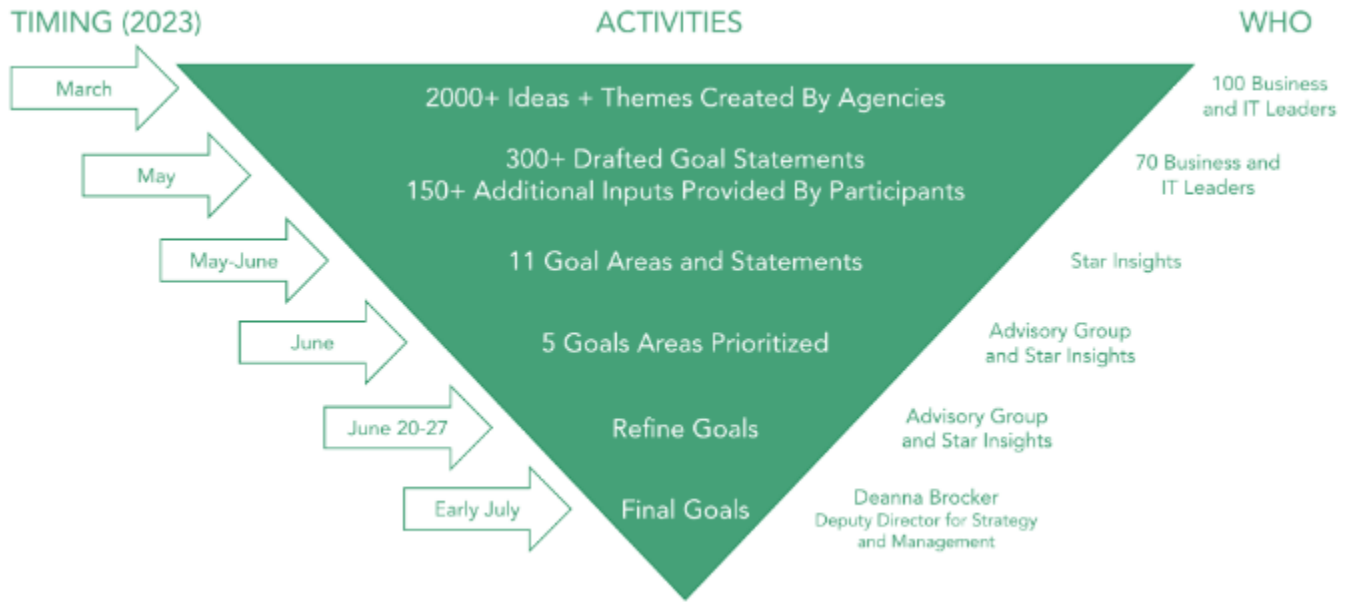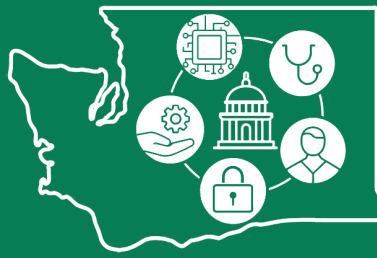13 Strategic Planning Workshops Completed

100+ Business and IT Leaders Contributed

2000+ Ideas and Themes Created

300+ Goal Statements Drafted

11 Goal Areas and Statements Initially Established

5 Goal Areas Prioritized → 4 Goals and Statements Confirmed

TIMING (2023)	ACTIVITIES	WHO
March	2000+ Ideas + Themes Created By Agencies	100 Business and IT Leaders
May	300+ Drafted Goal Statements 150+ Additional Inputs Provided By Participants	70 Business and IT Leaders
May-June	11 Goal Areas and Statements	Star Insights
June	5 Goals Areas Prioritized	Advisory Group and Star Insights
June 20-27	Refine Goals	Advisory Group and Star Insights
Early July	Final Goals	Deanna Brocker Deputy Director for Strategy and Management

The 13 in-person workshops saw significant engagement with over 100 agency business and IT leaders contributing their voices and envisioning bold future possibilities for the enterprise. Their input informed the overall process, and the final goals, statements, objectives, and priorities are detailed in the following pages.

Moving to Action | Goal Teams

Leading up to the approval of the final Enterprise IT Strategic Plan, WaTech leadership, Star Insights, and the Strategic Advisory Group established four "Goal Teams," each tasked with advancing the priorities and supporting initiatives of a specific strategic goal. These teams consist of the agency business and IT leaders with sponsorship through the IT Governance Model facilitated by WaTech.

Strategic Plan Framework

Our Unifying Statement

Connected Government, Stronger Communities, Better Washington

Our Unifying Values

Human-Centered

Courageous Innovation

Community + Connectivity

Inclusive Ideas

Accessibility

Stay Nimble

Our Pillars

Digital Trust

Shared Governance

Equitable Outcomes
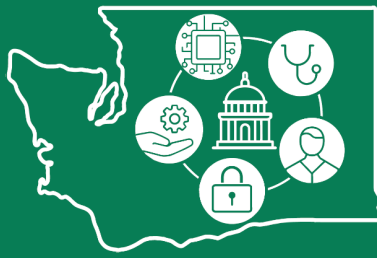
Service Excellence

Our Goals

Create a Government Experience that Leaves No Community Behind.

Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Government, Better Washington.

Innovative Technology Solutions Create a Better Washington.

Transform How We Work. Best Workforce Ever.

Our Goals

GOAL 1: CREATE A GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE THAT LEAVES NO COMMUNITY BEHIND

Through a connected government that emphasizes service delivery and the experience of those we serve, we can achieve equitable outcomes across our communities.

To emphasize a human-centered approach to service creation and delivery, the state of Washington is making it a top priority. This shared focus across more than 100 agencies will transform how they work and serve the public, making them a leading example of a connected government that offers an accessible digital government experience.

In recent years, state agencies have shown how this focus improves service efficiency, enhances lives, and builds trust in government while complementing communities.

Now is the perfect opportunity for the state of Washington and its agencies to prioritize a connected government approach to creating, building, and delivering services. By investing in a government experience that benefits our communities and promotes equitable outcomes, this commitment will endure beyond administration and leadership transitions.
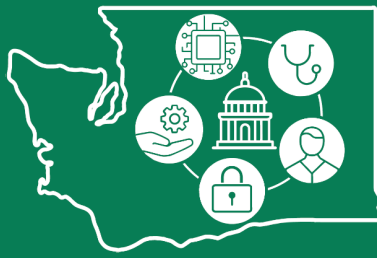
CORE OBJECTIVES

- Establish statewide approaches, principles, and processes for building and delivering digital services that are intuitive to discover, easy to use, and emblematic of shared governance.
- Establish an enterprise foundation for a connected government experience that supports agencies with service delivery and promotes equitable outcomes for those they serve.

SUPPORTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Envision a strategy and develop a plan to launch a "resident portal" focused on improving access to services and programs across the Washington state agencies.
- Establish standard practices for creating and building new services and state websites that elevate approaches like human-centered design and establish updated principles for digital service delivery that all agencies are connected and accountable to across the state.

- Generate an "access strategy" and create digital solutions to address systemic language and disability barriers to accessing state services and programs.

- Launch a coalition of agencies to develop enterprise broadband strategy and agency opportunities for delivery across the next six months, with the goal of "broadband for all."

- Establish strategic partnerships with "civic technology" organizations, nonprofits, and other social impact organizations focused on improving service delivery in government, language access, benefits accessibility, and other priorities for the state of Washington.

- Institute a standard set of equitable outcomes and measures that keep an enterprise view for service delivery, budget allocation, budget requests, and delivery to communities.

GOAL 2: BETTER DATA, BETTER DECISIONS, BETTER GOVERNMENT, BETTER WASHINGTON

Use data and insights to improve the experience of those we serve, prioritize service improvements, drive strategic decisions, and improve transparency.

As stewards of public services in the state of Washington, more than 100 agencies regularly collect, analyze, and utilize data to inform program decisions, budgeting priorities, and other critical aspects. The opportunity for these agencies lies in generating and collecting more relevant data and integrating data-driven approaches into their daily operations and decision-making processes to better serve the residents.
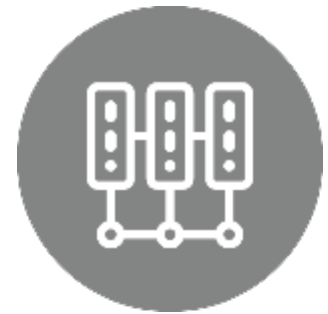
Given the systematic nature of the state's most pressing needs and civic challenges, agencies can collaborate and leverage data insights for strategic decisions that promote equitable outcomes and service priorities. With the evolving open data movement, agencies can prioritize providing data and analyses to empower residents to make informed decisions that improve their lives.

The immediate focus for the state of Washington is to establish secure infrastructure and processes to maximize data collection and responsible management, emphasize practices that yield practical insights from data analyses, and create an environment for agency collaboration on service improvements and customer outcomes.

To drive significant changes in data practices, ongoing agency collaboration and alignment with customer-focused measures, processes, security, privacy, and data governance are crucial considerations for the collective future of the enterprise.

CORE OBJECTIVES

- Establish enterprise resources, platforms, tools, agreements, shared governance, and shared infrastructure to support agency data collection, use, literacy analysis, and decision-making.
- Establish a future data strategy that supports immediate needs and future requirements to deliver services and a government experience that builds digital trust with the public while shifting to a statewide data-driven culture.

SUPPORTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Institute a consistent and standard approach and process for collecting, managing, and storing data that aligns with the needs of agencies and supports enterprise decision-making.

- Explore options and confirm strategic direction for a statewide information hub/central data platform for agencies to share data and collaborate on enterprise initiatives with established metrics/measures.

- Create enterprise data sharing agreement(s) and other supporting resources that permit agencies to share and use data more effectively with a prioritization on cross-agency collaboration and service improvements.

- Launch a statewide metrics initiative that establishes enterprise metrics for prioritized systemic civic issues, cross-agency program priorities, or how to measure customer experience statewide.

- Evaluate and recommend options for a statewide Open Data program that emphasizes agency priorities, sources of open data, and requested analyses/insights that deliver value back to the public and program teams.

- Cultivate the environment across the enterprise where analytics and insights are encouraged to drive program decisions, budgeting priorities, and engagement with the public to support an open and transparent government.

GOAL 3: INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS CREATE A BETTER WASHINGTON

Prioritize solutions emphasizing access, technology, and innovation to address systemic societal challenges and align our decision-making for those we serve.

Addressing complex societal challenges like climate change, justice reform, and benefits accessibility requires an integrated approach due to their systemic nature. Innovative solutions that leverage technological advancements and digital government service delivery can be highly beneficial in tackling these critical issues.

The ultimate focus for our state agencies remains on those we serve. It requires us to rethink how and what solutions we create and deliver and requires our programs and leaders to think about how we can collectively address these challenges versus a more traditional siloed approach. Challenging the status quo is crucial to achieving measurable equitable outcomes that instill pride in public service.

In addition to transforming the delivery of services, there is an exciting opportunity to define innovation for the state, invest in the right solutions, leverage technology to support the mission, and embrace a digital movement in government service delivery that will have lasting impacts on future generations.
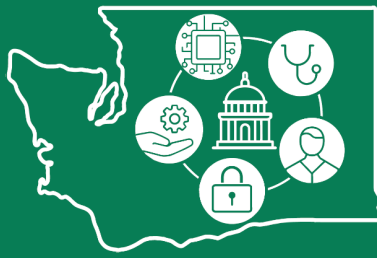
Finding a balance between modernizing existing technology securely and embracing new advancements is vital. Being enthusiastic about testing the latest solutions can lead to improved service delivery. Prioritizing funding for solutions that directly impact those we serve is crucial, establishing new approaches and ways of working that support a forward-thinking new status quo for years to come.
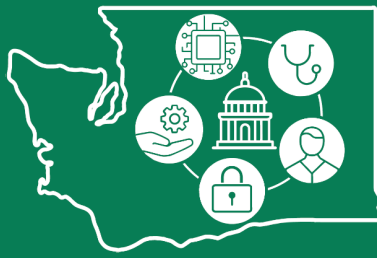
CORE OBJECTIVES

- Establish enterprise methodology for addressing systemic civic issues, creating statewide measures for accountability and service, and building an environment where agencies collaborate to achieve confirmed equitable outcomes.
- Establish an innovative culture for the state and its agencies while embracing modernization and the future of technology to create better services, prioritize service excellence and achieve equitable outcomes for our communities.

SUPPORTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Institute a set of strategic societal issues/challenges that the state of Washington will prioritize for cross-agency collaboration and emphasize the enterprise outcomes required to positively impact our communities.

- Stand up a forum for agencies to collaborate with the Chief Technology Officer on priorities, initiatives, and agency policies around new technological investments (e.g., large language models) that benefit the enterprise and improve agency service delivery.

- Launch an "Innovation Modernization Program" that addresses immediate agency needs and evaluates what future investments can collectively impact the enterprise and, ultimately, the experience of those we serve.

- Explore and recommend options for a digital innovation office or function that can support enterprise priorities and specific agency topics, focusing on future scale and benefit across the state.

- Assemble a coalition of existing agency examples that emulate a culture of innovation and support, instilling the characteristics and traits that will push away from the status quo.

- Pioneer a challenge-based procurement model for the state and agencies to replicate for their business priorities and focus on building and delivering innovative solutions.

GOAL 4: TRANSFORM HOW WE WORK. BEST WORKFORCE EVER.

Attract and retain talent, advance our agencies' skill sets, instill an innovative culture, and establish new and agile processes and practices to achieve our future vision.

Amidst an ever-evolving technological sector, Washington's support, care, and ongoing commitment to the well-being of its IT workforce will remain essential in pursuing the enterprise's mission to deliver a connected government experience to the diverse communities it serves.

It is essential that we address agencies' need to attract, hire, and retain talent that can support business needs and our enterprise vision.

As the state looks towards the future where the use of technology to deliver services will continue to change at a rapid pace in an increasingly competitive landscape, it will be critical to keep up with these demands. Supporting the IT workforce by addressing areas such as the modernization of legacy IT processes, the transformation of recruitment and retention practices, while also embracing a spirit of innovation will go far to impact IT business functions across the state.

By investing in enterprise-wide transformation in these ways, the state of Washington will reinforce and foster the necessary conditions for the future success of its IT workforce and, in so doing, anchor the enterprise's ability to serve its residents optimally.

CORE OBJECTIVES

- Establish updated recruiting processes, IT classifications, job titles, and investments that will attract and retain technology talent for state agencies to achieve their service delivery priorities, excellence in service, and equitable outcomes for their respective communities.
- Establish a new way of operating and statewide standards for addressing IT legacy processes, procurement + technological purchasing, agile development, and other prioritized topics that will transform our agencies' performance.

SUPPORTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Execute a statewide IT recruitment and retention strategy that focuses on sourcing talent from diverse talent pools (e.g., out-of-state candidates, interns, and prospective employees new to the IT workforce) with concurrent support for top IT talent employed by Washington state.

- Update, test, and iterate on existing hiring strategies to reflect the evolving needs of prospective IT employees, emphasizing competitive hiring packages, career growth, and mobility within the state of Washington.

- Establish an accessible statewide IT training program to nurture, strengthen, and enhance the professional skills of current and new IT staff.

- Implement an immediate AGILE development training program, IT leadership academy, and prioritized tech education courses to support the advancement of agencies and staff skills.

- Assemble an agency-led coalition to perform a statewide assessment of IT legacy processes and tech infrastructure to highlight critical areas of business operation that can be simplified, modernized, and made more human-centric for employees.

- Institute cross-agency forums such as innovation hubs, offices, labs, or other structures (in-person or virtually) that create space for IT employees to use best practices in tech, develop innovative approaches related to common IT business processes, and advance impact against societal challenges.

What Comes Next

We have established a model to move from creating our plan to delivering progress and impact for each of our four goals. Goal Teams will be dedicated to a specific area of focus, propelling the advancement of the strategic goals. Our goals are centered around four key areas: [1] Service Delivery, [2] Leveraging Data Insights, [3] Innovation, and [4] People.

Our team-based model emphasizes action and sustainability from the beginning and instills our Enterprise IT Strategic Plan into how we operate across the state of Washington.

Our teams will also directly align with our IT governance model, with chairs of governance bodies providing executive-level leadership. These lead (s) will work directly with the Goal Team Sponsors, Team Members, and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to demonstrate progress around the four goals. The governance body will also provide support and a forum to incubate and test ideas, solicit input as work progresses, and create an environment to deliver meaningful updates.

Goal: Create a Government Experience that Leaves No Community Behind

Team Lead: Business Management Council

Goal: Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Government, Better Washington

Team Lead: Information Management Committee

Goal: Innovative Technology Solutions Create a Better Washington

Team Lead: IT Investment Board

Goal: Transform How We Work. Best Workforce Ever.

Team Lead: Technology Management Council

We will evaluate our progress routinely and through a formal annual review based on established measures each goal team has confirmed. To stay relevant to what our agencies need and those we serve, we will complete a more informal evaluation of our work as things progress to allow for adaptations or slight changes in our focus based on what's working or not, and how we can refine our priorities and initiatives across each goal.

In keeping with this Goal Team model and approach, we will maintain alignment with our business needs, uplifting and optimizing service delivery for the communities we serve.

Call To Action

To realize our vision, we will empower our workforce, take calculated risks, innovate, collaborate across the enterprise, embrace failure, and stay nimble as things evolve across this dynamic landscape.

To support our vision, we have four action steps for you:

1. Review the plan and consider how your agency can align with one or multiple goals. Ask, "How can I help?"

2. Emulate our values through your work and how we can collectively serve the public and our communities.

3. Engage with Goal Teams, their Sponsor, Lead and Team Members to show support for their efforts on behalf of your state agency, the enterprise, and those you serve.

4. Participate in forums and future sessions to ensure our strategic plan demonstrates impact while evolving to stay relevant in an ever-changing technology environment around us.

We hope this Enterprise IT Strategic Plan serves as a north star for our 100+ agencies, the technology community, our program leadership and teams, external partners, and our communities. Through a connected government, we can emphasize our collective commitment to serve and will improve the accessibility, efficiency, and transparency of our government services.
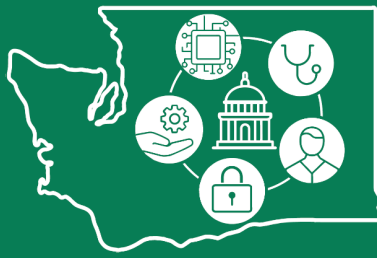
Acknowledgements

This Enterprise IT Strategic Plan was created for the state of Washington and developed in partnership with many people. We want to express our gratitude to all the stakeholders who contributed their time, expertise, guidance, and feedback throughout this inclusive process and collaborative journey.

- Agency Leadership
- Business and IT Leaders
- Governance Boards
- Technology Services Board
- State Advisory Boards
- External Advisors
- City and County Leaders
- Star Insights Project Team

Contact

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