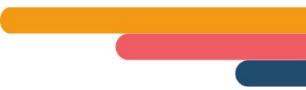


# IT Strategic Plan Progress Report 2026



SUPPORT BUSINESS | PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oregon Employment Department's Information Technology Services (IT) division leads strategic technology initiatives that support the agency's mission. With a team of more than 90 professionals, IT is focused on three strategic objectives: improving IT excellence, support business and finally to support innovation.

By keeping these objectives at the center of our work, we have already achieved several important milestones. These include Stage Gate 1 approval for the Enterprise Service Management Project (ESM), the successful launch of a new agency-wide intranet; and recognition through the 2025 State CIO Award for our data governance team.

We recognize that challenges remain. Due to staffing and budget limitations, some initiatives have yet to be started while others remain in progress. Looking forward, we have identified the need to revisit the IT Strategic Plan to ensure it aligns fully with evolving agency priorities.

This report outlines our progress under each of the three strategic objectives. Each objective has one to three major focus areas, and they form the foundation for each of our 21 initiatives. It also describes how IT has allocated resources, addressed risks, and applied mitigation strategies. The report concludes with a look ahead to future priorities and next steps.

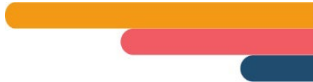
## OBJECTIVE 1 - IMPROVE IT EXCELLENCE

This objective aims to increase IT process maturity and improve IT operational performance. There are three tactical focus areas for this objective.

### **Focus Area - IT Work Intake, Procurement, and Projects**

The Work Intake, Procurement and Projects focus area describes efforts to streamline internal processes and workflows. There are three initiatives supporting our focus.

**Initiative 1:** Initiate the Enterprise Service Management (ESM) Project. IT successfully received Stage Gate 1 approval for the ESM and the Request for Proposal (RFP is in development with DAS/EIS/DOJ. Work on this project continues, with the goal of implementing the new system in Fall/Winter 2026.



**Initiative 2:** Communicate to agency leadership the benefit of engaging with IT early. This allows time for IT and the business to work together to identify requirements, existing solutions, and/or innovative solutions to ensure all needs are met. This is an ongoing effort, and an improvement has been seen when involving IT early in the program and other areas' efforts.

**Initiative 3:** Work with the business for all IT procurement and projects. The Service Management Office (SMO) has developed a process to streamline the procurement of software and hardware. They have established dedicated positions and repeatable processes, which have created a more efficient process for moving procurements through IT and on to the Agency Procurement Office.

## **Focus Area – Embrace ITIL's 7 Guiding Principles**

The ITIL guiding principles were embraced to create a shared understanding of service management and guide decision-making to move IT toward business-value alignment.

The SMO has developed our IT Communications Practice, a repeatable process to ensure IT is communicating well both internally within IT as well as our agency partners. This practice is expected to be finalized in Fall 2026. The SMO also coordinated an IT tabletop Incident Management exercise to help strengthen OED's operational resilience and validate our Incident Management policy. This is an exercise IT will continue periodically going forward to practice our response plans under realistic conditions to identify gaps and improve cross-team coordination before a real incident occurs.

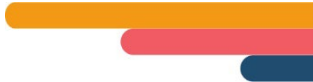
## **Focus Area – Mature IT Project Management Office (PMO)**

This focus area was created to implement standardized best practices, documentation, and artifacts to improve communication and alignment with the business.

**Initiative 4:** Align PMO practices with PMI/PMBOK and the EIS oversight process. IT hired a new PMO manager in January of 2025. He is working to accomplish alignment by engaging with EIS oversight and participating in groups facilitated by EIS.

**Initiative 5:** Standardize processes, communication, and project management tools. IT's PMO manager has met with other PMO managers and state government PMOs. He is using the knowledge from these meetings and collaboration with his team to refine the project intake process, project management and project closeout standards.

**Initiative 6:** Establish clear and defined processes to communicate when a project has ended and moved into operations. This is currently in progress, and the PMO is using the project to replace OED's intranet to test run this process. The final process and templates for artifacts should be finalized in Q4 2026.



**Initiative 7:** Review whether projects are delivered on time and meet expected outcomes and defined business requirements. Due to resource constraints and competing priorities, this initiative has not yet been started. It will begin in the Fall/Winter 2026.

## OBJECTIVE 2 – SUPPORT BUSINESS

This objective was created to support major OED priorities that require IT capabilities. There are four tactical focus areas related to this objective:

### **Focus Area – Agency Web Strategy related to policies and guidelines**

This focus area was created to develop an agency web strategy that will improve information and communication internally and externally, with a focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion requirements.

**Initiative 8:** Establish website standards based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). In collaboration with Communications and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office (DEI), IT adopted these guidelines.

**Initiative 9:** Start the internal intranet replacement project with Communications. This project was initiated, and the new intranet was implemented in April 2025 with project closeout occurring in Spring 2026.

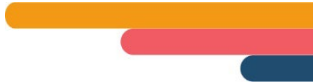
**Initiative 10:** Identify and implement a WCAG compliance tool. IT obtained and is using a WCAG compliance tool, PopeTech, to evaluate internal and external websites. IT and Communications has also identified solution for WCAG compliant PDFs, including Adobe Pro and Allyant. Training is being developed and rollout of these tools to business units is targeted for Summer 2026.

**Initiative 11:** Evaluate all web strategy work for alignment with the agency's Equity Framework. IT, in partnership with DEI, is and will continue to evaluate new and modified internal and external websites using the compliance tool to ensure alignment with the agency's Equity Framework.

### **Focus Area – Business value-driven decisions, focusing on supporting desired business outcomes**

This focus area was created to strengthen the relationship between business and IT to support critical business processes and applications and help find the proper solutions.

**Initiative 12:** Conduct a needs assessment with each business division. The second half of this initiative was to develop and implement a plan to address these needs. Due to resource constraints and competing priorities, this initiative has not been started by IT. However, IT participated in an agency-wide customer service focused evaluation and subsequent plan. This effort, led by the Directors Office,



which included focus groups, surveys and other engagements led to our agency Customer Service Workforce Strategy plan, which includes 101 initiatives to improve customer service both externally to our customers as well as internal to the agency. IT has six specific objectives in this plan related to improvement of Frances, as well as additional agency efficiencies through the use of AI. IT has completed one of the six Frances initiatives, restructuring Frances governance. IT is also supporting three AI initiatives to improve staff efficiency and updating Frances letters to claimants with plain language to improve customer experience.

## **Focus Area – Customer satisfaction and IT metrics**

This focus area was created to help seek a better understanding of the business needs and satisfaction through annual surveys.

**Initiative 13:** Conduct annual customer surveys with the business divisions. The purpose was to supply IT with meaningful metrics to show areas of improvement and where opportunities for growth still reside. Some surveys have been conducted, but they have not been at an annual cadence.

Responsibility for the surveys has been moved to the SMO to ensure annual completion. The SMO, in partnership with Info-Tech, issued the satisfaction survey in May 2026. IT will no longer consider this an initiative and use it as a success metric instead.

## **Focus Area – Data Governance**

This focus was created to continue the maturity process for data governance to align with the Oregon Data Strategy and the Data Governance and Transparency Program.

**Initiative 13:** Maintain the existing relationship with the EIS Data Governance and Transparency Office (DGT), which IT has been successful in doing.

**Initiative 14:** Review and update OED's Data Strategy and Data Governance Practice as needed. IT has completed a review and updated the Data Strategy and Data Governance Practice to align with the DGT.

**Initiative 15:** Review and implement the next steps as defined by the Data Governance Roadmap. The 2024-2026 priorities for Data Governance are to improve executive leadership awareness, continue Data Literacy, build on the Data Equity Framework, and continue optimizing data and analytics.

IT has been so successful at this that OED's Data Management Team won the 2025 State CIO award for Data Governance.



## OBJECTIVE 3 – SUPPORT INNOVATION

This objective was created to support technology innovation by creating processes to support and sustain innovation, explore innovative technologies, and identify and mitigate risks associated with new technology. There are three tactical focus areas related to this objective:

### **Focus Area – Retain and train staff**

This focus area was created to provide growth opportunities, satisfaction and career opportunities for IT staff.

**Initiative 16:** Identify existing EIS and DAS contracts that IT could leverage for training opportunities. It was identified that OED has LinkedIn Learning licenses for all employees. IT identified MS Azure training for their division and has purchased some PluralSight licenses for self-paced training.

IT developer staff have taken training available from FAST on supporting the new Frances system. Additionally, IT used contractors to facilitate data architecture, workshops on data strategy, and a proof of concept for MS Synapse.

Additional training will begin in the 25-27 biennium once the IT budget and amount available for training have been established.

**Initiative 17:** Encourage IT staff to use the Enterprise Skills Initiative, which is the Microsoft training that is part of the E5 license. IT managers provide staff with time to train and seek professional development opportunities.

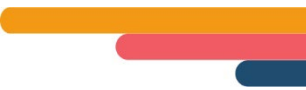
### **Focus Area – Generative Artificial Intelligence**

This focus area was created to explore AI and its potential uses within the agency.

**Initiative 18:** Investigate the potential future use of AI for translation services for written and verbal communication. This is currently in progress. OED began an initiative from the Customer Service Workforce Strategy plan to improve letters sent to claimants with easier to understand plain language, using AI as a first draft. This pilot is expected to go live in Summer/Fall 2026.

**Initiative 19:** Investigate the potential future use of AI to identify DEI-related barriers to OED services. Currently, IT has not made any progress on this initiative due to other priorities.

**Initiative 20:** Investigate new opportunities to reduce fraud by researching and evaluating existing or new AI technologies, without creating a barrier to Oregonians. Again, IT has not made any progress on this initiative due to resource constraints and competing priorities.



Most of IT's work on this focus has been establishing a cross-agency workgroup to investigate AI and its use and benefits for the agency. The AI workgroup has recently published the OED AI Guidelines. Additional opportunities to use AI to increase efficiency are in the OED Customer Service Workforce Strategy plan and are expected to be further developed in 2026-2027.

## Focus Area – Cloud Native Applications

This focus area was created to research cloud native applications and their potential use cases and benefits.

**Initiative 21:** Continue to explore consuming cloud native applications. IT supported staff training on Cloud-native applications and developed guidance on using cloud native applications as appropriate within the procurement process. The procurement process ensures that OED will always check to see if a cloud version is available and is the appropriate choice.

## METRICS

The following summarizes the metrics used for each of the strategic objectives.

### Objective 1: Improve IT Excellence

- Metric: Complete an annual customer satisfaction survey. The survey results will be compared with those from November 2022, which will act as our baseline.
  - The CIO Survey IT Satisfaction Scorecard from 2022 and 2024 surveys showed that overall satisfaction rose 14%. There were also increases in the following areas: 10% in “understands business needs”; 16% in “executes requests”; 13% in “communicates effectively”; 14% in “training effectively.”
  - There is continued frustration with the existing ticketing system, which dropped the IT Service Desk score by 2% during this period.
- Metric: Regularly review and evaluate the business leadership’s assessment of how well IT implements ITIL’s guiding principles over time.
  - Based on informal conversations, it appears that much of the business leadership doesn’t understand ITIL, its guiding principles, and how they impact IT’s service levels.
- Metric: Evaluate projects to determine if they are being delivered on time, within budget, and meet the defined outcomes.
  - IT has not started tracking this effort.
- Metric: Delivery of defined standardized practices, documentation, and processes that can be used uniformly on all IT projects.

- The PMO is currently in the process of completing the project closeout practices and documentation.

## **Objective 2: Support Business**

- Metric: Evaluate that all initiatives identified by the agency deliver on time and expected outcomes.
  - IT has not started tracking this effort.
- Metric: Compare initial WCAG scores on the website with the final score.
  - Score improved from A to AA.
- Metric: Compare customer satisfaction scores to baseline and how many projects experienced scope changes due to additional outcomes being identified.
  - The first half of this metric is a duplicate outlined in Objective 1. The second half of this metric has not been started.
- Metric: Evaluate where we are on the Data Governance Roadmap, identifying successes and challenges to meet the plan.
  - IT successfully established reporting and dataset standards and provided Tableau Data Literacy Courses for the agency.

## **Objective 3: Support Innovation**

- Metric: Document all areas of training, guidance, and new technologies to identify successes and challenges and ensure alignment with EIS's guidance regarding innovation.
  - IT has not started tracking this effort.
- Metric: Evaluate staff retention rates and conduct IT staff satisfaction surveys to identify areas of improvement.
  - In the past two years, there have been 4 employee resignations and 9 retirements.
  - IT had a 4.09 engagement score (out of 5) in 2024. This was a significant improvement of 0.23 from the previous year.
- Metric: Develop and implement AI guidelines in alignment with EIS and the Governor's guidance.
  - Completed
- Metric: Develop guidance for IT procurements on cloud-native applications.
  - Completed



## RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The Oregon Employment Department's Information Technology (IT) division comprises 115 professionals, led by the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Deputy CIO. Key managerial roles report to them, including the Application Development Manager, Frances Business Support Manager, Data Management Manager, Project Management Office Manager, Service Desk Manager, Service Management Office Manager, and Systems Manager.

## RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Potential budget limitations remain the most significant challenge. With the expected drop in State revenue as well as loss of Federal funding, IT must be very strategic when determining which initiatives to move forward, and which to pause for savings. With budget limitations, the ability to replace staff who have left is at best hampered, and at worst, not possible. IT ran at a 20% vacancy rate last biennium due to budget issues and is working to determine how many of those vacancies can be filled this biennium. Staffing shortages not only reduce the capacity to strengthen partnerships across divisions and programs, but it impacts the ability to provide timely services and implement new technologies. All of which hinders progress towards greater cross-functional alignment and strategic cohesion.

## NEXT STEPS

IT plans to evaluate and rewrite its strategic plan to better align with the agency's strategic plan and goals. Now is the right time to critically evaluate the objectives and determine where adjustments are needed. By mapping these areas of progress and identifying where momentum has stalled or priorities have shifted, IT can be ready to realign its objectives.



# CONCLUSION

IT has made progress toward advancing its three strategic objectives of improving IT excellence, supporting the business, and fostering innovation. Key achievements include Stage Gate 1 approval for the Enterprise Service Management Project, the successful implementation of a new agency intranet, adoption of WCAG standards, maturation of procurement processes, and national recognition through the 2025 State CIO Award for data governance. These accomplishments demonstrate the IT's capacity to deliver meaningful results while strengthening operational frameworks and service delivery.

At the same time, resource and staffing constraints, competing priorities, and ongoing cybersecurity risks continue to present challenges. Some initiatives remain incomplete or have not yet been started, highlighting the importance of prioritization and adaptability in a constrained fiscal environment. The upcoming rewrite of the IT Strategic Plan provides an opportunity to align objectives with evolving agency priorities, close identified gaps, and ensure that initiatives are both measurable and impactful.

With continued focus, and strategic alignment, IT will be positioned to provide effective technology support for the agency.