

**CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM,  
NORTH CAROLINA**



**BEST PRACTICES REPORT**

Compiled by the Budget and Evaluation Office

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## INTRODUCTION

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Provided in the following report are examples of innovations and potential “best practices” from other organizations, as submitted by city department heads. In general, the standard format for each submission provides information in the following order:

- Department Name
- Short Title of “Best Practice”
- Source of Information
- Detailed Description
- How this Practice Compares to Current City Operations
- Potential Benefits
- Potential Drawbacks

The intent of this report is to demonstrate that city department heads are aware of new ideas and program improvement possibilities in their service areas. Information on innovations comes primarily from city staff attending conferences, observing innovations on-site at another city, networking with professional peers, and learning from journals, books, and seminars.

City department heads and other staff are constantly learning from their peers, classroom training and professional association meetings and journals. This notebook provides a snapshot of some of the ideas that are either recently implemented or currently under review. Because this is the second year that the Best Practices Report has been compiled, there is a table at the end of each service area section of the Report, providing a follow-up on best practices that were included in the 2007 report.



**Winston-Salem**



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** City-County Planning, City-County Inspections, Engineering and Economic Development

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Electronic plan submission and interdepartmental one-stop shop development review

**Source of Information:** Institute of Government, 8 other cities in NC, and 3 “benchmarking” cities elsewhere in the US being studied

**Detailed Description:** Winston-Salem/Forsyth County has joined eight other NC communities in an Institute of Government-sponsored review process of best practices in development review. This evaluation is focusing on development review practices across the board, not just rezoning related processes that are handled by the planning staff and Planning Board. As such, this heavily involves zoning administration and building permitting processes handled by Inspections, and infrastructure related plan reviews and permitting by the Public Works divisions. The evaluation has been underway for a little over a year.

The first phase of the study examined the similarities and differences in the development review processes of the 9 NC communities in the study. Processes were mapped out and described, and meetings among all nine communities were held at the Institute of Government to present, explain and answer questions. Through that phase of the process, the Winston-Salem participants learned of practices employed such as a TRC (Technical Review Committee) that is used for more than just the Planning Board related site plan reviews, but for most other plans requiring permits from other departments. Another thing learned was the extent to which some of the nine communities are already using electronic means of intaking, routing and reviewing plans submitted by developers.

The next phase is studying national models of fast, fair and thorough plan review and permitting processes. Through an extensive evaluation process, the IOG and participating partner cities selected Henderson, NV, San Diego CA and Tallahassee FL as the “best of the best” in having fast, fair and through plan review and permitting process. The IOG has arranged for field visits to each community for the study group to see and hear first-hand how each of those systems works. Winston-Salem has three representatives as part of that field visit team, and after each visit, we are having a de-briefing here to discuss what was learned and what we may want to consider as a change to our interdepartmental processes. At the conclusion of the study, we would then design changes to our local processes that are designed to create speed, predictability, fairness and thoroughness in all our processes.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Except for plans being processed for Planning Board and elected body consideration, there is not as much interdepartmental collaboration and coordination on development plans and permits. Also, currently there is only limited ability to receive plans electronically and no ability to process, review and comment on them electronically through a workflow type of system. Additionally, there inconsistent time frame expectations for different types of plan or permit reviews in different departments.

**Potential benefits:** More predictable development review process across the board for developers; easier submissions for those with electronic plan submission capabilities; better coordination and collaboration between related departments. This would also reduce or eliminate the confusion that is rampant right now in the development and business community concerning which departments are in charge of which processes for plan review or permitting.

**Potential drawbacks:** Making these changes will require funding for the physical space changes needed to set up a true one-stop shop development review and permitting center; and funding for the electronic application and plan review system and workflow development that would be required.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** City-County Planning

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Customer Service Review for Planning Services

**Source of Information:** Study being done by consultant, and book “ABZ’s of Planning Management”

**Detailed Description:** Planning is currently engaging a consultant for a review of customer service performance and practices. This study is focusing only on the Planning Department. Our customers are many and varied and range from development related customers, to community and non-profit organizations to individual citizens. Their needs vary based on whether they are interacting with us on a rezoning proposal or subdivision plan, a revitalization study or process, an area plan being prepared, or a text amendment to our UDO. We believe we do a good job in listening to and responding to our customers while at the same time preparing plans, policies and recommendations that will address long-term community needs. However, we do not have the ability to provide systematic feedback which accurately focuses on the work which planning staff is responsible for, as opposed to perceptions that may stem from experiences with other processes managed elsewhere. Also, it is helpful to get an outside perspective of how we may compare to other planning agencies elsewhere in the US.

This study will employ a variety of means to assess our customer service practices, including examination of our ordinances, application forms, handouts, office area, process, staff interactions and use of focus group meetings and mail-in surveys. The consultant will then issue a report with observations and recommendations, and will make a return visit to also do a best-practices customer service workshop for the staff so that additional things we could do can be identified and explained.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** I am not aware of any sort of similar assessment that has been done elsewhere in City government.

**Potential benefits:** Several—Documentation of what we are doing well; identification of areas or ideas for improvement; demonstrating to customers that their feedback is important; training on best practices; potential application to other departments.

**Potential drawbacks:** Cost of hiring a consultant; may point to need to fund similar assessment of other departments, divisions, or operations.

**Other comments:** This project is currently funded and underway.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** City-County Planning Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Form-Based Development Code

**Source of Information:** Various cities and conferences

**Detailed Description:** A newer trend in cities promoting “smart growth” principles similar to those found in *Legacy*, is the overhauling of regulations to emphasize more the design elements of the built environment, and emphasize less the separation and classification of use categories that typical zoning categories tries to do.

For example, a downtown should have a wide variety of residential, commercial, entertainment, office, cultural and institutional uses---so traditional zoning that classifies and separates those uses on different parcels of land is counterproductive to those objectives. In this case, the emphasis should be on encouraging multi-use buildings, with one or more stories, that relate well to the street and de-emphasize the visibility and movement of cars. These are the important objectives, rather than the existing code structure that limits the flexibility on uses.

The same principle could be used in other areas of the community. Smaller activity centers, mixed use developments, and transportation corridors are all examples of areas that might benefit from a form-based code approach to development regulation. These could be implemented through use of overlay districts in the UDO, or possibly stand-alone zoning districts that replace the traditional zoning regulations.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** As explained above, current regulations are based on individual zoning districts, which emphasize classification and separation of uses. Form-based code does not emphasize separation of uses, but rather design considerations for building, structures, parking, streets, sidewalks, and open spaces.

**Potential benefits:** Better functionality of developments as something that promotes community and interconnectedness of nearby uses, rather than uses that need to be separated, buffered and disconnected from each other. Possibly less rezoning activity as developers would have more flexibility on uses, and basic design requirements would be already established by code.

**Potential drawbacks:** As a change in our structure of regulation, this would require quite a bit of time to discuss with affected stakeholders and policy-makers to assure that there is a comfort level in making this type of change. Perhaps the best way to approach this is to let the Downtown Core form-based code be the “pilot project” which helps introduce the community to the concept and if that works well, to extend it to other areas.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** City-County Planning and other city and county departments

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Geographic Information System (GIS) study

**Source of Information:** Consultant, and best practices in GIS from across the country

**Detailed Description:** Through funding that has been identified from both City and County budgets, a consultant is being hired to study the current City-County GIS system and make recommendations as to how the system can be best managed and organized in the future to best serve the needs of its users.

The current GIS system has evolved from cooperative efforts of City and County departments since the 1980’s. The system has been loosely managed through this cooperation, with no central management authority, but rather a variety of players which contribute different things to the system. The technical experts in the key departments have been meeting to discuss and coordinate technical issues, and the department heads of key departments meet on an occasional basis to discuss larger policy and funding issues. The system has incrementally grown since then based largely on individual effort and cooperation.

Other communities have recognized the growing and critical relevance of GIS to local government operations, problem analysis, policy making, database management and internal/external information retrieval and chosen a more intentional management and operating structure. The City and County’s system has grown in size and relevance where an assessment of how best to manage and operate it is needed. This study will examine how it works here locally, what are the needs, potential and problems of the current system, how could it be improved, and how best to manage it. The consultants will document and use the experiences of other localities across the country to examine different models for management and operation, and make recommendations for consideration here that are tailored to our local needs. This study and the recommendations from it will then be used to guide management, funding and policy decisions in the future.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Currently, GIS operations and management are handled through a loosely cooperative effort between 5 core city-county departments in addition to participation and input from 2-3 others, and several more as users or clients. Meetings happen on an irregular basis, and decisions, changes or new initiatives usually take months or longer to implement.

**Potential benefits:** More intentional and organized system of management and operation. Also, a more rational multi-year plan for improving and expanding the system.

**Potential drawbacks:** A more intentional management and operating structure may require some reorganization and reassignment of staff between departments. There would possibly be costs associated with some of the organizational options, and there perhaps would be some costs associated with office space changes or computer or server hardware.

## Update of Community and Economic Development “Best Practices” Included in the 2007 Report

<u>Service Area/Department/Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Updated Information</u>
<p><u>Planning Department</u></p> <p>Better use of graphics to help others understand planning and regulatory concepts</p>	<p>Following the Town of Cary’s example, the Planning Department suggested that the UDO and other development requirements incorporate graphics to help development customers, citizens and appointed/elected officials understand concepts that are otherwise difficult to understand in purely written form.</p>	<p>The new UDO on-premise sign regulations incorporated pictures and drawings to illustrate the different types of signs and the differences in height and size of different options that were being considered. Also, a PowerPoint show was used to help simulate impacts on a streetscape from different options of electronic sign change rates. Beyond the UDO, graphics have been much more heavily and successfully used.</p>
<p>Use of a “pattern book” approach to help developers conform to design regulations</p>	<p>The City of Norfolk, VA, has created a “pattern book” which is “pre-approved” for development in certain zoning districts as long as developers conform to the site design elements in the book. Denver promotes better design excellence through a similar approach in their regulations—that is, if the development conforms to the design principles already spelled out in a form-based code, it is allowed by right; variations are heard by boards.</p>	<p>Recently, we have begun an incremental approach to this “best practice.” Through discussions with the Downtown Partnership, we will be jointly attempting to develop a “form-based code” for the downtown core. The form-based code will show through a series of drawings and pictures, examples of the types of building design and use elements which would be applied to development happening in the overlay district.</p>
<p>Better use of graphics to achieve consensus on subdivision planning standards</p>	<p>Cabarrus County recently implemented a process to overhaul its subdivision regulations to get more control over how subdivisions were planned, so that</p>	<p>The use of graphics and other visuals has been a major part of our recent overhaul of the PRD (Planned Residential Development) subdivision option in our</p>

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

subdivisions would include more open space and be more attractive. A community-based process was set up using a series of workshops that used, through graphics and pictures, methods of coming to agreement on desired outcomes, and then achieving consensus on the specifics of subdivision planning standards. The new standards dealt with open space requirements, street and block design, and some minimal architectural standards.

**Updated Information**

City-County UDO. Beginning in early 2007, our staff put together a slide show of both good and poor examples of cluster or open space subdivisions here locally and used those images to illustrate to stakeholders why the current regulations are not having the desired effect. Other graphics were developed and used which illustrate good design principles of open space subdivision design, and a several month-long discussion among neighborhood and environmental advocates and representatives of the development and real estate communities ensued. The result was a consensus and compromise which led to all parties supporting a UDO text amendment which codified these changes and was adopted unanimously by the City-County Planning Board, the City Council, and most recently the County Commissioners.

**Neighborhood Services Department**

**Council Action Team**

In San Antonio, Texas, there was a critical need for the management team to have the city respond to requests for service. The Manager implemented the “Council Action Team” to provide an effective and immediate response to concerns and issues raised by council members and citizens, by

In FY 06-07, the City Council approved the addition of four (4) Neighborhood Assistance Specialists to the Neighborhood Services Department to serve in a similar capacity to San Antonio’s Council Action Team. These four positions have been assigned to specific city wards to follow up

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

facilitating communications with various city departments and by proactively resolving neighborhood concerns.

**Updated Information**

on neighborhood issues, and to keep the council members apprised of citizen concerns and issues.





## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Utilities Administration

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Automated Meter Reading (AMR)

**Source of Information:** Utilities staff analysis

**Detailed Description:** Automated Meter Reading is a process by which the water meter reading is transmitted via a low radio frequency (which does not require FCC licensing and does not interfere with other bandwidths). Reading is conducted by driving within the vicinity of the AMR transmitter connected to the water meter. Once the route is completed, the readings are then uploaded into the Water billing system.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Current water meter reading is conducted by employees manually reading the meters. Manual reading consists of driving to each meter, getting out of the vehicle, pulling the lid on a meter box, reading and entering the read into a handheld unit and returning to the vehicle. Over 700,000 reads are performed each year via this method. Currently 12 meter readers are required for this program.

**Potential benefits:** The proposed Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system will:

- Increase operational efficiencies by allowing utilities to read more meters in less time
- Reduce operational costs by eliminating time spent on hard-to-access meters
- Improve customer satisfaction by eliminating intrusive meter readings and maintaining more accurate information for billing and dispute resolution
- Increase employee and customer safety by reducing the amount of time meter readers are out in traffic
- Improve billing-data quality by eliminating data-entry errors, performing off-cycle reads, and eliminating estimated readings
- Reduce theft and revenue loss due to meter tampering
- Identify revenue loss and distribution system problems
- Manage water conservation programs.

**Potential drawbacks:**

- Increase in cost of meters
- Increase in maintenance costs
- Full implementation must be phased due to capital cost

**Other comments:** AMR technology is now becoming the standard for all Utilities providers, public and private, due to its increase in efficiency, customer service and information logging. Most systems the size of Winston-Salem are either reading meters via AMR or are implementing it in a phased approach. Upon implementation, the meter reading staff can be reduced by as much as two-thirds with a reallocation of the readers who will not be needed to other Utilities Division functions.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** Utilities Construction and Maintenance

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Fire Flow Testing Fee for Services

**Source of Information:** Utilities staff analysis

**Detailed Description:** Current water flow test information is needed each time a new building is being designed that requires a fire sprinkler system. The design criteria is based on the amount of available water on the water main that will be serving the property. The architect, engineering firm or fire sprinkler contractor will typically fax in a request for water flow information and Utilities’ staff will perform the necessary test. The potential for a mathematical error, or gauge calibration could cause the reported numbers to make the difference in thousands of dollars worth of design criteria. (ex. Low numbers could require larger pipe sizes, and sometimes even the addition of a pump or high numbers that are inaccurate may not be discovered until after the completion of a project.) The recommendation is to require the ‘design engineer’ to perform the flow test with Utilities’ staff being on site to physically operate the hydrant only. We would not state the methods to be used to perform the test, we would not supply the gauges, nor would we perform the calculations. In addition to that, they will pay a flat rate of \$100.00 to have someone there.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** We currently provide this service totally free of charge upon request.

**Potential benefits:** It removes us from all liability from erroneous information and places the burden upon the design engineer for accuracy and completeness of all information.

**Potential drawbacks:** This plan may require multiple flow tests on one site depending upon who is doing the up front work. If a contractor needed the information to complete a bid, but did not actually have the job yet then a situation could develop that would require us to go and meet multiple contractors. However, each one would be paying the service fee so our time would be paid for.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Stormwater Division

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Use of rain barrels in residential communities for water conservation, re-use reduced and sustainable development

**Source of Information:** multiple communities

**Detailed Description:** Some large communities in the eastern part of the state, where mandatory phase 2 and phase 3 water restriction are in place, have rain barrel programs. The rain barrels allow citizens to have a source of water for watering landscaping features when water conservation measures may not allow for City water supplies to be used. This practice also decreases the amount of stormwater runoff to creeks and streams during a storm event which may decrease nuisance flooding or erosion of receiving streams. The plastic barrels are purchased at a discounted price from the manufacturer and sold for cost, through the municipalities, to the citizens. Currently, there is a backlog of orders from manufacturers as more communities try to provide this service to the citizens.

The rain barrel program is managed by a variety of different entities.

Cary	Water Conservation/Utilities
Charlotte Mecklenburg	Soil & Water Conservation
Durham	Water Management
Raleigh	Solid Waste
Wilmington	New Hanover Soil & Water

- The Town of Cary has been doing a rain barrel program since 2000. They distribute about 730 barrels a year through the Parks & Recreation Centers. Distribution is monthly.

- Raleigh is currently distributing 260 rain barrels at two distributions a week, which takes place at their City Yard. The barrels sell on consignment, so the citizen writes the check directly to the manufacturer. The distribution process is very time consuming.
- Currently, neither Greensboro nor High Point has a rain barrel program, but Guilford County Cooperative Extension sells about 30 barrels a month.
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg has had a rain barrel program for three years. Four times a year, barrels are pre-ordered, and then distributed on a Saturday from the County Government parking lot. Citizens can only pay by cash, check or money order. Barrels are also sold at the Earth Day fair.

In talking with the contacts in the various communities, it became clear that access to rain barrels, or even to used, quality plastic barrels that can be made into rain barrels, have become a scarce commodity. Manufacturers are taking delivery dates several months out.

Asheville, Fayetteville, Hickory, High Point, and Statesville were also contacted but do not have a rain barrel program.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Winston-Salem currently doesn't have a rain barrel program.

**Potential benefits:** Conservation initiative to conserve water resources and reduce runoff during storm events.

**Potential drawbacks: Minimal effects unless used aggressively.** Supply of rain barrels seems to be an issue.

**Other comments:** Still under investigation

	Charlotte	Cary	OWSA	Durham	Greensboro	Raleigh	Wilmington
City program/department		Water Conservation/ Utilities		Water Management		Solid Waste	
Other entity	Soil & Water Conservation		Orange Water & Sewer Authority		Cooperative Extension		New Hanover Soil & Water
Size/Cost	60 gal - \$85 80 gal - \$100	65 gal/87.00			65 gal - \$100	60 gal - \$80.06 80 gal - \$90.74	65 gal - \$95
Pre-order	yes	no, first come	pre-pay & pre-register	yes	no	no	yes
Method of distribution	Quarterly on a Sat. in the parking lot at the County Government Building & Earth Day	Community Centers, Parks & Recreation	Have done two workshops on building your own	Their office is in an old warehouse	Pick up at Extension	Pick up at city yard	1 day - pick up and pay
# Distributed	800 since program began	750 a year	200	50 - 70 on consignment	35 every other month	Selling on consignment	
How is program publicized	Website, utility bill stuffer, ad in newspaper	Utility newsletter, website, ads in newspaper		Limited - website and fliers at events	Word of mouth	Word of mouth	
Distributor/Manufacturer	Rain Barrel USA	Rainwater Solutions		Rain Water Solutions	Rain Water Solutions	Rain Barrel USA	Rain Water Solutions
Mandatory water restrictions	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

## Update of Environmental Health “Best Practices” Included in the 2007 Report

<u>Service Area/Department/Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Updated Information</u>
<u>Utilities Division</u> Incorporate a Denitrification Process into our Wastewater Treatment Process Scheme	Nitrified activated sludge would be recycled back into zones where there was no dissolved oxygen and mixed with a source of carbon. Certain bacteria would then utilize the molecular oxygen bound in the nitrate molecule to remove the carbon substrate and degrade the nutrient into nitrogen gas.	A consultant is in the early stages of evaluating the various steps that would be required to achieve denitrification at our existing Waste Water Treatment Plants. Lower Nitrogen limits will most likely be a part of the permits expects to be issued in 2009. This study will look at all reasonable technology and recommend a solution according to capital investment and potential operating costs.
Incorporate the Sale of “Gray” water into our Business Plan for Irrigation Purposes only to Reduce the Discharges from our Two Treatment Plants	Satellite treatment plants (scalping plants) constructed on Main outfall and/or reuse water pumping stations at the treatment plants divert a portion of the plant’s treatment flow into a separate distribution system where treated water is provided for irrigation and uses other than direct consumption.	A consultant and staff have identified several potential locations where a small "scalping" plant could be constructed that would treat wastewater for use as an irrigation supply. The locations have to be near a use that would consume a large amount of water for irrigation (IE soccer complexes and golf courses) The next step is to identify the necessary technology and capital investment required to deliver the appropriate quality product and the appropriate permitting steps that would be required.



**Winston-Salem**



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Winston-Salem Fire Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Medical Response Vehicle (MRV)

**Source of Information:** Departmental Program Study

**Detailed Description:** Currently medical response calls make up approximately 65% of our total call volume. We currently respond to these calls in full size fire apparatus. These larger response vehicles average only about 3-5 m.p.g. A small SUV hybrid type vehicle could respond to these calls more effectively and at a substantial fuel savings. A recent 30 day study demonstrated this fuel cost savings could be as much as 89%.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** We currently respond to medical calls with full size fire apparatus that averages only about 3-4 miles per gallon of fuel.

**Potential benefits:** Reduced fuel cost, larger specialized fire apparatus available for fire/rescue response, larger more costly fire apparatus replacement occurring less often, smaller type vehicle more maneuverable and less obstructive of streets enhancing scene safety and reducing response times.

**Potential drawbacks:** Initial start-up cost would be prohibitively high if the operation of the smaller vehicles require full-time staffing of a 9- to 12-person squad for 24 hour, seven-days-a-week service.

**Other comments:** Other cities use a larger rescue type vehicle that responds to all types calls and assists in the medical response. Using this approach, fuel savings is minor.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Police Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Comprehensive Plan to Address Prostitution

**Source of Information:** Contacts with Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, Forsyth County Health Department, Forsyth County District Attorney’s Office, Forsyth County Sheriff’s Office and Centerpoint as well as various local service providing agencies

**Detailed Description:** The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office First Offender Prostitution Program (FOPP), established in 1995, has been a model for multi-faceted approaches to address the crime of prostitution. As a result of its dramatic success, dozens of other jurisdictions in the United States, Canada and Europe have replicated or are exploring replicating FOPP. The program has received media coverage and the Innovations in Government Award. The FOPP Program is a three-pronged approach that offers the following:

- Services to aid women to permanently exit the criminal justice system and to rebuild their lives free of sexual exploitation, prostitution and abuse.
- Early intervention for women by providing in-custody and out-of-custody assessments, referrals, peer support, rehabilitation, vocational training, and case management for women trying to exit prostitution.
- Arrests of male customers, "Johns" and "John School," an educational program for first offenders that takes a real-world, confrontation-style look at the legal, health, and other risks and effects of prostitution. Administrative fees collected from the Johns fund the intervention services for women and girls.

FOPP clients have access to individual case management, groups, legal advocacy, and referrals to health, education, legal, housing, and trauma and substance abuse recovery resources.

Similar programs also operated in 2002 in Pinellas and Hillsborough County Florida under the name of Project HOPE. These pilot programs were developed to help break the cycle of prostitution and solicitation. In terms of services to prostitutes, the programs recognized that most prostitutes have multiple treatment needs, are unemployed with little or no prior legitimate job experience, lack stable housing situations, and have minimal education. Most prostitutes have children, some degree of a substance abuse problem and lack a social family support system. To address these issues, both pilots developed individualized treatment plans for each participant. Staff of both pilots reported budget constraints and the shortage of local services, such as residential beds for substance abuse, limited their ability to fully address client needs.

The Comprehensive Plan to address Prostitution has evolved from the John School Initiative, which began in 2002, to a comprehensive plan to address street level prostitution in the city and as a result, the number of partners involved in the project has expanded. In 2007, the list of partners involved in the initiative expanded to include the following agencies: Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, Forsyth County Health Department, Winston-Salem Police Department, Centerpoint, Forsyth County District Attorney's Office, Forsyth County Sheriff's Office, and Center for Community Safety, WSTV-13 various other service providers within the community.

A funding opportunity through the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) proposes to provide funding for program development, which would assist female prostitutes in the community. The grant provides for fifty \$500,000 awards for five years to target women affected by HIV/STD's. The grant allowed for the development of a program which would provide long-term substance abuse treatment, mental health services, job skills and various other services needed to assist female prostitutes in breaking the cycle of prostitution activity. The grant proposal has not been officially announced at this time. ARCA and Insight Services have been contacted and have provided various alternatives for short and long term care in the community which may be needed if Forsyth County is awarded the grant.

In addition, Centerpoint has been extremely active in creating a treatment plan for mental health providers as part of the total care package for prostitutes once a strategy is devised to address the underlying factors associated with prostitution. Centerpoint has also approached members of the group regarding the Housing 400 Initiative which involves funding for housing which may be available as part of the strategy to provide housing for female prostitutes who have completed care at a residential treatment facility as part of the project. At this time, a site has been identified and approved by grant administrators. The grant application is to be completed by Centerpoint by January 31, 2008. In addition, funding from United Way has been secured to provide support services for individuals placed in these homes.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** There are currently no long-term care options in the area that address the needs of street level prostitutes. When females do seek help they are typically referred to a local service provider and most local providers do not currently have the funding available to provide any type of assistance. The female prostitutes do not have any type of resources available that may offer the long-term care needed to address the underlying issues related to prostitution such as unemployment, job skills, housing, childcare, substance abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases.

**Potential benefits:** The project will have a direct impact on the chronic female prostitutes which have been identified and consented to participate in the project. Program participants will be provided access to long-term treatment focused on their individual needs which cause them to participate in prostitution related activities. Females will be given the opportunity to change their lifestyle and break the cycle of prostitution.

**Potential drawbacks:** The project requires a significant amount of funding. Identifying and securing sources of funding, which will provide adequate support for the program, may be a potential obstacle.

## Update of Public Safety “Best Practices” Included in the 2007 Report

<u>Service Area/Department/Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Updated Information</u>
<u>Fire Department</u> Automatic Vehicle Locating	<p>This would provide global positioning location for dispatch of the closest unit to an emergency. It would involve all fire department response apparatus being equipped with global positioning equipment and a dispatch/computer-aided dispatch system that would monitor the location of units and dispatch the closest unit to any emergency.</p>	<p>Research by staff has revealed the following information: The current 800mhz radios that are being used by the fire department have a satellite tracking component built into them. This component can be turned on at a cost of \$250.00 per unit. The fire department has 203 units that would need to have this component switched on. Total cost: \$50,750.00. A new software package would also need to be purchased for the communications C.A.D. system. The projected cost of the software package is \$5,000.00, bringing the total cost of this project to approximately \$55,750.00. It is recommended by Fire staff that this project be implemented, if possible, in the next one to two years.</p>
Children’s Safety Village	<p>The construction of the proposed Safety Village Charlotte-Mecklenburg is a joint effort of the Charlotte Fire Department, City-County Government along with public and private partnerships. The child-sized town is designed to</p>	<p>The Fire Chief has met with the Police Chief, the Recreation and Parks Director and a representative from the Forsyth Health Department. According to the Health Department representative, the Health Department has received a small</p>

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

**Updated Information**

provide fun, interactive injury prevention education to kindergarten through elementary school age children. The village has paved streets, working traffic signals, miniature town buildings, railroad crossing, and other displays all designed to provide hands on learning and instruction on how to avoid injury risk! Preventable injuries are the number one health risk for children age 14 and under, both here in Charlotte-Mecklenburg and across the nation.

grant to be used toward the construction of the Safety Village. At this time the Health Department is looking to partner with the City of Winston-Salem to bring this project to life. Police, Fire and Recreation will continue to work on this project in hopes of bringing a proposal to management within four to six months.

**Police Department**

Crisis Intervention Team

The Crisis Intervention Team concept was developed by the Memphis Tennessee Police Department in partnership with their area mental health providers and advocates. CIT involves providing a 40-hour block of instruction to specially selected police officers that trains them to more effectively recognize and respond to persons in mental health crisis.

The Winston-Salem Police Department engaged in a collaborative effort with the area mental health Local Management Entity (LME) and a number of mental health service providers to successfully implement the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). There were three training sessions during 2007 resulting in approximately 65 officers from six different jurisdictions being qualified as CIT officers. Positive outcomes were recognized immediately in that CIT officers were able to successfully recognize and then de-escalate consumers in crisis, thus achieving resolution through means other than arrest or use of force.

Police Training Officer Program

The U.S. Department of Justice Office of

The Winston-Salem Police Department

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

Community Policing Services funded the development of the PTO Program. This new post-academy field training replaces the traditional Field Training Officer method of training recruits. The method differs from the traditional method in that it focuses on developing each officer's learning capacity, leadership, and problem-solving skills.

**Updated Information**

successfully implemented the Police Training Officer (PTO) program in 2007. All qualified field trainers (corporals) received the PTO training and the new method was utilized with Recruit Class 56. The PTOs and the trainees reported favorable outcomes with the new method. There will be some modifications to the management of documentation for the next recruit class but the program itself progressed as expected.



**Winston-Salem**



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Transportation

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Long Line Thermoplastic Pavement Marking

**Source of Information:** Transportation Research Board and City of Charlotte, North Carolina

**Detailed Description:** Long Line Thermoplastic Pavement Marking is a durable product that offers high wet condition and night time visibility. On new to moderately aged pavement, the product adhesion can offer a life cycle of five years. Thermoplastic pavement markings can provide a decrease in the frequency of pavement marking maintenance affording a better looking and better performing product for a longer period of time. The City of Charlotte, North Carolina uses Long Life Long Line Thermoplastic products on its new and repaving projects.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Currently, the City of Winston-Salem applies center line and edge line to the roadway in paint. Stop bars, arrows, crosswalks and roadway symbols such as: School Zones and Railroad Crossings are thermoplastic products.

**Potential benefits:** Thermoplastic application offers a longer life expectancy, a higher degree of reflectivity, decreased maintenance intervals and potential safety benefits due to increased visibility. This product also affords a better looking end product due to the more precise mode of application to the pavement.

**Potential drawbacks:** Presently, the City does not own or rent the equipment necessary for the application of Long Line Thermoplastic Markings. Purchase of equipment would mean a higher initial cost or the need to contract with a vendor to begin using this product.

## Update of Transportation “Best Practices” Included in the 2007 Report

<u>Service Area/Department/Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Updated Information</u>
<u>Department of Transportation</u> Credit Card Payments	Arrange for the parking decks and lots to accept debit/credit cards as payment.	March 5, 2008 we began installation of credit card machines in all of our decks and lots with hourly attendants. We expect to complete the installations soon. Customer response appears to be positive.
<u>Streets Department</u> Convert Street Sweeping Contract to an “in House” Service	Compare the city’s policy of contracting out the yearly street sweeping contract to an in-house service using city employees and equipment.	The 06-07 contract amount was \$355,199.54. The Streets Department anticipated contract amount to drastically increase due to fuel, annexation, and additional sweeping mileage. However, the 07-08 contract amount was \$345,345.68. Analysis of the costs for equipment and staff that would be needed to provide the service in-house indicates that, at this time, the contracted service is more cost-effective.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Dog Park Surfacing – K9 Grass

**Source of Information:** Parks and Recreation Business Magazine

**Detailed Description:** A new synthetic grass product called K9 grass is being used at kennels and dog parks around the country. K9 grass is designed to be durable, drainable, cleanable, and safe for dogs. It has a dense blade structure that allows dog droppings to be readily scooped up. The back of the product has multiple holes for continuous and instant drainage, which makes it easy to hose down. It also provides a durable surface for high-traffic dog areas, and has an anti-microbial agent built into the blade structure to help reduce odor.

This surface could be installed at the City’s current dog park at Washington Park, or used at a new dog park at a yet-to-be-determined site.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** This is a new practice for the Recreation and Parks Department.

**Potential benefits:** Decrease time and resources spent on upkeep of grounds at the dog park. Increase citizen satisfaction.

**Potential drawbacks:** Cost of installation of new surfacing. Cost of replacement in the future.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Vandalism Deterrent

**Source of Information:** Parks and Recreation Business Magazine

**Detailed Description:** Video cameras are becoming useful tools in deterring or catching vandals. Technology now allows park professionals to install hard-wired or wireless cameras either inside or outside recreation facilities. These cameras are then tied to a remote digital recorder. Some systems can be monitored from a computer over the Internet, miles away from where the cameras are physically located. Wherever cameras are installed, signs should accompany them to alert people that the area is under video surveillance. This is often times enough to deter some would-be vandals.

Along with the potential to deter vandals, video cameras also enhance the chances of identifying and catching vandals. If one or two offenders are caught using evidence from a camera, word will spread and vandals may begin to avoid that area.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** This is a new practice for the Recreation and Parks Department. There are currently video cameras in use at several City facilities, including City Hall and the Bryce A Stuart Municipal Building.

**Potential benefits:** Decrease time and resources spent on vandalism repairs/clean up at Recreation facilities. The Recreation and Parks Department spent over \$18,000 on vandalism repairs from July 1, 2007 through October 29, 2007.

**Potential drawbacks:** One-time expense for installation of camera systems and the ongoing costs associated with the maintenance of the system. Visible cameras can also be perceived as being intrusive and make citizens/patrons wonder why they are needed.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Winston-Salem Entertainment-Sports Complex

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Event Coordinator Intern Program

**Source of Information:** Common industry practice within the public assembly, entertainment and sports industry.

**Detailed Description:** The Event Coordinator Intern Program is an eight to nine month intern program where the individual is integrated into the Event Services Division of the Winston-Salem Entertainment-Sports Complex. The program is structured such that the candidate is provided training, given a full event coordinator work load and will receive hands on experience in the public assembly facility industry. The candidate must commit to the time frame and is compensated. Interns usually have completed their undergraduate degree and are either in graduate school or contemplating graduate degrees in Sports Management.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Other City Departments have intern programs.

**Potential benefits:**

Develops and trains individuals that want to enter the public assembly facility management field. Allows for additional staff in the event services division and identifies a potential pool of candidates for vacant positions in the Complex operation. Provides for job opportunities and hands on experience to students at regional universities.

**Potential drawbacks:** None

**Other comments:** The program can be a very useful tool for the management of the operation in identifying potential candidates for vacant positions. The program has been in existence for ten years with seven of the candidates employed within the public assembly facility industry. Three event coordinators presently with Complex operation went through the program. One of the former interns was just named the General Manager and Executive Director of the Seagate Center in Toledo, Ohio.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** Winston-Salem Entertainment-Sports Complex

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Sustainability / Green Program

**Source of Information:** Common industry practice within the public assembly facility industry. It is a major initiative in the design and construction of new coliseums, stadiums and convention centers. In addition, it is a major initiative of the International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM) for facilities to develop sustainability or green programs for their operations. North Carolina public assembly facilities are sharing information on their individual green programs.

**Detailed Description:** The Complex staff is in the early stages of development of a Sustainability Program for the Winston-Salem Entertainment-Sports Complex. The program will create a comprehensive green program that addresses recycling, product procurement, energy consumption, education and evaluation. The program will include all of the complex operations to include food/beverage, custodial, maintenance, administration, staff, patrons and clients. The program is staff driven and will include an overall mission, goals and strategies.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City is in the process of developing a sustainability program

**Potential benefits:**

The development of a sustainability or green program accomplishes three key goals. One; Has the potential to lower the operating expenses of the Complex. Two; Improves and enhances the environment of the community, and Three; creates awareness in the community of the City’s efforts to recycle and be proactive in preserving our natural resources.

**Potential drawbacks:** None

**Other comments:** Sustainability or green programs are relatively new to the public assembly facilities industry and as such this will be a process that will evolve over time but should have very positive results for the Complex operation and the community.

## Update of Leisure Services “Best Practices” Included in the 2007 Report

<u>Service Area/Department/Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Updated Information</u>
<u>Recreation and Parks Department</u> Using Synthetic Turf for Athletic Fields	Synthetic turf is an alternative to natural grass and other landscaping applications for athletic fields, landscape planting islands, road medians, and golf courses. The benefit would be lower yearly costs. The drawbacks would be a high installation cost up front, and the concern that the public would prefer natural landscaping in medians and traffic islands.	Recreation and Parks staff has spoken with vendors regarding these products and determined that the cost of putting synthetic turf on one soccer field would be around \$460,000. It would take many years of annual maintenance cost savings to get a positive “pay back.”
Remote Control Technology	Mecklenburg Recreation and Parks operates 164 facilities and spends many man-hours to open and close gates, lock and unlock restrooms, turn field lights on and off, and activate irrigation systems. They have successfully automated 33 such functions with a variety of remote control devices that are often connected through the Internet.	Recreation and Parks staff has done research on many of these products over the last year. The department may request a small number of these products in the FY 08-09 budget to begin a pilot program to gauge their effectiveness.
<u>Winston-Salem Entertainment-Sports</u>		
<u>Complex</u>		
Mystery Shopper	This is a program designed specifically to monitor the experience of the patron that purchases and ticket and attends an event. The “mystery shopper” concept is best	One mystery shop has taken place in 2008 with several additional shops scheduled for February, March and April. The first follow-up training sessions with staff

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

**Updated Information**

operated using an outside consultant.

based on the first shop are scheduled to be conducted prior to events on February 8 and 9. The first shop has allowed the management staff to work with the mystery shop provider in making minor changes to the forms so that information is relevant and quantitative.

**Dixie Classic Fair**

On-Line Entry Systems for Competitive Exhibits

Create an on-line entry system that allows people interested in entering their items into the fair the ability to do so without having to obtain a printed catalog, fill out a printed form and mail their entry.

The Fair has evaluated this online entry system software used by dozens of fairs across the country and determined its use would be advantageous to the Fair. The software is supplied to us by Martech Systems, which provides us with the program we currently use for data entry for catalog exhibitors. We are in the process of obtaining the link and training necessary to provide online entry service to fair exhibitors. We should begin testing the online entry process by early April with a goal of having online entry service available through our website by mid-July, to coincide with our premium catalog mailing.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Property Maintenance Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** HVAC Demand CONTROLLED VENTILATION (DCV) Controls

**Source of Information:**

- *American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers manual 62.1-2004, Section 6 Ventilation Rate Procedures*
- *American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers manual 62.1-2004, Section 6 Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality (proposed addendum re: DCV)*
- *RANDY ROGERS, PROPERTY MAINTENANCE SUPERINTENDENT*

**Detailed Description:** New controls for building HVAC systems are on the market which will save energy by reducing the run time of equipment and outdoor air requirements.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Presently, the design of building HVAC systems is based upon expected heating and cooling loads, the conditioning of which is controlled by thermostats which only sense temperature conditions. Outside air is brought in through the system year-round, regardless of the temperature. The outside air must be conditioned to bring it to interior temperature standards, requiring excess energy.

**Potential benefits:** Controlling the amount of outside air by sensing carbon dioxide levels or occupancy will allow outside air to be introduced only when the controls allow. Energy to heat and cool the outside air will be reduced. Indoor air quality is not compromised because the level of carbon dioxide is constantly monitored. The typical payback for demand controlled ventilation system controls is usually less than three years.

**Potential drawbacks:** The cost of adding demand-controlled ventilation controls will have to be weighed against potential energy savings to determine the feasibility on a case-by-case basis because the DCV controls can only be used with certain types of HVAC equipment.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Property Maintenance Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Solar Assisted Water Heating

**Source of Information:** NC Solar Center Various energy seminars Randy Rogers,  
Property Maintenance Superintendent

**Detailed Description:** Solar-assisted water heating systems have evolved into a dependable method of reducing energy-costs to supply hot water. Their feasibility is limited to applications where there is an appreciable demand for hot water. The solar-assisted hot water system reduces energy costs by pre-heating the incoming water supplied to the existing water heating system, thereby reducing the amount of electricity or gas needed to heat the water. Properly installed and positioned solar systems are capable of operating at low ambient temperatures, on days when adequate sunlight is available.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Conventional water heating methods are presently used in city buildings that have water heating systems.

**Potential benefits:** Energy usage will be reduced at facilities where solar-assisted systems are installed. Reduced energy usage means lower expenditures for energy.

**Potential drawbacks:** Solar-assisted water heating systems have an initial cost that varies depending on the size of the system required. Proper positioning of the system is required to ensure adequate exposure and proximity to the existing system.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Fleet Services

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Policies

**Source of Information:** Industry publications and organizations such as APWA and NAFA.

**Detailed Description:** Every organization needs a set of guidelines on which to base the replacement of vehicles and equipment. The purpose of a replacement schedule is to allow the organization to plan future expenditures for capital and maintenance. Vehicle replacement depends on numerous factors such as age, use (mileage or hours), maintenance history, procurement cost, and function. Technology changes in vehicle design and production along with alternative fuels have also become a factor in the replacement decision.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City has had a set of vehicle replacement guidelines for many years. The problem is that the guidelines are outdated and need to be revised. The City’s vehicle and acquisition policy and the automotive industry’s improvements in technology have made it necessary to revamp the current replacement guidelines.

**Potential benefits:** The major benefit is cost control and best utilization of the City’s fleet. The planning function would be greatly improved and the budgeting could be tailored to keep the fleet balanced between capital costs and maintenance costs.

**Potential drawbacks:** By extending the replacement schedules, there is the potential for increased maintenance and repair costs. If the replacement schedules are increased and the future budgets do not allow adherence to the schedule, maintenance costs and downtime would be expected to increase rapidly.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Information Systems

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Adopt the Cisco Internet Protocol Telephony (IPT) System as the Preferred Telephone Technology for all departments.

**Source of Information:** Forester, the Yankee Group, Business Communication Review

**Detailed Description:** Market trends indicate that businesses are replacing traditional PBX telephone systems with IP based telephone systems. The City should follow this trend and replace legacy telephone systems that reach their end of life with IP based telephone equipment compatible with the Cisco IPT equipment currently in use. IPT provides the means to extend communication services to all employees regardless of their location. Employees in an office, remote location or in a mobile environment can have access to unified voice, video, data and mobile applications operating on a common technology platform that is not possible if the telephone systems are not integrated. A common city wide telephone system will support the following applications:

- Contact Center expansion
- Unified communications
- Improved business practices using enhanced IP telephone set features
- Remote office/work from home flexibility
- Video conferencing

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City is already using a Cisco IPT solution for offices located in City Hall, the Bryce Stuart Municipal Building, City Yard offices and offices along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. These offices are already realizing the benefits of a centralized telephone system to support their operations.

**Potential benefits:**

- Improved business practices using enhanced technology platform
- Direct control of communications environment
- Management and administration of single network for voice and data communications
- Single cable plant supports voice and data applications
- Improved costs controls

**Potential drawbacks:** Converting all departments to a common telephone platform will involve detailed planning and will require significant capital investment.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Information Systems

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Software Development Testing Methodologies

**Source of Information:** Having formal methodologies relating to system and acceptance testing as a part of Release Management is considered a best practice in well known IT Governance frameworks such as ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) and COBIT (Control Objectives for Information Technology).

**Overview:** IT departments have an obligation to their customers to deliver high quality new or modified systems. Levels of success will increase by focusing on testing to make sure that applications and infrastructure solutions match the intended purpose, are free from errors, and follow project plans for release into production.

These goals can be achieved in part by establishing a formal test methodology whose performance can be measured by the application downtime or data fixes caused by inadequate testing and the percent of projects with approved testing plans.

**Detailed Description:** Formal testing methodology references

- A test plan
- A test environment
- System and data conversion
- Testing of changes at the unit, system, and integrated levels
- Final acceptance testing

A good test plan includes approval from all relevant parties and is based on organizational standards. It defines roles, responsibilities, and success criteria. It considers test preparation, establishing a test environment, planning/performing/documenting/retaining test cases, error handling and correction, and formal approval. Additionally, based on the risk to business operations, the plan might include requirements for performance, stress, usability, pilot, and security testing.

A separate test environment that reflects the future operations environment should always be considered to enable sound testing. Procedures should be in place to ensure that the data used in the test environment are representative of the data that will eventually be used in the production environment. Tests results should be documented and retained.

When converting from an old system to a new one an audit trail of pre and post-conversion results should be developed and maintained. Additionally, a detailed verification of the initial processing in the new or upgraded application should be performed by the business unit to confirm a successful implementation.

It is important that testing be performed at all component levels. This ranges from unit level to system level up to integration with other systems and processes. Once in production there should be a final series of tests that establishes user acceptance of the applications. Test data and results should be saved for audit trail purposes and future testing.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City of Winston-Salem falls into the middle range of a maturity model relative to testing and can be described as having a “defined process.” There is a methodology relating to installation, migration, conversion, and acceptance in place. At times testing varies from the defined process based on individual preferences, business decisions, and time constraints. These variations can impact the quality of new systems and changes and lead to inconsistencies.

The City needs to move to the next level of maturity which can be described as “managed and measurable.” This would mean that procedures are formalized and developed to be well organized and practical with defined test environments and certification procedures. In practice, all major changes to systems would follow this formalized approach, and there would be consistent follow-up to address identified control weaknesses.

**Potential benefits:** Evaluating how well we are meeting requirements would be standardized and measurable, producing metrics that could be effectively reviewed and analyzed by management. Key performance indicators might include:

- Percentage of projects with documented and approved test plans
- Percentage of errors found during a quality assurance review of installation and certification functions

Business operations within the City would benefit from reduced down time or data fixes caused by inadequate testing.

**Potential drawbacks:** Adding controls and formalizing processes require additional resources and add time to the overall length of a project. Testing environments may require separate hardware, software licenses, and infrastructure segmentation. Increasing the involvement of the business units in the testing process takes them away from other duties they may need to perform to support day-to-day City operations.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** Information Systems

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Configuration Management Database (CMDB)

### **Source of Information:**

Accurately accounting for all the assets, configurations and their relationships in the information technology infrastructure requires a standard and well defined process. Configuration Management is considered a best practice by organizations such as PMI (Project Management Institute) and is defined as a best practice in well known IT Governance frameworks such as ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library).

### **Detailed Description:**

CMDB is a database repository that contains all relevant information about the components of the information system used in an organization's IT services and the relationships between those components. Components of an information system are referred to as configuration items (CI). A CI can be any conceivable IT component, including software, hardware, telecommunications, procedures and documentation, as well as any combination of them.

Configuration Management is a subset of practices under the ITIL Service Support process and provides a basis for Incident Management, Problem Management, Change Management and Release Management, all of which are also practices under the ITIL Service Support process.

Configuration Management is designed for managing all IT assets, configurations and their relationships involving:

- Hardware
- Communications equipment and software
- System software and application software
- Documentation and procedures
- Relationships of CIs

The activities related to Configuration Management are:

- Planning and defining the purpose, scope, objectives, policies and procedures
- Identification of the CIs that will be under Configuration Management
- Control to ensure only authorized changes are recorded in CMDB
- Status accounting (reporting) enables tracking of changes to CIs
- Verification and audit to ensure CIs are correctly recorded in the CMDB

**How this practice compares to current City operations:**

The City currently uses multiple databases to track assets and configuration information and while some other tools use an automated discovery process, many others require manual effort to keep them up-to-date. As a result, we often have duplicated information that may or may not be consistent between the various databases it is stored in. Following this best practice will improve our ability to better plan changes to our environment and speed our ability to identify the cause and solutions to reported problems.

**Potential benefits:**

Having a consistent Configuration Management Database process provides the following benefits:

- Providing accurate information on CIs.
- Controlling CIs.
- Adherence to legal requirements.
- Contributing to financial planning.
- Making software changes visible.
- Contributing to contingency planning.
- Supporting Release Management and version control.
- Improving security.
- Providing Problem Management with data trends.

**Potential drawbacks:**

The primary potential drawback of CMDB would be reporting on data that was not updated in a timely manner. However, if the CMDB was automatically updated this would not present a problem.

## Update of Interdepartmental Services “Best Practices” Included in the 2007 Report

<u>Service Area/Department/Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Updated Information</u>
<u>Fleet Services Department</u> Strategic Plan for Fleet	Develop a strategic plan for organizing and prioritizing fleet goals, policies and performance measures.	<p>The development of Fleet’s Strategic Plan is still a work in progress. The major policies of fuel management and vehicle acquisition are in place and actively being monitored. We are presently redefining some of our current operations dealing with customer service, liaison communication, performance reporting, vehicle justification and sustainability.</p> <p>We are also in the process of evolving some of our internal policies (standards) to align with industry and government/legal standards for equipment replacement and safety. One example is the replacement of tires based on the accepted safety standard of tread depth.</p> <p>The purpose in updating and publishing these policies is to have an organized set of fleet decision criteria that can be communicated to the operating departments.</p>

**Service Area/Department/Title**  
**Information Systems Department**  
Change Control

**Brief Description**

Change control is a subset of practices under Change Management as outlined within the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Service Management component. The objective of Change Control is to ensure that standardized methods and procedures are used for efficient and prompt handling of all changes in order to minimize the impact of change-related incidents upon service quality and consequently to improve the day-to-day operations of the organization.

**Updated Information**

Over the last twelve months the IS Department has matured in its practices of change control. Additional administrative and tracking controls are in place to monitor what impact changes will have on our infrastructure and environment.

Some of the specific tasks that were performed in support of this best practice include:

- More involvement of the Division Supervisors in approving change request submissions from their direct staff and in assuring quality documentation and adherence to the Change Control process.
- With the implementation of IPT we have expanded the Change Control process to include the Telecommunications Division.
- We have modified the request forms (standard and emergency) to track additional required change information,
- We have extended communications of changes to Utilities and the Coliseum/ Fairground Complex when their infrastructure may be

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

**Updated Information**

Desktop Management

Desktop management is used to leverage IT staff resources while increasing the productivity of key groups within the support organization.

impacted.

- We expanded the involvement of the Finance Information Systems staff.

Information Systems expanded our use and improved our efficiency in the use of client based management and security tools. Security and patch committees were established to identify and implement standard practices and processes for administering security methodology within our environment. Some department liaisons are members of and actively participate on our patch committee team.

Some of the improvements made include:

- Streamlined the application packing and deployment process for quicker, more reliable distribution of products to the desktop
- Implemented full-disk encryption on notebook and tablet computers which prevents accidental data loss/compromise in case a system is lost or stolen
- Refined our patch management process to allow for quicker release

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

**Updated Information**

Source Code Library

A source code control system manages changes, user access, and availability of source code. Not only is it used for protection, but it also facilitates the ability to borrow ideas and logic of proven code.

- of critical operating system updates to client systems
- Expanded our use of Zenworks Management Suite to inventory and track remote/non-connected mobile devices
- Successfully tested the use of remote management/security tools for pandemic preparedness
- Implemented “challenge questions” for clients needing password reset to ensure authenticity of requests for password changes
- Tested and will soon release McAfee 8.5i virus protection product which will include filters for detecting and preventing problems caused by adware, spyware, malware, phishing, and key logging

When this was submitted as an IT best practice last year, we were at what could be described as a “repeatable and intuitive” level of control. Over the last twelve months the IS Department has matured in its use of a source code library to a “defined process.” Administrative and procedural controls are in place and documented and the library is evaluated on

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

**Updated Information**

a periodic basis.

Some of the specific tasks that were performed in support of this best practice include:

- We conducted an audit and missing items were added.
- We added controls to ensure compliance to our release management process.
- We upgraded the SourceSafe application used to manage the library which provided improved auditing and monitoring.
- We expanded the library to include city-owned and developed code generated by other departments and gave them access to the library.
- We added a number of customized Crystal Reports which represent a significant amount of development time and contracted hours to the library.

**Property Maintenance Department**

Job Order Contracting

Job order contracting is a comprehensive procurement system for construction and construction related services. It is specifically designed to help facility

Discussions have been held with the City/County Purchasing Department regarding this program. They are checking to see if other North Carolina

**Service Area/Department/Title**

**Brief Description**

owners obtain routine services rapidly for established fees. A job order contract is a specially designed undefined quantity contract that is awarded on a periodic basis to one or more contractors, usually on an annual basis.

**Updated Information**

governmental agencies have used job order contracting successfully and legally.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Budget and Evaluation Office

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Consolidation of Management Reports to Council

**Source of Information:** Other N.C. cities, through the North Carolina Local Government Budget Association ListServ (on-line research resource for budget professionals across the State)

**Detailed Description:** Budget staff across the State has shared documents and reports that consolidate management information communicated to elected officials, usually on a quarterly basis. The City of Durham provided a report format that consolidated status information on the city’s strategic goals, budget versus actual expenditures and revenues to-date and projected for year-end by department and type, capital project status, investment portfolio information, grants report, risk fund payments to date, contract approvals by the city manager, contract types by department, non-city agency awards, impact fee summary of revenues and expenditures, tax levy analysis, downtown revitalization project recap, and planned bond issuance information. In Durham, the production of this report is coordinated by the Budget and Finance directors. The benefit is that all the information is provided in a single package, at regular intervals (quarterly).

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** At this time, the City Council receives many reports from the City Manager, at various times throughout the year, as scheduled in the annual calendar of key work item. Major reports include the Capital Project Monitoring Report, the Performance Scorecard, the fund balances report, the troubled loan report, and other reports, as needed.

**Potential benefits:** A set package of information items from city management to the Council, on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, would encourage departments to be more accountable for their performance, knowing that the status of their programs, services, and projects are reviewed by management and Council on a regular basis. It would also be helpful to Council to know what information they will be receiving and when it will be delivered. The consistency of the report format would also facilitate comparison of information from quarter to quarter.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** City Link

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Behavioral Style and Personality Type training

**Source of Information:**

HR World  
Corporate Resources International  
Servicestrategies.com  
ICIMI.com (international customer management institute)

**Detailed Description:** In a call center environment we are constantly managing change, dealing with conflict, and/or trying to explain processes in an effective manner. Team effectiveness and customer service satisfaction is improved with a sound understanding of behavioral types and personality styles. Most call centers have personality/behavioral type training as a standard part of their customer service training program. All certified customer service training programs include an understanding of basic personality traits.

Adding the ability to train in this area will improve City Link's performance in professional development, team dynamic, interdepartmental communication, interaction with coworkers and management, and most importantly effective delivery of service to each customer.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The contact center has customer service training focused on delivering professional and courteous service. The training is currently lacking in depth training on how to deal with each individual most effectively based personal interactive style.

**Potential benefits:**

- Discovering your behavioral strengths
- Learning to value the strengths of others
- Discovering ways to deal with conflict effectively
- Cultivating teamwork and reduce team conflict
- Developing strategies to meet a diversity of needs

- Improving communication skills through determining communication styles
- Understanding customer behavior and decision making styles
- Improving customer relationships and customer satisfaction
- Reducing personal and organizational conflict and stress
- Managing interpersonal communication better
- Enhancing and developing coaching and mentoring skills

**Other Comments:** We can add a training package to add to our ongoing training program for about \$800.00 or utilize existing training regimens already in place in the city.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** City Secretary’s Office

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Restructure the City Secretary’s Webpage to be a Legislative Information Center

**Source of Information:** City of Pittsburgh, PA and the Cities of Charlotte, Durham and Raleigh, NC

**Detailed Description:** The City of Pittsburgh’s City Council and City Clerk’s Office have launched a Legislative Information Center, which is linked to the City Clerk’s webpage. Because of the increasing demand for open access to public records, this is an excellent tool for keeping the public informed and will also benefit private businesses, non-profits, the media and other government entities.

The City Clerks’ webpage in Charlotte, Durham and Raleigh have direct links to the City Council, Council meetings, minutes, agendas, the City Code, etc., serving as a total information center.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City Secretary’s webpage briefly describes the duties of the office, with no link to the City Council or its information.

**Potential benefits:** Restructuring the City Secretary’s webpage would present a more professional image of the office, indicating the connection between the City Council and the City Secretary’s Office. It would allow users to read the entire text and history of each item considered by Council, and conduct comprehensive searches of all types of legislation, including resolutions, ordinances, proclamations and appointments. In addition, citizens would have the Council’s schedule and other supporting links such as the International Institute of Municipal Clerks and the Institute of Government at UNC. This information would be in addition to the current structure of the Council’s information on the City’s website.

**Potential drawbacks:** This practice could not be implemented until the problems are resolved with our agenda management program, which will enable us to publish supporting documentation for each agenda item on the City's website.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** Financial Management Services – Purchasing

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** E-Procurement – Vendor Bids

**Source of Information:** North Carolina Finance List Service and GFOA Recommended Practices and Aberdeen Group Research white papers.

**Detailed Description:** This best practice would enable City of Winston-Salem vendors to submit bids and proposals over the internet with automated bid opening and management of bid awards. The specific proposal is expand the City’s Internet-oriented Purchasing processes to allow vendors to submit bids and proposals of all types over the Internet. Vendors can submit bids and have them remain sealed until bid opening. This will allow vendors to come in and update and modify bids right up to the last minute before a bid opening, thus giving them more time to work on and refine bids without giving away confidential information prior to bid opening. It would allow vendors to submit bids and proposals and view the results of bid openings immediately without having to come to City Hall.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City of Winston-Salem already posts and allows vendors to download bid requests and Requests for Proposal via the Internet. However, actual bids and proposals have to be mailed far enough in advance to guarantee delivery before the bid opening deadline or must be hand-delivered in person at the last minute.

**Potential benefits:** The proposed Internet-based bid acceptance would allow vendors to refine and work on their bids or proposals right up to the last minute. It would allow vendors to view the results of bid openings on-line. It would eliminate the need for vendors to come on-site to deliver bids or view bid openings. It would simplify the bid opening and results publication process for the Purchasing Department staff. It would supply the Purchasing Department with bid and proposal materials that are already in electronic form and eliminate the necessity of scanning bids and proposals for archival and approval routings, since the files could simply be attached.

**Potential drawbacks:** The project will require extensive internal staff time to test and implement the new functionality and then communicate this to and train vendors. The cost of using this software if it is outsource to an Application Service Provider is about \$5,000 plus the IS support staff time to install the web browser application on 4 workstations.

**Other comments:** This project has been submitted as low priority service enhancement request for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 because it results in improved customer service directly to the vendors but not to the public at large and does not result in substantial long-term cost savings and has only modest improved staff productivity. The goals this project are consistent with City Council strategic directives and while the benefits are modest, staff believes the project is worth pursuing.

Staff has proposed different versions of this project each of the last three years at high cost with more automation of business processes, but the project has not been approved. Implementing it as an outsourced service allows the City to offer the service enhancement to the vendors while obtaining modest productivity enhancements at a very modest cost.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Financial Management Services – Treasury/Revenue Collections

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** iNova - Expansion of Internet Payment Acceptance

**Source of Information:** North Carolina Finance List Service and GFOA Recommended Practices

**Detailed Description:** This best practice encourages City of Winston-Salem customers to pay as many bills via credit card over the internet as possible with automated updating of the back office billing system. The specific proposal is expand the City’s offerings to customers to allow customers to pay general invoices of all types over the Internet for a wide variety of services and to apply for and pay business licenses over the Internet.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City of Winston-Salem already accepts Internet payments for Utility bills, parking tickets, Dixie Classic Fair Tickets and Yard Cart stickers. The City proposes to upgrade its cashiering software infrastructure to allow expanding this service to almost any bill generated by the City to either individuals or businesses. Examples are: Bulk Container pickup, Landfill tipping fees, Housing Services invoices, Monthly Parking Deck Passes and False Alarm penalty fees.

**Potential benefits:** This process has the advantage of costing less by the avoidance of bad checks and avoidance of check clearing fees by the banks. It also improves staff productivity and reduces errors and speeds posting to customer accounts by electronically updating customer’s accounts in the back office systems. The back office systems create bills to customers and track how much is still owed. This process also expands the convenience to City customers allowing for almost 24X7 payment of bills regardless of office hours and the avoidance of customers having to come downtown to pay or mail in bills. It also allows customers to pay at the last possible minute and still avoid penalties.

**Potential drawbacks:** The project requires a significant capital investment to upgrade our existing Revenue Collector software to iNova the next generation Internet-based software. It also will require extensive internal staff time to test and implement the upgrade and the new functionality and then communicate this to customers.

**Other comments:** This project has been submitted as the top priority service enhancement request for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 because it has the multiple benefits of improved customer service directly to the public combined with long-term cost savings and improved staff productivity. These goals are consistent with City Council strategic directives.

The City of Winston-Salem will eventually have to upgrade to iNova to stay current on Internet, operating system and database infrastructure, so the cost is not entirely incremental to the new services and will have to be incurred eventually.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Financial Management Services – Treasury/Revenue

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Discount Rate for Utilities Credit Card Payments

**Source of Information:** North Carolina Finance List Service

**Detailed Description:** This best practice was discovered by monitoring the NC Listserv and taking note of a discussion thread about discount VISA fees available for utilities accepting credit card payments. If the merchant is processing primarily utility bills, then the merchant can a high volume processor discount from VISA and Mastercard. The merchant must certify the purpose and volumes being processed and apply for the discount through the merchant’s servicing bank.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** The City of Winston-Salem had negotiated a discount rate for processing credit card receipts with BB&T for all of its credit cards. However VISA and Mastercard standard merchant fees are taken as a percentage of the sale and are not generally negotiable until a merchant is generating extremely high volumes such as would be available to a WalMart or Target type of retailer. The City pays the lowest rate available to a processor with our volumes who is a non-utility or small dollar per transaction processor.

**Potential benefits:** The city does have the opportunity to segregate Utility bills out and apply for a discounted rate. The savings is estimated at \$8,250 per year to the Utilities Fund.

### Calculations as follows:

Visa	
Average ticket	\$ 100.20
Average Visa Fee	\$ 0.93
Utilities discount fee	\$ 0.75
Savings per transaction	\$ 0.18
Average Number of Visa Transactions/Mo.	\$ 3,555.00
Average Savings per month	\$ 639.90

<b>MasterCard</b>		
Average ticket	\$	100.20
Average Visa Fee	\$	0.95
Utilities discount fee	\$	0.75
Savings per transaction	\$	0.20
Average Number of Visa Transactions/Mo.	\$	239.00
Average Savings per month	\$	47.80
Total Monthly Savings	\$	687.70
times 12 Months	X12	
Estimated Annual Savings	\$	8,252.40
Rounded Estimated Annual Savings	\$	8,250.00

This is a savings to Utilities fund and does not help us on our General Fund Operations Review savings, except to the extent of about \$410 per year.

**Potential drawbacks:** There is no drawback to immediate implementation of the special pricing for Utilities division. The special processing is not available to other general city accounts like Winston Lake, Salem Lake or Parking Decks and would not be desirable for those operations since their low average ticket results in a cost lower than the 75 cents per transaction anyway.

**Other comments:** Since this project did not require changes to our cashiering software or web payments software as originally expected, Treasury and Revenue Collections management decided to go ahead and pursue this best practice immediately. The rate has been applied for and approved by VISA and Mastercard via BB&T. The new rate went into effect in March and the City Utilities division should realize four months of savings in FY 2007-2008 and a full year of savings in FY 2008-2009.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** Human Relations Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Youth Retreat

**Source of Information:** City of High Point, North Carolina

**Detailed Description:** The City of High Point holds an annual youth retreat. This retreat lasts all day and includes students who will establish and/or continue student human relations committees at their respective schools. The purpose of the retreat is to brainstorm and share ideas for positive and interesting youth involvement. They also discuss positive leadership traits, cultural diversity, and fostering positive human relationships.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** There is currently no comparable program within City operations. However, it may complement youth outreach such as the anti-gang initiative and activities of the Youth Council and/or Student Human Relations Committee that are currently being undertaken by the City.

**Potential benefits:** This program may offer an alternative for youth to cultivate leadership skills and an inclusive mindset.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Human Resources Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Alignment of Competency-based Training and Development

**Source of Information:** IPMA-HR/NASPE Benchmarking Project: Best Practices

**Detailed Description:** Alignment of Competency-based Training and Development with the organization’s business plan, provide a framework for ongoing competency assessments, continuously enhance their training programs and evaluation techniques, and measure behavior changes of training participants. Broward County, Florida provides an employee development program that includes the following components:

- The County aligns training with organizational strategy. Training is linked to organizational needs by aligning employee performance with the agency's performance and business plan.
- The impact of training and development is measured by assessing skills and behaviors before and after completing the programs.
- Responsibility for training and development is shared with managers, supervisors, employees, and Employee Development and Human Resources.
- Technology drives efficient management of the training and development process.

**Strategic Alignment:** Broward County annually develops and updates a strategic training and development plan. The plan is based on 1) Strategic goals set by the Board of County Commissioners; 2) A business plan to achieve the goals; 3) Administrative mandates; 4) Employee performance improvement and training needs; 5) A lifelong learning requirement; and 6) Changes in the work environment, technology and innovation.

Measurement includes evaluating changes in behavior for all mandatory classes. Results are shared with top management to educate them on how the managers can support their employees to maximize and sustain behavior changes that impact business results.

**Structure of Training:** The County offers an overall program of courses and training, much of which is conducted on County time and paid for by the County. Coursework may include job, personal or professional skill development, as well as technical, career and promotional development. Types of training include:

- **Generic training:** broadly applicable to many employees, offered through the bi-annual training schedule, for application on the job and for professional development. Offerings are grouped according to training initiatives that support County Commissioner goals; usually taken on county time.
- **Mandatory training:** required by county policy for designated employees for current or newly assigned work duties. Examples include supervisory development training, employment issues/sexual harassment training, SUNsational service, (standards for service excellence at all points of contact) and procedural training (ensures that employees obtain an adequate understanding of county policies, rules and regulations that directly affect the performance of their assigned duties).
- **Operational training:** technical or specialized training to meet an organizational need or satisfy an occupational mandate for training in current or newly assigned work duties.
- **Workforce development:** updates basic skills or develops new skills not directly related to work assignments.
  
- **Tuition reimbursement:** includes undergraduate, graduate and doctorate courses and/or coursework in vocational or technical institutions in Florida. Reimbursement is after submission of proof of satisfactory completion of the course.
- **Return to school initiatives:** a variety of programs that help reduce the burden of up-front expenses associated with going back to school. These include tuition waivers, third-party billing, deferred payment, and cash-out of annual leave.
- **Educational leave:** provides education directly related to and clearly needed on the job. It is not intended to provide paid time off to obtain advanced or special certifications, or regular or advanced college degrees; not to exceed 160 hours per calendar year with the approval of the County Administrator.

**Function:** The primary focus of training and development is to ensure that employees have the skills, knowledge, and abilities to perform their jobs efficiently, effectively, and ethically for the citizens of the county. The functions of the Employee Development Section are: 1) **Organizational learning** - meeting business needs, focusing on learning opportunities that impact the organization as a whole, supporting lifelong learning opportunities, and training internal facilitators. 2) **Process improvement** - initiating focus groups and surveys to evaluate employee satisfaction and identify training needs, measuring the degree of performance change. 3) **Resource management** - procuring training resources, centralizing approval for decentralized process, maximizing return on investment, assuring quality and non-duplication of training effort, and providing a self-funding mechanism. 4) **Internal consulting** - enhancing the organization through coaching and assistance from internal training and development professionals, develops employees to provide specialized facilitation for county agencies. 5) **Facilitating change** - guiding organizational change from planning through resistance to implementation, communicating direction, providing training to enable work teams to understand/implement the change, and empowering employees to accept responsibility for the success of the change. 6) **Managing liability** - teaching how and when to take

prompt/effective action and reduce potential exposure to liability, supporting all areas of employment laws, and promoting a harmonious workplace. 7) **Reporting** - providing a "report card" for the County and the community including an annual report on activities and results, reporting on required training and training needs, delivering briefings to management and staff. 8) **Internal/external partnering** - developing collaborative efforts among work groups and agencies and partnering with the educational community to provide formal and vocational opportunities for lifelong learning and better employability.

**Assessment and Transfer of knowledge:** The County assesses organization-wide training needs biennially as well as at the completion of each training class. An on-line needs assessment and development planning system for all employees was just implemented through a partnership with a local university. In addition, a team of trained professionals conducts a needs assessment when requested for dysfunctional or struggling work locations using interviews, observations and/or focus groups, resulting in recommendations for appropriate interventions, including training. Operationally, supervisors and managers are responsible for ensuring their employees get the training they need and/or have the opportunity to attend the training classes. Organizationally, Employee Development and Human Resources is responsible for the training. Ultimately employees are responsible for their personal professional development. Through an electronic "Personal Development Plan," employees may request and/or suggest classes they need to help them perform their jobs.

A substantial investment is made in evaluating changes in behavior. This assessment is costly since it requires pre and post assessments by participants and their supervisors to assess skills and behaviors before and after the course. In effect, these courses involve four assessments: two self-assessments and two supervisory assessments. Assessments are used to modify courses for the training and development staff and by supervisors to coach employees on behavior expectations and feedback.

**How this compares to current City Operations:** The current employee development program provides some degree of training. Reductions in staff and funding have severely impacted the services provided. Future changes in employee workforce, limitations of a shrinking pool of available applicants to select from, and competition for quality employees will drive the need for a more comprehensive and strategic employee training and development program.

**Potential benefits:** Linking training and development to organizational needs requires forging close working relationships with agency leadership, aligning employee performance with the agency's performance and business plan, and linking employee improvement/learning needs with performance. The continued assessment, evaluation, modification and enhancements ensure the successful achievement of the organization's mission, vision and core values.

**Potential drawbacks:** A change in the organizational structure to include human resources as a strategic partner. Additional funding to provide internal and external resources for this program.



## “BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM

**Department Name:** Human Resources Department

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Implementing a nontraditional compensation and performance pay program

**Source of Information:** IPMA-HR/NASPE Benchmarking Project: Best Practices

**Detailed Description:** City of Charlotte began its journey in innovative compensation practice in direct response to a major shift in organizational priorities beginning in the 1990’s. Its compensation philosophy and plans shifted to support the City's vision, mission and values -- to recruit and retain a competent and diverse workforce. City has changed from a traditional pay plan to a variable pay philosophy and practice by implementing a broadbanding and pay for performance system. An annual employee incentive program and a competition-based gain sharing program rounded out the performance management system. The City also has an employee suggestion award program called CIA ("Clever Ideas in Action"). The broadbanding pay plan applies to all of the City's employees, except for police and fire positions below police sergeant and fire captain. These positions are in a separate, traditional step plan, and typically receive a cost-of-living adjustment and annual step increase. Pay increases for employees in the broadbanding system are based on performance and relationship to the market rate for their job classes. A comprehensive, annual labor market study is conducted for both pay plans, using both public and private sector compensation data. The City uses the median of actual salaries paid for similar jobs within the geographical area where recruitment is conducted to measure market competitiveness. Department managers have the discretion to grant merit increases, to raise base pay and/or award a lump sum bonus up to 8 percent, based on performance. In addition, an employee who has acquired added job-related skills or responsibilities, and/or earned a certificate or college degree can receive an additional base pay increase or lump sum payment, up to 15 percent. All increases in base pay or lump sum increases must be funded within average amounts allocated to each department for each fiscal year. In addition, the annual employee incentive program provides a lump sum bonus to employees if citywide savings goals are achieved. Moreover, additional amounts can be granted to employees in departments that achieve annual departmental performance targets. For example, if a performance target to reduce cost is achieved, a portion of the savings is given to the employees who achieved the goal. Up to 50 percent of the savings (with no cap) can be paid out. The remainder of the savings is returned to the general fund and, thereby, to the taxpayers. Another program -- the competition-based gainsharing program -- provides an incentive for City departments to compete with the private sector by competitively submitting sealed bids to provide public services. This only occurs when work is to be contracted out. Management and line employees jointly develop their bid. Individual employees or teams who are

awarded the bid and complete the contracted work below the stated bid cost receive up to 50 percent of the savings realized. The total payout to an employee, excluding payments attributable to overtime, may not exceed 25 percent of the employee's base rate of pay during the contract period. Finally, "Clever Ideas in Action" (CIA) encourages and rewards employees who develop better ways of doing business (such as saving money, increasing productivity and improving quality). Employees or teams whose ideas are implemented receive a lump sum bonus up to 25 percent of the first year net savings to a maximum of \$5,000.

**How this compares to current City Operations:** While the current compensation system includes broadbanding and pay for performance the scope has been limited. Annual research and updates in market data and related adjustments have not occurred. This has resulted in a lack of competition in attracting and retaining high quality employees. As future competition for quality employees increases, there is a need for Human Resources to play a more strategic role in ensuring that compensation is tied to people, their performance, and the City's vision, organizational values, work cultures and business strategies.

**Potential benefits:** Value-added strategic initiatives provide the benefits of first having compensation plans support the City's vision, mission and values -- to have a competent and diverse workforce. Secondly, variable pay is used as an incentive and reward to achieve City goals. A third benefit is the strategies are time-tested -- these plans have been developed, implemented, re-evaluated and fine-tuned over a period of years to insure they continue to meet their intended purpose.

**Potential drawbacks:** Funding associated with the implementation and maintenance of the programs and staff needed.



## **“BEST PRACTICE” DESCRIPTION FORM**

**Department Name:** Marketing and Communications

**Short Title of “Best Practice”:** Manager’s Blog on the Employee Center

**Source of Information:** Annual City County Communications and Marketing Conference. The session was called Generationally Savvy Communications.

**Detailed Description:** One portion of the presenters program spoke about how to keep millennial employees, those born after 1980, engaged and interested in the operation of the organization. The presenter suggested incorporating blogs on the intranet where employees, with access, could hear from the city administrator and his/her assistances on a regular basis, and where they could participate in the discussion. We could incorporate a blog into the design of the site for between \$300 and \$500 a year. Another option is to have the City Manager write an open letter to employees periodically that would be published on the employee center. We could also use our online video program to air video statements from the Manager.

**How this practice compares to current City operations:** Marketing and Communications coordinates the day-to-day effort to keep the employee center updated. The site has information that is pertinent to employees ranging from benefits to upcoming events, and the employee discount program. There is a page for the manager, but it’s not been made into a destination where employees can come learn about all the changes happening in the organization or to hear from the manager his vision for various projects or issues such as ethics.

**Potential benefits:** This would capitalize on Lee’s ability to build a good rapport with employees. It would also give employees a better understanding of the organization which has experienced a great deal of change in the last year and a half. It would also allow him to communicate with employees about the more significant issues before they read about them in the newspapers, see it on television.

**Potential drawbacks:** The City Manager’s schedule may be too busy for him to undertake this project in the near future.

**Other comments:** The previous marketing and communications “Best Practice” of creating an online employee phone directory was implemented and has resulted in a cost savings of \$1,800 each year. It’s now updated on the Employee Center weekly.

## Update of General Government “Best Practices” Included in the 2007 Report

<u>Service Area/Department/Title</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>	<u>Updated Information</u>
<u>Budget and Evaluation Office</u> Participation in the Southeastern Practitioners Network on Local Government Performance Measurement	Participation would help determine the best measures for local government performance and engage the public and community based organizations in the measurement process.	Budget staff observed the Network in action, last February, when the City of Durham held focus groups to help select measures of street conditions and city street maintenance services. Staff will continue to monitor the network’s impact on Durham and other participating cities.
<u>City Secretary’s Office</u> Electronic Agenda Management	The latest generation of agenda creation software has automated virtually every aspect of the agenda creation process. The software is web-based, which allow staff to submit meeting items over the Internet without having to install any software on their individual computers.	This project is still in the beginning stages, due to difficulties with the SIRE system and its integration with our current video streaming service. However, we will continue to work with the vendor to make the systems work to the City’s benefit. It will serve as a valuable source of public information and retrieval.



**Winston·Salem**