
Performance Audit of IT Web Services

STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND PROCESS ALIGNMENT
NEEDED FOR ONLINE SERVICES

DECEMBER 2013

Audit Report

Office of the City Auditor
City of San Diego



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THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

December 10, 2013

Honorable Interim Mayor, City Council, and Audit Committee Members
City of San Diego, California

Transmitted herewith is an audit report on IT Web Services. This report is in accordance with City Charter Section 39.2. The Results in Brief is presented on page 1. The Administration's response to our audit recommendations can be found after page 29 of the report.

We would like to thank the Department of Information Technology's staff, as well as representatives from other City departments for their assistance and cooperation during this audit. All of their valuable time and efforts spent on providing us information is greatly appreciated. The audit staff responsible for this audit report is Shoshana Aguilar, Andy Horita, Chris Kime, and Kyle Elser.

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Results in Brief

The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) reports 1.2 million visitors to the City's website each month. Collectively, DoIT also reports that departments make over 48,000 website updates per year in order to maintain the 54,000 links to webpages, online services, and documents. With many people relying on the City website for information, it is critical to ensure that City online services¹ are relevant, timely, and comprehensive.

Over the past decade, online services have been shown to increase service levels and overall accessibility of services to residents, while decreasing their overall cost. Currently, the City does not effectively leverage this capability.

The City's website offers 52 online services where users can complete transactions such as paying business tax, registering for a gymnastics class, or establishing water service. However, based on our audit we found that more services are not offered because the City has not prioritized online services in its strategic plans and does not have a coordinated process for implementation. We found that online services could be expanded and that the ability to locate online services could be improved. We identified 10 additional services such as construction permits, golf tee times, and special event permits that could be placed online to make transactions with the City more efficient for individuals and businesses.

Specifically, we found the following:

1. The City does not have a strategic direction or policy initiative for online service delivery. The City's strategic plan does not address online services, nor does it have clear goals to propel the development of web services. Previous City administrations have not made developing or implementing online services a high priority even though the local business community has communicated a desire for more online services. Cities with nationally recognized websites have a formal process in place to identify and create new online services. San Diego could improve the effectiveness and efficiency of City operations

¹ For the purpose of this audit, we defined online services as: Specific public-facing web services that provide an interactive interface for users to complete routine transactions such as payments, applications, and reporting. Online services are complete, end-to-end transaction processes, which may include document processing and filing, or secure payment negotiation.

by developing a strategic plan that includes specific goals for online services, and communicating those goals to City departments for identification, prioritization, development, and implementation of online services.

2. The City does not have a coordinated process for departments to adapt business processes to online services. The current process is decentralized, non-uniform, and underdeveloped. As such, identifying potential online services is solely a departmental responsibility. City departments should work with the Office of the Chief Operating Officer to evaluate and adapt processes for online delivery to improve efficiencies, reduce the cost of city government, and maximize the services offered to our residents. In addition, the City has a review process in place to ensure strategic fit for information technology (IT) investments called the IT Business Leadership Group (IT-BLG). With more strategic guidance from City leadership, the IT-BLG could make improved decisions in implementing online services.
3. Online services are difficult to locate and the online services list is incomplete. As of September 2013, the City website offered 52 online services, but less than half of them are accessible from the homepage drop-down list labeled Access Online Services. To find some of the online services, a user would have to know which department offers the service, navigate to the department's webpage, and then locate the link to the service. In other cities, online services are grouped based on the transaction type such as making a payment or requesting a permit. The City should improve user access to online services by designing a webpage that groups online services by type of service, and make it readily accessible from the City's homepage. If users could more easily access online services, they could interact with the City more efficiently.

We made four recommendations to address the issues we identified and the departments agreed or partially agreed with all of the recommendations.

Background

The City of San Diego's website was established in 1994. It provides access to information for website users which include City residents, visitors, businesses, and the media. In addition to information access, the website provides over 50 online services (see **Exhibit 1**, on pages 5 and 6) that allow users to complete transactions such as paying a parking ticket, registering for a swim class, or establishing water service. Online services enable users to conduct business with the City 24 hours a day and move residents from being "in line" to online. In this audit, we examine the City's online services strategy and how it affects the City's portfolio of online services.

Online Services in the City of San Diego

As of September 2013, the City website offers 52 online services, which are accessed through various means. There is no agreed upon definition of what constitutes an online service in the City or in the larger web community. Definitions of online services range from highly technical to overly broad. For the purpose of this audit, we defined online services as:

Specific public-facing web services that provide an interactive interface for users to complete routine transactions such as payments, applications, and reporting. Online services are complete, end-to-end transaction processes, which may include document processing and filing, or secure payment negotiation.

Exhibit 1 below lists the online services we found throughout the website and the department that offers the service.

Exhibit 1**San Diego Online Services**

Item Number	Online Service	Department
1.	72-Hour Abandoned Vehicle Complaint Form	Police
2.	Alarm Permits	Police
3.	Ask San Diego Public Library	Library
4.	Audiobook Checkout	Library
5.	Board & Commission Application	City Clerk
6.	Building Records Request	Development Services
7.	Business Tax Application	City Treasurer
8.	Business Tax Renewal	City Treasurer
9.	Campaign Disclosure	City Clerk
10.	Citizen Request Form to Report Narcotic Activity or Request More Patrol	Police
11.	Create New Lobbyist Account	City Clerk
12.	Delinquent Account Payment	City Treasurer
13.	Disclose Economic Interests	City Clerk
14.	E-books Checkout	Library
15.	Establish or Cancel Water Service	Public Utilities
16.	Graffiti Removal Request	Transportation and Storm Water
17.	Interlibrary Loan	Library
18.	Job Interest Card	Personnel
19.	Job Opportunities	Personnel
20.	Library Bills	Library
21.	Library Materials Renewal	Library
22.	Licensed Alcohol Establishment Citizen Complaint Form	Police
23.	Live Online Librarian/Texting	Library
24.	Live Online Tutoring	Library
25.	Lobbyist Registration and Disclosure Report	City Clerk
26.	Meeting Agenda Comment Form	City Clerk
27.	New Children's Museum Membership Pass	Library
28.	Official City Document Request	City Clerk
29.	Online Ethics Training Program	Ethics Commission
30.	Online Property Room Auction	Police
31.	Online Video Checkout	Library
32.	Parking Citation Payment	City Treasurer
33.	Parking Citation Review	City Treasurer

Item Number	Online Service	Department
34.	Place Hold on a Book	Library
35.	Police Reporting Online	Police
36.	Police Ride Along Request Form	Police
37.	Private Property – Inoperable Vehicle Complaint Form	Police
38.	Register for Recreation Classes (In Progress)	Park and Recreation
39.	Rental Tax Renewal Payments	City Treasurer
40.	Rental Unit Business Tax Payment	City Treasurer
41.	Request for Noise Investigation Form	Development Services
42.	Reuben H. Fleet Science Center Pass	Library
43.	Simple No Plan ePermits	Development Services
44.	Storm Water Service Request	Transportation and Storm Water
45.	Street Service Request	Transportation and Storm Water
46.	Title Purchase Suggestion	Library
47.	Traffic Service Request	Transportation and Storm Water
48.	Transient Occupancy Tax and Tourism Marketing District Payments Online	City Treasurer
49.	Trash Service Request	Environmental Services
50.	Trash Service Tracking	Environmental Services
51.	Water Bill Payments	Public Utilities
52.	Water Conservation Certificate Verification	Public Utilities

Source: OCA generated from the City website.

Current Process for Online Service Implementation

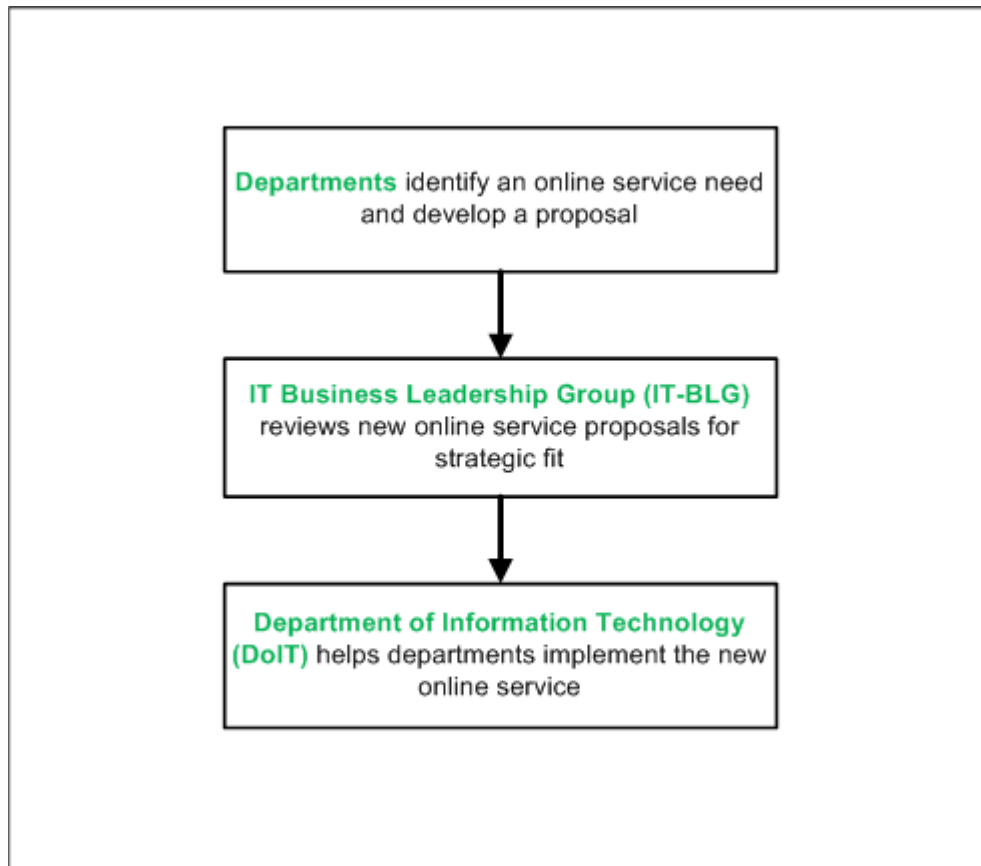
The current City administrative process for establishing an online service has multiple steps and is dependent on self-initiated Department action. Department of Information Technology (DoIT) management informed us that if a department wants to implement a new online service, the department first needs to develop the business process internally. Next, a department brings their proposal to the Information Technology Business Leadership Group (IT-LG)² for review. Evaluation of each proposal includes alignment to the City's strategic plan, tactical plan,

²The IT-BLG is an interdepartmental IT governance committee that reviews, prioritizes, and approves all IT investments for alignment with City strategy.

standards, architecture and security— along with a detailed cost/benefit analysis. If the proposal is approved, DoIT assists the department in implementing the approved services by providing technical standards and ensuring that the program will interact effectively with other City software applications. CGI, the City’s IT vendor, typically performs the actual implementation of the online service. **Exhibit 2** diagrams the current process for online service implementation.

Exhibit 2

Current Process for Online Service Implementation



Source: OCA generated based on auditor analysis.

Audit Results

Finding 1: The City Does Not Have a Strategic Direction or Policy Initiative for Online Service Delivery

The City does not have a strategic direction or policy initiative for online service delivery. The City's strategic plan does not address online services, nor does it have clear goals to propel the development of web services. Previous City administrations have not made developing or implementing online services a high priority even though the local business community has communicated a desire for more online services. Cities with nationally recognized websites have a formal process in place to identify and create new online services. San Diego could improve the effectiveness and efficiency of City operations by developing a strategic plan that includes specific goals for online services, and communicating those goals to City departments for identification, prioritization, development, and implementation of online services.

Online Services Are Not Part of the City's Strategic Vision

Previous City administrations have not made developing or implementing online services a high priority. If this had been the case, online services would have been incorporated in the City's strategic plan, with specific service goals and objectives to promote the development of online services. The strategic plan is a key document that charts the strategic direction of the City. It contains the City's mission, vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures. It defines the direction for the City and provides a strategic framework for the strategies and activities of the departments. The City's four goals are to have: a safe, clean, and livable city; a fiscally-sound, effective city government; sustainable growth and economic prosperity; and a responsive, committed, and innovative workforce. An online service objective would fit under goal number two of the current strategic plan, a fiscally-sound effective city government, and departments could develop corresponding performance measures.

The current City of San Diego strategic plan is part of the Fiscal Year 2014 Adopted Budget embedded in the City Management Program (CMP). The CMP integrates strategic planning and performance monitoring efforts with the budget decision making process. The CMP is intended to ensure that the City creates and adheres to its goals and priorities. The strategic planning process takes a top down approach beginning with the formulation of the City's strategic plan at the Citywide level. Departments implement the plan's goals and objectives at the operational level. Clearly defined goals and objectives provide context and accountability for achieving strategic plans. The current CMP does not contain an objective specific to the delivery of online services.

**The San Diego Business
Community Demands
Online Services**

Representatives from the San Diego business community articulated a desire for improved online City services at a previous Council committee meeting. The Committee on Economic Development and Strategies (ED&S) discussed current and potential online services at a meeting in February of 2012. The purpose of the meeting was to identify ways to help businesses save time and money by improving the City's online services. The Committee heard presentations from the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Office of the Mayor, the City Treasurer, and a joint presentation from the Economic Development Division and Economic Growth Services Section of the Development Services Department. The participants provided testimony regarding the challenges related to conducting business with the City via the internet. At the meeting, Committee members discussed previous requests for online services. One example of a business request is an online version of the Letter of Agency Agreement, which authorizes the police to access business property as needed. Businesses wishing to grant the police access to their property must currently submit the form in hard copy twice a year. Another example of an online service requested by the business community is the ability to process business permits online.

According to the meeting minutes, the Committee requested that the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) staff return to the April 2012 ED&S Committee meeting with a preliminary assessment, including cost estimates, for a comprehensive Citywide strategy for making the City's website more customer friendly by optimizing online services. However, Mayor Sanders' staff explained that the request would involve multiple

departments reporting back to the Committee individually in the future. No further action was taken in subsequent committee meetings.

**Strategic Direction
Drives Operational
Decisions in Other Cities**

Based on our research, we found that other cities incorporate online services into their strategic plans with strong mayoral support. San Diego can look to other cities for leading practices in providing online services for businesses and residents alike. Cities nationally recognized for their online services by the Center for Digital Government such as: New York, New York; Riverside, California; and Louisville, Kentucky, demonstrate that mayoral leadership and clear goals propel the development of online services.

New York, NY One example of an executive-driven improvement of online services is Mayor Bloomberg’s strategic initiative in New York City to create a one-stop business resource, NYC Business Express. NYC Business Express is an interactive guide for new businesses to move through the startup process. The process to start a business may involve multiple departments and approvals, but the tasks are integrated and seamless from the user’s perspective.

Riverside, CA The City of Riverside shows its commitment to bringing more services online through its IT Strategic Plan. Current IT projects include increasing online self-service applications, such as special event permitting and online payments. Practices such as documenting the City’s IT Strategic Plan have helped Riverside gain national recognition as one of the best municipal websites for the past three years³.

Louisville, KY Louisville received a national award for municipal websites seven years in a row. In 2011, the Louisville mayor developed a strategic plan that included online services as a top priority. One of the plan’s primary objectives is to deliver excellent City services. To realize this objective, the plan includes the goal of increasing the number of online services offered by 15 percent annually⁴. This approach suggests that online services are an integral part of City services, and that online services need to play a large role when a mayor is crafting their vision. For Louisville to reach its goal, the

³ Center for Digital Government, Best of the Web and Digital Government Achievement Awards.

<http://www.govtech.com/cdg/digital-government-achievement/>

⁴ See Appendix C for detail on Louisville’s online service goals.

City is cataloging all services not currently online, identifying potential services, and using business process reengineering to adapt their processes to online delivery.

San Diego could improve the effectiveness and efficiency of City operations by developing a strategic plan that includes specific goals for online services, and communicating those goals to City departments for identification, prioritization, development, and implementation of online services. Without strategic direction, the effort to develop online services at the department level is decentralized, non-uniform, and underdeveloped.

Recommendation #1

We recommend that the Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, develop a strategic vision for online services. This should include developing specific goals and objectives for increasing online services offered, with clear roles and responsibilities for City departments, and milestones that are incorporated into the City's strategic planning documents.
(Priority Level 3)

Finding 2: The Current City Process for Developing Online Services is Decentralized and Non-Uniform

The City's process for online services development is decentralized and non-uniform. As such, identifying potential online services is solely a departmental responsibility. While the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) provides technical standards and policies, it is not responsible for producing website content for City departments. In the current City structure, departments look to the Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) for guidance on strategic priorities, including online services. Since online services have not been a strategic priority in the City, departmental processes to evaluate online services are, in some cases, underdeveloped. In the past, City leadership successfully evaluated processes to improve efficiencies, reduce the cost of city government, and maximize the services offered to our residents. Business process reengineering studies could be conducted in a targeted way to adapt services for online delivery in accordance with an online services component of the City's strategic plan. The City's review process to ensure strategic fit for information technology (IT) investments, the IT Business Leadership Group (IT-BLG), could ensure an online service project's alignment with the City's strategic plan.

Current City Process for Developing Online Services is Decentralized

As reported in Finding 1, the City does not have a strategic vision for online services that would guide departments in the adaptation of business processes to online services. Therefore, in this decentralized environment, each City department is responsible for choosing to address online services on its own. As a result, there is disparity in how individual departments address online service issues. For example, some departments have regular meetings to assess potential online services and prioritize business processes to bring online, while other departments have no such practice. **Exhibit 3** shows the number of online services that each department offers.

Exhibit 3**List of Online Services by Department**

Department Name	Number of Online Services
City Clerk	7
City Treasurer	8
Development Services	3
Environmental Services	2
Ethics Commission	1
Fire-Rescue Department	1
Library	13
Park and Recreation	1
Personnel	2
Police	8
Public Utilities	2
Transportation & Storm Water	4
Total	52

Source: OCA Generated from the City website.

Departments Do Not Have a Uniform Process for Developing and Implementing Online Services

The current online services have emerged as a result of individual department initiatives. Part of the reason there is such disparity in online services among City departments is the non-uniform nature of the process to identify potential services. For example, the Library Department reports having regular meetings to discuss potential online services. The Library also collects ideas for emerging trends in library websites from a variety of sources. In addition, according to the Office of the City Treasurer, the business units have weekly meetings to discuss potential IT projects. Other departments we interviewed did not have a regular process and relied on a few individuals to promote new online services. If departmental processes were uniform, online services would be better distributed across City departments.

Each department has unique challenges to bringing services online. By interviewing selected City departments, we found that IT staff resources within departments are non-uniform. Some departments have staff with advanced IT knowledge, while others may be limited to a few employees who are fully engaged in maintaining systems already in place. The Park and Recreation Department, for example, only has one full time IT employee.

Also, there may be budget constraints and technological barriers that would make online service implementation more complicated.

DoIT management has noted that before they advise departments on the vendor sourcing for an online application, each individual department responsible for the service evaluates the business process and develops the online service model. DoIT management recommends that departments: identify what is important to constituents, set criteria for assessing needs, consider the ease of implementation, analyze costs, and evaluate the overall business impact. According to DoIT, this process should take place before a new service is offered online.

Individual departments are in the best position to identify potential online services to be developed. Identifying potential online services based on stakeholder feedback would be the first step in developing a coordinated, Citywide effort to reengineer and adapt processes for online delivery. In addition, if City departments had a more developed evaluation process to adapt services for online delivery, the City might offer more online services. During the course of our audit, we found 10 potential services, offered by other cities, that San Diego could add to its catalog of services. **Exhibit 4** lists these services.

Exhibit 4**List of Potential Online Services for San Diego**

Item Number	Online Service	City of San Diego Status
1.	Automated Permits Inspection Scheduling	Available by phone only.
2.	Bid for City Contracts	Solicitations are available online, but it is not currently possible to submit a bid online. An online service is being developed.
3.	Business Loan Application	Loan applications are currently available as PDF documents that must be submitted as hard copy.
4.	Construction Permits	Permits are currently available as PDF documents that must be submitted as hard copy.
5.	Donate to a City Department	An online donor information form exists to submit donor's information, but no online service exists to make a donation online.
6.	Golf Tee Time	Reservations for City-owned and operated golf courses are available by phone only.
7.	Online Letter of Agency Agreements for Police	Forms are currently available as PDF documents that must be submitted as hard copy.
8.	Online Plan Submittal and Plan Check	Not available online.
9.	Order Police Records	Currently available by mail or in person.
10.	Special Event Permits	An online service is being developed.

Source: OCA generated based on auditor analysis.

The City Has Two Distinct and Related Processes for Online Service Implementation

Once a department identifies a service that lends itself to online delivery, the City has two distinct and related processes for implementation: business process reengineering and the Information Technology Business Leadership Group (IT-BLG). The first process involves an analysis of an existing service to adapt it for online delivery. The second process, the IT-BLG, entails a review of the business case related to a potential online service for strategic fit with other IT initiatives Citywide. Together, these processes provide a comprehensive function to adapt needed online services for delivery to the public.

In the past, the City of San Diego has conducted Business Process Reengineering (BPR) to make City processes more efficient. These prior BPR efforts found opportunities for greater efficiency in the City, but the bulk of the changes were not related to online services. One example of a BPR that resulted in improved efficiency and cost savings was the Library Department's examination of the process for overdue books and hold notice communications. The Library switched from mailing paper notices to email notification and reportedly saved over \$167,000 in postage in fiscal year 2009. While past BPR efforts streamlined City services, there are no current BPR efforts underway.

Louisville, Kentucky, incorporates BPR into adapting services for online delivery, and is currently working on adapting about 50 permitting processes for their website. The Louisville Technology Department works with subject matter experts in each department in order to map processes for online delivery. Louisville's IT function is more centralized than San Diego's. The Louisville mayor plays a role to encourage departmental participation in the process.

City departments in San Diego could work with the COO to evaluate and modify processes for online delivery using a model such as business process reengineering. The department would then submit a business case to the IT-BLG for each process under review.

**The IT Business
Leadership Group
Reviews Projects for
Alignment with City
Strategy**

The IT-BLG is the approving authority for IT expenditures based on their review of business cases presented. The evaluation criteria include business alignment, adherence to established IT standards, and financial return on investment. By virtue of reviewing the entire Citywide portfolio of IT projects, this governance group can identify linkages and commonalities between departmental efforts and gain economies of scale where possible.

The first step in the IT-BLG process is a review of the business case concept and potential return on investment. After the IT-BLG receives this initial proposal, the department proceeds with gathering more detailed information to implement the project. This may include soliciting quotes from outside vendors. Once the documentation has been obtained and reviewed, the IT-BLG meets to approve or deny the project. If approved, the department will proceed with the development of the project and submit update reports to the IT-BLG according to an established schedule.

If City leadership provides strategic and tactical guidance for departments to evaluate and adapt processes for online delivery, the IT-BLG may receive more online service proposals and could make improved strategic decisions.

Recommendation #2

The Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) should direct City departments to identify services that lend themselves to online delivery, and the COO should generate a Citywide report of prioritized potential services. Then, the COO should work with departments to conduct internal efforts to evaluate and adapt the potential services for online delivery. (Priority Level 3)

Finding 3: Online Services Are Difficult to Locate and the Online Services List is Incomplete

The City's online services are difficult to locate, and the list of online services is incomplete. As of September 2013, the City website offered 52 online services, but less than half of them are accessible from the homepage drop-down list labeled Access Online Services. To find some of the online services, a user would have to know which department offers the service, navigate to the department's webpage, and then locate the link to the service. In other cities, online services are grouped based on the transaction type such as making a payment or requesting a permit. The City should improve user access to online services by designing a webpage that groups online services by type of service, and make it readily accessible from the City's homepage. If users could more easily access online services, they could interact with the City more efficiently.

Website Users Cannot Easily Locate Online Services from the City Website

We found that website users cannot easily locate online services using the City's website. The City homepage offers multiple access points to online services which are inconsistent, incomplete, and not centralized. **Exhibit 5** shows an image of the City homepage with circles to highlight all the ways to find online services.

Exhibit 5

City Homepage with Online Services Circled



Source: OCA generated from the City website.

There are three primary places where the City lists online services: the Citizen Services Directory, the Access Online Services drop-down list, and the Services A-Z webpage. The Citizen Services Directory lists more than 700 items including some online services and links to web pages external to the City. The search feature for the Citizen Services Directory requires the user to know the correct spelling of an item in order to find it in the directory. The Access Online Services drop-down list has 39 items, including items that are not online services. The Services A-Z contains more than 150 links including City services and services offered by other entities. These three lists are organized alphabetically. The current design assumes that the user already knows the City's terminology for the service that they are seeking. A lengthy alphabetized list may not be the best way for users to identify online services.

The List of Online Services is Incomplete

The Access Online Services list on the City homepage is incomplete. As of September 2013, the City website offered 52 online services, but less than half of them are accessible from the homepage drop-down list labeled Access Online Services. According to Department of Information Technology (DoIT) management, DoIT updates the list when departments advise them that new online services have been added. However, DoIT does not have a formal process to ensure that the list is accurate and complete. DoIT receives guidance from the Mayor's Office for the overall content and design of the City homepage. To find some of the 52 online services, a user would have to know which department offers the service, navigate to the department's webpage, and then locate the link to the service. **Exhibit 6** below lists some of the online services we identified that are not included on the Access Online Services drop-down list.

Exhibit 6**Services Not Listed on the Access Online Services Drop-down List**

Item Number	Online Service	Department
1.	72-Hour Abandoned Vehicle Complaint Form	Police
2.	Ask San Diego Public Library	Library
3.	Audiobook Checkout	Library
4.	Board & Commission Application	Clerk
5.	Book Title Purchase Suggestion	Library
6.	Campaign Disclosure	Clerk
7.	Citizen Request Form to Report Narcotic Activity or Request More Patrol	Police
8.	Create New Lobbyist Account	Clerk
9.	Disclose Economic Interests	Clerk
10.	E-books Checkout	Library
11.	Establish or Cancel Water Service	Public Utilities
12.	Interlibrary Loan	Library
13.	Job Interest Card	Personnel
14.	Licensed Alcohol Establishment Citizen Complaint Form	Police
15.	Live Online Librarian/Texting	Library
16.	Live Online Tutoring	Library
17.	Lobbyist Registration and Disclosure Report	Clerk
18.	Meeting Agenda Comment Form	Clerk
19.	New Children's Museum Membership Pass	Library
20.	Official City Document Request	Clerk
21.	Online Ethics Training Program	Ethics Commission
22.	Online Property Room Auction	Police
23.	Online Video Checkout	Library
24.	Police Ride Along Request Form	Police
25.	Private Property – Inoperable Vehicle Complaint Form	Police
26.	Register for Recreation Classes	Park and Recreation
27.	Rental Unit Business Tax Payment	Treasurer
28.	Request for Noise Investigation Form	Development Services
29.	Reuben H. Fleet Science Center Pass	Library
30.	Traffic Service Request	Transportation and Storm Water

Source: OCA generated from City website.

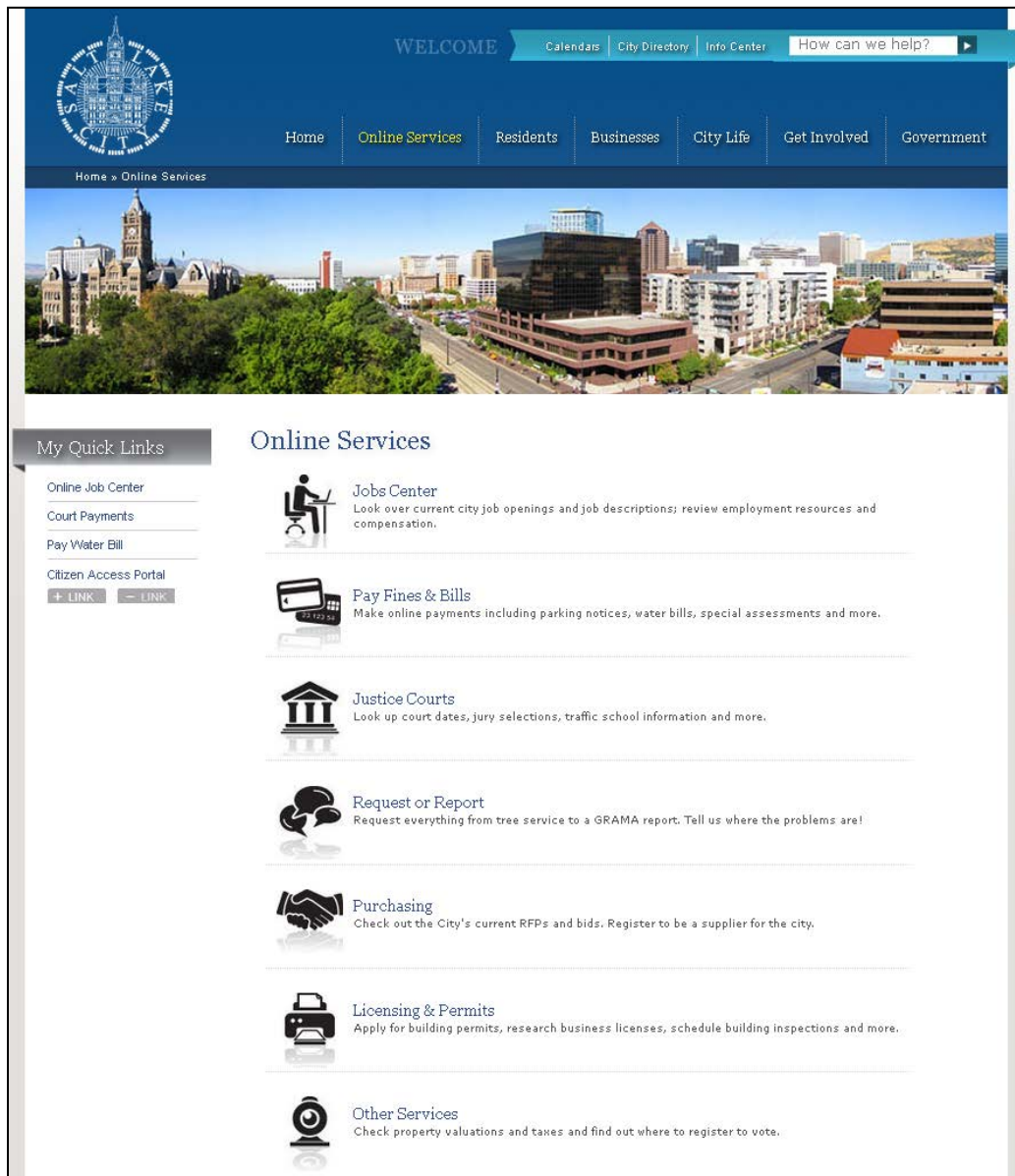
One consequence of the decentralized and incomplete listing of online services is that the usage rates for the services may be lower than they could be. That is, users may be coming to City buildings or mailing documents when the service already exists on the website. For example, while users could pay parking tickets online, the City Treasurer reports that less than half of all parking violations are paid online. In addition, half of all businesses pay City taxes via mail or in person, rather than online. Other cities provide examples of how to organize online services so that they are easier to access.

In other cities, online services are grouped based on the transaction type such as making a payment or requesting a permit. For instance, users can access Salt Lake City's online services through the Online Services link on the City's homepage. The link leads to the Online Services page, which consolidates all online services on a single page and is organized by transaction type such as job applications, bill payments, and permitting. **Exhibit 7** shows the Salt Lake City online services page⁵. This practice allows users to quickly identify the service they seek.

⁵ See Appendix D for another City's example of grouping online services by function.

Exhibit 7

Salt Lake City Online Services Are Grouped by Function



Source: Salt Lake City website.

In San Diego, DoIT has the objective of providing accurate and timely information on City websites. DoIT is responsible for posting content for a number of City webpages including the homepage and the drop-down list of online services. City departments provide content to DoIT, and DoIT makes the requested changes. In addition to the requested changes, DoIT could improve access to online services on the City website. If

website visitors could more easily access online services, they could interact with the City more efficiently. Likewise, an increase in the use of online services could result in more efficient City operations.

Recommendation #3 The Department of Information Technology (DoIT), in conjunction with City departments, should define which online services to include on the homepage drop-down list of online services called Access Online Services. DoIT should update the online services list and develop a procedure to periodically check with departments to determine that the list is accurate and complete. (Priority Level 3)

Recommendation #4 The Department of Information Technology should work with the Office of the Chief Operating Officer to design a webpage that groups online services by type of service and make it readily accessible from the homepage. (Priority Level 3)

Conclusion

Cities that are winning awards for their websites have adapted online services as a strategic objective with the support of their mayor. These cities have adapted processes for online delivery, integrated online services across departments, and organized these services by transaction type on their websites. During the course of our audit, we found that there is no strategic direction or policy initiative for online service delivery, the City does not have a coordinated process for departments to adapt business processes to online services, and website users cannot easily locate online services from the City website.

In San Diego, each department is responsible for identifying services to adapt for online delivery. Some departments conduct studies to identify and implement online services, but the process is non-uniform across the City. There is a process to review IT investments for strategic fit Citywide. This process is known as the IT Business Leadership Group (IT-BLG). The departmental evaluation process and the IT-BLG processes could be used together to increase online services.

The departments agreed or partially agreed with all of our recommendations to provide strategic direction and alignment for online services.

Recommendations

- Recommendation #1** We recommend that the Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, develop a strategic vision for online services. This should include developing specific goals and objectives for increasing online services offered, with clear roles and responsibilities for City departments, and milestones that are incorporated into the City's strategic planning documents. (Priority Level 3)
- Recommendation #2** The Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) should direct City departments to identify services that lend themselves to online delivery, and the COO should generate a Citywide report of prioritized potential services. Then, the COO should work with departments to conduct internal efforts to evaluate and adapt the potential services for online delivery. (Priority Level 3)
- Recommendation #3** The Department of Information Technology (DoIT), in conjunction with City departments, should define which online services to include on the homepage drop-down list of online services called Access Online Services. DoIT should update the online services list and develop a procedure to periodically check with departments to determine that the list is accurate and complete. (Priority Level 3)
- Recommendation #4** The Department of Information Technology should work with the Office of the Chief Operating Officer to design a webpage that groups online services by type of service and make it readily accessible from the homepage. (Priority Level 3)

Appendix A: IT Web Services Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Objective In accordance with the City Auditor’s Fiscal Year 2013 Work Plan, we conducted a performance audit of the Department of Information Technology’s (DoIT) web services. Specifically, our objectives were to:

- Determine if the listing of online services offered by City departments is current and complete; and
- Evaluate the barriers to enhancing or expanding online services.

Scope & Methodology To determine if the listing of online services was current and whether information was readily accessible on the City website, we:

- Reviewed pertinent Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), policies and procedures, and City Attorney memorandums;
- Interviewed DoIT management and staff to obtain an understanding of DoIT processes and responsibilities for website maintenance; and
- Catalogued and compared online services throughout the City during Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014.

To evaluate the barriers to enhancing or expanding online services, we:

- Interviewed a judgmental selection of four departments including those with robust online services and those which could greatly expand their online services; and
- Identified best practices for online service strategy and webpage organization among municipal websites during Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix B: Definition of Audit Recommendation Priorities

DEFINITIONS OF PRIORITY 1, 2, AND 3 AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Office of the City Auditor maintains a classification scheme applicable to audit recommendations and the appropriate corrective actions as follows:

Priority Class ⁶	Description ⁷	Implementation Action ⁸
1	Fraud or serious violations are being committed, significant fiscal or equivalent non-fiscal losses are occurring.	Immediate
2	A potential for incurring significant or equivalent fiscal and/or non-fiscal losses exist.	Six months
3	Operation or administrative process will be improved.	Six months to one year

⁶ The City Auditor is responsible for assigning audit recommendation priority class numbers. A recommendation which clearly fits the description for more than one priority class shall be assigned the higher number.

⁷ For an audit recommendation to be considered related to a significant fiscal loss, it will usually be necessary for an actual loss of \$50,000 or more to be involved or for a potential loss (including unrealized revenue increases) of \$100,000 to be involved. Equivalent non-fiscal losses would include, but not be limited to, omission or commission of acts by or on behalf of the City which would be likely to expose the City to adverse criticism in the eyes of its residents.

⁸ The implementation time frame indicated for each priority class is intended as a guideline for establishing implementation target dates. While prioritizing recommendations is the responsibility of the City Auditor, determining implementation dates is the responsibility of the City Administration.

Appendix C: Screenshot of Louisville, Kentucky, Online Service Goals

LouisvilleKy.Gov Feedback ▾

Home About **Process**

STRATEGIC PLAN

Departments:

Strategic Plan > Make more services available online

Make more services available online

★★★★☆ Total votes: 80

Goal
 Increase number of online services offered by Metro Government by 15% annually between FY13 and FY19 and increase the Open Data, Open Metadata and Open Content about city assets and services available online.

Why is this important?
 Online government interactions mean more convenient services for citizens and businesses. Online government interactions improve the cost effectiveness and accuracy of government operations. A first class city also makes certain that every aspect of the built environment also has reliable digital descriptions available to citizens and entrepreneurs for deep engagement mediated by smart devices.

What are we doing to accomplish this?

- Metro Technology Service (MTS) will work with all departments to catalogue all services not currently available online by FY14; this will include work to establish a robust, nationally recognized, digital urban planning program that addresses digital infrastructure, Open Data, Open Metadata and Open Content.
- After completing the catalogue, departments will work with MTS to determine what services lend themselves to online delivery; once potential online services have been agreed to, departments will undertake business process reengineering to adapt their process to online delivery by FY15.

How we are going to get there

Make more services available online
 Increase number of online services offered by Metro Government by 15% annually between FY13 and FY19 and increase the Open Data, Open Metadata and Open Content about city assets and services available online

Division 4, Beat 2
 Division Website
 Subscribe to crime trends in this division.

Vision & Mission

Vision
 "Louisville is a city of lifelong learning and great jobs, wellness, and compassion"

Mission
 Louisville Metro Government is the catalyst for creating a world-class city that provides its citizens with safe and vibrant neighborhoods, great jobs, a strong system of education and innovation, and a high quality of life.

Objectives

- Deliver Excellent City Services
- Solve Systemic Budget Issues
- Take Job Creation to the Next Level
- Invest in our People and Neighborhoods
- Create Plans For A Vibrant Future

Guiding Principles
 Together, we have the ability to improve the quality of life for all citizens in every corner of our community. Please, take a moment to read through the following documents that guide Mayor Fischer's Administration.

- [Citizen's Bill of Rights](#) and
- [Fischer Administration Team Values](#)

Related Documents and Sites

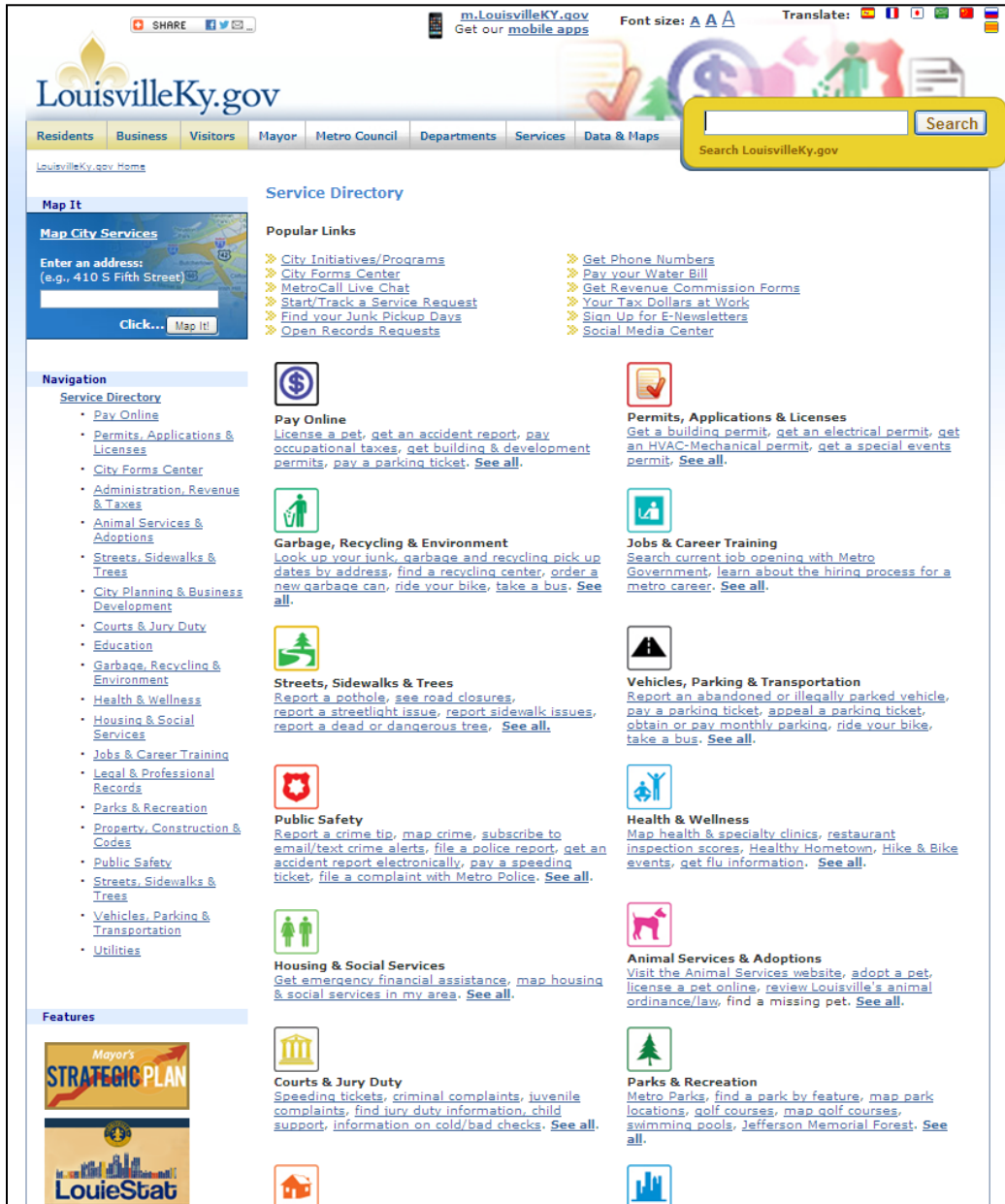
- [Progress Louisville](#)
- [Vision Louisville](#)
- [Bloomberg Innovation Delivery Teams](#)
- Sustain Louisville - Coming Soon!

Relevant Links

- [Mayor's Homepage](#)
- [Office of Performance Improvement](#)
- [LouieStat](#)
- [Data.Louisvilleky.gov](#)

Source: Louisville Metro Government webpage.

Appendix D: Screenshot of Louisville, Kentucky, Online Services



Source: Louisville Metro Government webpage.



**THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: December 6, 2013

TO: Eduardo Luna, City Auditor

FROM: Stacey LoMedico, Assistant Chief Operating Officer
Jeff Leveroni, Director, Department of Information Technology

SUBJECT: Management Response to the Performance Audit of IT Web Services, dated November 2013

Management has reviewed the City Auditor's recommendations in the audit report for IT Web Services. Our response to each of the audit recommendations is documented below.

Finding 1:

Recommendation #1

That the Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, develop a strategic vision for online services. This should include developing specific goals and objectives for increasing online services offered, with clear roles and responsibilities for City departments, and milestones that are incorporated into the City's strategic planning documents.

Management Response: **Partially Agree**

Management agrees with the recommendation there needs to be a comprehensive approach for developing the City's online services. Until a new Mayor is on board and has articulated their approach, strategic goals and objectives for the organization, management is not able to develop an approved plan. However, because customer service and communications is a specific focus of the City's new organizational structure introduced by Interim Mayor Gloria and unanimously adopted by City Council, management has clear direction that online services will facilitate the goals of the new organization. Thus, management will work with departments to identify online services and programs within the next 120 days for presentation to the Mayor in April.

Time to implement: **120 days for the initial review**

Finding 2:

Recommendation #2

The Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) should direct City departments to identify services that lend themselves to online delivery, and the COO should generate a citywide report of prioritized potential services. Then, the COO should work with departments to conduct internal efforts to evaluate and adapt the potential services for online delivery.

Management Response: **Agree**

Per the response to Recommendation #1 staff will complete this and provide to the Mayor for review and approval. Time to implement: **12 months**

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Management Response to the Performance Audit of IT Web Services, dated November 2013
December 6, 2013

Finding 3:

Recommendation #3

The Department of Information Technology (DoIT), in conjunction with City departments, should define which online services to include on the homepage drop-down list of online services called Access Online Services. DoIT should update the online services list and develop a procedure to periodically check with departments to determine that the list is accurate and complete.

Management Response: **Agree**

The Department of Information Technology will confer with departmental content owners to review the list of services outlined in Exhibit #6 of the audit document. The Access Online Services drop-down list will be adjusted accordingly. Additionally, the Department of Information Technology will periodically prompt departmental content owners to share updates related to existing/new online services, to facilitate the maintenance of the Access Online Services drop-down list. Time to implement: **45 days**

Recommendation #4

The Department of Information Technology should work with the Office of the Chief Operating Officer to design a webpage that groups online services by type of service and make it readily accessible from the homepage.

Management Response: **Partially agree**

Historically, the format and content of the SanDiego.gov website is based on direction approved by the Mayor. The format and content may be limited by the legacy web technology currently utilized by City staff. The Department of Information Technology will propose and implement an interim solution for an Online Services web page that is similar in structure to Exhibit #7 displayed in the audit document. Time to implement: **45 days**

Upon the election of the next Mayor, and with the support of the Office of the Chief Operating Officer, the Department of Information Technology will propose acquiring Web consultant services to evaluate the current SanDiego.gov format and technology, and propose a “best practice” strategy that will result in a service-centric, SanDiego.gov website. Anticipated activities and timeframes for this endeavor include:

- Consultant acquisition, website evaluation and proposal: **6 months.**
- Implementation of a service-centric strategy: **To be determined based upon the consultant recommendation.**

cc: Scott Chadwick, Chief Operating Officer
Jeff Sturak, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Tony Heinrichs, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Ron Villa, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Mary Lewis, Chief Financial Officer
Department Directors