

County of Marin

Strategic Plan
A Blueprint for Excellence
in Public Service

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County of Marin

Strategic Plan

A Blueprint for Excellence in Public Service

Adopted September 25, 2001

John Kress District 1
Supervisor

Harold C. Brown, Jr., District 2
President of the Board

Annette Rose District 3
Supervisor

Steve Kinsey District 4
Supervisor

Cynthia Murray District 5
Supervisor

Mark Riesenfeld County Administrator

INTRODUCTION

A Message from the Board

In November of 2000, our Board adopted the County's first Mission, Goals and Values and directed that the County Administrator create an inclusive countywide process to develop a strategic plan that would bring the county organization into alignment with those guiding principles. This document is the result of what became a ten-month process involving fifty-eight strategic plan team members, one hundred and seventy members of focus groups, two hundred and fifty employees who participated through a survey and many, many more who participated through departmental staff meetings.

This plan will create a foundation for excellent customer service and accountability that will benefit the residents of Marin County for years to come. That foundation will rely upon the employees of Marin County who have participated in the creation of this plan and who will now be called upon to carry out the "action plan."

The many meetings that led to this final product produced not only this document but in the process released an energy and excitement that has been rewarding for our Board to witness. I know that this enthusiasm will carry us forward to an organization that is not only a fulfilling place to work but an organization which is a model for public service excellence.

On Behalf of the Board of Supervisors,

Hal Brown, President
Board of Supervisors

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A Message from the County Administrator

The Marin County Strategic Plan is not the end of a “project.” Rather, it is the beginning of a new way of working together. The strategic planning process established a model for collaboration and communication by involving hundreds of employees from all levels of the organization. Implementation will also require collaboration among employees from all departments and organizational levels. In the long run, this new way of working together will have a positive impact not only on our organization, but also for the people we serve.

This Strategic Plan for public service excellence in Marin County would not have been possible without the foresight, dedication and support provided by the individual and collective efforts of the Board of Supervisors. The form and substance of this plan are clearly guided by the spirit, suggestions and recommendations of hundreds of County employees. Gratefully acknowledged are these employees who provided thousands of suggestions as participants of focus groups and as respondents to surveys.

Without the generous and dedicated work of the Core Groups that focused on Customer Service, Employee Support and Development, Communications, and Performance Management, the Strategic Plan would not have its spirit and relevance for the organization. Much gratitude is owed the employees who participated in the Core Groups for their energy and wisdom.

The Steering Committee deserves recognition as a group who established the planning process, collaborated with the Core Groups and the Board of Supervisors and shaped and molded the Strategic Plan into its finished form. Their leadership and tenacity is to be acknowledged and respected.

Overall management of the Strategic Plan development was provided by the Project Management Group. This group dedicated countless hours of time, energy and creativity to organizing and guiding the strategic planning process. Their contributions and accomplishments are gratefully acknowledged.

An organizational development effort of this magnitude would not be viable without the active support of the County’s Department Heads, both elected and appointed. Special recognition is due the Department Heads for their willingness and energy in helping to guide the County toward higher levels of public service excellence.

No acknowledgement of this Strategic Plan would be complete without recognizing the incalculable contributions of our consulting team led by The Results Group and Mary McGovern Gebhardt. Their patience, guidance, dedication and professionalism have been generously shared with the County of Marin. Their contributions to our organization’s positive growth and transformation cannot be overstated.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAM

Steering Committee Members

- Laura Armor (ex officio), Director of Human Resources
- Fran Brigmann, Director of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services
- Bob Doyle, Sheriff
- Marilyn Filbrun, Desktop & Systems Support Manager, Information Services & Technology
- Dorren Hill, Engineering Assistant, Public Works
- Sue Kettmann, Administrative Analyst, Health & Human Services
- Ken Massucco, Fire Operations Battalion Chief, Fire Department
- Mark Riesenfeld (ex officio), County Administrator
- Nancy Rubin, Director of Health & Human Services
- Mike Sadjadi, Director of Public Works
- Joe Spaeth, Public Defender
- Joan Thayer, Assessor-Recorder
- Anne Wooliever, Acting Chief Deputy Probation Officer

Customer Service Core Group Members

- Cheryl Fisher, Sheriff Lieutenant, Sheriff's Office
- Shelly Grant, Supervising Communications Technician, Public Works
- Tiffany Ho, Medical Director, Community Mental Health Service, Health & Human Services
- Don Hunter, Assistant Assessor-Recorder
- Rich Lopez, Fire Operations Battalion Chief, Fire Department
- Julie Molina, Library Desk Supervisor, County Library
- Meloni Page, Personnel Technician, Human Resources
- Stan Rowan, Fire Chief
- Michael Smith, Treasurer/Tax Collector
- Shirley Watt, Health Services Clinic Manager, Health & Human Services

Employee Support And Development Core Group Members

- Bob Beaumont, Assistant Director of Public Works
- Cindy Brown, Training Programs Coordinator, Human Resources
- Stacy Carlsen, Agricultural Commissioner
- Ben Dresden, Director of Information Services & Technology
- Hank Jen, Administrative Analyst, County Administrator's Office
- Margaret Levine, Detention Registered Nurse, Health & Human Services
- Gail Papworth, Principal Personnel Analyst, Human Resources
- Judy Penn, Eligibility Supervisor, Health & Human Services
- Darnell Roary, Deputy Probation Officer, Probation Department
- Liz Rottger, Program Manager, Health & Human Services
- Rose Spikes, Legal Secretary, Public Defender's Office
- Ken Zepponi, Road Maintenance Supervisor, Public Works

Communication Core Group Members

- Marion Boyd, Senior Events Coordinator, Parks & Open Space
- Joan Brown, Volunteer Coordinator, Human Resources
- Jeff Carroll, Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff's Office
- Patrick Faulkner, County Counsel
- Larry Kay, Senior Road Maintenance Worker, Public Works
- Sue Kettmann, Administrative Analyst, Health & Human Services
- Barbara Kob, Mediation Coordinator, Probation Department
- John Martin, Systems & Programming Manager, Information Services & Technology
- Dean Powell, Principal Transportation Planner, Public Works
- Vicki Sacksteder, Administrative Analyst, County Administrator's Office
- Sparkie Spaeth, Program Coordinator, Health & Human Services
- Carol Starr, Director of County Library Services

Performance Management Core Group Members

- Richard Arrow, Auditor-Controller
- Roy Given, Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector
- Gilbert Guadiana, Administrative Analyst, County Administrator's Office
- Alex Hinds, Director of Community Development
- Norman Klein, Retirement Administrator, Marin County Employee Retirement Administrator
- Farhad Mansourian, Assistant Director of Public Works
- Barbara McKrell, Associate Civil Engineer, Public Works
- Ron Paolini, Parks & Open Space Superintendent, Parks & Open Space
- Liz Paris, Training & Development Officer, Human Resources
- D.J. Pierce, Health Services Associate, Health & Human Services
- Karen Small, Acting Chief Deputy Recorder, Assessor-Recorder
- Diane Stoker, Supervising Public Health Nurse, Health & Human Services

Project Management Group

- Laura Armor, Director of Human Resources
- Linda Christman, Assistant County Administrator
- Liz Paris, Training and Development Officer, Human Resources
- Mark Riesenfeld, County Administrator
- Steve Ekstrom, The Results Group
- Mary McGovern Gebhardt, Collaboration & Innovation
- Michael Wright, The Results Group

Project Manager

- Linda Christman, Assistant County Administrator

Project Staff

- Georgia Dennehey, Administrative Analyst, County Administrator's Office
- Laila Suter, Executive Secretary to County Administrator

Consultants

- Norma Smith Davis, The Results Group
- Steve Ekstrom, The Results Group
- Mary McGovern Gebhardt, Collaboration & Innovation
- Steven Greenberg, The Results Group
- Janice Ray, The Results Group
- Sara Tickler, The Results Group
- Michael Wright, The Results Group

Cover Photograph: Dan Heller

PROLOGUE

A Message from the Steering Committee

BACKGROUND

Marin County has many unique qualities. People who live and work here have long appreciated Marin County's exceptional quality of life - its small towns, rolling hills and bay vistas, cultural events, quality schools, creativity, and diversity of thought.

Nevertheless, Marin's quality of life faces serious challenges. While issues in the past focused largely on environmental concerns and personal health and safety, their scope has grown to embrace far more. Quality of life issues now include a vibrant economy, manageable traffic, affordable housing, appreciation of diverse cultures and outlooks, accessible recreational and cultural opportunities and broad community dialogue. One responsibility of all local governments, including the County of Marin, is to address these issues in pursuit of a high quality of life for all residents.

The Marin County Board of Supervisors has captured this ambition in the County's mission statement:

"The mission of the County of Marin is to provide excellent services that support healthy, safe, and sustainable communities, preserve Marin's unique environmental heritage; and encourage meaningful participation in the governance of the County by all."

This mission demonstrates the County's commitment to build a sustainable community, and to encourage the thoughtful input of all Marin residents.

Improving the quality of life in Marin will require the effort and dedication of many people. The County must be clear in its mission and goals - as articulated in this Strategic Plan - and the County's Strategic Plan must be accepted and supported at all levels of the County organization. All involved will face the challenge of pulling together and channeling diverse ideas toward common goals. To truly serve the community of Marin, the Plan must be used as a catalyst to increase the strength and capacity of the County as an organization, and thus the ability of the County of Marin to deliver the products and services needed and expected by Marin residents and visitors.

This document is the product of the County of Marin's first strategic planning process. The reader may notice that much of the attention is placed on the County organization. This is intentional, for without a strong infrastructure larger community-oriented goals cannot be as readily achieved. The Plan contains the basic framework of mission statement, goals and strategies for the organization. It also embodies the aspirations of Marin County employees to provide the best public service they possibly can. Contributors from all levels of the

organization have expressed their collective wish to work for a progressive organization that shares their commitment to public service, strives to be a top-quality employer, respects their skills and values their work. These hopes underlie each page of this Plan.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Marin County Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator initiated the strategic planning process over an eighteen-month period spanning 1999-2000. They began with the formulation of draft values, mission statement, and goals as well as an assessment of the organizational structure and a determination of desirable performance and service outcomes. Four Core Groups, each consisting of County employees from all levels of the organization, then began crafting the Plan. Each of the Core Groups - Customer Service, Employee Support and Development, Communication, and Performance Management - conducted extensive research. They defined the problems in their areas of focus and formulated goals and strategies to address them. Their work was detailed and dedicated; the products of their work were outstanding.

Two additional methods were used to obtain input directly from County employees. First, a series of focus groups comprised of County employees, randomly selected, offered suggestions as to what would make the County of Marin a better employer. Second, a survey was distributed to all employees, allowing everyone to have a voice in the Strategic Planning process.

A Steering Committee gathered and synthesized all input to create this Strategic Plan. Much attention was paid to organizing the Plan, drawing clear connections among goals, strategies, outcomes and actions, as well as maintaining the original intent and content of the Core Group products. The Steering Committee also oversaw the overall strategic planning process and, assisted by consultants and staff, kept the process tied to an ambitious timeline.

The value of the strategic planning process goes beyond the Plan it has produced. The process engendered in employees a belief that positive things can happen, and that their contributions and expertise are valued. In this sense, the process alone - independent of its product - has helped the County take a major step toward becoming a better organization.

MAKING WORDS A REALITY

This Strategic Plan must be used if it is to be effective. It is intended to become dog-eared, smudged and coffee-stained. It is a guide for the County of Marin now and into the near future and will be revised as circumstances change.

The hard work and determination of participants have contributed to a quality Plan that captures the essence of what this organization would like to become. County government and the community of Marin will reap the benefits of this work. The Plan has a strong foundation, vision and direction. This powerful combination of qualities can make wonderful things happen.

GOALS

Goal I: Provide Excellent Public Service

To demonstrate a genuine desire to serve the public by treating all persons with courtesy and respect, by providing efficient, competent services to the whole community, and by effectively and responsibly using taxpayer dollars.

Goal II: Create a Sustainable Future

To promote a sustainable future for Marin County, benefiting present and future generations by encouraging balanced communities where residents have opportunities to enjoy a high quality of life with adequate and diverse employment, housing, transportation services; cultural, recreational, safety and health services; and a beautiful and clean environment.

Goal III: Promote Service Excellence

To manage Marin County's resources and personnel in a manner that responds to community priorities, focuses on delivery of high quality services, and fulfills the County's responsibilities as a political subdivision of the State.

Goal IV: Encourage Community Collaboration and Partnering

To recognize Marin County's role in actively participating in partnerships with our cities, towns and other counties; local businesses and public interest organizations; and, state and federal levels of government.

Goal V: Promote Innovative Management and Employee Development

To recognize and support professional excellence and development among employees and provide a system of management that welcomes innovation and responds efficiently and effectively to public needs.

STRATEGIES

Strategy I: Keeping the Service in Public Service

Provide excellent service to our customers in the community, and to our co-workers as internal customers.

Strategy II: Making Marin County the Employer of Choice

Create and maintain a high level of employee job satisfaction and performance.

Strategy III: Creating a Listening Organization

Establish effective communication mechanisms to ensure that employees and the community have access to relevant, timely information.

Strategy IV: Assessing Our Impact on the Community

Devise an accurate and efficient system for measuring the effectiveness and benefit of County programs. Use performance management tools to help achieve desirable community outcomes that support a sustainable future.

STRATEGY I, THE CUSTOMER



The Customer — Wendy Kirk, Intermediate Clerk, County Clerk's Office responds to questions from local business owners completing a business license application.

STRATEGY I: THE CUSTOMER

Keeping the Service in Public Service

Provide excellent service to our customers in the community, and to our co-workers as internal customers.

“Customer service is an inside-out relationship that begins with Marin County employees supporting and serving each other so that they can serve the public.”

- *Customer Service Core Group*

Overall Approach:

County employees at all levels will work together to design and implement a customer service program. Emphasis will be on two areas: the internal customer, or co-workers; and the external customer, the general public. Quality public service depends on the quality of internal relationships.

Various employee work groups will be responsible for completing specific tasks. Overall direction will be provided by a Strategic Planning Implementation Steering Committee, which will also be comprised of employees at all levels of the organization and from many Departments.

Outcome A. A clear, well defined customer service system for internal and external customers.

Purpose: To have a coordinated, County-wide program to enhance customer service that responds to the changing needs of both the public and the internal customer.

Actions:

1. *Develop and implement a County-wide customer service program:*
 - *Create a customer service office (CSO) to develop and oversee implementation of the customer service program.*
 - *Create a County-wide written policy on internal and external customer service, and disseminate to all employees.*
 - *Conduct an initial study to establish a baseline measure of customer service performance.*
2. *Include the following elements in the customer service program:*
 - *Create one point of personalized telephone access to County services.*
 - *Enhance access for non-English speaking customers.*
 - *Provide a notary public service; convenient parking; longer office hours; one-stop shopping where feasible; and other appropriate enhancements.*
 - *Provide access to e-government services (e.g., bill paying) on the County's website.*
3. *Gather and respond to customer feedback, and evaluate the effectiveness of the customer service program:*
 - *Design an ongoing customer feedback mechanism.*
 - *Conduct periodic studies of customer service performance and compare results to the baseline.*

STRATEGY I: THE CUSTOMER

Keeping the Service in Public Service

"Hire approachable, friendly people for customer service jobs who embrace diversity and go the extra mile with a smile."

- County Employee

STRATEGY I: THE CUSTOMER

Keeping the Service in Public Service

“We need to provide the service that every one of our customers/citizens needs and is entitled to. Each one of us knows what good service is - we recognize it when we get it at a store or office. Employees earn satisfaction from doing a job well.”

- County Employee

Outcome B. A comprehensive customer service training program for all new and existing employees.

Purpose: To provide consistent service to customers in all departments regardless of where they receive services.

Actions:

1. *Develop a customer service curriculum and customer service standards, and require periodic training for all new and existing employees.*
2. *Train all employees on internal and external customer service expectations and standards.*

Outcome C. Continuous recognition of employees for meeting internal and external customer service goals.

Purpose: To recognize excellence and reinforce the importance of excellent customer service.

Actions:

1. *Enhance current efforts to reward employees who have demonstrated outstanding customer service.*
2. *Develop and implement a system to promptly recognize and reward employees based on the program developed in Outcomes B and C above.*

Outcome D. Improved County business programs that serve all departments and impact internal and/or external customer service (e.g., purchasing, printing, accounting, recruitment and hiring).

Purpose: To improve both internal and external customer service by providing excellent and timely business support to employees.

Actions:

1. *Review County business practices and programs that support all departments and employees.*
2. *Develop an internal business program that enables all departments to receive timely and effective support services.*
3. *Implement the internal business program which should include but not be limited to:*
 - *Streamlining of recruitment and hiring practices.*
 - *Timely payment of vendors.*
 - *Timely execution of equipment purchases.*

Outcome E. The County evaluates its customer service performance.

Outcome F.

Purpose: To create a mechanism for ensuring excellent customer service at all levels of the County.

Actions:

1. *Incorporate customer service into the performance management program.*
2. *Based on the program developed in Outcomes A and B above, include customer service as a category in employee performance expectations and evaluations, County-wide.*

**STRATEGY I:
THE CUSTOMER**

*Keeping the
Service in
Public Service*

“Every employee should be committed to meeting the request of everybody they come in contact with, citizen and co-worker. The employee should be ready, willing, able and equipped to directly render assistance or refer to the appropriate source.”

- County Employee

STRATEGY II, THE EMPLOYEE



The Employee
— Thomas Lai,
Principal Planner,
Community Development
Agency, reviews
plans for a proposed commercial development.

STRATEGY II: THE EMPLOYEE

Making Marin County the Employer of Choice

Create and maintain a high level of employee job satisfaction and performance.

“The County can only be as great as the sum total of its staff.”

- *Employee Support and Development Core Group*

Overall Approach:

County employees at all levels will work together to develop and implement programs that contribute to making Marin County the employer of choice. Continuous improvements in the workplace will be made by focusing on work-life balance, work style and compensation issues.

Various employee work groups will be responsible for completing specific tasks. Overall direction will be provided by a Strategic Planning Implementation Steering Committee, which will also be comprised of employees at all levels of the organization and from many Departments.

Outcome A. **Marin County is continually successful in recruiting and retaining high-performing staff.**

Purpose: To ensure that Marin County has the qualified staff it needs to provide high quality services to the community.

Actions:

1. *Establish programs to support a healthy work-life balance for employees:*
 - *Survey employees on child and elder care needs; establish programs.*
 - *Assess the feasibility of expanding health-related initiatives such as ergonomic improvements, smoking cessation programs and health club membership; establish programs where appropriate.*
2. *Provide for a more flexible work style through:*
 - *Expansion of flexible work hours*
 - *Telecommuting*
3. *Enhance compensation:*
 - *Study, design and enhance Tier II retirement benefits to be more competitive.*
 - *Identify and implement strategies that will assist employees with housing needs.*

STRATEGY II: THE EMPLOYEE

Making Marin County the Employer of Choice

"I'd like the County to be a place I'm proud to say I work for, and not have people conjure up thoughts of a slow moving, very large institution. 2,500 people is not that large compared to many corporations, therefore let's make our operations very pliable."

- County Employee

STRATEGY II: THE EMPLOYEE

Making Marin County the Employer of Choice

"I would like the County to be a supportive place to work. The best way to get there is to have all people supervising others get training on how to be a boss and how to deal with everyday problems."

- County Employee

Outcome B. County managers delegate authority and responsibility to capitalize on the experience, creativity and wisdom of staff.

Purpose: To develop an empowered workforce, able to quickly recognize and solve problems in their area of responsibility.

Actions:

1. *Identify management techniques that support delegation and employee empowerment, and develop training programs for managers and supervisors.*
2. *Conduct readiness activities to redefine expectations of managers and supervisors, incorporating employee empowerment and delegation of responsibilities into annual management evaluations.*

Outcome C. Marin County's exemplary training for staff and management supports employee empowerment and effectiveness, as well as the County's recruitment and retention goals.

Purpose: To significantly increase Marin County's use of high-quality training as a means to improve employee effectiveness and job satisfaction.

Actions:

1. *Develop a comprehensive training curriculum for new and existing employees that supports the accomplishment of the County's mission, goals and values.*
2. *Implement the following as part of the comprehensive training curriculum:*
 - *Technical training regarding job-related skills.*
 - *Maximizing Performance and Supervisory Academy programs.*
 - *Mentoring programs.*
 - *Management and leadership development.*
3. *Implement a systematic evaluation process to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of the training curriculum.*

Outcome D. The County of Marin provides maximum opportunities for employees to develop and advance in their careers.

Purpose: To improve employee job satisfaction by increasing opportunities for professional development.

Actions:

1. *Create a career development program:*
 - *Conduct research, including surveying employees to determine the direction and content of the program.*
 - *Implement training programs based on the research.*
 - *Develop career ladders and workforce planning.*
 - *Recognizing the value of cultural and language diversity as a benefit to the management ranks of the County, develop strategies to enhance opportunities for such diversity.*
 2. *Expand training programs, including supervisor preparation.*
 3. *Implement a systematic evaluation process to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of the career development program.*
-

Outcome E. Excellent work is recognized and rewarded.

Purpose: To demonstrate the County's appreciation for outstanding performance.

Actions:

1. *Establish a program of tangible rewards and recognition that can be given at the discretion of supervisory staff.*
2. *Provide training to all supervisors, managers and leaders regarding recognizing and rewarding employees.*
3. *Develop mechanisms for publicizing employee achievements to other County employees, the Board of Supervisors and the community.*

**STRATEGY II:
THE EMPLOYEE**

***Making Marin
County the
Employer of
Choice***

"I would love to see the County as a leader. By this I mean more creativity and competence as an organization. I would like us, as a County, to value intelligence, competency, and open-minded thinking."

- County Employee

STRATEGY II: THE EMPLOYEE

Making Marin County the Employer of Choice

"I'd like a place to work that is more egalitarian ... where everyone is valued for what they contribute with lots of room for suggestion, problem solving, risk taking and innovation."

- County Employee

Outcome F. Employees have the equipment and workspace they need to do their jobs effectively.

Purpose: To support employee effectiveness and increase retention.

Actions:

1. *Establish standards for lighting, space, equipment and cleanliness.*
 2. *Assure that these standards are incorporated into all Departments' annual work plans, as appropriate.*
 3. *All departments shall annually determine the equipment needed by employees to do their jobs well, and will request needed equipment in their annual budgets.*
-

Outcome G. Using employee assessments, identify and implement improvements needed to maintain Marin County as an employer of choice.

Purpose: To ensure that employees have a voice in improving their workplace.

Actions:

1. *Periodically conduct employee surveys, focus groups and other assessment tools to identify improvements needed to maintain Marin County as an employer of choice.*
2. *Based upon information derived from employees and other workplace data, develop and implement strategies to maintain and improve workplace excellence.*

STRATEGY III, COMMUNICATION



Communication — Madeline De Justo, Assistant Registrar of Voters and Yvonne Guenza, Elections Clerk III, assist a local resident with voter registration information.

STRATEGY III: COMMUNICATION

Creating a Listening Organization

Establish effective communication mechanisms to ensure that employees and the community have access to relevant, timely information.

"In order to effectively communicate with the public, we must develop communication procedures and systems to effectively communicate with each other."

- *Communication Core Group*

Overall Approach:

County employees at all levels will work together to develop and implement a communication system that will improve how employees communicate with one another, across departments and up and down the organization. Improved internal communications will be complemented by a comprehensive approach to communications with the public about County services and how to most effectively receive them.

Various employee work groups will be responsible for completing specific tasks. Overall direction will be provided by a Strategic Planning Implementation Steering Committee, which will also be comprised of employees at all levels of the organization and from many Departments.

Outcome A. The design and implementation of improved internal communication systems and mechanisms for County employees.

Purpose: To enhance communication between management and employees, across departments, and among employees.

Actions:

1. *Develop a policy regarding what information belongs on electronic and physical bulletin boards.*
2. *Develop a policy for unofficial staff postings.*
3. *Improve communication from County administration to employees (consider regular reports from CAO, HR & IST offices).*
4. *Implement methods to improve communication from County administration to employees and between employees, including:*
 - *Provide tools and mechanisms for supervisors to communicate with their staff.*
 - *Develop an effective method for distributing notices to non-civic center locations.*
 - *Provide every onsite and offsite employee with access to a computer and intra-County systems.*
 - *Initiate specific ongoing employee forums.*
 - *Develop and provide training to all staff on the effective use of newly implemented communication mechanisms.*
 - *Provide accessible, visible bulletin boards at all employee locations.*

STRATEGY III: COMMUNICATION

Creating a Listening Organization

“Communication needs to be spoken and listened to... both from the top down and the bottom up.”

- County Employee

STRATEGY III: COMMUNICATION

Creating a Listening Organization

"It would be helpful to have more interdepartmental communication. The Strategic Planning Process meetings were a good opportunity to meet others that work for the County."

- County Employee

- *Publish a calendar of events by paycheck attachment, electronic bulletin boards, and department bulletin boards.*
 - *Maintain Frankly Speaking as an employee newsletter.*
 - *Host Internet bulletin boards for County employees.*
5. *Improve access to and knowledge of all County departments, including:*
- *Create a County-wide Employee Directory with names by function, phone numbers and location.*
 - *Create a Directory of County Services with contacts and locations, printed and distributed regularly; develop procedures for keeping the directory current.*

Outcome B. **A Public Information Officer (PIO) is designated to address external and internal communication issues.**

Purpose: To provide guidance to and supervision of the County's communications systems.

Actions:

1. *Develop a classification and job description for the PIO duties.*
2. *Designate or hire a public information officer.*

STRATEGY III: COMMUNICATION

Creating a Listening Organization

Outcome C. A consistent County identity is presented to the community.

Purpose: To create a uniform portrayal of County government.

Actions:

1. *Develop an internal and external communication plan that emphasizes a consistent presentation of County services to the community as portrayed by its business systems (e.g., letterhead, logos, building signage, etc.)*
 2. *Systematically implement communications plan.*
-

Outcome D. A successful County-wide system of two-way communication with the public and other agencies.

Purpose: To increase effective public access and customer satisfaction.

Actions:

1. *Create a directory of County services with contacts and locations, and publish regularly; develop procedures for keeping the directory current (see also Outcome A, Action 5, above).*
2. *Coordinate the presentation of the official County position on important public issues.*
3. *Facilitate public dialogue on issues through electronic forums and community discussions.*
4. *Publicize County programs and achievements.*
5. *Facilitate communication between the County and other agencies.*
6. *Create a consistent point of contact for the public on significant County issues. (See PIO position in Outcome B above).*

“The E-GOV project will really improve communication. When employees look at it regularly it will really help to create an understanding of department processes and policies. It will also help the public become more familiar with what is available and how to get access.”

- County Employee

STRATEGY IV, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



Performance Management — Robert “Bob” Wyatt, Landscape Services Worker II, Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services, makes repairs to the sprinkler system at the Civic Center Lagoon Park.

STRATEGY IV: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Assessing Our Impact on the Community

Devise an accurate and efficient system for measuring the effectiveness and benefit of County programs. Use performance management tools to help achieve desirable community outcomes that support a sustainable future.

“Determining the effectiveness of public policies and programs requires a careful assessment of what is working and what is not. Looking at performance measures and outcomes will enable the County to measure its long-term and cumulative impact on this community.”

- *Performance Management Core Group*

Overall Approach:

County employees at all levels will work together to develop and implement a performance management system that will measure the quality and effectiveness of selected public policies and programs.

Various employee work groups will provide guidance on the creation, use and assessment of performance management measures. Overall direction will be provided by a Strategic Planning Implementation Steering Committee, which will also be comprised of employees at all levels of the organization and from many Departments.

Outcome A. The design of a performance management program for the County of Marin.

Purpose: To ensure the effective utilization of Marin County resources that will result in the achievement of desired goals and objectives.

Actions:

1. *Establish a performance management task force guided by expert consulting assistance to develop guidelines for performance measures used to assess the effectiveness of services and projects.*
2. *In coordination with the County-wide Plan update, develop a series of community assessment (quality of life) indicators for Marin County, which are interconnected with program and service outcome measures, and Strategic Plan goals.*
3. *Develop an implementation strategy that includes a schedule of departments and program areas, indicating where and when performance tools will be used.*

STRATEGY IV: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Assessing Our Impact on the Community

“Are we meeting the needs of our communities? We need to find out.”

- County Employee

STRATEGY IV: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Assessing Our Impact on the Community

“If the County policies and management styles improve, with emphasis on customer service, employee support, and communications, then desired performance will occur.”

- County Employee

Outcome B. The implementation of the performance management program designed in Outcome "A" above.

Purpose: To ensure the effective utilization of Marin County resources that will result in the achievement of desired goals and objectives.

Actions:

1. *Implement initial phases of the performance management program identifying pilot departments, and generate data to guide further development in the next fiscal year.*
2. *Develop comprehensive training and education on performance management, initially for the pilot departments.*
3. *Based on the experience gained with the pilot departments, expand the performance management program to include all other County departments.*

Outcome C. The County Strategic Plan is implemented and contributes to the continuous improvement of the County organization.

Purpose: To ensure that the Strategic Plan is used as it was intended.

Actions:

1. *Periodically review the Strategic Plan to assure its timely implementation.*
2. *Periodically assess the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan and its organizational development impact.*

ACTION PLAN, PHASES I, II, III



Siamak Motohari, Senior Civil Engineer, Department of Public Works, inspects steel bracing welds in the Hall of Justice Seismic Retrofit Project.

ACTION PLAN - PHASES I, II, III

To be effective, this Strategic Plan must be implemented methodically and thoughtfully, and at a pace that keeps our organization moving towards its goals without compromising ongoing responsibilities and duties. The County of Marin's Plan will be implemented in phases - stretching over approximately 3 ½ years - with actions in each phase building upon the successful completion of earlier actions.

The Action Plan is presented in the following charts. The charts identify in what phase or phases work on a particular action item will occur. The Action Plan is divided into the four strategy focus areas with actions represented by numbers in the first column. In some cases, Actions are further refined by bulleted phrases that describe specific steps to complete an action. An "X" is used to designate the phase(s) in which the action will be initiated and completed. If an action is expected to take a significant amount of time to complete there might be an "X" in more than one phase. Also, some bullets may have their own "X" (e.g., I.A.3) if they are to be initiated and completed in a different phase from a related bullet.

The Action Plan, under the column heading "Potential Collaborators," provides a preview of the range of departments who have already expressed interest in working on particular action items. "Conveners" represent the group or person charged with initiating an action.

Of utmost importance is how actions will be completed. Our organization will be stronger and more effective to the degree that there is broad involvement in solving problems. We want to implement the Strategic Plan in the same way we created it , meaning that employees from all departments and levels will participate in carrying out the ambitious tasks shown on the following pages.

Strategy 1 - The Customer: "Keeping the Service in Public Service"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
A. A clear, well defined customer service system for <u>internal</u> and <u>external</u> customers.					
<p>1. <i>Develop and implement a County-wide customer service program</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Create a customer service office (CSO) to develop and oversee implementation of the customer service program.</i> • <i>Create a County-wide written policy on internal and external customer service, and disseminate to all employees.</i> • <i>Conduct an initial study to establish a baseline measure of customer service performance.</i> 	X			Implementation Steering Committee	HR, Assessor, County Counsel, CAO, Library
<p>2. <i>Include the following elements in the customer service program:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Create one point of telephone access to County services which may include use of technology and personalized phone service.</i> • <i>Enhance access for non-English speaking customers.</i> • <i>Provide a notary public service; convenient parking; longer office hours; one-stop shopping where feasible; and other appropriate enhancements stemming from customer feedback processes.</i> • <i>Provide access to e-government services (e.g., bill paying) on the County's website.</i> 	X	X	X	Implementation Steering Committee	H&HS, Sheriff, HR, Board Office, IST
<p>3. <i>Gather and respond to customer feedback, and evaluate the effectiveness of the customer service program:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Design an ongoing customer feedback mechanism.</i> • <i>Conduct periodic studies of customer service performance and compare results to the baseline.</i> 	X			CSO	H&HS, Sheriff, Coroner, Assessor, IST
		X	X		

Strategy 1 - The Customer: "Keeping the Service in Public Service"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
B. A comprehensive customer service training program for all new and existing employees.					
1. <i>Develop a customer service curriculum and customer service standards, and require periodic training for all new and existing employees.</i>		X		CSO	CSCG Alumni, H&HS, Library, HR, County Counsel
2. <i>Train one quarter of all employees on internal and external customer service expectations and standards.</i>		X		CSO/HR	
3. <i>Train remaining employees on internal and external customer service expectations and standards.</i>			X	CSO/HR	
C. Continuous recognition of employees for meeting internal and external customer service goals.					
1. <i>Enhance current efforts to reward employees who have demonstrated outstanding customer service.</i>	X			CSO	Retirement, Library, H&HS, Coroner, HR
2. <i>Develop and implement a system to promptly recognize and reward employees based on the program developed in Outcomes B and C above.</i>		X	X	CSO	Retirement, Library, H&HS, Coroner, HR
D. Improved County business programs that serve all departments and impact internal and/or external customer service (e.g., purchasing, printing, accounting, recruitment and hiring).					
1. <i>Review County business practices and programs that support all departments and employees.</i>	X			CSO	IST, DPW, HR County Counsel
2. <i>Develop an internal business program that enables all departments to receive timely and effective support services.</i>	X			CSO	Auditor-Controller, Various Employee Reps., HR
3. <i>Implement the internal business program which should include but not be limited to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Streamlining of recruitment and hiring practices.</i> • <i>Timely payment of vendors.</i> • <i>Timely execution of equipment purchases.</i> 	X	X		CSO	Sheriff, County Counsel, DPW, HR

Strategy 1 - The Customer: "Keeping the Service in Public Service"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
E. The County evaluates its customer service performance.					
1. <i>Incorporate customer service into the performance management program.</i>	X	X		Implementation Steering Committee	Performance Management Advisory Group
2. <i>Based on the program developed in Outcomes A and B above, include customer service as a category in employee performance expectation and evaluations, County-wide.</i>			X	HR	Various Employee Reps.

Strategy 2 - The Employee: "Making Marin County the Employer of Choice"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
A. Marin County is continually successful in recruiting and retaining high-performing staff.					
1. <i>Establish programs to support a healthy work-life balance for employees:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Survey employees on child and elder care needs; establish programs.</i> • <i>Assess the feasibility of expanding health-related initiatives such as ergonomic improvements, smoking cessation programs and health club membership; establish programs where appropriate.</i> 	X	X		HR	Various Employee Reps
2. <i>Provide for a more flexible work style through:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expansion of flexible work hours</i> • <i>Telecommuting</i> 	X X	X		HR	Various Employee Reps
3. <i>Enhance compensation:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Study, design and enhance Tier II retirement benefits to be more competitive.</i> • <i>Identify and implement strategies that will assist employees with housing needs.</i> 	X	X X	X	HR	Retirement, Treasurer, CAO, Auditor-Controller, DPW
B. County managers delegate authority and responsibility to capitalize on the experience, creativity and wisdom of staff.					
1. <i>Identify management techniques that support delegation and employee empowerment, and develop training programs for managers and supervisors.</i>	X			Implementation Steering Committee, HR	Department Heads and Assistant Department Head Groups
2. <i>Conduct readiness activities to redefine expectations of managers and supervisors, incorporating employee empowerment and delegation of responsibilities into annual management evaluations.</i>		X	X	HR	Department Heads and Assistant Department Head Groups

Strategy 2 - The Employee: "Making Marin County the Employer of Choice"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
C. Marin County's exemplary training for staff and management supports employee empowerment and effectiveness, as well as the County's recruitment and retention goals.					
1. <i>Develop a comprehensive training curriculum for new and existing employees that supports the accomplishment of the County's mission, goals and values.</i>	X			HR	Various Employee Reps, Assistant Department Head Group
2. <i>Implement the following as part of the comprehensive training curriculum:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Technical training regarding job-related skills.</i> • <i>Maximizing Performance and Supervisory Academy programs.</i> • <i>Mentoring programs.</i> • <i>Management and leadership development.</i> 	X	X	X	HR	Various Employee Reps, Assistant Department Head Group
3. <i>Implement a systematic evaluation process to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of the training curriculum.</i>	X			HR	CSO, IST
D. The County of Marin provides maximum opportunities for employees to develop and advance in their careers.					
1. <i>Create a career development program:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conduct research, including surveying employees to determine the direction and content of the program.</i> • <i>Implement training programs based on the research.</i> • <i>Develop career ladders and workforce planning</i> • <i>Recognizing the value of cultural and language diversity as a benefit to the management ranks of the County, develop strategies to enhance opportunities for such diversity..</i> 	X	X X X	X	HR	Various Employee Reps.
2. <i>Expand training programs, including supervisor preparation.</i>		X		HR	Ag. Commissioner, Fire, Auditor- Controller

Strategy 2 - The Employee: "Making Marin County the Employer of Choice"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
3. <i>Implement a systematic evaluation process to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of the career development program.</i>		X		HR	
E. Excellent work is recognized and rewarded.					
1. <i>Establish a program of tangible rewards and recognition that can be given at the discretion of supervisory staff.</i>	X			HR	County Counsel, Parks-OS-Cultural, Probation
2. <i>Provide training to all supervisors, managers and leaders regarding recognizing and rewarding employees.</i>	X	X		HR	
3. <i>Develop mechanisms for publicizing employee achievements to other County employees, the Board of Supervisors and the public.</i>	X			PIO	
F. Employees have the equipment and workspace they need to do their jobs effectively.					
1. <i>Establish standards for lighting, space, equipment and cleanliness.</i>	X			Implementation Steering Committee	County Counsel, Public Defender, Records Mgmt. Comm.
2. <i>Assure that these standards are incorporated into all Departments' annual work plans, as appropriate.</i>	X			CAO	
3. <i>All departments shall annually determine the equipment needed by employees to do their jobs well, and will request needed equipment in their annual budgets.</i>	X	X	X	CAO	IST
G. Using employee assessments, identify and implement improvements needed to maintain Marin County as an employer of choice					
1. <i>Periodically conduct employee surveys, focus groups and other assessment tools to identify improvements needed to maintain Marin County as an employer of choice.</i>		X		HR	Department Head Group, Various Employee Reps.

Strategy 2 - The Employee: "Making Marin County the Employer of Choice"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
2. <i>Based upon information derived from employees and other workplace data, develop and implement strategies to maintain and improve workplace excellence.</i>			X	HR	Department Head Group, Various Employee Reps.

Strategy 3 - Communication: "Creating a Listening Organization"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
A. The design and implementation of improved internal communication systems and mechanisms for County employees.					
1. <i>Develop a policy regarding what information belongs on electronic and physical bulletin boards.</i>	X			PIO	County Counsel, IST, HR
2. <i>Develop a policy for unofficial staff postings.</i>	X			PIO	County Counsel, IST, HR
3. <i>Improve communication from County administration to employees (consider regular reports from CAO, HR & IST offices).</i>	X			PIO	H&HS, Sheriff, IST, Library, HR, Ag. Commissioner, DA
4. <i>Implement methods to improve communication from County administration to employees and between employees, including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide tools and mechanisms for supervisors to communicate with their staff.</i> • <i>Develop an effective method for distributing notices to non-civic center locations.</i> • <i>Provide every onsite and offsite employee with access to a computer and intra-County systems.</i> • <i>Initiate specific ongoing employee forums.</i> • <i>Develop and provide training to all staff on the effective use of newly implemented communication mechanisms.</i> • <i>Provide accessible, visible bulletin boards at all employee locations.</i> • <i>Publish a calendar of events by paycheck attachment, electronic bulletin boards, and department bulletin boards.</i> • <i>Maintain Frankly Speaking as an employee newsletter.</i> • <i>Host Internet bulletin boards for County employees.</i> 	X	X		PIO	H&HS, Sheriff, Ag. Commissioner, DA, IST

Strategy 3 - Communication: "Creating a Listening Organization"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
5. <i>Improve access to and knowledge of all County departments, including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Create a County-wide Employee Directory with names by function, phone numbers and location.</i> • <i>Create a Directory of County Services with contacts and locations, printed and distributed regularly; develop procedures for keeping the directory current.</i> 	X	X		IST	PIO
B. A Public Information Officer (PIO) is designated to address external and internal communication issues.					
1. <i>Develop a classification and job description for the PIO duties.</i>	X			HR	CAO, Department Head Group
2. <i>Designate or hire a public information officer.</i>	X			CAO	
C. A consistent County identity is presented to the community.					
1. <i>Develop an internal and external communication plan that emphasizes a consistent presentation of County services to the community as portrayed by its business systems (e.g., letterhead, logos, building signage, etc.)</i>		X		PIO	DA, Parks-OS-Cultural, Fire, DPW, IST
2. <i>Systematically implement communications plan.</i>		X		Implementation Steering Committee	DA, Parks-OS-Cultural, Fire, DPW, IST

Strategy 3 - Communication: "Creating a Listening Organization"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
D. A successful County-wide system of two-way communication with the public and other agencies.					
1. <i>Create a Directory of County Services with contacts and locations, and publish regularly; develop procedures for keeping the directory current (see also Outcome A, Action 5, above).</i>	X			IST	PIO, Sheriff, Library
2. <i>Coordinate the presentation of the official County position on important public issues.</i>		X		PIO	CAO, Department Head Group
3. <i>Facilitate public dialogue on issues through electronic forums and community discussions.</i>		X		PIO	IST
4. <i>Publicize County programs and achievements</i>		X		PIO	Various Departments
5. <i>Facilitate communication between the County and other agencies.</i>		X		PIO	CAO
6. <i>Create a consistent point of contact for the public on significant County issues. (See PIO position in Outcome B above).</i>		X		PIO	

Strategy 4 - Performance Management: "Assessing Our Impact on the Community"

	Phase 1 10/1/01 to 6/30/03	Phase 2 7/1/03 to 6/30/04	Phase 3 7/1/04 to 6/30/05	Convener	Potential Collaborators
A. The design of a performance management program for the County of Marin.					
1. <i>Establish a performance management task force guided by expert consulting assistance to develop guidelines for performance measures used to assess the effectiveness of services and projects.</i>	X			CAO	CDA, Auditor-Controller, IST, County Counsel, Public Defender
2. <i>In coordination with the County-wide Plan update, develop a series of community assessment (quality of life) indicators for Marin County, which are interconnected with program and service outcome measures, and Strategic Plan goals.</i>	X			Task Force	
3. <i>Develop an implementation strategy that includes a schedule of departments and program areas, indicating where and when performance tools will be used.</i>	X			Task Force	
B. The implementation of the performance management program designed in Outcome A above.					
1. <i>Implement initial phases of the performance management program identifying pilot departments, and generate data to guide further development in the next fiscal year.</i>		X		Task Force	
2. <i>Develop comprehensive training and education on performance management, initially for the pilot departments.</i>		X	X	HR	Task Force
3. <i>Based on the experience gained with the pilot departments, expand the performance management program to include all other County departments.</i>			X	Implementation Steering Committee	
C. The County Strategic Plan is implemented and contributes to the continuous quality improvement of the County organization.					
1. <i>Periodically review the Strategic Plan to assure its timely implementation.</i>	X	X	X	Implementation Steering Committee	Various Employee Reps.
2. <i>Periodically assess the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan and its organizational development impact.</i>	X	X	X	Implementation Steering Committee	Various Employee Reps.