CITY OF SALINAS
FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: OCTOBER 14, 2025

DEPARTMENT: FINANCE DEPARTMENT

FROM: **SELINA ANDREWS, FINANCE DIRECTOR**

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TITLE: **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION UPDATE**

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

It is recommended that the Finance Committee receive the administrative report and provide feedback to staff. No action required.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This information technology report is being provided to the Finance Committee members to provide an overview of FY24-25 accomplishments, performance metrics, FY25-26 goals, initiatives, and technology governance strategy.

BACKGROUND

The Information Technology Division (ITD) supports Citywide technology infrastructure and systems that enable Citywide functions and services. On May 6, 2025, the Finance Department provided a brief update to the Committee regarding the Information Technology Governance and Steering Committee (ITGSC). The ITGSC reviewed the technology project portfolio and developed an IT Work Plan for ITD to prioritize technology projects and ensure that resources were allocated to meet business needs.

Project Portfolio

For many years the City of Salinas has deployed technology and uses data in ways that promote improvements to business processes and support data driven decisions. While leveraging technology innovation continues to be a focus of the City, it is crucial to adopt a strategic approach to ensure Citywide alignment and investment of resources. The development of an IT Work Plan helps facilitate cross-departmental communication, provides robust solution review, reduces duplicative efforts, and sets a clear direction for ITD.

There were 40 projects identified as part of the FY24-25 project prioritization exercise. Of the 40 projects, 6 were identified by multiple departments. This demonstrates the importance of strategic

governance to avoid duplicative efforts. ITD collaborated with departmental stakeholders and vendors to complete 12 projects in FY24-25. The ITGSC has identified 28 technology projects for FY25-26 with 11 projects carrying over from the prior year. In total, the FY25-26 IT Work Plan identifies and prioritizes 24 technology projects through the fiscal year.

A Year of Technology At-A-Glance

The City's technology landscape spans across 8 departments and numerous geographical locations within the City. Providing secure access to the network infrastructure and a diverse set of information systems is of upmost importance. ITD provides numerous levels of support ranging from first tier help desk to advanced integration and data management support. The following areas outline key functions of ITD:

- IT Governance
- Enterprise/Network Security and Operations
- Purchasing and Acquisition
- Security and Compliance
- Disaster Recovery and Incident Response
- Mobile Device Management
- Cybersecurity Awareness Training

Managing the Enterprise Technology Portfolio of the City requires a multi-faceted approach. The concept of technological proficiency is a method that ITD employs to manage technology risk. Technology planning, cyber hygiene, technical competency, and governance are fundamental elements that lead to technological proficiency. For example, the City started the ITGSC to address strategic governance of technology initiatives developed a formal solution review process. Additionally, ITD completed the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review self-assessment provided by the Center for Internet Security. This assessment provides a baseline score for cybersecurity maturity and identifies areas of improvement.

Another accomplishment that aims at achieving technological proficiency is related to technology planning. Development of the IT Work Plan identifies and prioritizes technology initiatives at the department level and ties them together with the City's overall goals and mission. This accomplishment has helped ITD significantly in that it limits re-prioritization of resources by establishing a project roadmap. The City has made it a point to incorporate staff training as part of technology solution implementation. ITD staff has worked closely with departments to ensure that trainings are included in project plans and, on numerous occasions, have attended conferences and trainings with internal stakeholders to ensure sound technology practices are properly and adequately deployed to fulfill the project plan.

Cybersecurity Updates

The City recognizes the importance of confidentiality, integrity, and availability of technology resources. This year, the City has adopted the Center for Internet Security Critical Security Controls (CIS Controls) framework for its cybersecurity initiatives. The CIS Controls are a prioritized set of CIS safeguards to defend the most prevalent systems and networks against cyber-

attacks. The controls are mapped and referenced by multiple legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks.

User training and education continue to be an important part of the City's cybersecurity strategy. Users of technology resources receive online training material in the form of quizzes, videos, and scenarios. This year, ITD has worked closely with the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, and the Human Resources Department to implement numerous policies related to technology use, artificial intelligence (AI), and physical security.

In addition to strengthening the City's internal network and training its users, ITD has become a founding member of the Central Coast IT Leadership Collaborative that is made up of neighboring agency technology professionals. The Collaborative focuses on emerging trends and sharing of information to strengthen the regions cybersecurity resilience.

Challenges and Opportunities

The City of Salinas, like all organizations, increasingly relies on technology to carry out services in all functional areas. Technology governance, planning, operational efficiency, risk mitigation, and training are important areas of operating and maintaining an Enterprise Technology Portfolio. New legislation, cybersecurity and privacy, and business continuity planning evolve daily. These challenges continue to transform the way the City evaluates, procures, and implements technology resources to improve business processes and continuity of operations. ITD is committed to working with internal and external business partners to establish key business partnerships to innovate and streamline the way the City provides its services to the community.

Change creates new challenges, but it also facilitates opportunities through innovation. The City recently implemented an Artificial Intelligence Governance and Use Policy. The policy establishes a framework for review, procurement, and use of AI technologies. Responsible use of AI in public service continues to be a focal point for the City. Developments in AI evolve daily and there is immense value that the technology can bring to the City.

In addition to leveraging emerging technologies, ITD continues to realize value in establishing integrations with those new platforms by adopting them after carefully selecting and making them available to the city staff to improve their productivity. ITD continues to involve and cooperate with other City departments and divisions by offering dependable, consistent and reliable platforms to bring their functionalities and capabilities to city staff and residents. As an example, through ITD's secure infrastructure, the GIS Division can implement system integrations such as the Cityworks asset management systems, develop advanced visualizations in the form of dashboards through the GIS Enterprise Web Platform, and enable fast, data-driven decision-making across the organization.

Artificial Intelligence

While AI may appear to be a newer concept, it has existed for decades and is implemented in many common applications that are being used across the organization today. The difference and impact of AI is how it is applied. Types of AI include predictive, generative, and perceptive. Applications

vary as do risks. It is built by a set of algorithms developed by people enabling AI to operate at different levels of autonomy. This emerging trend presents opportunities to help streamline operations and better meet community needs by reimagining the way the City provides services to the community.

The City's principles in its approach to AI include effectiveness, transparency, accountability, privacy, security and safety, and workforce empowerment. Currently, all information technology purchases are reviewed by ITD to conduct a benefit and risk analysis. Staff continues to develop an AI Framework to ensure responsible use and implementation.

Looking Ahead

Staff is actively engaged in finding ways to creatively reimagine the approach to current business processes and systems in addition to effective use of and deployment of technology resources and innovative solutions. As the City plans for the future, technology implementations will include smarter services in meaningful, measurable ways.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. *The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.*

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

This report aligns with City Council's Strategic Goal of striving for Economic Development - Sustain, encourage, and develop a diverse and thriving economy that benefits all Salinas residents and businesses and that contributes to the community's economic health.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

This staff report has been coordinated with the City Manager's Office.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There is no cost associated with receiving this preliminary budget update.

ATTACHMENTS:

2025 Information Technology Division Update Presentation