HOUSING AUTHORITY CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: HACLA Board of Commissioners

FROM: Luis Yataco, Information Technology Director *ly*

THROUGH: Douglas Guthrie, President and CEO *Douglas Guthrie*
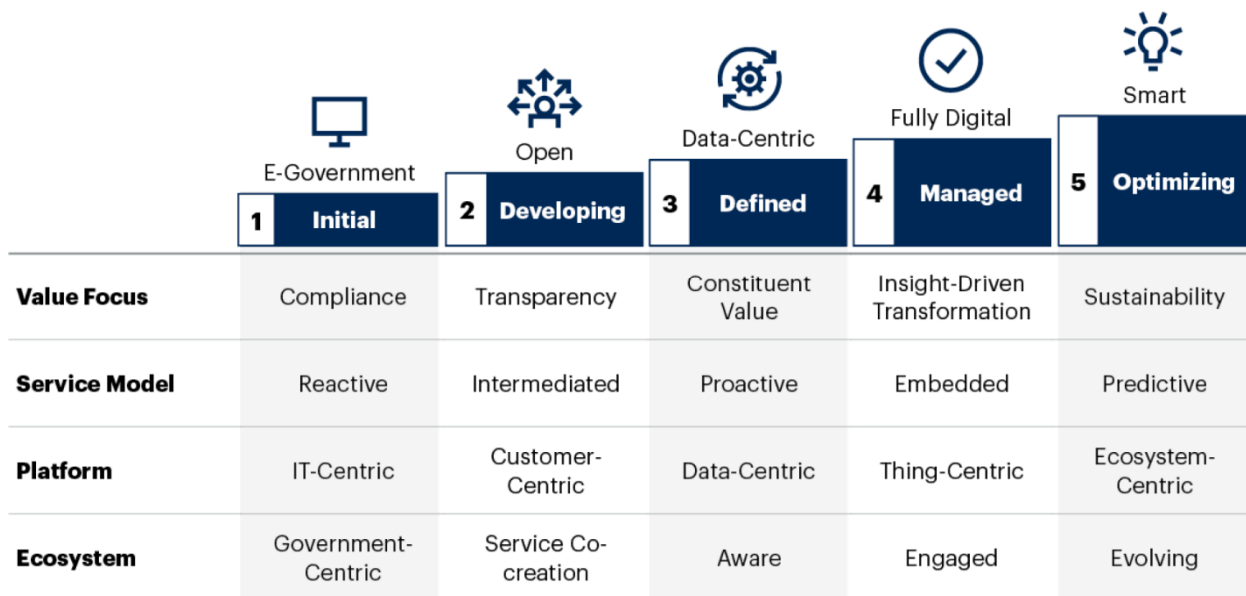
DATE: October 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Information Technology Initiatives 2020 Annual Update

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This report is intended to provide the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles ("HACLA") Board of Commissioners ("BOC") an annual progress update on Information Technology ("IT") initiatives in line with the HACLA Vision Plan "Build HOPE". This edition prioritizes new and urgent initiatives covered by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and. Economic Security ("CARES") Act and their overall impact on HACLA's modernization efforts.

The City's Digital Transformation and HACLA's Modernization

Local government agencies are on a path to change and mature their service delivery practices by incorporating technology and data to optimize and transform their services. The City of Los Angeles[1] and the County of Los Angeles are making major strides into what is now called "Smart" digital government practices that emphasize a citizen-centered experience with the use of Artificial Intelligence, web-based technology, mobile applications, and social media. This is transforming the eco-system of government services and citizen experience surrounding HACLA. This path is outlined by Gartner, Inc.[2] with the following diagram.

Digital Government Maturity Model

	E-Government 1 Initial	Open 2 Developing	Data-Centric 3 Defined	Fully Digital 4 Managed	Smart 5 Optimizing
Value Focus	Compliance	Transparency	Constituent Value	Insight-Driven Transformation	Sustainability
Service Model	Reactive	Intermediated	Proactive	Embedded	Predictive
Platform	IT-Centric	Customer-Centric	Data-Centric	Thing-Centric	Ecosystem-Centric
Ecosystem	Government-Centric	Service Co-creation	Aware	Engaged	Evolving

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[1] City of Los Angeles Executive Directive No. 29: Contactless and People-Centered City Initiative
[2] Gartner, Inc. is a leading technology research and advisory firm http://www.gartner.com

HACLA has traditionally been on the "Initial" step of the maturity model, however, keeping in line with the transformation of government services and practices surrounding HACLA, Build HOPE outlined a path to automation and the modernization of HACLA's business processes. All three major areas: **People**, **Place** and **Pathways** include strategies to leverage technology owned by HACLA or to acquire and expand the use of technology. During 2018 and 2019, HACLA stayed on track and completed almost all the initiatives outlined in the Vision Plan. 2020 looked to be another year of progress in fulfilling the plan. However, starting in March 2020, new health mandates which emphasize staff and stakeholder safety, have required government agencies such as HACLA to quickly embrace technologies that allow **work from home for staff** and **self-service technologies for stakeholders**. The pace to adapt to altered business processes, procure and implement new technologies has been significantly accelerated.

Work from Home - Teleworking
HACLA expanded the use of remote access and video conferencing technologies to establish work from home protocols for its employees. In a very short amount of time, HACLA provided training to over 500 employees outlining the steps for accessing network resources such as email, enterprise systems (ORACLE, Voyager, Elite) and files while not in the office inclusive of security protocols requiring dual authentication (token). Web conferencing technology such as GoToMeeting was established as the standard platform for virtual face-to-face interactions.

From PCs to Mobile Tablets and Accessories
Looking to the future and to leverage the accelerated transformation, HACLA is now prioritizing mobile-first technology acquisitions. In 2020, HACLA had budgeted the replacement of over 500 Windows 7 desk Personal Computers ("PC"s) with Windows 10 desk PCs. However, this has now been changed to the replacement of those outdated Windows 7 PCs with mobile Surface Pros which staff can dock at work and at home. The acquisition of the Surface Pros and accessories such as monitors and docking stations is fulfilling three needs: replacement of the old office desk PC, a mobile device for staff to access network resources when teleworking, and the proper accessories to set up an office at home.

From Desk Phones to Cell Phones
HACLA is also in the process of replacing an antiquated phone system. In the initial phases of this project, all public housing sites have replaced their analog phones with digital phones. In the next phases of the project however, a different approach is being considered for large staff offices such as Section 8 Valley, Section 8 South and Headquarters. Instead of replacing all desk phones with similar devices, HACLA is also adapting this project to the times and replacing a significant amount of old desk phones not with new desk phones, but instead with cell phones. This provides additional resources and mobility options to staff. It is anticipated that approximately 10% of staff will be using a cell phone as their primary communication device. The City of Los Angeles has taken on a similar initiative when replacing their desk phones.

Self Service – Virtual Contact Center, Online Certifications, Kiosks and Website
In the last few months, the disruption to traditional brick-and-mortar walk-in services has led to an increase in the need for an expansion of the use of the contact center technologies and online web portals.

Virtual Contact Center
In February 2020, HACLA migrated several small contact centers to a single platform. Doing this before the pandemic has played a critical role in handling higher call volumes and providing staff the flexibility to work from home as contact center agents with the use of a cellphone. Additional functionality is scheduled to be implemented in 2020 that will significantly expand the capabilities of the call center agents to engage with and improve the customer experience of callers/stakeholders. Centralizing the call centers into the new "Customer Contact Center" will also lead to standardization and to more efficient call handling and call resolution.

Online Certifications
Both Elite and Voyager have updated their online portals to replace the paper intensive certification process with online forms and document uploads in a matter that will satisfy the complex steps taken at HACLA. Both platforms are on separate but similar tracks for the testing of their functionalities.

To ensure that Section 8 is improving organizational efficiency to better support program delivery, all caseworkers and supervisors from S8 West office received training on how to use Elite's MyHousing portal, a **free online service** system that will allow S8 participant families to complete their **annual reexamination** 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from any smartphone, mobile device, or computer with Internet access for annual reexaminations to be effective November 2020.

Separately for Asset Management and Housing Services, Voyager is being set up to incorporate all the relevant steps for online initial eligibility determination as well as annual and interim reviews. These online capabilities are expected to roll out in 4Q, 2020 for Asset Management and 1Q, 2021 for Housing Services.

Kiosks
As an extension to the online portals, thirty-four (34) kiosks will be placed at management offices in 2021 to address limited walk-up traffic. For clients and residents that do not have access or devices at home, HACLA will install walk-up kiosks at key locations which will have ready access to the portals in multiple languages, including answers informational videos and answers to frequently asked questions.

Website
HACLA is expediting plans to redesign its main website to better accommodate the almost 80,000 page views per month. The current layout is not conducive to changes in line with the latest accessibility requirements and it hinders expanded use of the site. HACLA has selected a vendor that has ample experience in government website. The new redesign is scheduled to start next month, and it is estimated to take seven months.

Connectivity for Residents
HACLA has been actively looking for opportunities to bridge the digital divide affecting the residents. The impact of this divide is much greater now for students struggling with acquiring the tools necessary for virtual learning.

Partnership with Starry
As published by the LA Times[3] in October 9, HACLA has partnered with a start-up internet service provider, Starry, to provide residents at eight (8) public housing sites with very low-cost high-speed internet access. This program will reach up to 9,000 residents and will provide them free internet access for its initial term during the 2020-2021 school year. The installation work will be funded via a grant Starry has received from Microsoft and will start this month with Imperial Courts.

Partnership with T-Mobile
The remaining public Housing sites will receive T-Mobile hotspots acquired through a program T-Mobile is extending to HACLA called EmpowerED 2.0. Specific areas within Social Halls and Gyms will be converted into classrooms-style study halls for student residents.

Vision Plan – IT Initiatives
In addition to the items stated above, a significant number of initiatives were added in 2020 and many of those will continue into 2021. Please see Attachment 1 – (Information Technology Summary of Key Actions and October 2020 Update).

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[3] https://www.latimes.com/business/technology/story/2020-10-09/tech-companies-step-up-to-bring-free-wi-fi-to-l-a-public-housing-students

Attachment 1
Information Technology Summary of Key Actions

PEOPLE			Timeline			
Investment Area	**Resident and Participant Leadership**	**Work to Date and Planned Activity**	**Pre 2020**	**New Item**	**2020 Update**	**2021 Highlights**
Strategy 2	*Develop and implement strategies to engage hard-to-reach residents*					
Action 2.3	Assess existing communication tools and look for technology opportunities to improve communication & engagement with all residents	S8: Waitlist Application Portal	Completed 2Q, 2017			
		AM: RENTCafé Portal	Completed 2Q, 2016			
		Evaluate Portal for online applications (Market Rate)	Completed 4Q, 2019			
		Implement Online applications (Market Rate)		Yes	*Completed*	
		Evaluate Online Certifications portal (waitlist, move-in and annual recertifications)		Yes	*Completed*	
		Implement Online Certifications Portal (50059)		Yes	*To Be Completed, 4Q 2020*	
		Evaluate YARDI Commercial Café Portal		Yes	*Completed*	
		Implement YARDI Commercial Café Portal		Yes	*Completed*	
		HS: Walk-in Payment System (WIPS)	Completed 2Q, 2015			
		Automated Clearing House (ACH)	Completed 2Q, 2013			
		Applicant Portal	Completed 1Q, 2018			
		Waitlist Application Portal	Completed 1Q, 2018			
		RENTCafé for PHA residents	Completed: 3Q, 2018			
		Kiosks for lobbies [CARES Funded]: S8 (13), AM (5) & HS (16)		Yes	*To be Acquired 4Q, 2020*	*Deployment: HS: Q4, 2020; S8: 1Q, 2021*
New Action	Connectivity for Residents including internet access and devices	Partnership with Starry (Wireless Internet Service Provider) to provide services for 8 public housing communities, approx. 9,000 residents		Yes	*Four (4) Communities to receive services 4Q, 2020*	*Four (4) additional communities to receice services 1Q, 2021*
		Partnership with T-Mobile to provdie hotspots to over 1,500 families [CARES Funded]		Yes	*Target 4Q, 2020*	
		Chromebook Lending Libraries at Computer Labs [CARES Funded]		Yes	*Target 4Q, 2020*	

Attachment 1
Information Technology Summary of Key Actions

Investment Area	Public Safety	Work to Date and Planned Activity	Pre 2020	New Item	2020 Update	2021 Highlights
Strategy 2	*Improve security monitoring at all HACLA sites*					
Action 15.3	Install safety cameras as well as more and better lighting.	HS: Nickerson Gardens Imperial Courts, Ramona Gardens, Avalon Gardens, Gonzaque Village, Pueblo Del Rio, Pico Gardens, Estrada Courts, Mar Vista Gardens, William Mead, San Fernando, Racho San Pedro	Completed 3Q, 2018 Completed 1Q, 2019			
		Expansion to S8 South (21), S8 Valley (16) and HQ (added 5)		Yes	*Completed 2Q, 2020*	

PLACE				Timeline		
Investment Area	**Management Excellence**	**Work to Date and Planned Activity**	**Pre 2020**	**New Item**	**2020 Update**	**2021 Highlights**
Strategy 9	*Manage capital resources and reserves to sustain useful life of existing and new units in HACLA's portfolio*					
Action 9.2	Continue to evolve use of technology to manage requests for maintenance/repairs, deployment of personnel, view alerts and outages related to specific developments, view scheduled inspections & evaluate cost/time	AM: "Yardi Maintenance Mobile" Additional staff training	Completed 1Q, 2017 Completed 2Q, 2019			
		Evaluate YARDI Facility Manager/Elevate/YARDIOne		Yes	*Completed*	
		Implement Facility Manager/Elevate/YARDIOne		Yes	*To Be Completed, 4Q 2020*	
		Evaluate YARDI Commercial Module/Commercial Café		Yes	*Completed*	
		Implement Commercial Module/Commercial Café		Yes	*Completed*	
		Implement Commercial Café (HACLA Staff Work Orders)		Yes	*To Be Completed, 4Q 2020*	
		HS: "Yardi Maintenance Mobile" Additional staff training	Completed 2Q, 2018 Completed 1Q, 2019			

Action 9.4	Expand technologies to communicate with private market landlords and property managers of Section 8 properties to share program information; improve tenant-landlord relations; offer tips & training.	S8: Partner Portal
		   Housing Quality Standards mobile application
		   Interface review for expanded functionality
			Completed 2011
			Completed 3Q, 2017
			
			Target Q2, 2019
					Ongoing	

Attachment 1
Information Technology Summary of Key Actions

PATHWAYS			Timeline			
Investment Area	**Organizational Efficiency**	**Work to Date and Planned Activity**	**Pre 2020**	**New Item**	**2020 Update**	**2021 Highlights**
Strategy 5	***Optimize technology platforms to enhance customer service and better support program delivery***					
Action 5.1	Develop a technology roadmap and framework to guide the development and implementation of information technology solutions	Industry and Market Research Guiding Principles for IT Solutions	Completed 1Q, 2018 Completed 3Q, 2019			*Multiple enterprise systems will be moved from on-premise to the cloud*
Action 5.2	Conduct evaluation of current Emphasis Elite and Yardi Voyager systems to improve system alignment and integration.	Vendor assessment of current capacity and future development roadmap S8: Extend contract with Emphasys S8 & HS: Single-platform evaluation	Completed 2Q, 2018 Completed 1Q 2019 Completed 2Q, 2019			
		Renegotiate Contract with Yardi		Yes	*Target 4Q, 2020*	
Action 5.3	Identify and evaluate current HACLA processes across business lines for "automation gaps" and systems bottlenecks to expand usefulness of technology to handle current manual processes and increase productivity (e.g. automated procurement, HR and payment approvals, cloud based data systems, etc.)	Assessment of manual paper-based workflows Business Process Reviews by Yardi and Emphasys Voyager Platform upgrade for Jobs Plus Initiative	Completed 1Q, 2018 Completed 4Q, 2018 Completed 3Q, 2019			
		AM: Procure2Pay (Payscan)		Yes	*Completed 2Q, 2020*	
		VendorCafe		Yes	*Target 1Q, 2021*	
		YARDI Screening		Yes	*Completed 3Q, 2020*	
		Evaluation of Electronic Document Management opportunities expanded for **[CARES Funded]**		*Yes*	*Completed 2Q, 2020*	
		Implementation of EDMS for multiple Departments		*Yes*	*Framework 4Q, 2020*	*Target 2Q, 2021*
		Bulk Scanning: Digitization of current documents **[CARES Funded]**		*Yes*	*Scope in 4Q, 2020*	*to Start next year*
NEW Action	Mobile First Initiatives for business continuity and to support work-from-home	Telework Equipment: **[CARES Funded]** a) replace PCs with mobile devices b) tablet personal computers for over 500 employees for remote access c) accessories for home office stations		*Yes*	*To be completed 4Q, 2020*	
		Web Conferencing technologies		*Yes*	*Completed*	
		Office 365 Migration		*Yes*	*In-progress*	
		Contract Signing		*Yes*	*To be completed 4Q, 2020*	

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Information Technology Summary of Key Actions

PATHWAYS			Timeline				
Investment Area	Organizational Efficiency	Work to Date and Planned Activity	Pre 2020	New Item	2020 Update	2021 Highlights
Action 5.4	Identify and evaluate opportunities to manage and reduce walk-in traffic by digitizing manual, paper-intensive interactive business processes	Online Re-Certification demonstrations Pilot testing of system capabilities	Completed 2Q, 2018 Completed 4Q, 20019			
		HS: Online Initial Eligibility Determination, Annual and Interim certifications - Voyager Compliance Exchange		Yes	Pilot 4Q, 2020	Implementation 1Q, 2021
		S8: Annual and Interim certifications - Elite Streamline - Phase 1 - S8 West		Yes	Completed 4Q, 2020	Expand in 2021
Action 5.5	Identify and evaluate opportunities to manage high call volumes through smart routing and interactive self-service technologies	S8: Virtual Contact Center pilot - Inspections, Support Services - Valley, South, Administration New Phone System procurement	Completed 2Q, 2017 Completed 1Q, 2018 Completed 3Q, 2019			
		New Phone System Implementation and expansion	Target 2Q, 2020	Yes	PH Sites, Completed Commercial Sites to be completed in 4Q, 2020	
		Cell Phone alternative [CARES Funded]		Yes		1Q, 2021
		eFax [CARES Funded]		Yes	To be completed 4Q, 2020	
		Virtual Contact Center (Phase 1) - platform replacement		Yes	Completed	
		Virtual Contact Center (Phase 2) - outbound campaigns, agent addressbook and callback		Yes	To be completed 4Q, 2020	Expanded 1Q 2021
Action 5.6	Identify and evaluate opportunities for improved interaction, transparency and access to data with stakeholders via internet portals, mobile applications, and other tools	Data Sets identified Compilation of Dashboards	Completed 3Q, 2018 Target 4Q, 2019		Ongoing	Implementation 2Q, 2021
		New Website: Redesign of web pages and implementation of new content management system [CARES Funded]		Yes	Scope in 4Q, 2020	Implementation 2Q, 2021