

San Francisco

Digital Innovation Team Proposal

March, 2021



City and County of San Francisco

Office of Mayor London N. Breed

Mayoral Term: January 2020 – January 2024 (eligible for re-election)

Application completed by:

Sean Elsbernd, Chief of Staff

Sophia Kittler, Mayor's Liaison to the Board of Supervisors

Sean.Elsbernd@SFGov.org | Sophia.Kittler@SFGov.org

Phone: 415 554 6153

Chief Digital Services Officer: Carrie Bishop

Chief Data Officer: Jason Lally

Interim Director of Civic Innovation: Amardeep Prasad

Existing Innovation Capacity

Structure & Skills

Please describe your city's existing innovation capacity. What is the composition of the team or teams that support this work?

What types of innovation skills do you use on a regular basis?

The City and County of San Francisco currently has a robust but fragmented “digital innovation” capacity, which is primarily focused on the digitization of existing city services, and is spread across several Departments. This includes:

- **Office of Civic Innovation**, a part of the Department of Technology. This office of 3 staff, including a (interim) Chief Innovation Officer, runs the “Startup in Residence (Stir) program, which pairs startups with departments seeking a specific innovation; and oversees the Civic Bridge program, which brings in tech companies to consult on identified projects.
- **Office of Digital Services**, part of the City Administrators office, is a 40 person team that helps departments use Agile design principles and build new digital interfaces. The office is led by the Chief Digital Services Officer, Carrie Bishop.
- **City Performance Auditor** in the Office of the Controller builds on our DataSF platform to analyze City data on service delivery by providing reports and a “scorecard”, ranging from metrics on street cleaning to emergency medical response times.
- **DataAcademy**, part of the DataSF initiative in the Office of the Controller, is a shared-services group that teaches department staff learn design principles, how to incorporate PowerBI and data visualization into their work-flow, and supports departments on digital initiatives.
- **COIT (Committee on Information Technology)** is a public-facing committee of 13 Department heads that manages the medium- and long-term strategy for technological investment

Across these various offices, department staff has support on agile design, data analytics, and some human-centered design. While there is coordination among the technology-focused groups, there cross-departmental prioritization or collaboration is limited to long-term planning and major initiatives. For example, COIT reviews the five-year ICT plan and the Green Technology Purchasing Policy, but would not routinely engage on development and implementation of a coordination of case management software between the Department of Homelessness and the Department of Public Health.

These robust, but bureaucratic, resources operate independent of the Mayor’s office, with project escalation only as part of routine department updates.

Defining Success

How do you define success for digital services in your city? How do you measure it?

San Francisco defines a successful digital system by evaluating its projects against the following four principles:

1. Put the needs of residents first
2. Focus on delivery and outcomes over process
3. Create an agile and data driven culture
4. Make City services accessible to everyone

We do not, currently, have defined metrics for these goals, but are committed to the public process, public feedback, and iterating on our designs to reflect that feedback.

Technology Infrastructure

Describe the state of your back-end technology systems. Are they integrated across the city?

The City and County of San Francisco, like many cities, is modernizing 20 year-old business systems and technology infrastructure at the same time City services are transforming from paper to digital services. This transformation has accelerated during the COVID crisis and these new digital services rely on high capacity networks, common virtual meeting platforms, advanced cybersecurity protections, and robust multi-departmental data sharing. These environments are integrated and deliver new equitable, digital services that meet the latest accessibility standards. However, back-end technologies are not, for the most part, integrated.

The City has made financial investments in Citywide enterprise management systems, which are available for departments should they elect to opt-in.

The City coordinates these investments to support departmental digital services through a centralized policy board, COIT.

Procurement

How long does it take your city to procure new technology services and digital infrastructure?

The City has streamlined technology procurement to speed the process and lower the cost, which enables department to benefit from the technology investment as soon as possible.

First, the City develops enterprise license agreements to purchase common technologies such as networks, document management, business productivity tools, enterprise applications and cellular services. These pre-established vendor contracts allow the procurement manager to easily issue a purchase order. The enterprise agreement speeds the process because it includes pre-negotiated terms and reduced pricing based on volume discounts. In the FY 20/21 budget year, the City saved \$11M from using enterprise technology agreements.

Second, the City accelerates the procurement cycle through our “Technology Marketplace”. The Office of Contract Administration competitively bids technology and services to create a list of pre-qualified vendors. The City creates tiers based on the capacity of the vendors in order to include a broad range of suppliers from small, nimble providers to larger firms able to address more complex projects, with tiers based on National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) classifications. These vendors have accepted the City’s terms and conditions, including rigorous social requirements and are able to source a wide range of products. Importantly, the Technology Marketplace also enables the City to promote use of local businesses.

There is a streamlined procurement process for data that is not confidential, for which most are executed within 2 months. Procurement for IT to handle sensitive or personal information (financial, HIPAA) takes longer.

Projects & Prioritization

Who makes decisions in your city about what innovation projects you work on?

What role does the mayor have in setting the innovation agenda?

For most innovation or digitization projects, Department leadership determines prioritization and funding for their own City department. The coordination with the Office of Civic Innovation and the Digital Services team are generally set and prioritized by an internal group including the Director of Digital Services, Director of Civic Innovation, and the Director of Technology, among other staff. The Mayor has historically not been involved in individual department decisions, but has weighed in on larger strategic initiatives, or those closely aligned to major policy priorities.

For example, as the COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center leadership developed the health indicator dashboard, the Mayor and her senior staff collaborated with the digital services team on communications and language, design, and analysis to ensure a clear message of public safety and transparency through the pandemic and into the reopening phases.

In recent years, the City has undertaken several innovative initiatives, ranging from focused digital initiatives like the Dahlia affordable housing portal, to a fundamental overhaul of cross-departmental permitting. These programs are conducted directly with the digital services teams and the departments, typically without direct Mayor’s Office involvement.

Major technology system changes

Do you have any major technology system changes in the works for your city?

The new SF Permitting Center is an example of ongoing major system advancement. The new 49 South Van Ness building is a state-of-the-art, 16-story tower that co-locates 15 departments and 1,800 staff to deliver a one stop Permitting Center for construction, business and special event permits.

The City currently has more than 13 different locations where residents may need to go to obtain a permit. The new Permit Center brings together the permitting departments under one roof a space designed to improve collaboration and efficiency. Building technology as well as new digital services for online permitting and electronic plan review contributed to significant improvements in the City's vast permitting services. Through shared physical space and integrating back end software, Permitting departments will have greater opportunities to collaborate and communicate, improving the overall experience for customers and staff as they complete over 70,000 building permits per year, hopefully shortening the permit review time by weeks or months.

Recent Projects

What is an example of a recent digital innovation in your city that you are proud of?

What are the most exciting results of this work?

What is an example of a digital project that failed? What did you learn from it?

Some recent innovation successes were through partnerships with the Office of Civic Innovation's Civic Bridge Program. One example, Dahlia, is a portal for SF residents to find below-market-rate (BMR) housing, providing access and transparency to the affordable housing lottery.

The Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) sought to create an online system for residents to find and apply for subsidized and affordable housing. Through Civic Bridge, MOHCD and Google staff coordinated on user experience design, software development, and project management to deliver product strategy and technical recommendations. To understand barriers to affordable housing, the team conducted stakeholder interviews and field research, designed for multiple user types and conducted user research to test designs and develop recommendations. The joint team developed the conceptual design of the "Dahlia" affordable housing portal, which was subsequently built by the City.

In 2016, the City was frustrated by a lack of high quality and affordable internet service throughout the City. The City's digital divide meant 100,000 residents lacked Internet access at home, including 15% of public school students lack Internet at home and over 50,000 San Franciscans have sluggish dial-up speeds. To address this need, the City explored a public private partnership (P3) business plan to fund fiber broadband service to every home and business the City. Construction is difficult in a dense city and when the total cost of the project exceeded \$2.5B, the project was paused. The City pivoted to a more targeted approach, prioritizing service for affordable housing developments in the City

where lack of access is most acute. Rather than blanket the entire City, including those with adequate service, the newly conceived initiative seeks address just the most critical need. To date, the City is serving over 6,000 homes with high-speed broadband service.

Innovation Vision for the City

Improving Collaboration

Do you have a strategy or stated goals for scaling digital innovation in your city? If yes, when was the strategy launched and who leads it? If not, please tell us what the status of your digital strategy is.

What does your city need the most to create meaningful innovation and achieve creativity breakthroughs?

What is the biggest obstacle preventing your city government from delivering more seamless user experiences and improved outcomes?

Mayor Breed's vision for digital services in the San Francisco is based in access, accountability, and coordination: All San Franciscans should be able to connect to government services and engage in the public process through accessible portals and easy-to-find information.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, San Francisco demonstrated that focused and coordinated leadership and project management could unlock new innovations and faster product iteration for vastly improved transparency and accountability. Routine stakeholder engagement with iterative feedback loops, robust data analysis, and close coordination led to clearer policy-making, better communication with the public, and improved outcomes.

To reach our City's innovation potential, San Francisco must better integrate our the digital services and innovation work with political major Mayoral and Citywide initiatives, particularly focusing on transformative policy shifts that are enhanced by technology, rather than isolated technology investments.

The City's technology investments are an essential, parallel, but ultimately separated process from our legislative and policy-making initiatives. This system works well to support our ongoing, major technology upgrades and investments, such as broadband access to public housing. However, these technology upgrades necessarily trail City policy shifts, and are unable to respond as nimbly for cross-departmental policy priorities. As such, service innovations that are tech-enabled, rather than purely technological, are limited by the technology budget cycle.

Digital Strategy Management

San Francisco's digital strategy is managed by the Committee on Information Technology (COIT). COIT is a public-facing body that identifies and prioritizes major technology initiatives and sets the city's investment schedule for those projects. The Committee is comprised of 13 department heads.

The City's major strategic initiatives are:

- Support and Maintain Critical Infrastructure: *Investment in basic needs*
- Prepare and Protect City Systems: *Cybersecurity and disaster preparedness*
- Make City Operations more Efficient and Effective: *data-driven investments for efficient service delivery*

- Improve Customer Service: *replacing legacy technology*

COIT develops a 5-year Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Plan annually to plan fiscal investments in major technology projects.

I-Team Grant

How would this grant help you achieve your strategic vision?

How would you use this investment to support your vision for the future?

Based on your experience, which three services in your city would benefit from a digital transformation process?

What measurable outcome would you want to accomplish as a result?

The Bloomberg I-team grant will support the Mayor's office with the skills and resources to replicate that environment outside of the Emergency Operations Center. Mayor Breed's top policy priorities – mental health treatment, social justice reform, reducing bureaucracy, improving government accountability – would each benefit from human-centered design, data analysis, and clear communication; the I-team aligns those skills more closely to the policy-making arm of the City.

In order to achieve this vision, Mayor Breed hopes to leverage the City's existing data, Digital Services team, and innovation partnerships, and connect those resources directly with her office through an innovation Director on her senior staff that regularly reports on policy updates. This team will have political savvy, policy expertise, and regular access, in addition to a foundation in innovation and service delivery that will be augmented by the training and support of the Bloomberg innovation professionals. This structure will leverage the Mayor's robust policy advisory team, communications office, and close integration with the Budget Office to reinforce innovation priorities.

This structure marries digital modernization with policy innovation, driving improved outcomes across departments, preventing orphaned projects. It will ensure that both the innovation projects get the political support and ownership necessary to move quickly, and that the top policy initiatives be directly integrated with the top-notch innovation and digital resources teams.

Mayor Breed proposes three priority projects, to be staffed by an Innovation team in the Mayor's Office, and supported by additional technical staffing on the Digital Services team.

Small Business Navigation

How can San Francisco accelerate small business and economic recovery by unifying its grant and assistance programs?

Goal: Create centralized application and City portal; decrease application time burden on businesses by >50%

Mental & Behavioral Health Treatment Coordination

How does SF use design and technology to connect clients to the best treatment programs as efficiently as possible, and how can we improve their long-term treatment outcomes?

Goal: Increase client base, and reduce case management burden by 25%;

reduce jail population with mental health challenges by 100%

Government Accountability and City-funded Programming

What City-Funded services are available to San Franciscans across policy areas, how do we connect residents to those services, and how effective are they?

These three policy areas require close coordination, not only across numerous departments, but also with the Mayor's Budget Office and senior policy team, as well as with key political and community stakeholders. They represent important policy areas in which the Mayor is interested and directly involved.

The I-Team's expertise would not only bring those innovation skills in-house to the Mayor's office, but will help the office build lasting language and connection to work with the existing and talented teams across the Department of Technology, Committee on Information Technology, and Digital Services teams.

Staffing in the Mayor's Office

A new position, Mayor's Director of Innovation, will report directly to the Mayor and oversee the delivery of the program over three years. This position will be responsible for driving the projects forward, creating stakeholder alignment and ensuring that the Mayor's commitment to innovation is understood by all departments. This position will also work on opportunities to showcase the work of the projects. This position will be supported by an additional new role of Mayor's Innovation Policy Advisor will support the Director of Innovation in developing innovation policy, coordinating with day-to-day operations, and maintaining stakeholder engagement.

In addition, we propose moving the existing Office of Civic Innovation out of the Department of Technology and back into the Mayor's Office. Originally founded in the Mayor's Office in 2012, this team includes the Director of Civic Innovation and two Innovation Fellows. The team is expert at bringing in private sector skills to support innovative projects within the City. This move will increase the profile of the City's Innovation programs and bring in more private sector partners for pro bono support under the Civic Bridge and STiR programs, it will also create a more cohesive approach to innovation in the City, and support innovation policy development.

Operational staffing

This strong mayoral team will partner closely with Digital Services in the City Administrator's Office to deliver operationally on the proposed projects. Digital Services is a team of 45 designers, engineers and product managers, working on a range of digital projects across the City. This group also recently merged with DataSF, which supports departments to open data, and make data-driven decisions.

New, dedicated positions in Digital Services will support this work:

- Data analyst (1824) (DataSF)
- Project Manager (1824)
- UX Designer (1053)
- Engineer (1043)
- *Technical Architect (1044)*
- *Service Designer (1054)*

The Technical Architect and Service Designer will be predominantly working on the Mental Health SF project proposed below, and as such will be funded by the City through MHSF project funding.

These positions will be backed up by a strong digital team, and the leadership support of the Chief Digital Services Officer, and Chief Data Officer. Together, we will work in partnership with the Bloomberg experts and call on additional data and digital expertise throughout the three-year program.

Youth Fellows addition (optional)

Mayor Breed is committed to racial equity and inclusion, and to giving the City's youth opportunities to participate in City government. We propose an addition of two youth fellows to this team. These fellows would be high school graduates who are currently, or have recently completed a hands-on "bootcamp" to quickly learn coding, product management, or design. Supported by the Mayor's Office and Digital Services, these young people would be active team members and receive mentorship and guidance while building work experience and getting a taste of impactful work solving big problems for the City.

Funding & Budget

Do you currently receive external funding to develop this area of work in your city? If so, what is the impact of that funding?

While San Francisco successfully manages the planning for fiscal investments in our technology and digital services through the COIT committee, pairing with outside funding and design services on specific projects have consistently proven nimble and efficient for top priority projects. The vast majority of digital innovation efforts are funded through the annual City budget, and do not include external funding, beyond an occasional grant to a specific department for a specific project.

San Francisco's Office of Civic Innovation also matches private donors of technology consulting services with City department consulting through its Civic Bridge initiative. These in-kind donations from organizations like Google are selected annually each spring, and work particularly well for self-contained, consumer facing digitization projects within a single department or office. They do not include monetary grants or additional external funding.

Grant Acceptance Process

What is the process for accepting grant funds in your city? For example, does your city require approval by City Council to accept funds, and if so, what would be the timeline for seeking their approval? Can your city accept grant funds directly or will you require a fiscal sponsor?

All grants that the City receives require review by the office of the Controller, followed by a formal legislative 'accept and expend' process through the Board of Supervisors. This process can take from 4 to 8 weeks, depending on the calendar, political considerations, and type of legislation. The legislative package would require:

- A resolution or ordinance (drafted by San Francisco's City Attorney)
- Grant application
- Grant Agreements (Bloomberg, City)
- Ethics filings (Mayor)

Upon receiving legislative approval, the City would be able to receive funds, and would not require a fiscal sponsor. A proposed budget is attached.