

STRATEGIC PLAN 2001

LANE COUNTY,
OREGON

Board of Commissioners

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INTRODUCTION TO STRATEGIC PLAN

by William Van Vactor



In 1998, the Board of County Commissioners were again faced with a financial plan which showed declining revenue and increasing expenses. In response to this recurring problem, the Board of County Commissioners appointed the Future Focus Task Force. This group of citizens was asked to recommend what business Lane County should be in. The task force replied that on the one hand, the business mix of services currently being provided appeared appropriate. They also pointed out however, that there was no standard by which the services could be compared. They therefore strongly recommended Lane County adopt a strategic plan that could be used as a guide in future years, regardless of whether Lane County's revenues were rising or falling.

The Board of County Commissioners took to heart the task force's recommendation and worked for over two years with the department heads, budget committee and union representatives, to develop a strategic plan. This work effort culminated on March 14, 2001 when the plan was adopted.

The strategies are divided into four categories: service improvement, resource, planning and allocation, performance management, and revenue development.

1. Services Improvement

Strategies in the Service Improvement category include:

1. Evaluating reorganization opportunities.
2. Developing more flexible staffing.
3. Promoting electronic access to public services.
4. Promoting continuous quality improvement.

2. Resources and Planning

Strategies for Resources and Planning include plans for the chief resources necessary to deliver county services. These plans include:

1. Human resources.
2. Information technology.
3. Land and facilities.

A key portion of the strategic plan is found in Section B(3) which provides a road map for the strategic allocation of resources:

"The county's highest funding priority will be those services that are effective in addressing the immediate and critical life and health safety needs of our citizens. Priorities will be guided by the relative severity and immediacy of the threat to life and health safety and/or the effectiveness of long-term or future deterrent to threats that the service provides. For prevention services, early intervention will be a higher priority than later intervention."

As you can see, Lane County has placed as its highest priority public health and safety services with a strategic eye towards prevention services which have the best chance of reducing the need for additional services in the long term. In this manner, services such as police services, i.e. rural patrol, corrections, public health, and maternal child health are given top priority.

3. Performance Management

The strategies regarding Performance Management include:

1. Refining countywide goals.
2. Refining planning at the departmental level.
3. Strengthening analytical capabilities.
4. Developing performance measures for major services.
5. Remaining accountable for strategic plan implementation.

4. Revenue Development

Finally, strategies in the Revenue Development category include:

1. Developing balanced revenue strategies.
2. Identifying and recovering user fees and charges.
3. Pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities.
4. Pursuing intergovernmental revenue and private donations.
5. Developing timber revenue strategies.

The fundamental reason Lane County has adopted the strategic plan is to demonstrate accountability to its citizens. By adopting this plan, the leadership of the County is saying that as it provides high quality services, it wants to be able to demonstrate superior performance. The plan calls for demonstrating this by comparing the services to standards set forth in the plan and best practices throughout the county. This document therefore sets the direction for Lane County government and serves as the steady rudder in the high winds and strong current of local government service delivery.

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Overview

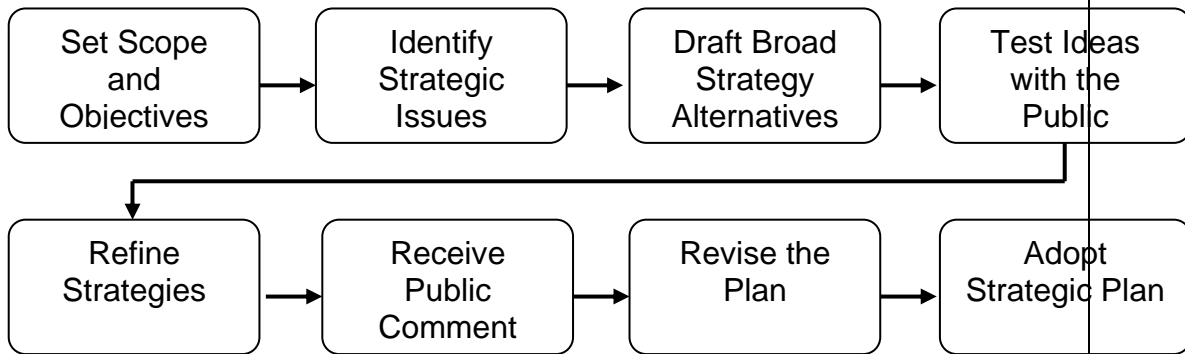


OVERVIEW

LANE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Lane County Board of County Commissioners initiated a strategic planning process in July 1999. The objective of developing a strategic plan for the County was stimulated, in part, by the report of a citizens group, the Future Focus Task Force, issued in 1998. One of the principal recommendations of this group was that the County develop a strategic plan.

In August 1999 the County retained a consulting firm, Public Knowledge, Inc., to assist in the develop of the plan. A nine-member Steering Committee (consisting of two County Commissioners, two other elected officials, County administrative staff, and a citizen representative) was established. The primary responsibility of the Steering Committee initially was to work with the consultants to outline a planning process. The Steering Committee determined that a broader group, the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (SPEC), should be established as the working group that would consider strategic planning issues and proposals and recommend a final plan for adoption by the Board of County Commissioners. The SPEC, with a membership of about 35 persons, included all five County Commissioners, most County department heads, five citizen members of the County's Budget Committee, union representatives, and selected County administrative staff. The broad process the SPEC followed is depicted below:



The SPEC met to organize, to approve the process, and to set the scope and objectives on September 16, 1999. The SPEC determined that the plan should broadly cover County government and not be restricted to just “discretionary” County services. But the SPEC also emphasized that the plan would not be a broad “community” plan; it would focus on County government actions, although intergovernmental strategies would be among those considered. The SPEC identified several objectives for the plan; it should:

- Provide a basis for change
- Build consensus around a future vision
- Focus the organization’s energies
- Identify ways of working differently
- Provide a way to evaluate service priorities and service levels

OVERVIEW

Following the initial SPEC meeting the consultants interviewed the members of the SPEC individually or in small groups, reviewed the County budget, and reviewed various relevant previous reports to help identify strategic issues for subsequent consideration. Based on this activity the consultants identified several perceived Lane County government internal strengths and weaknesses and perceived external opportunities and threats. The consultants also documented several possible strategic actions based on the interviewees' insights and opinions and grouped these into broad strategic themes.

On October 5, 1999 the SPEC met to review the situation analysis and to evaluate possible strategy alternatives. A list of about 16 areas for strategic initiatives resulted from this meeting.

The consultants then facilitated several focus groups with the public and employees. The purposes of the groups were to: (1) provide a check and balance on some strategic themes that had been preliminarily outlined by the SPEC; (2) identify any new strategies or themes meriting further consideration; and (3) generate ideas to help refine the strategies and translate them into effective actions. The SPEC wanted to get informed outside feedback before proceeding too far down the path of drafting a strategic plan.

There were two basic types of groups. One type consisted of members of the public not employed by the County. These persons were not selected randomly, however. Because informed opinions were sought the selection consisted partly of persons that SPEC members recommended as persons who would be good participants. Public members of County advisory committees were also invited to participate. An attempt was made to achieve some balance by assuring that various areas of the county were represented and that there was some breadth in the known interests of the invitees. Invitations were sent to 789 people. Out of this group 132 actually attended a focus group session and signed in. Fourteen one-and-one-half hour sessions were held, with between five and 15 participants per session.

The second type of group consisted of County employees. An open invitation to participate was extended to all employees who were interested and whose supervisors were able to provide the release time. There were three two-hour sessions and approximately 150 employees attended, in total.

Certain further strategic concerns and themes emerged from the focus groups and several of the SPEC's original themes were reinforced. The consultants prepared a summary of the focus groups which the SPEC considered in an November 22, 2000 meeting to begin to refine strategic alternatives. This meeting resulted in a draft strategic plan for public review.

OVERVIEW

In January 2000 the County Commissioners held public hearings on the draft plan. The draft plan was also placed on the County Internet site and a summary was inserted in a countywide newspaper supplement. Citizens had an opportunity to respond to a survey that accompanied the newspaper supplement soliciting opinions about the draft plan. Over 330 persons responded to the survey.

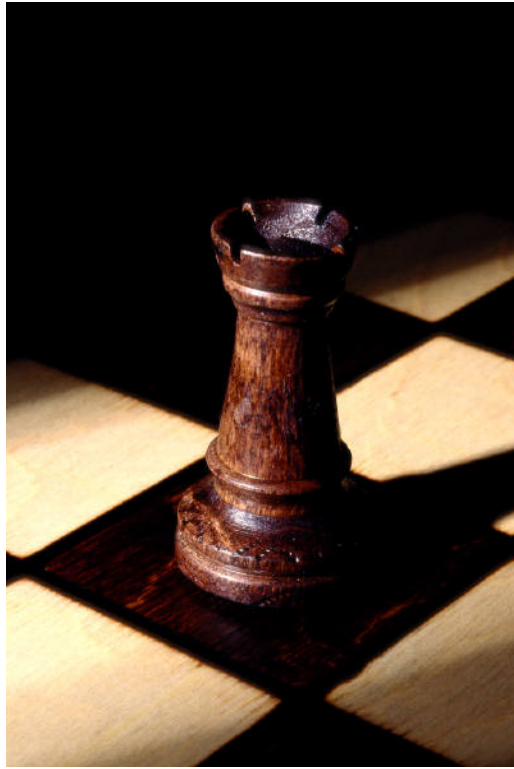
Members of the SPEC and public commenters identified certain issues which they believed required further attention in the planning. One of the key concerns, for example, was that the County needed to do a better job of defining what its core services were and of specifying how service priorities would be set. The County's management team of department heads and administrative staff worked on this and other issues through the spring and summer of 2000.

The SPEC met again on September 19, 2000 and on December 15, 2000 to review alternative drafts of strategies resulting from the work by interim groups and to set preliminary priorities among the strategies. Subcommittees were appointed to work on selected portions of the plan based on the comments of SPEC members at the meetings. The subcommittees were requested to prepare high-level implementation plans (with key tasks, responsibility assignments, and timelines) for the highest priority strategies.

The final draft of the strategic plan was circulated to SPEC members prior to a final meeting on January 30, 2001. They were asked to submit in writing any comments they might have at that point. The Steering Committee reviewed the written comments and organized them for discussion at the final SPEC meeting. After discussion at the final meeting, the SPEC members voted on acceptance of the plan. Based on a principle established at the beginning of the process a super-majority of two-thirds of the SPEC was needed to recommend the plan for approval by the Board of County Commissioners. All members of the SPEC voted that they either positively supported the plan or at least found it acceptable even though they thought it could be improved.

The Board of County Commissioners approved the Lane County Strategic Plan at their meeting on March 14, 2001. The strategic planning Steering Committee was delegated the task of monitoring and guiding the implementation of the plan.

Executive Summary



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From: Bill VanVactor

To: All Employees

Date: May 16, 2001

Our New Strategic Plan

Lane County's new Strategic Plan was created to guide current and future leaders about what public services the county should provide, at what level and how the services should be delivered. The Board of County Commissioners adopted it on March 14, 2001.

The plan, which saw its genesis in 1998 as a proposal by a group of citizens called the Future Focus Task Force, is the culmination of many meetings, discussions and deliberations by county officials, employee groups and interested citizens.

The plan includes Lane County's mission and vision statement, in addition to 10 guiding principals. The county's goals and core strategies are the essence of the plan.

The strategies are divided into four categories: Service Improvement, Resource Planning and Allocation, Performance Management, and Revenue Development.

Strategies in the Service Improvement category include evaluating reorganization opportunities, developing more flexible staffing, promoting electronic access to public services and promoting continuous quality improvement.

Resource planning and allocation strategies are to develop plans for the chief resources applied to deliver county services, which include human resources, information technology, and land and facilities; refine the communications plan; and allocate resources strategically.

Section B3 of the Strategic Plan provides the road map for the strategic allocation of resources:

The county's highest funding priority will be those services that are effective in addressing the immediate and critical life and health safety needs of our citizens.

Priorities will be guided by the relative severity and immediacy of the threat to life and health safety and/or the effectiveness of long-term or future deterrent to threats that the service provides.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For prevention services, early intervention will be a higher priority than later intervention.

As you can see, Lane County has placed as its highest priority public health and safety services with a strategic eye towards prevention, which will have the best chance of reducing the need for additional services in the long term. In this manner services such as police services, i.e. rural patrol, corrections, public health, maternal child health and prevention at both the Department of Youth Services and Department of Children and Families are given top priority.

Performance management strategies encompass refining countywide goals, refining planning at the departmental level, strengthening analytical capabilities and remaining accountable for strategic plan implementation.

Strategies in the revenue development category include developing balanced revenue strategies, identifying and recovering user fees and charges, pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities, pursuing intergovernmental revenue and private donations, and developing timber revenue strategies.

The Strategic Planning Executive Committee consisted of all five commissioners; all citizen budget committee members; the Sheriff, District Attorney and Assessor; all department directors; employee union representatives and essential county staff members.

An outline of the Strategic Plan is attached. To examine a copy of the new Lane County Strategic Plan, visit the county's Web Site at vnvw.lanecoumy.org, or call (541) 682-4203.

LANE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (YEARS 2001 - 2005)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Our Mission

The mission of Lane County Government is to provide high quality local government services in a fair, open and economical manner to best meet the needs and expectations of our citizens and our guests.

II. Our Vision

Lane County Government is trusted and respected as a dynamic and innovative organization that provides high quality services.

III. Our Guiding Principles

Our actions are guided by several principles:

- Accessibility
- Accountability
- Customer focus
- Diversity
- Valued employees
- Pursuit of excellence
- Mission-driven
- Integrity, loyalty, and trust
- Stewardship
- Teamwork

IV. Lane County's Goals

Lane County Government exists to ensure the safety and well being of the people who live, work and visit our communities. That includes personal safety, security of property, preservation of infrastructure, health safety, and assisting in providing for our citizens' basic needs. Lane County places special emphasis on programs that serve youth, incorporated into and consistent with the following overall goals:

- Work for a strong regional economy to expand the number of family wage jobs available in Lane County.
- Provide opportunities for **citizen participation** in decision-making, voting, volunteerism and civic and community involvement.
- Ensure the provision of *basic* social support in the areas of health care, disease prevention, protection, poverty reduction and independent living.
- Ensure the *public's safety* with regard to adult and juvenile crime, emergency preparedness and regional cooperative policing through law enforcement, intervention, prosecution, incarceration, and parole and probation, while protecting individuals' constitutional rights.
- Contribute to **appropriate community development** in the areas of transportation and telecommunications infrastructure, housing, growth management and land development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Maintain a *healthy environment* with regard to air quality, water quality, waste management, land use and parks.
- *Protect the public's assets* by maintaining, replacing or upgrading the County's investments in systems and capital infrastructure.
- Provide *efficient and effective financial and administrative support* and systems to direct service departments.

V. Lane County's Core Strategies

Overall strategic theme: To build and maintain credibility and respect we understand that we must both perform well and remain accountable to the public for our performance. We must continually improve our services and allocate our resources wisely. We must listen carefully to our citizens and do our best to effectively inform them how our actions are addressing their concerns.

Specific strategies are specified for each of the following initiative areas, consistent with the overall strategic theme:

A. Service Improvement

- A1 - Evaluate reorganization opportunities
- A2 - Develop more flexible staffing
- A3 - Promote electronic access to public services
- A4 - Promote continuous quality improvement

B. Resource Planning and Allocation

- B1 - Develop plans for the chief resources applied to deliver County services - human resources, information technology, and land and facilities
- B2 - Refine the communications plan
- B3 - Allocate resources strategically

C. Performance Management

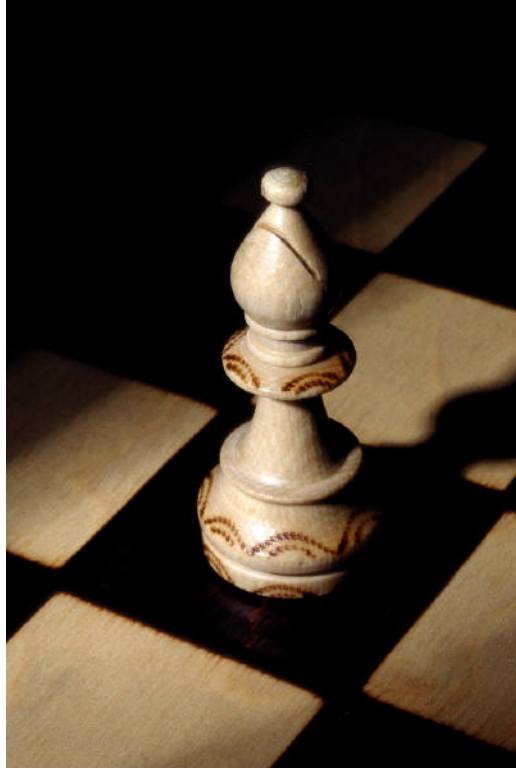
- C1 - Refine Countywide goals
- C2 - Refine planning at the department level
- C3 - Strengthen analytical capabilities
- C4 - Remain accountable for strategic plan implementation

D. Revenue Development

- D1 - Develop balanced revenue strategies
- D2 - Identify and recover user fees and charges
- D3 - Pursue entrepreneurial opportunities
- D4 - Pursue intergovernmental revenue and private donations
- D5 - Develop timber revenue strategies

Detail for each of these strategies appears in the full text of the strategic plan.

Mission, Vision And Guiding Principles



MISSION, VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ADOPTED LANE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

Lane County's Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

At every level of Lane County Government – from office workers and maintenance crews to elected officials and volunteers – we strive to make the best possible use of your tax dollars to deliver the services and programs you expect and need. Our mission, vision and guiding principles reflect our sense of duty and expressed commitment to every citizen of Lane County.

I. Our Mission

The mission of Lane County Government is to provide high quality local government services in a fair, open and economical manner to best meet the needs and expectations of our citizens and our guests.

II. Our Vision

Lane County Government is trusted and respected as a dynamic and innovative organization that provides high quality services.

III. Our Guiding Principles

ACCESSIBILITY

All citizens and employees, regardless of abilities, will have ready access to our services and facilities. Language and culture will not be barriers. Our processes will be open and fair to all.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We will ensure public funds provide priority services our stakeholders want and need. We will always strive to get the most benefit from our available resources. We will always act in accordance with the law, with integrity, and in the public interest.

CUSTOMERS

We will be customer-driven, both internally and externally. We recognize customers as our central focus and will treat them with courtesy and respect. We value our customers and are committed to providing quality service and customer satisfaction.

DIVERSITY

We will treat all people with dignity and respect. We will demonstrate through our actions an understanding and appreciation for cultural diversity and individual differences. We absolutely will not tolerate sexual, religious, racial harassment or discrimination.

MISSION, VISION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VALUED EMPLOYEES

We will enable employees and teams to self-manage their work and expect them to be accountable for their decisions and actions. Our success depends on the success of our individual employees. We will strive for good physical working conditions for employees and visitors as well as up-to-date equipment. We recognize each individual is a unique and contributing member of our organization. We will recognize and reward people for hard work, creativity, innovation and prudent risk-taking.

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

We are committed to quality and excellence. Innovation and calculated risk-taking are essential. We are committed to continuous improvement and creativity. We will look ahead and will not be satisfied with the status quo.

MISSION-DRIVEN

We are driven primarily by our mission, not by rules. We need fewer rules, less rigidity and less bureaucracy. We believe flexibility and responsiveness can be achieved while also maintaining accountability.

INTEGRITY, LOYALTY, AND TRUST

We believe that ethical conduct is paramount and it will be a trademark of our organization. We will strive to create an environment of trust and loyalty, and civility which comes from open, honest, and direct interactions with each other and our customers. Fostering this environment reinforces our belief that people can and will do the right thing.

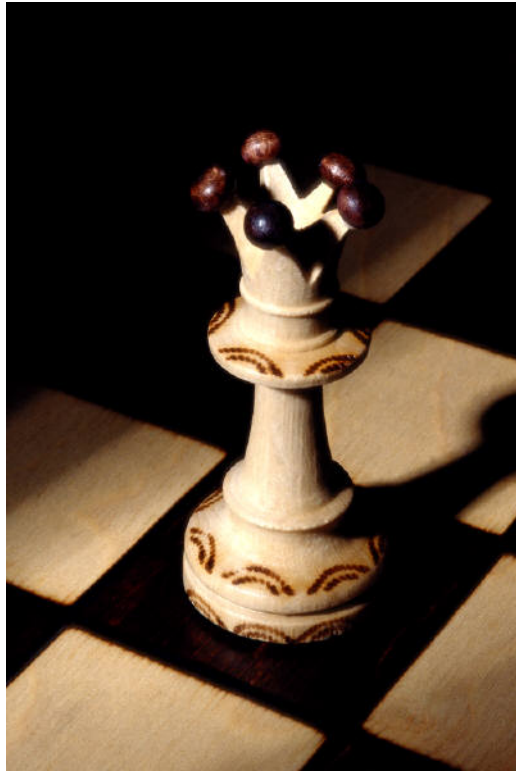
STEWARDSHIP

We are committed to the most efficient use of the public's resources. We will invest in our people, systems and facilities. Capital and system investments will be maintained, replaced and or upgraded as needed to sustain the value of the public's assets.

TEAMWORK

We will enhance and support teamwork and teambuilding in our organization. We will strive for a professional and cooperative working relationship with employee and citizen groups. We believe joint problem-solving, increased involvement and shared decision-making with employee groups will contribute to higher staff morale and enhanced productivity.

Goals



GOALS

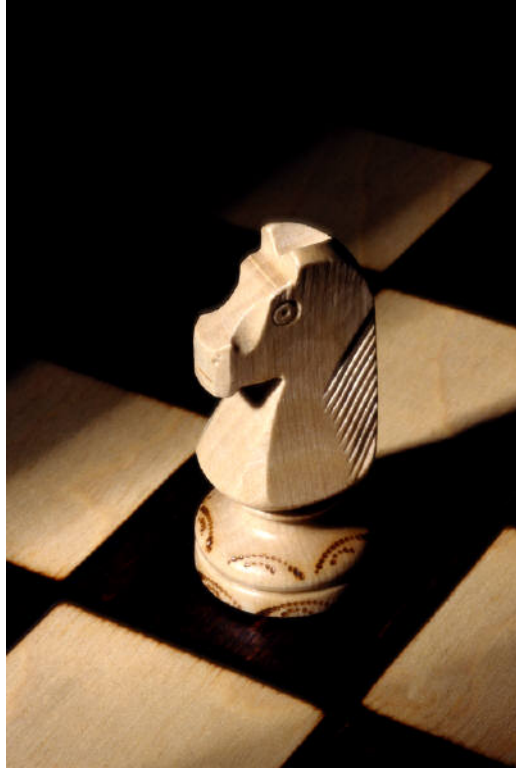
Lane County's Goals

Lane County Government exists to ensure the safety and well being of the people who live, work and visit our communities. That includes personal safety, security of property, preservation of infrastructure, health safety, and assisting in providing for our citizens' basic needs. Lane County places special emphasis on programs that serve youth, incorporated into and consistent with the following overall goals:

- Work for a strong regional economy to expand the number of family wage jobs available in Lane County.
- Provide opportunities for citizen participation in decision-making, voting, volunteerism and civic and community involvement.
- Ensure the provision of basic social support in the areas of health care, disease prevention, protection, poverty reduction and independent living.
- Ensure the public's safety with regard to adult and juvenile crime, emergency preparedness and regional cooperative policing through law enforcement, intervention, prosecution, incarceration, and parole and probation, while protecting individuals' constitutional rights.
- Contribute to appropriate community development in the areas of transportation and telecommunications infrastructure, housing, growth management and land development.
- Maintain a healthy environment with regard to air quality, water quality, waste management, land use and parks.
- Protect the public's assets by maintaining, replacing or upgrading the County's investments in systems and capital infrastructure.
- Provide efficient and effective financial and administrative support and systems to direct service departments.

County departments will continue to develop specific and measurable objectives consistent with these overarching goals. Departments will articulate measurable results that focus departmental objectives, plans, strategies and activities, and will evaluate department performance in achieving the planned results.

Core Strategies



CORE STRATEGIES

Lane County's Core Strategies

Lane County Government has established several core strategies. These establish the priorities that will guide our actions. They describe how we will act consistently with our mission and guiding principles to achieve our vision and goals.

Overall strategic theme: To build and maintain credibility and trust we understand that we must both perform well and remain accountable to the public for our performance. We must continually improve our services and allocate our resources wisely. We must listen carefully to our citizens and do our best to effectively inform them how our actions are addressing their concerns.

List of Strategies

A. Service Improvement

- A1 – Evaluate reorganization opportunities
- A2 – Develop more flexible staffing
- A3 – Promote electronic access to public services
- A4 – Promote continuous quality improvement

B. Resource Planning and Allocation

- B1 – Develop plans for the chief resources applied to deliver County services
 - human resources, information technology, and land and facilities
- B2 – Refine the communications plan
- B3 – Allocate resources strategically

C. Performance Management

- C1 – Refine Countywide goals
- C2 – Refine planning at the department level
- C3 – Strengthen analytical capabilities
- C4 – Remain accountable for strategic plan implementation

D. Revenue Development

- D1 – Develop balanced revenue strategies
- D2 – Identify and recover user fees and charges
- D3 – Pursue entrepreneurial opportunities
- D4 – Pursue intergovernmental revenue and private donations
- D5 – Develop timber revenue strategies

A. Service Improvement

A1: Evaluate reorganization opportunities

[“Reorganization” as defined, includes the host of restructuring and reengineering opportunities including but not limited to: consolidation; contracting with or depending upon another provider; co-location; use of different media for service delivery (such as video judicial processes, electronic records dissemination, electronic reporting).]

- a. Lane County Government will actively seek to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of public services by considering reorganization of service delivery systems both within county government and across government agencies. We will examine areas where similar or closely related services reside in different organizational units.
- b. Evaluation criteria will include: (1) the size of any cost savings potential; (2) the impact on service quality and service levels; (3) the degree of similarity in functions; (4) public support of reorganization; and (5) the degree of cooperation from the relevant external entities (for intergovernmental reorganizations).
- c. We will evaluate the feasibility of further reorganization of the following county support services:
 - Fleet services
 - Personnel and human resources services
 - Accounting functions
 - Grounds maintenance
 - Engineering services
- d. We will also evaluate possible reorganizations across County departments, including:
 - Public Safety corrections services and Health and Human Services probation and parole
 - Commission on Children and Families and Health and Human Services
 - Economic development programs and contracts
 - Animal control and law enforcement
- e. We will give early priority to evaluation of intergovernmental reorganization opportunities in the following *direct service* areas:
 - Land use and building planning and development
 - Public safety police functions
 - Public safety corrections functions
 - Road maintenance and engineering
 - Solid waste

CORE STRATEGIES

- Courts
 - Airports
 - Regional planning (LCOG)
- f. We will also evaluate and consider intergovernmental reorganizations for *support services*, including:
- Fleet services
 - Information technology
 - Financial systems
 - Public employee benefits
- g. We will be proactive and assert intergovernmental leadership in the specified areas. We will look for opportunities where the constituents of each agency involved will receive a net benefit in reorganization. Where intergovernmental reorganization is either not feasible or the most desirable approach we will pursue stronger inter-agency planning and coordination, giving initial priority to the direct services areas listed above. We will also assess the potential benefits of co-location of services, including facilities for the following:
- Law enforcement
 - Corrections
 - Health and human services
 - Road maintenance
 - Information technology
 - General government facilities
 - Transportation

A2: Develop more flexible staffing

- a. Lane County Government's personnel policies will promote employee accountability and the matching of rewards to performance. We will strive for a flexible classification and compensation system. County managers and bargaining units will work together to ensure that the system supports and does not inhibit excellent performance in the delivery of County services.
- b. All officials, managers, and employees will be expected to cultivate the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their responsibilities well. Personnel policies will encourage job-related training and career development support. As a consequence, each employee will be responsible for contributing to the overall success of the County by performing his or her job to the best of his or her ability.
- c. Management policies will encourage employee involvement in decisions on how to perform work in the most effective and efficient manner

CORE STRATEGIES

possible. We will also explore the use of empowerment policies such as self-directed work teams and cross training.

- d. Lane County will strive to foster a work environment in which an employee's diverse character and talents are recognized, supported and applied to maximizing the County's ability to attain its goals. To this end the County will strive for flexibility in the workplace so to encourage and assist all employees to succeed in the performance of their duties.
- e. Lane County Government supports contracting out as one option to consider for assuring the efficiency and effectiveness of its services. In evaluating any contracting out opportunity we will comply with labor contract and other legal requirements and will consider qualitative as well as cost factors.

A3: Promote electronic access to public services

- a. Lane County Government will promote expanded electronic access to County services, through the Internet and other related approaches. However, where electronic alternatives are developed, more traditional options (face-to-face or telephone service) will also be preserved. We will encourage the development of public access Internet sites in all areas of the county so that persons without electronic access at home may have access. Both informational applications (answering citizens' questions about County services) and transactional applications (allowing persons to complete business with the County, such as filing permit applications) will be developed. We will also develop Internet applications that enhance public participation in County government. Priorities for development will be established based on the following criteria:
 - The application will either generate cost savings without sacrificing service quality, or will enhance service quality or accessibility at an acceptable cost.
 - The up-front investment required is justified by the expected benefits of the application.
 - A sound technical and design approach has already been demonstrated; there will not be much technical risk.
- b. Design standards will also be established and implemented to promote the usability, flexibility, consistency, and quality of the County's Internet applications.
- c. We will give early priority to evaluation of Internet application development opportunities that meet these criteria in addition to those listed above:

CORE STRATEGIES

- The applications support current revenue generating processes and/or the applications has the potential to generate new revenue.
 - There is an established customer base (perhaps professionals) that use personal computers.
 - There are customers who expect to pay for the service (and may experience savings in time and money by using the Internet).
 - There is an existing database to support the application.
 - A framework of countywide user policies and fees are in place.
- d. Applications that appear to meet these criteria include:
- Assessment, taxation
 - Deeds and records
 - District Attorney Case Management System information
 - Law enforcement data for media access
 - Land Management Services (permits, etc.)
 - Engineering plans and specs
 - Highway traffic volume counts
 - Food handler exams

A4: Promote Continuous Quality Improvement

- a. Lane County Government encourages continuous process improvement efforts initiated by work units in County departments.
- We will work to establish rewards for successful innovations initiated by both individual employees and teams of employees, and to remove barriers that could inhibit innovation.
 - “Gain sharing” programs and procedures will be explored to encourage process improvement efforts
- b. Under these programs a meaningful portion of any demonstrable cost savings resulting from work unit process improvement initiatives will be budgeted to support investment in further process improvements and efficiencies or enhancements in the quality of working conditions for the relevant work unit(s) or department(s), or to support overall County allocation priorities.
- c. The purpose of process improvement is not the displacement of employees from their positions. However, when vacancies occur, it is in the best interest of the County and its citizens to review work processes and to determine whether the vacant positions and associated resources can be better utilized.
- d. As part of the County’s Succession Plan, we will focus on retaining current employees and ensuring they possess the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their jobs well. To this end, the County will develop career ladders and work to encourage employees to become prepared for

CORE STRATEGIES

desired promotional opportunities. Additional strategies will be considered to motivate employees to pursue appropriate training, which will increase their chances for success in their work and better qualify them to fill future vacancies.

- e. We will look for ways to build on the research and experience of others (e.g., U of O's "3PM", the Graduate School of Business, other higher education institutions, external consultants, other comparable public agencies, etc.) to assist County departments in conducting process improvement efforts and other efficiency initiatives.

B. Resource Planning and Allocation

Before Lane County can allocate its resources effectively, it must first identify what its key resources are. Chief among the key resources are the employees and volunteers who provide services to Lane County's citizenry. Next are the information and technology resources that the County has or can develop for staff and the public and the lands, facilities and other physical holdings entrusted to the county's stewardship. Once these resources have all been identified, the County must then develop a strategic plan for how each of these resources can best be utilized to meet its goals and objectives.

B1: Develop plans for the chief resources applied to deliver County services – human resources, information technology, and land and facilities

- a. Lane County Government will develop a human resources plan. The Human Resources division will direct and coordinate the overall planning effort. Departments will bring specific issues to Human Resources for resolution. Human Resources would then report back to respective department with a plan of action for their approval. This plan will:
 - Analyze future workforce needs (consistent with this strategic plan).
 - Assess current workforce capabilities in relation to the future needs (accounting for expected retirements and turnover).
 - Identify actions to assure that workforce capabilities meet future needs.
 - Evaluate how the County's personnel policies will promote employee accountability through performance objectives and then recognize performance through appropriate reward systems.
 - Aim for a flexible classification and compensation system so that the system supports and does not inhibit excellent performance in the delivery of County services.
 - Specify policies and practices to encourage training and development supports so employees have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform well.

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- Identify management policies and practices to encourage employee involvement in decisions on how work will be performed.
 - Seek to strengthen career paths with County, to strengthen leadership abilities of managers and supervisors, and to assure successful succession transitions for positions where incumbents retire.
 - Establish how the County's commitment to diversity will be met through hiring, retention, promotion, and training practices.
 - Analyze Human Resources Division capacity to implement the plan.
- b. We will establish an information technology plan to guide the County's future investment in technology. The plan will:
- Analyze the County's future business needs (consistent with this strategic plan) and trends in the state-of-the-art of information technology.
 - Assess the County's current information technology in relation to future needs and identify actions to assure that the County appropriately applies information technology to meet future needs.
 - Include a strategy for Geographic Information System (GIS) coordination, maintenance and funding.
 - Review the County's current use of regional information technology services, including AIRS, GIS, RIS and Telephone Services, and recommend a strategic vision for when it is appropriate for the County to partner with other public agencies in the use of such services.
 - Establish how Lane County government will cooperate with small cities such as Florence, Cottage Grove, Oakridge, and Junction City, as well as other public agencies within the county, to ensure that the benefits of information technology will be available throughout the county.
 - Identify how both Internet and Non-internet platforms and applications will be appropriately supported.
 - Be compatible with the strategies included in the strategic plan, including the strategy for electronic access to County services.
- c. Lane County Government will conduct an inventory of all of its land and facilities and holdings, including leased space where the County is the lessee or lessor:
- For land or facilities that the County owns the inventory will identify the value of each holding, the current use, the long-term use identified currently (if any), size, location, zoning, and restrictions and the potential for lease, sale, or other revenue generation.
 - The lease term, cost per square foot, total cost, and comparable private sector pricing will be provided for leased space where the County is the lessee or the lessor.

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- The general physical condition of all occupied facilities and their life expectancy will be assessed.
- d. Based on this inventory, Lane County will establish policy and decide the disposition or retention of assets and will develop a master plan for existing and future facilities. Any long-term commitments involving space will be based on this master plan. The master plan will:
- Identify ways to reduce costs (lease savings) or improve service (co-location convenience for customers and clients) through space consolidation.
 - Identify ways to improve space and facilities conditions to better serve citizens, insure the adequate maintenance of existing infrastructure, and provide an environment conducive to high employee productivity.
 - Reflect a high priority for preventive maintenance as the preferred maintenance strategy, as opposed to deferred maintenance
 - Identify the financing approach for any major new planned developments.

B2: Refine the communications plan

- a. Lane County Government recognizes that efficient and effective use of its resources requires strong communication. This includes effective communication with the public, internally among County personnel, and between County departments and other agencies that work with the County. Toward that end, the County will refine its communications plan, taking into consideration:
- Methods to promote public participation in County decisions and to give County officials a way to “listen” as well as to explain
 - Simple understandable ways to communicate financial information to employees and the public
 - Methods to simply explain the County’s role and services to the public
 - Methods to assure that employees are sufficiently informed about the services not only of their own department, but of others as well
 - An annual report to Lane County citizens

B3: Allocate resources strategically

- a. The County’s funding priorities are as follows:
1. The County’s highest funding priority will be those services that are effective in addressing the immediate and critical life and health safety needs of our citizens.

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Priorities will be guided by the relative severity and immediacy of the threat to life and health safety and or the effectiveness of long-term or future deterrent to threats that the service provides. For prevention services, early intervention will be a higher priority than later intervention.

2. The second funding priority is for those services that are a direct response to the County's broad goals. Primary emphasis will be placed on services that relate to
 - Personal safety
 - Property safety
 - Infrastructure safety
 - Health safety
 - Basic needs
 - Programs serving youth
3. The third funding priority is services that are mandated and that do not otherwise fall into the categories addressed by the first two priorities. The level of funding for these functions and the level of service provided may be flexible and will be guided by the demonstrated cost-effectiveness and broad public support of the services.
4. The County will also fund services where there are sound fiscal reasons to do so, and where the service contributes to the attainment of the County's broad goals. The following factors will be considered:
 - The service generates revenue (beyond indirect) for the General Fund.
 - Funding the service has no indirect negative impact on the General Fund.
 - The service helps to leverage funds that support other high priority services.
 - The service is supported by funds that cannot be diverted to the General Fund.
 - The service generates revenue for Lane County citizens.
5. To cost-effectively provide direct services to the citizens of Lane County it is essential that the County fund certain central support services. The most essential support services are those that
 - Reduce risks of loss,
 - Maintain infrastructure,
 - Assure sound fiscal management and accountability,
 - Support human resources, or
 - Directly support the Board of Commissioners (both administration and policy support).

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Next are other services that provide support to direct public service departments.

The remaining support services are those that provide Countywide coordination.

Additions or reductions to these support services functions should be as proportional as possible to corresponding changes in the funding of the County's direct services to the public, recognizing that some costs for support services are fixed and some are variable, proportional to the entire organization's budget and/or staffing levels.

To the extent possible based on available funding, Lane County will maintain reserve funds to address possible future funding shortfalls or other fiscal contingencies. The County will establish criteria to guide the size and possible uses of this fund.

6. Other priorities consistent with the broad goals in this plan will be further defined as this plan is implemented. The services must be ones that are known to be cost-effective, a significant improvement for citizens, and ones where there are either no other providers or the County service is (or is expected to be) broadly utilized.
- b. The following resource allocation principles will apply to all budgetary situations:
1. Services of countywide benefit are to be funded by a broad-based revenue structure, such as countywide property taxes and other general-purpose revenues.
 2. All other factors being equal, the County will attempt to retain or achieve maximum flexibility with its revenue sources, but will comply with all legal requirements constraining the application of non-General Fund revenues.
 3. In seeking new sources of revenue, those that allow more flexible spending will be given priority over those that are restricted. However, the County also recognizes in some cases it may be more acceptable to taxpayers or the payers of user fees that certain revenues be dedicated to particular purposes.
 4. The County will attempt to leverage its County dollars as much as possible. For example, other factors being equal, higher priority will be given to funding those services or programs where the

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investment of County dollars matches funds provided by the state or federal government or others and a County match is required in order to receive the non-County funds.

5. In considering the costs and benefits of particular services and programs, the County will always take into account possible inter-departmental or intergovernmental impacts and the possible future cost impacts for Lane County citizens.
 6. Any services or programs that are largely or wholly supported by time-limited grant or contract funds received from the state or federal government or other sources will be considered to automatically sunset at the expiration of the grant or contract. Exception will be made on the basis of alternative funds availability or service shifting within departments.
 7. A distinction will be made between those General Fund supported countywide services that, to the extent resources are available are slated for growth in General Fund support, and those that will receive constant or decreasing General Fund support.
 8. Lane County will seek funding for innovative projects that can benefit Lane County citizens; consistent with the other principles stated here.
 9. The County will strive for a balance between administrative/operational support services and the services that are directly delivered to Lane County citizens.
 10. The County will appropriately fund infrastructure maintenance and replacement.
 11. The County will continually examine perceived redundancies in administrative and professional services in the context of impacts on the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery to Lane County citizens.
- c. If the County was to receive additional revenue sufficient to support its existing services at current levels or was able to generate savings in current services, the first priority is to establish prudent reserves for future contingencies.
 - d. The following principles will apply if reductions are required because of cutbacks in revenue:

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1. To the extent possible, across-the-board reductions will be avoided. Reductions will be made on the basis of established criteria.
2. Before cuts are made in critical public safety services, the County will consider possibilities for re-direction of revenue that supports other services.
3. When service reductions are required, the County will consider elimination of entire services before considering incremental cuts. Emphasis will be placed on quality. If the County finds that funds are not sufficient to provide a quality service then the service may be terminated. Or, the County may limit the number of recipients of a service, rather than cut the quality of the service provided to the remaining recipients.
4. In the event of reductions, every effort will be made to appropriately fund infrastructure maintenance and replacement. In the past we have sacrificed facilities for short-term gains; we do not want to do that in the future.
5. General Fund reductions, if necessary, will be made considering the following options:
 - Reduce/eliminate financial support to outside agencies that are not funded by a dedicated revenue source and not controlled by the Board of Commissioners (applies to those programs that would not be delivered directly by the County if the outside agency did not exist).
 - Make service level reductions on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with established criteria, focusing first on areas where there is discretionary General Fund support.
 - Propose new sources of discretionary revenue, or un-dedicate sources that are now dedicated but where the County has the authority to make a change.
 - Make program reductions, following established priorities, distinguishing those that are dependent primarily on County discretionary revenue from those affected by State-shared revenue.
 - Recognize/encourage innovations which reduce General Fund use.
 - Authorize debt re-structuring.
6. Road Fund priorities will be as follows:
 - Operation, maintenance, and preservation (OM&P) of the existing County road system will receive the highest priority.
 - To the extent possible, OM&P activities should be funded by user fees from the State Highway Fund and timber receipts.

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- Timber receipts, beyond those needed for OM&P, should be used to fund modernization projects and revenue sharing.
 - If modernization projects decrease significantly in the future, and the County is not able to contract for design services with other agencies, staff resources devoted to modernization projects will decrease accordingly.
 - County/City Road Partnership payments will be maintained through the plan period (and then re-evaluated).
- e. No service will be reduced below a floor that places the safety of citizens or County employees substantially at risk.

C. Performance Management

C1: Refine Countywide goals

- a. The County will continually review its mission, vision and guiding principles for future service delivery. Consistent with the review and with input from its citizens, the County will identify quality-of-life goals that it deems to be the highest priority goals for Lane County services. In selecting each priority the County will take into account both the importance of the goal and the County's ability to favorably influence results related to the goal. The selected goals will be measurable. The County will engage in a goal-setting process periodically, consistent with the strategic planning cycle.

C2: Refine planning at the departmental level

- a. In conjunction with proposed budgets, each County department will prepare an annual plan that indicates which countywide goals are addressed by each proposed program or service of the department. Departmental strategies to help achieve the highest priority goals will be identified in the plans. The plans will indicate how the strategies are consistent with the County strategic plan and how the results will be measured and evaluated (with a goal of not duplicating the measurement and evaluation requirements of other funding sources).
- b. Lane County Government will require all departments to establish and maintain quantitative, meaningful, and useful performance measures linked to County goals and strategies. Measures should include indicators of program effectiveness (outcomes); units of work accomplished (outputs), costs per unit of work (efficiency), service quality, customer satisfaction, and service accessibility. Where selected Countywide end outcomes are relevant to a department but not wholly within the control of that department; the department should identify the key intermediate outcomes it expects to achieve that contribute toward

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achievement of the end outcome. The County will provide appropriate and timely training to departments in the development of performance measures.

- c. Each department will report its performance for each of the selected performance measures at least annually. The departments will apply the performance measurement results in formulating their plans and budgets.

C3: Strengthen analytical capabilities

- a. Analytical resources are necessary to implement our strategies. We recognize that our analytical resources are limited and that we must determine priorities for where these resources will be assigned. There are three kinds of analysis to be done:
 - Performance – effectiveness, efficiencies, comparisons with industry standards, best practices, cost per unit of work, etc.
 - Accomplishment toward reaching County goals, Department goals and Benchmarks.
 - Customer Satisfaction – 1) the degree where complaint is filed or made directly to personnel and 2) public perception of needs met in courteous and timely manner.
- b. Analysis of the County’s diverse service delivery system will require centralized and decentralized approaches. Therefore, its analytical capability needs to be strengthened at the department level and in County Administration. In order to maximize the effectiveness of this dual approach, we will:
 - Determine which analysis is most appropriately centralized (County Administration) and which is most appropriately decentralized (Departments).
 - Develop standards for analysis to ensure consistency between centralized and decentralized outputs.
- c. We will attempt to leverage our analytical capacity by matching the most appropriate resource to each high priority analytical task. Possible resources include, for example:
 - Central County Administration staff
 - Department personnel
 - Personnel shared across departments
 - Internal auditor
 - Consultants
 - Peers in other jurisdictions
 - State or federal agency personnel
 - Professional associations

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C4: Remain accountable for strategic plan implementation

- a. Lane County is committed to successful implementation of this strategic plan. To help guide implementation, within three months of adopting the plan we will develop implementation schedules for those strategies deemed to be the highest priorities. Implementation schedules will be developed for other strategies over time as the plan is implemented and to respond to any shifts in priorities.
- b. Implementation plans will specify:
 - Major tasks necessary to implement the strategy
 - Persons or groups assigned the lead responsibility for each major task
 - Timelines for the major tasks
 - Estimates of resources required for each major task
 - Expected end products or key deliverables related to the strategy
- c. Lane County will monitor progress against the implementation plan for each strategy. Corrective actions will be initiated, where appropriate, in cases where the implementation varies from the plan.
- d. Initially, the highest priority strategies include (these may be modified as the plan is implemented):
 - Allocate resources strategically
 - Develop plans for the chief resources applied to deliver County services
 - Develop balanced revenue strategies
 - Evaluate reorganization opportunities
 - Identify and recover user fees and charges
 - Refine Countywide goals
 - Strengthen analytical resources
 - Develop timber revenue strategies
- e. The County will review and replace or modify this strategic plan at least every five years.

D. Revenue Development

D1: Develop balanced revenue strategies

- a. Developing and maintaining sufficient and balanced sources of revenue are keys to the success of our strategic plan. Without adequate resources we will not be able to provide Lane County citizens the high quality services they want and deserve.

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- b. Lane County Government will sponsor referenda for local revenue measures when and if the Board of County Commissioners determines it is appropriate to do so.
- c. We will examine the relative merits of the following:
 - Supporting citizen-led initiatives
 - Establishing alternative budget authorities, such as special revenue districts and an elected lay budget authority
 - Presenting tax measures as single issues, a series of issues, a menu of issues, and/or a smorgasbord of issues
 - Creating a special law enforcement district.

D2: Identify and recover user fees and charges

- a. Lane County Government will assure that fair and reasonable user fees are established and collected for those services where state law permits such fees and where the usage of the service is affected by consumer choice. We will follow the following principles:
 - Those who benefit should pay, and those who pay should benefit.
 - However, the County will seek to assure that persons are not prevented from receiving essential services because of inability to pay. Sliding fee scales based on income will be established for essential services.
 - Fees will be based on costs, including reasonable allocations of overhead and a fair return on investment, where appropriate. In setting fees the County may sometimes discount fees below costs after taking into consideration the historical level of the fee and user sensitivity to the charges, but where it does so there must be clear policy justification for any discounts. The County will also assure that the costs used as the basis for fees reflect efficient levels of operation of the service.
 - Fees will not be charged where the costs of collection would be unreasonably high in relation to the potential revenue.
 - The County recognizes that, while it will be able to charge for some services, such as use of the County Fairgrounds by profit making organizations, it may not wish to charge for other services, such as health care services for the poor.
- b. We will review all of our services for compliance with the stated fee policy and for fee collection procedures. We will give early priority to evaluation of possible user fees and collection procedures for selected services with due regard to citizen access. These include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Parks
 - Utility uses and activity in rights-of-way (would require change in state law)

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- Animal control
 - Commercial hazardous waste disposal
- c. The County will evaluate reasonable system development charges for roads, storm water, and parks facilities serving new residential, commercial, or industrial developments in unincorporated areas of the County.

D3: Pursue entrepreneurial opportunities

- a. Lane County Government will identify services it can offer that would potentially generate additional revenue. To this end we will encourage public-private partnerships where otherwise consistent with the County's overall policies and goals.
- b. We will apply the following principles to identify entrepreneurial opportunities: (1) the service involves an area where the County has a unique capacity to provide the service; (2) or there is a need for a broad public good or service that is currently under-served and private business has not stepped in, or is not likely to, to address the need; (3) or the activity would otherwise support a public purpose. Further, (4) the risks are acceptable.
- c. We will further evaluate opportunities meeting the criteria outlined above to take into account: (1) the net revenue potential in relation to the risk; and (2) the degree of public and private business support or opposition to County involvement in the proposed enterprise. Initially we will explore opportunities in the following areas:
- Parks and recreation facilities (including campgrounds, conference centers, golf courses, and other sports facilities)
 - Road maintenance and engineering services for both government and private entities
 - Fleet services for other government agencies
 - Secure custody housing (adult and juvenile) for other jurisdictions or programs
 - Information technology services for government agencies
 - Marketing of geographic information system (GIS), property records, and other enhanced data developed by the County (including selling through intermediaries such as LCOG)
 - Rural technology infrastructure and business support development

D4: Pursue intergovernmental revenue and private donations

- a. Lane County Government will maintain a legislative advocate to supplement the efforts of statewide and national organizations that

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represent county government. We will advocate for legislative actions based on annual County priorities.

- b. Lane County may consider retaining a resource developer to pursue state, federal, and private grants and private donations and develop a list of priority service areas where such funding will be sought. Individual departments may continue to seek grants using current resources.
- c. Lane County will assess establishment of a private foundation to help support high priority County services.

D5: Develop timber revenue strategies

- a. Lane County will prepare a plan that identifies strategies and actions to ensure continuation of county payments from the federal government under Public Law 106-393.

**Appendix A -
Implementation**



APPENDIX A - IMPLEMENTATION LANE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic Priority Summary Matrix

Strategy	Priorities	
Service Improvement		
A1 Evaluate reorganization opportunities		2
A2 Develop more flexible staffing		
A3 Promote electronic access to public services		
A4 Promote continuous quality improvement		
Resource Planning and Allocation		
B1 Dvlp plans for chief resources to deliver County Services		1
Human Resources Plan		
Information Technology Plan		
Land and Facilities Master Plan, inventory & policies		
B2 Refine the communications plan		
B3 Allocate resources strategically		
Performance Management		
C1 Refine Countywide goals		
C2 Refine planning at the departmental level		
C3 Strengthen analytical capabilities		5
Increase Analysis		
Performance Measures		
Financial Analysis		
Process Improvement		
C4 Remain accountable for strategic plan implementation		
Revenue Development		
D1 Develop balanced revenue strategies		3
D2 Identify and recover user fees and charges		4
D3 Pursue entrepreneurial opportunities		
D4 Pursue intergovernmental revenue & private donations		
D5 Develop timber revenue strategies		

Appendix B -
Focus Group



APPENDIX B - LANE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT ON FOCUS GROUPS Conducted October 18 through 20, 1999

I. Overview

A. The Process

Focus groups were organized as part of Lane County's strategic planning process. The purposes of the groups were to: (1) provide a check and balance on some strategic themes that had been preliminarily outlined by the County's Strategic Planning Executive Committee (SPEC); (2) identify any new strategies or themes meriting further consideration; and (3) generate ideas to help refine the strategies and translate them into effective actions. The SPEC wanted to get informed outside feedback before proceeding too far down the path of drafting a strategic plan.

There were two basic types of groups. One type consisted of members of the public not employed by the County. These persons were not selected randomly, however. Because informed opinions were sought the selection consisted partly of persons that SPEC members recommended as persons who would be good participants. Public members of County advisory committees were also invited to participate. An attempt was made to achieve some balance by assuring that various areas of the county were represented and that there was some breadth in the known interests of the invitees. Invitations were sent to 789 people. Out of this group 132 actually attended a focus group session and signed in.¹ Fourteen one-and-one-half hour sessions were held, with between five and 15 participants per session.

The second type of group consisted of County employees. An open invitation to participate was extended to all employees who were interested and whose supervisors were able to provide the release time. Approximately 150 employees attended one of three two-hour sessions.

A commissioner or another elected official or department head welcomed the attendees to each session and provided background on why the focus groups were being held. The attendees were also given a handout at the beginning of each session (see Attachment 1). Each group had a facilitator who led the discussion and a recorder who noted comments on a flip chart. The facilitator provided some further background information and then asked questions of the group. The

¹ Some persons attended but apparently did not sign in; they are not included in the count above, but their comments and questionnaires are reflected in the summary.

questions were mostly open-ended and addressed three large topics: (1) revenue strategies; (2) efficiency, effectiveness, and quality improvement strategies; and (3) resource allocation principles. Generally the facilitators tried to cover the topics identified in Attachment 2, but not necessarily in the order noted or in the same literal form as the questions are expressed in the attachment. The general intent was to prompt discussion with broad questions relevant to the strategic planning so that participants could state their thoughts independent of prior discussion in the SPEC. But the facilitators also asked follow-up questions at times to test opinions and ideas on matters that the SPEC had discussed previously.

At the end of each session the participants were invited to complete a brief questionnaire (Attachment 3). There were five closed-ended questions to test opinions on some specific strategies previously discussed by the SPEC, and three open-ended questions to give the participants an opportunity to add to or comment further on anything that may have been discussed in the session.

The consultants sifted and summarized both the oral comments from the sessions and the written comments on the questionnaires. The summarization procedure sought common themes from the discussions and examples or specific suggestions that illustrated these common themes. The procedure involved writing individual comments on “sticky notes” and arranging these notes into thematic categories. With the exception of the tally of the closed-ended questions on the questionnaire, “votes” generally were not taken or recorded. However, the consultants did attempt to gauge whether opinions in the groups were broadly held or not. In preparing the summary the consultants considered the frequency of certain comments as well as the intensity and tone of both visual and oral responses in the groups. They attempted to capture not only what seemed to be majority opinions, but also the range of opinions and counter-currents. The summary therefore is necessarily interpretive; it represents how the consultants heard what was said in the sessions.

B. Broad Themes

Several broad themes emerged from the focus group discussions, as summarized below. More detail appears in the next section of this report where the discussion summaries are organized according to the strategies originally outlined by the SPEC.

Credibility and trust. One major theme, arising in all or nearly all of the sessions, was that citizens distrust the County. Attendees cited previous instances where the County placed revenue measures before voters with arguments that passage was needed if particular services were to

survive. When the measures were defeated at the polls, the people believe that the County managed to find funds to maintain the services. The County, rather than receive credit for fiscal ingenuity, was perceived as being less than straightforward with voters about its fiscal situation. Credibility also suffered when measures for specific services were approved, but the service was eventually eliminated. Even the employee groups appeared nearly unanimous in recognizing a high level of public distrust as a major concern. Participants generally felt that the County must reestablish its credibility before it can be successful with revenue measures. Thus, the focus groups would reinforce the appropriateness of a strategic vision that sought to rebuild credibility and trust.

Efficiency before more taxes. An associated theme, not shared unanimously but nevertheless prominent, was that the County should be cautious in approaching the voters for more tax dollars. While some were quite aware that the County had pared back spending considerably, several expressed the sentiment that the County needs to show it is operating efficiently before seeking more funds. The questionnaire responses to the five closed-ended questions are instructive in this regard. The public group was notably more in favor of efficiency actions than revenue actions, and only a minority of the public group supported going to the voters with specific proposals for taxes (see Attachment 4).

Communication. Another related strong theme was the belief that citizens in general do not understand the County well. Many cited the need for stronger public information on where County funds come from and where they are spent. They requested simple, straightforward information, such as pie charts, that could be easily communicated to the public. Group comments underscored the need for the County to address public perceptions and improve its image, but some noted that people do not want to feel like the County is “selling” them something with its public information initiatives. One suggestion on this topic was that all staff should be trained to be “ambassadors” for the County. People want communication to be two-ways; they want County officials to “listen,” not just to “explain.” A few suggested more use of Internet capabilities to establish an on-line dialogue with the public. Employees also cited the communication issue and many stated that they did not understand the current ballot measure and thus could not explain its benefits to fellow citizens. Employees also commented that better internal information sharing is needed. Many stated that they know little about the operations of other departments.

Business focus. Both citizens and employee focus groups support the effort to establish resource allocation principles and priorities to better determine "what business the County should be in." Many participants

expressed the view that establishing and applying such principles will not be easy. Obstacles include maintaining the political will to stick with decisions in the face of likely objections from supporters of reduced or eliminated services.

Accountability. The idea of stronger accountability was stated in several ways. Several stressed the need to hold departments, employees, and contractors accountable for results. In some cases this comment translated into support for more and better use of performance measures, and some suggested basing budgets and rewards on performance. Participants frequently stated they want information about the effectiveness and success of County services and programs. Some stated that the County is doing a good job in many areas but these successes are not communicated to the public. While some participants would like independent reviews of County performance, it appears that most who addressed the issue would be satisfied with reports produced by the County.

Analytical capacity. But the groups also generally recognized that increased use of performance information would require analytical capacity. The employee groups and even many members of the public appeared to be aware that the number of County positions assigned to analytical tasks is limited, and several voiced support for more positions for this purpose, especially if the worth could be demonstrated through savings achieved from stronger analysis of County operations. A few suggested that external groups, possibly volunteers, could help analyze department activities. One suggestion was that the County could work more closely with the University of Oregon (or other institutions) to involve students in public service. Analytical and research tasks might be a good fit for students in several university curricula, but there are also many other possible internship-like activities that would support the work of the County, meet educational needs of various higher education programs, and provide a way for students to serve their community.

Community goals. Related to the performance measurement theme, a few attendees advocated that the strategic plan should identify those community goals that the County's services and programs will be directed towards. They would place the question "What kind of community do we want?" at the front of the strategic planning process. The examples given included quality of life factors such as controlled growth, health outcomes, and public safety. The thought arose in another way as a few others advocated that the County should help preserve what they perceived to be a good quality of life in Lane County. Many quality of life elements are subject to measurement and are captured statewide in the Oregon Benchmarks. If addressed in the strategic plan, a first step might be to identify those "benchmarks" that

the County deems most important and within its sphere of influence. This step would interrelate with clarification of the County's role.

Leadership. Several of the groups focused some of their discussion on the need for leadership from the Commissioners. A few observed that the public is not negative about County employees, but may be about the elected Board. Some employee attendees commented that employees take their cues from the top, and that good management starts with the Commissioners, who set the values and tone for the culture. Some expressed a concern about the Commissioners' ability to agree on big things like the strategic plan, and questioned whether future Boards would accept a plan developed by a previous Board.

Consolidation. Consolidation and coordination of public services seemed to fall into the class of "motherhood and apple pie." There appeared to be a clear consensus that some public services among County and city governments are duplicative and uncoordinated and that there is considerable potential for both cost savings and improved services. Many participants felt that the County is best positioned to take the lead in these efforts. Several suggested services, both internally within the County and externally across governments, were offered as good candidates for consideration of consolidation.

Visibility. This theme manifested itself in two areas. First was the expressed desire for more County "presence" in rural areas. Many participants from these areas see the County government as Eugene/Springfield focused with inadequate service levels in other areas. Second, it seems important that the County be "visible" as it pursues such strategies as consolidation and collaboration. The County should be seen acting strategically as it goes about its business. The methods it employs and the resulting decisions it makes should stand up to public scrutiny as fair, impartial, data-based, and beneficial to the entire county.

II. Summary of Discussions (Organized by Strategy)

A. Revenue Enhancement

Strategy A1: Develop tax revenues

As noted in the overview, there was substantial skepticism and resistance to local tax increases in the public groups. The employee groups, too, seemed sensitive to the concern that people do not want more taxes. There was discussion in several groups about whether taxes for particular purposes or taxes for general purposes were better. Opinions were split on this. Some felt that taxes for specific purposes were better because it helps the voters know what they are voting for. Others felt that many voters might be skeptical that the funds would be spent for the stated purposes (because of continuing distrust) even when taxes are specifically earmarked. And some pointed out that earmarked taxes could be inefficient, that the situation may change over time and earlier commitments may not represent the best way to spend the funds. Some employees were concerned that taxes for specific purposes could fragment and further divide County departments. Some commented that bundling several specific purposes in one measure (like the income tax surcharge measure) would hurt chances of passage because there would more likely be things in the package that people did not support, but others believed the opposite.

Part of the skepticism about going to the voters with taxes for particular purposes was based on the feeling that people should not be held hostage to emotional issues and made to believe that if they do not vote for something a key service will not be available. One person expressed his opinion this way: if measures being sent to the voters are for such high priority services, why aren't they being funded already?

A more aggressive position – seeking a new general fund tax base or continuing to pursue income tax surcharges or other local taxes – was a minority opinion. A few stated that they believed that people viewed bonds for capital projects more favorably than operating fund support. A few were more supportive of taxes for added services (e.g., Sheriff's patrol) in designated geographic areas (service districts). Several people mentioned tax structure changes that would require state legislation (local option sales taxes, changes in the income tax, etc.).

Implications for strategic plan: While new tax measures are promising because they could directly address critical funding issues, the focus groups cast considerable skepticism on the feasibility of passage. If building credibility and trust is the vision, going to the voters continuously with tax referenda may be harmful to realization of the

vision. A more cautious and sustained approach could be better. For example, the strategy could be to hold off on any new referenda for a few years until the County has had a chance to pursue efficiency opportunities and develop better public information about achievements. The results of the November 2 election may also be interpreted to reinforce this approach.

Strategy A2: Identify and recover user fees and charges

Both the public and employee groups support user fees and charges as a revenue source (see Attachment 4), but with several caveats.

- Some felt that user fees are appropriate only when there is a request for service above what everyone should get from their taxes, when there is added “use” based on consumer choice.
- Most would not want user fees to prevent persons from receiving essential services; sliding fee scales would be one way to deal with this concern.
- Some believe that fees should not exceed the costs of the service (including reasonable allocations of overhead), while others would not object to a “profit” as long as fees were set with some sensitivity to the “market.”
- Several pointed out that the cost of collection needs to be reasonable in relation to the revenue potential.
- At least some were concerned that user fee increases could just further anger people and would not promote public trust.
- One person commented that user fees should not be increased simply to support chosen staffing levels but instead should reflect an efficient operation.

Two types of “user charges” were mentioned more than others. The County could implement system development charges to cover the costs of roads, storm sewers, and parks serving new developments in unincorporated areas (just as cities do for incorporated areas). However, some would object, noting that these charges would simply raise already high housing prices. Several persons (particularly Public Works employees) also mentioned that the County now receives nothing from utilities that use the County’s right-of-way (whereas cities receive franchise fees).

Among the other possible use-related charges that were mentioned (mostly by employees) were the following:

- A County business license
- Fees for handling special events (Public Works and Public Safety)
- Increased fees for mowing and grading services

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- Bicycle licenses to support bike paths
- A County motor vehicle registration fee
- A County gas tax
- Increased fines or fees for offenders
- A stump tax

Some members of the public mentioned that they oppose fees for park admissions. There was little, if any, discussion of one of the ideas that was discussed earlier at the SPEC retreat: more aggressive pursuit of Oregon Health Plan and private insurance payments for certain County services.

Implications for strategic plan: Development of an overall policy on user fees would appear to be appropriate, addressing the various caveats identified in the focus groups. The SPEC may also want to target certain areas from the list of suggestions for early analysis and decisions. A decision one way or another on system development charges seems called for. Also, right-of-way use fees appear to be a strong candidate for the list of legislative advocacy priorities.

Strategy A3: Manage the land and facilities assets portfolio

This topic did not come up in all of the groups, but where it did the feeling was that assets should be actively managed. People felt they would need to know more, and a few stressed the need for an inventory and analysis of current uses. One specific suggestion was that the inventory of assets should be appraised at market values. Those that spoke on the subject would keep open all options, including sale, lease, or partnerships with private business. Some who spoke stated the principle that the any property sales or leases should be used to generate steady income rather than be applied entirely for current expenses.

Implications for strategic plan: Consistent with the SPEC discussion on October 5, the first step would appear to be to complete an analysis of existing assets before any further strategic decisions can be made on this topic. An inventory should identify the value of each holding, the current use, the long-term use identified currently (if any), and the potential for lease, sale, or other revenue generation.

Strategy A4: Look for entrepreneurial opportunities

To the extent that this subject was discussed, the sentiment appeared to be that if the private sector is not providing a service the County should be free to do it, but that the free enterprise system should be allowed to do as much as it can. County-private partnerships were viewed as acceptable. Some specific possibilities were mentioned:

- Golf courses
- Parking concessions
- GIS information and maps
- “Naming rights” for parks and County buildings
- Advertising on County property or vehicles

Implications for strategic plan: Nothing came out of the focus groups that would change the consensus of the SPEC on October 5 that this strategy is acceptable. But there should be some guiding principles; for example: (1) the County itself owns or has developed something of value (like property information or GIS); (2) or there is a need for a broad public good or service that is currently under-served (recreational facilities, possibly) and private business has not stepped in, or is not likely to, to address the need; (3) or the activity would otherwise support a public purpose; (4) and the risks are acceptable; (5) and the bounds of good taste would not be breached by the County undertaking (some might say, for instance, that advertising on County vehicles would cross this boundary).

Strategy A5: Pursue intergovernmental revenue and private donations²

This option was viewed more favorably than new local taxes. A majority of both the public and employee groups supported it (see Attachment 4). However, there were few new suggestions on how it might best be accomplished. A few pointed to the need to work with the legislature to get funding for mandates. One person said that there should be funding from the state for psychiatric services that Lane County provides but which are a state responsibility in other counties. One person advocated charging other governments for tax administration. Some Public Works employees were concerned with the Road Fund money that passes through to cities; one suggested providing service to the cities instead of dollars. One group supported the idea of spending some money for staff or contractors in order to pursue private funding more effectively.

Implications for strategic plan: This strategy appears relatively non-controversial, although it was pointed out that there could be resistance from other units of government competing for intergovernmental funds. The challenge for the SPEC will be in deciding on how to actualize this strategy. Will it mean spending some funds on lobbyists or fundraisers? In any case, a list of legislative advocacy priorities should be developed.

² This strategy was originally combined with the preceding strategy on taxes, but has been separated here based on the discussion at the SPEC retreat on October 5.

This strategy interrelates with the user fee strategy: some of the suggestions for user fees or charges would require state legislation.

B. Efficiency, Quality, and Effectiveness

Strategy B1: Look for economies of scale (consolidation opportunities)

This strategy was strongly supported by all of the groups (see Attachment 4). Whatever the reality, there is a clear perception by both the public and employees that there are several opportunities along these lines, both intergovernmental and within the County. Notably, there was not strong opposition among employees to consolidations of some County functions with cities or other government agencies.

The internal opportunity that generated the most discussion among employees was the possibility of combining Public Safety and Public Works fleet operations. Both pro and con positions were stated. A few mentioned possible department consolidations (HHS and CCF, for one). Some cited potential within HHS. For example, consolidation of HHS locations (including contractors) was seen as desirable by some because many HHS clients are served by multiple programs. Another idea was integration of the monitoring of contract service providers who have contracts with several County programs.

Some expressed the belief that economic development efforts were too fragmented (involving perhaps 15 agencies) and could be consolidated into one agency as long as that agency served rural communities as well as the metropolitan area. Other intergovernmental consolidation options that were mentioned included:

- Law enforcement (all police functions)
- Dispatch
- Police records
- Planning functions
- Land use and building permits (although different codes would present a barrier)
- Transportation services (roads)
- Parks
- Solid waste
- Fleet operations and equipment
- Purchasing
- Training

Generally, the groups appeared to feel that the greatest intergovernmental opportunities were with the cities of Eugene and

Springfield, but many of the comments were more wide-ranging and encompassed smaller cities, state agencies, and other entities.

Implications for strategic plan: The County needs to aggressively pursue this strategy and inform the public on how it has done in order to build credibility. Obviously intra-County opportunities are more within the County's control than are intergovernmental possibilities, but the strategy needs to address both. A first step would be to identify some criteria for rating consolidation opportunities (high savings potential, strong public support, etc.). These criteria could then be applied to select specific opportunities or areas that most merit further analysis. Then there should be more in-depth analyses to compile the appropriate information for these areas. Internally, fleet operations would appear to merit early attention. Externally, many believe that there continue to be opportunities with law enforcement functions, and a mechanism is in place (the PSSC) to possibly pursue these. In Public Works there has been analysis on where better coordination or consolidation with ODOT could be productive and assigning a high priority to follow-up on these issues would appear warranted.

Strategy B2: Develop more flexible staffing

The discussion of this strategy centered more on the contracting out element than on any changes in the current system of position classifications. There was substantial support among the public groups for contracting out as something worthwhile to pursue. Most seemed to recognize that some services would be more worthy candidates than others would and that further analysis would be required to sort these out. In addition to cost, some expressed that risks to the public needed to be considered in determining what to contract. Most who addressed the issue would weigh cost heavily, though. Some expressed reservations about contracting to reduce costs when the lower costs were attributable primarily to lower wages paid by the provider. Lower costs because of greater efficiency were more attractive.

The services that were suggested as candidates for contracting out included the following:

- Custodial services in County buildings
- Information services
- Training (use other agencies and colleges)
- Food court
- Building and planning services
- Jail
- Landfill and solid waste
- Parks and recreation

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- Animal control
- Road maintenance
- More health and human services

Some thought that contracting ought to be considered for services outside of Eugene-Springfield where it is now possible to offer only part-time service requiring travel by County employees (health services in Florence were mentioned). The notion of “managed competition,” where public employees would be allowed to compete for contacts with private firms, was discussed in a few groups. There were also some ideas for more flexible staffing not requiring contracting out. Staffing the jail with correctional officers, not sworn officers, was suggested. Using more temporary staff for short term needs was another idea. And several persons supported more use of volunteers for certain functions.

Some groups brought up LCOG services. Some questioned whether citizens and the County received full value from the funds the County provides LCOG, and one suggestion was that other groups, including private firms, be allowed to compete for some of the LCOG services.

Implications for strategic plan: Like consolidation, this strategy is sufficiently popular with the public that if the County did not pursue it its credibility would suffer. As with several of the other strategies, a logical next step would appear to be the identification of those service areas that should get early analytical attention. It will take objective analysis to determine where contracting out or other alternatives are most desirable and where they are not. There is a substantial literature on contracting out and the County could extract principles from this literature to incorporate into the strategic plan (see Attachment 5).

Strategy B3: Promote electronic access to public services

There was strong support, especially among the public attendees, for using the Internet to provide information and to allow the public to transact business with the County. Many pointed out that the County would be seen as deficient if it does not keep up with where private business and other governments are going with Internet applications. But the attendees stressed that the public should be given choices on how to access services; the face-to-face option should not be abandoned. And nearly all that spoke felt that public access sites should be supported for those who do not have computers at home.

Several pointed out that the potential here is not unlimited. Many County services simply need to be hands on. And several pointed out that the cost savings potential, if any, may not be great, that the opportunity was really more one of improved customer service – up-

front investment will be required in any case before there is any pay-off. Some suggested using the Internet to strengthen public participation in County decisions, and others pointed out that there could be more internal uses as well (so, for instance “Department A” could answer an inquiry without sending the person to “Department B” for the information). One other suggestion was to involve youth volunteers or schools to help develop applications.

A strong theme was that whatever the County is going to do in this area it should do well. Poor applications were seen as more harmful than none at all. A few employees felt that the County should piggyback on applications that others have developed rather than risking a more leading edge approach.

Employees, plus some members of the public, also pointed out that the County should not overlook better applications of more basic technologies before putting all of its eggs into an Internet basket. Telephone applications were offered as an example. Some employees, too, were outspoken on the point that they would like good training and support on just some of the basic technology now available before lots of investment is sunk in new areas. Another competing need that was identified was for better integration of existing databases.

Implications for strategic plan: The focus group comments generally aligned with the SPEC discussion on October 5, but presented some reasons for a cautious approach. Many believed that this strategy will possibly cost additional money rather than save money in the short term. As a next step the SPEC could identify some high-level principles for the strategic plan (for instance, the principles that face-to-face options will be preserved and that public access sites will be supported). But further headway will depend on the commitment of resources to perform analyses to identify specific areas where Internet applications might be most beneficial. The analyses should clearly identify the expected benefits and costs of each candidate application.

Strategy B4: Promote continuous quality improvement

Employees, in particular, offered many ideas where there could be further efficiencies in County operations, not necessarily captured by the other efficiency strategies. Although there was no outpouring of support for an aggressive total quality improvement (TQM) program, there was some support among employees for principles consistent with TQM. For instance, suggestions included more self-directed work teams, increases in supervisory and management spans of control, less hierarchy, more joint worker-management forums, and examination of the “best practices” of other agencies. While there was understandable

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caution about new initiatives (employees have seen TQM and related efforts before and many feel overworked as it is), no one seemed to want to cut off those initiatives that come from the bottom up. Some employees appeared supportive of specific “rapid process improvement” (RPI) projects, for example.

Again, there was recognition that more analysis would be needed before the areas of greatest opportunity for process improvements could be identified. A few members of the public suggested more audits to help identify these areas. Some employees pointed out that there are existing audit reports (Public Works, e.g.) where follow-up on the recommendations is merited.

There were suggestions targeting particular areas for process improvements or cost savings, including the following:

- Simplify the process for Board orders; delegate more to department managers so that fewer orders would be required.
- Streamline Board communication across departments by using e-mail and/or an electronic newsletter.
- Deliver more social and health services through schools.
- Look for travel efficiencies; for instance, use electronic means to arrange carpools of County employees traveling to Salem (possibly involving other government agencies as well), Florence, or other frequent destinations.
- Promote internal recycling and energy conservation; although this may not save lots of dollars, it will help build respect.
- Combine or otherwise streamline human services and justice services planning processes.
- Promote annexations to cities to reduce service demands within urban growth boundaries.
- Reexamine where crimes are prosecuted and punished with jail time.
- Eliminate court appearances for traffic tickets.
- Improve subpoena processes; Sheriff’s deputies are not needed to deliver all types of subpoenas.
- Shut down services where they are too lean to be effective (the Oak Ridge Justice Court was offered as an example).

There was support for continuing to encourage employee ideas and for providing rewards and incentives for good ones. One specific suggestion was that the principle be established that no one would lose his or her job because of a savings idea brought forward by his or her work group. Retraining and reassignment to a comparable position would be guaranteed. A closely related suggestion was that departments be able to retain at least some of the savings resulting from any

improvement ideas that they generate. One person suggested that such funds might be put into a pool to support research and development for further service improvements in the department.

Implications for strategic plan: While there was no consensus message from the groups that the County should have an aggressive and formal process improvement program, there were some good ideas for principles that might be included in the strategic plan to encourage bottom-up initiatives. The job guarantee and “gain sharing” of savings notions identified above are worthy of further consideration. The incentive program for employee suggestions that the County recently re-instituted is also consistent with thoughts coming from the focus groups. Other suggested ideas that could promote process improvements without a big investment necessarily included allowing employees to work on process improvement teams during the work day (with supervisory approval), selecting themes (for example, “customer service at the counter”) and encouraging and rewarding improvements related to these themes, and tuition reimbursement for employees who attend classes on process improvements or related topics.

Strategy B5: Develop inter-organizational plans to better target certain services.

The employee groups acknowledged a need for more cooperation among County programs and departments; some stated that the current culture makes it difficult. An example of a cross-department issue arose in employee discussion. Some Public Works employees questioned the value of the inmate work crews, feeling that they were inefficient in the tasks they performed and that the costs of supervision were high. But Public Safety employees pointed out that there was a law enforcement purpose in having the crews, that the public wants to see persons pay for their crimes. One asked how departments other than Public Safety could provide work sanction opportunities for offenders. No attempt was made in the focus group to resolve the different viewpoints, but this issue seems to be a good example of one where a joint cross-department solution would make sense.

Relating to this topic some also extended an observation noted with the “consolidation” strategy above. Contract service providers may have contracts with multiple County departments. Integration of contract monitoring across departments represents an efficiency opportunity.

One idea on this topic that was discussed in a few groups addressed budget practices. Some employees observed that there is often a “use it or lose it” imperative with remaining budgeted funds nearing the end of a fiscal year. The recommendation was that a portion of any unspent

funds at the end of the year carry-over for the same department into the next fiscal year, to provide a savings incentive. Some of the savings would also increase the carry-over available for allocation to any department. Further details would need to be resolved to make sure the incentive worked properly if this idea were to be pursued.

Another suggestion was that health and human services be organized to “follow people” rather than categorically by program. This could be one way to better target services for high end users of County services. Some saw better partnership and cooperation as a revenue enhancement opportunity through more joint grant proposals.

Implications for strategic plan: While there seems to be a broad-based belief among employees that there are opportunities to work smarter by crossing departmental boundaries, identifying specific solutions that will work remains a challenge. Adjustments in the budgeting process have been offered as a possible mechanism, and might be one place to start further work on this strategy.

C. _____

Strategies C1, C2, and C3: Develop human resources, information technology, and facilities plans

These strategies were not brought up explicitly for direct discussion in the workshops, but various comments from the attendees were relevant. Employees, in particular, had many things to say that could be taken into consideration in a human resources plan; for example:

- At least some felt that job security and compensation should not be based on seniority, that the system should be performance-based.
- More emphasis on career paths was advocated.
- Some recommended more management training. Topics that came up were leadership, understanding and application of the County’s guiding principles, and working with employees who are not performing well.
- Some stressed the value of diversity and practices that support diversity.
- At least one advocated a choice of benefit plans.
- One suggested an early retirement option for long-term employees, giving medical coverage as an incentive, but also achieving savings on PERS and wages.

The comments on information technology are mostly captured in the discussion of the electronic access strategy above. The theme of using basic technology better (that is, not committing all technology funds to

Internet applications) was mentioned often enough that it merits repetition here.

Several groups touched on the topic of space and facilities, and the comments reinforce the desirability of facilities planning. Some of the comments are noted in relation to the “asset management” and “consolidation” strategies above. Many employees feel that their workspace is sub-standard, both for employees and for customers/clients. Many of the comments seemed to be directed to health and human services facilities, apparently including both the County’s and those of nonprofit contractors. One person stated in written comments that the County needs a master plan for existing and future facilities, and that long-term commitments involving space should not be undertaken until that plan is in place and future needs and uses are better understood. Several saw an opportunity to reduce costs (lease savings) or improve service (co-location convenience for customers and clients) through space consolidation. One suggestion was that more out-stationing of human services staff at schools could not only improve service access but also free up space in other facilities.

Implications for strategic plan: The plans should consider the comments summarized above and in the other noted sections of this report. A possible additional plan – for public information – might be added. There were many comments in the focus groups on the importance of better communication with the public and internally (as noted in other sections of this report).

Strategy C4: Develop a resource allocation plan.

Discussion in all of the groups was supportive of the need to have principles to guide resource allocation. The idea of segregating services into priority categories was almost universally supported by those who spoke on the subject. As expressed by many, this thought included not only a distinction between mandatory and non-mandatory services, but also further setting of priorities within these categories. Many felt that ranking service priorities could guide both budget cuts and additions.

Among the principles advocated by the groups were the following (these came from multiple sources, including both the public and employees, and may not be internally consistent; the list is long):

- Do not damage core services with severe cuts. Preserve quality – if cutbacks are needed, eliminate programs rather than doing work poorly. Thus, do not apply flat percentage cuts across the board (a minority opinion was registered: if very deep cuts are necessary, across the board reductions may be unavoidable). Some programs

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are ineffective if not funded at least at a “threshold” level and it would be better to cut them altogether.

- Identify “baseline” levels of service. Do not go above these levels unless the funds are there.
- Do not try to do too many things. Funding should be more concentrated in fewer programs. Commissioners should say “no” more often and not try to please everyone.
- Eliminating non-mandated services will not solve the fiscal problem. The County will need to reduce service levels if severe cuts are needed.
- Cut those things that do not produce certifiable results.
- Look for the big picture. Consider the cross-effects on other programs when determining cuts or additions to the budget.
- Do not undermine support services with deep cuts. Keep these services (human resources, information technology, etc.) strong so that there will be a strong work force that has the tools to do well regardless of changes in elected leadership.
- Support and build infrastructure. Do not defer maintenance (creating future costs) to meet current needs. Do preventive maintenance where there is evidence that it works.
- Leverage funds as much as possible with state, federal, and private dollars.
- Apply research and evaluation evidence in deciding what to fund. Continuously build on what has been proven to work.
- Fund prevention programs that have been proven to work..
- If there is “extra money” save it for future contingencies – build a reserve for ongoing support of core services. Or, set aside funds to support innovations and service improvements (an internal investment fund).
- Do not take on new services that could become more difficult to support in the future (for example, those supported by time limited grants). A criterion for new spending should be whether the program can be continued in the future. Or, do not take on new programs without letting something go.
- Look for services that the state can take back or fund. Also, look broadly at the County’s services in the context of services provided by the state, other local governments, and schools to help determine County priorities. Some services can be better provided by agencies (public or private) other than the County. Get out of urban services that cities can do. Services that others can do are possible candidates for County reduction or elimination.
- Do not expand or add any service unless the need has been clearly identified in advance.
- Do not hire County employees for new or experimental programs. Contract them out.

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- Stop doing those things that are not fully enforced (dog licensing, for example).
- Assure rural access to County services. Do not make cuts that will damage this.
- Support those services that benefit people countywide.
- Segment the County's "customer base" – for example, urban incorporated, urban unincorporated, rural incorporated, and rural unincorporated. This will help clarify what services are essential for each group and will therefor help to sort out priorities.
- Give priority to things affecting safety – this includes not just traditional "public safety" programs, but also safety elements of other programs (for example, installation and maintenance of proper road signs, or restaurant and environmental health inspections).
- Analyze what the risks would be if the service(s) did not exist.
- Do not focus entirely on discretionary funds. Pay more attention to wise use of non-discretionary funds.
- Cut upper and middle management before line staff.
- Do not pick out emotional services for "cuts" just to get votes.
- "Question authority" on mandated services with insufficient funding.
- Maintain a continuum of human services.

On the questionnaires participants had an opportunity to identify services that they would cut if cutbacks were required, and services that they would add should extra funding become available. Many responded here with principles rather than specific services, and these responses are reflected in the list above. But many also identified specific services. However, there was no clear consensus on which services people felt should be cut and which should be expanded. The cumulative lists (taking all responses combined) for both categories were long, not many were mentioned more than a few times for either category, and many that were on one person's cut list were on another's add list (or vice-versa).

Implications for strategic plan: The subcommittee preparing draft resource allocation principles should review these focus group comments and take them into consideration in preparing the draft.

D. Role Clarification

The SPEC discussed four "strategies" relating to this theme; this focus group summary treats all four in combination because the strategies are closely related. Many aspects of "role clarification" were picked up in the comments summarized for the "resource allocation" strategy above.

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The principal thought that emerged is that the County should more clearly identify what its purposes and priorities are, and then do these well. The group comments were generally supportive of a more active intergovernmental role for the County (see especially the comments reported for the “consolidation” strategy). As noted for the previous strategy, the attendees wanted the County to clearly identify different categories of services to set priorities (for example, mandated versus non-mandated). And for services that other agencies might do just as well or better (“urban” services typically provided by cities, for example), the sentiment seemed to be that the County should at least consider “divesting” these services to others.

Implications for strategic plan: The resource allocation plan comments identified for the previous strategy should also provide guidance for refinement of the role clarification strategy.

LANE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLANNING FOCUS GROUPS

A. Purpose of this Focus Group and How It Will Work

Lane County is currently working on a strategic plan. The plan will provide broad guidance on the County's range of services and how they will be delivered in the future. The County is still working on its vision for 2005 and beyond but from the work done so far it is clear that this vision entails gaining the trust and confidence of Lane County citizens and providing high quality services at a fair price.

As an individual known to be interested in and knowledgeable about county government you have been invited to participate in the strategic planning process. The purpose of this focus group is to seek your ideas and opinions on broad action themes that the County should pursue to best realize its future vision. *Thank you very much for your participation.*

A facilitator will lead your group and will ask some open questions and sometimes will ask follow-up or clarifying questions. All responses are welcome but your group is likely to work best if you follow some basic principles:

- Remember that the purpose is to assist the County's strategic planning process; the group cannot stray far from this topic, so direct your comments as much as possible to the questions posed by the facilitator.
- Be constructive. Recommendations for improvement will be more helpful than complaints or criticisms without suggestions for how change can best occur.
- Be considerate of others' right to speak. Keep your comments brief (one or two minutes each) and await your turn to speak (you will have several opportunities).

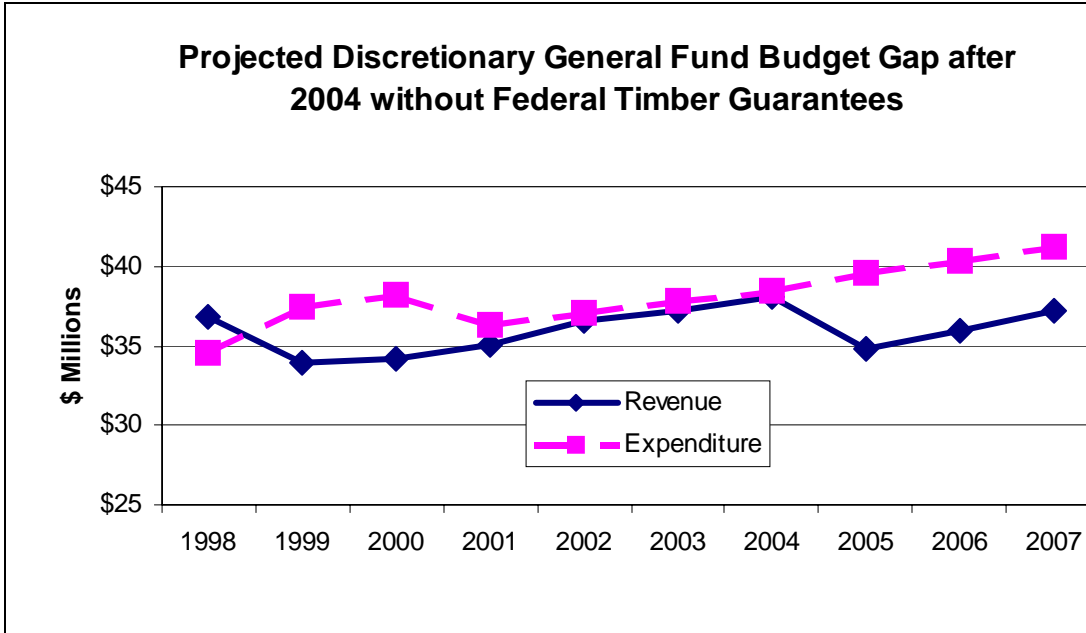
A recorder will note many of the group's observations on a flip chart. Later your group's comments will be summarized along with those of others to provide valuable information for County leaders to apply in formulating the plan for the future. The leadership group has deliberately not gone very far yet down the path of formulating strategies in order that the focus group results may be applied for guidance.

B. Some Background Information

County leaders have identified several external opportunities (O) and threats (T) and internal strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) that should help shape the County's strategic plan. Among these are the following:

- **Funding** - Future funding is unstable (T). Without new federal legislation a big drop-off in federal timber revenue after 2004 is a major problem. A projection of the discretionary portion of the General Fund

without the legislation appears in the following graph. The expenditure line in the graph simply extrapolates historical trends beyond 2004. Cash reserves have been able to bridge the gap between revenue and expenditures up to now, but after 2004 significant expenditure cuts would be required to balance the budget (the Road Fund situation is similar).



- **Human resources** - The work force is dedicated and knowledgeable (S), but aging (W).
- **Technology** - Changing technologies can notably impact County service delivery (S, W,O,T).
- **Facilities infrastructure** – Some physical facilities are old, deteriorating, or otherwise unsatisfactory; some are costly to operate (W).
- **Net worth** - The County (or related entities) owns many valuable physical assets (S).
- **Growth** - The population is growing significantly and the composition is changing (T,O).
- **Mandates** - State government actions increase service mandates and other costs without associated adequate funding (T).

C. How You Can Provide Further Input

You will be given about ten minutes at the end of the meeting to complete a brief questionnaire. While completion is of course voluntary, your response will help supplement the comments you and others make today.

LANE COUNTY FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

A. Introduction

- Overview of Lane County strategic planning
 1. Financial projections/uncertainty (refer to hand out)
 2. Proactive vs. reactive
 3. Role of County government
 4. Your suggestions on broad themes, specific strategies, and new ideas

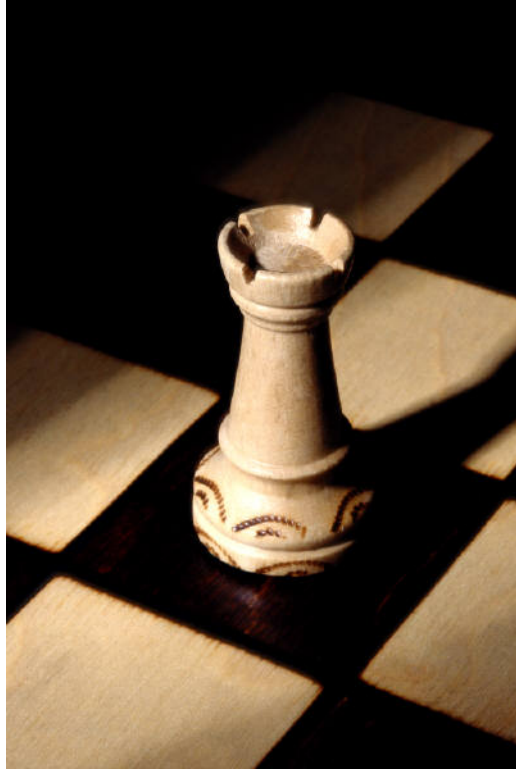
B. Themes and Strategies

- Revenue enhancement *In developing its strategic plan:*
 1. Do you think that countywide taxes requiring a local referendum are an option for the County to consider?
 2. Do you think that system development charges or taxes that support specific services are an option for the County to consider?
 3. Do you think that increasing/initiating user fees to cover charges (e.g. parks) and sliding fee scale should be considered?
 4. Are there other possibilities for revenue enhancement that the County should consider?
- Cost reductions *In developing its strategic plan:*
 1. Should the County consider increasing electronic access (Internet) to County services?
 2. Do you see any opportunities for coordination/consolidation across agencies, e.g. public safety-crime labs, drug teams, that should be considered? (would require County intergovernmental leadership)
 3. Do you see any opportunities for contracting out services?
 4. Are there opportunities for program/service elimination's/reductions--non-mandated services--that should be considered?
 5. *(For County employees only) In your work, do you see opportunities for cost savings that would benefit the County?*

C. Resource allocation principles

- If the County were faced with substantial cutbacks in revenue, what do you think would be a fair and effective way to reduce or eliminate services?
- Are there any specific services or types of services that you would suggest be considered first for cutbacks?
- If the County were to receive substantial additional revenues, what do you think would be a fair and effective way to increase services above current levels?
- Are there any specific services or type of services that you would suggest be considered first for improvements or expansion?

**Appendix C -
Citizen
Survey**



APPENDIX C – CITIZEN SURVEY

LANE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLANNING FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Strategies

Below are some strategies (broad action themes) that others have suggested to help Lane County better win the trust and confidence of its citizens (by delivering efficient, high quality, and effective services) and to assure that funds are available to meet future needs (revenue enhancement). Please check the appropriate box to indicate how you feel about these strategies, and add your suggestions too if you wish. Examples of what each strategy *could* mean (but not necessarily) are included, but direct your reaction to the *general strategy* rather than to the specific examples in each case.

	<u>Support</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
Look for consolidation opportunities , both internally and inter-governmentally. For example, further combine fleet operations or combine specialized law enforcement units.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promote electronic access to County services , enabling many transactions to be conducted over the Internet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strengthen efforts to develop state and federal revenue support . This could mean, for instance, retention of a lobbyist for the County.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to the voters with proposals for taxes that support specific services . Referenda could be countywide, or possibly for particular services in smaller districts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify and recover user fees and charges . Fees for some existing services might increase to cover full costs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other improvement strategies . If you have any other strategies (broad action themes) to suggest for how the County might improve the efficiency, quality, and effectiveness of its services or equitably and fairly enhance revenues, you may note them below:			

B. Service Contraction

If funding shortfalls required the County to cutback on services are there any specific services or types of services that you would suggest to be considered first for cutbacks?

C. Service Expansion

If additional revenue were to become available are there any specific services or types of services that you would suggest to be considered first for improvements or expansion?

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES TO CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS

Public Groups:

Strategy	Support		Neutral		Oppose		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Look for consolodation opportunities	128	95.5%	4	3.0%	2	1.5%	134	100%
Promote electronic access to County services	97	71.3%	34	25.0%	5	3.7%	136	100%
Strengthen efforts to develop state and federal revenue support	74	56.5%	45	34.4%	12	9.2%	131	100%
Go to the voters with proposals for taxes that support specific services	53	40.8%	42	32.3%	35	26.9%	130	100%
Identify and recover user fees and charges	80	62.0%	32	24.8%	17	13.2%	129	100%

Employee Groups:

Strategy	Support		Neutral		Oppose		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Look for consolodation opportunities	74	90.2%	7	8.5%	1	1.2%	82	100%
Promote electronic access to County services	56	68.3%	25	30.5%	1	1.2%	82	100%
Strengthen efforts to develop state and federal revenue support	60	70.6%	16	18.8%	9	10.6%	85	100%
Go to the voters with proposals for taxes that support specific services	46	56.8%	23	28.4%	12	14.8%	81	100%
Identify and recover user fees and charges	63	79.7%	13	16.5%	3	3.8%	79	100%

Combined Public and Employees:

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Strategy	Support		Neutral		Oppose		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Look for consolodation opportunities	202	93.5%	11	5.1%	3	1.4%	216	100%
Promote electronic access to County services	153	70.2%	59	27.1%	6	2.8%	218	100%
Strengthen efforts to develop state and federal revenue support	134	62.0%	61	28.2%	21	9.7%	216	100%
Go to the voters with proposals for taxes that support specific services	99	46.9%	65	30.8%	47	22.3%	211	100%
Identify and recover user fees and charges	143	68.8%	45	21.6%	20	9.6%	208	100%

Criteria for Selecting Candidates for Contracting Out

- The City of Portland Auditor adapted criteria developed by the Colorado State Auditor's Office to assess services as candidates for contracting out:
 - Market strength – Is the private sector able and interested in delivering the service?
 - Political resistance – How strong is any opposition from the public, users of the service, interest groups, or public officials?
 - Potential for savings – What is the probability that costs can be reduced through contracting, assuming no change in the level or quality of service?
 - Quality of service – What is the likelihood that competition will have a favorable impact on the effectiveness, timeliness, or thoroughness of the service?
 - Impact on employees – How will employees be affected?
 - Legal barriers – How will contracting comply with applicable laws?
 - Risk – Will contracting expose the County to hazards, liabilities, or service failures?
 - Efficiency – Will change help improve the efficient use of government assets?
 - Management control – Will government officials still be able to effectively oversee the provision of the service?

- Lawrence Martin proposed criteria for identifying candidates for public-private competition:³
 - Ancillary services are preferable to core services (but core services can be done too).⁴
 - Hard services are preferable to soft services.⁵
 - Stand-alone services are preferable to interrelated services.⁶
 - Services that can be segmented are preferable to services that cannot.⁷

³ From "Selecting Services for Public-Private Competition," ICMA 1996. Although Martin focuses the criteria on public-private partnerships, all but the last four listed under this bullet point appear generally applicable to contracting out.

⁴ Ancillary services are services where the "customers" are typically internal (e.g., printing, fleet, etc.). Core services are delivered directly to the public.

⁵ Hard services are more measurable (outputs, outcomes, etc.).

⁶ Law enforcement communications is an example of an interrelated service.

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- Services that have been successfully contracted out before are preferable to services that have not.
- Services that are expected to generate at least two – and preferably more – private sector bids or proposals are preferable to services that are not.
- Services for which multi-year contracts can be awarded are preferable to services for which they cannot.
- Services where private sector firms are competitive in terms of employee compensation and benefits are preferable to services where they are not.⁸
- Services for which private sector firms make substantial use of part-time employees are preferable to services where they do not.
- Services proposed for contracting that evoke lower levels of employee union opposition are preferable to services that evoke higher levels.
- Services provided by in-house departments whose management is entrepreneurial are preferable to services whose management is less so
- Services provided by in-house departments whose staffing levels are higher than those in private-sector firms are preferable to those where this is not the case.
- Services provided by in-house departments with greater potential for using part-time employees are preferable to those with less potential.
- Services whose delivery systems offer more opportunity for restructuring and reengineering are preferable to those where these opportunities are less.

⁷ Segmented means the ability to subdivide by geography, by the amount of work to be done, or based on other fractions of the whole.

⁸ Here “competitive” means from the standpoint of the employer (that is, not substantially higher than in the public sector).