
Productivity Improvements

Montgomery County strongly encourages its departments and agencies to identify and implement productivity improvements within their budgets. Such initiatives are essential, especially in difficult fiscal times when agencies and departments are called on to significantly reduce costs and preserve essential services. Below is an identification of productivity initiatives implemented by departments during FY09 and FY10 or planned for FY11. Some examples of productivity improvements departments are encouraged to implement include:

- Process re-engineering initiatives
- Implementing a new IT application
- Public-private partnerships that maintain services at lower cost or achieve higher service levels
- Consolidating programs
- Reorganizations
- Contracting out services or, alternatively, bringing contracted services in-house, to reduce costs
- Increasing use of volunteers
- Re-negotiating maintenance/license agreements
- Re-configuring programs to generate increased revenues
- Reducing publication costs by placing more information on the web and producing fewer hard copies
- Introducing employee incentives (within personnel guidelines)

Circuit Court

- ❖ The Court implemented a number of initiatives in mid-2008 to improve the processing of child welfare cases, including improved service to parties, revised scheduling and postponement practices, and enhanced communications between the Court and various external agencies. As a result, the number of TPR cases closed within the State time standard of 180 days increased from 61% in FY08 to 95% in FY09.
- ❖ The Circuit Court is undertaking an analysis of juror utilization to assess the effectiveness of current jury management practices, using a performance measure developed by the National Center for State Courts.
- ❖ The Court is conducting an in-depth analysis of case processing performance against its Differentiated Case Management time standards to determine the point at which case processing performance begins to falter. This will provide an early indication of problems and will signal the need to take pre-emptive efforts to prevent declines in performance as measured by the State's time standards.
- ❖ The Circuit Court is automating its data collection process for cases placed on the "To Be Assigned" docket to be able to identify the number of these cases and their outcomes in order to better manage the Court's workload.
- ❖ Other studies underway to better understand - and improve - the Court's case processing performance include: examining the extent to which cases ultimately make it to trial and the point at which cases begin to drop out (to help improve scheduling and to ensure that judges' time is efficiently utilized); studying the performance of specially assigned cases to see how they affect overall case processing performance; examining postponements to assess their effect on case processing time; and analyzing case processing performance by case subtype to identify the effect of each sub-type on case processing performance.

Community Use of Public Facilities

- ❖ Implement next phase of a document imaging system to replace current manual process for managing paper facility request forms and payment records.
- ❖ Enhanced use of technology to reduce paper, print, and mail costs including using image check copies in lieu of making photocopies, reducing the number of handouts distributed at weekly user education meetings, and eliminating redundant distribution of first-class mail notices when active e-mail accounts are available.

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- ❖ Enhanced use of new on-line information resources resulting in better coordination between MCPS and CUPF. Fewer customers experienced access delays or lock-outs and better reporting of after-school use enabled enhanced accuracy in energy programming
 - ❖ Linking the MCPS staff web portal to CUPF's on-line resource center gave MCPS staff instant access to scheduling, overtime reports, utility reports, and other resources supporting community use

County Attorney

- ❖ Electronic Imaging System - The Office of the County Attorney (OCA) continues to expand the current electronic imaging system. Forfeitures and subrogation files have been scanned and interfaced with the CountyLaw system. The Health and Human Services (HHS) Division has successfully implemented redaction services using Zyfind. The Imaging Project increases productivity by eliminating the need for duplicating paper files for staff that need to work on the files. Imaging of files also saves time compared to searching for paper files- staff can access the files at any time, via a shared drive, simultaneously.
- ❖ Reduced Publication Costs - The Office of the County Attorney has placed the "County Attorney Monthly Report" on-line at the department web site which, as a result, has reduced the amount of hard copies that need to be printed; thus printing costs have been reduced.

Economic Development

- ❖ Implemented the Salesforce Database, which will improve data integrity and allow for better tracking of departmental data.
- ❖ Implemented a reorganization that realigned functions based on the goals outlined in the revised strategic plan for economic development.

Emergency Management and Homeland Security

- ❖ Utilized existing alert notification software to expand the ability of other County organizations to provide timely emergency notifications to their target groups.

Environmental Protection

- ❖ Began work on a water/sewer service area category database for all county properties, linked to the County's GIS. The database includes the property's water and sewer service area categories, service conditions or restrictions applying to the property, and category change actions affecting the property within the past 20 years.
- ❖ Corrected building layer and multi-family property data to correctly and accurately apply the WQPC to these types of accounts.
- ❖ Improved the accuracy of the impervious area calculations, which will help track progress toward meeting MS4 requirements.
- ❖ Used LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) remote sensing data to re-delineate the County's watershed layer, last updated in 1996.
- ❖ Integrated DEP's approval of record plats into the Department of Permitting Services automated permit tracking system to streamline the plat approval process and allow access by developers to the status of DEP's plat review.
- ❖ Created a web-based application verification system for Green Biz consultants.

Fire and Rescue Service

- ❖ MCFRS civilianized uniform staff at the Emergency Communication Center with civilian call takers. This allows the uniformed staff to cover positions in the field.
- ❖ Implemented electronic patient care reporting, resulting in more efficient preparation and management of the tens of thousands of emergency medical service reports that MCFRS produces each year.

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- ❖ The Division of Volunteer Services teamed with the Departments of Finance and Technology Services to automate the data management and payment process for the volunteers' length of service award program(LOSAP) resulting in a savings of 16 hours of payment processing time each month

Fleet Management Services

- ❖ Moved from an annual to a quarterly parts inventory ensuring more accurate inventory controls Fleet is better able to stock proper quantities by controlling minimum/maximum levels to lessen out of stock situations; has better control over obsolescence, and improved cost control. In addition monthly spot checks are being performed
- ❖ Increased vendors converted to Automated Clearinghouse(ACH) payments by 66% over the past year for increased accounts payable efficiencies and reduced payment turnaround times to vendors. Additionally, substantial cost savings to the County are incurred as electronic payments are increased while check processing is decreased.

General Services

- ❖ The Print Shop now has the capability to design e-brochures for the County's Intranet and Internet. This additional method of disseminating information has reduced paper usage and met the standards established by the County's Green Initiative.
- ❖ Hard wiring of the Record Center has increased processing speed by 60% and productivity in the areas of quality control and re-scanning.
- ❖ The DGS IT Group is the driving force behind productivity improvements such as E-Leave Slips, E-Brochures and E-Forms all of which support the Executive's paper reduction initiative

Human Resources

- ❖ Consolidated two Occupational Medical Services Professional Physician contracts into a single fixed-price contract, which will save approximately \$1.2 million annually.
- ❖ Rolled out ePAF (Electronic Personnel Action Form) to all County departments except Public Safety, resulting in improved tracking of personnel actions and reductions in processing errors
- ❖ Redesigned and streamlined the health plan open enrollment communication process by introducing a branded look to written and online communications and improving content and navigation of the open enrollment web application.

Liquor Control

- ❖ Implemented and will monitor a revised "Listing/Delisting Product Committee" process designated to maximize inventory control efficiencies while providing a wide and varied selection of fresh items and standards from which customers can choose.
- ❖ Reduced paper usage by 21% from FY08 by increasing on-line report generation for staff and vendors
- ❖ Automated the pricing program, which enables vendors to enter price changes on the Internet and submit electronically. This information will flow into the warehouse management system automatically after department review, eliminating the manual entry.
- ❖ Implemented improvements to the wholesale internet ordering system resulting in a 45% increase in Internet sales.

Parking District Services

- ❖ Integrated the self-release booting program, and its inherent customer service advantages, throughout all four Parking Lot Districts.
- ❖ Expanded the capability to pay by credit card to a wider variety of Parking programs and services

Permitting Services

- ❖ Created a "fast track" drainage review process for building permit land development issues resulting in a reduced number of complaints having to do with drainage and other environmental impacts
- ❖ Created an intermediate plan review process for commercial building construction projects resulting in reduced review time for small commercial building projects Plan reviews are completed within ten working days for projects that qualify for the Intermediate Plan Review process
- ❖ Reduced the number of plans required for new single family submissions from two copies to one, reducing the amount of paper required from customers and handled in the department
- ❖ Improved customer service and enforcement consistency by training staff on every aspect of complaint handling

Public Libraries

- ❖ Reducing paper usage and postage costs by switching notifications about customers holds to postcard format, and instituting a campaign to encourage customers to switch to email notification
- ❖ Set a goal, and currently successful in implementing, of holding at least 25% of work group meetings virtually. Held a department-wide staff development day using and featuring virtual meeting technology

Sheriff

- ❖ Video Protective Order Hearings at the Family Justice Center. Through a collaboration of State, local and private agencies and the support of the Maryland Judiciary, the Family Justice Center will be able to use technology for video court hearings for Temporary Protective Orders in July 2010. This pilot video hearing project is the first of its kind in Maryland.
- ❖ E*Justice: In September 2009, law enforcement agencies implemented the first component of the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) replacement with the E*Justice records management system. This step is the first of many to migrate public safety data components out of CJIS, a propriety mainframe system, to a relational database structure. Overall, E*Justice provides easy query and research tools providing law enforcement more flexibility in retrieving and utilizing the data in the course of their public safety duties

Transportation

- ❖ Continue to develop the Storm Operations Center to improve storm response by improving technology and coordination between storm managers and the depots
- ❖ Developed a pilot project to replace the current, paper permit system for residential parking with a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) permit system.
- ❖ Issuance of a new task order for project management and scheduling services to continue deployment of project management software and institute best practices on County projects to forecast resource workload and make timely decisions to ensure the ability to deliver projects on time

Urban Districts

- ❖ Silver Spring Urban District has virtually eliminated the use of overtime by adjusting work schedules as needed
- ❖ Wheaton Urban District created a dedicated deployment plan to increase the visibility of the Wheaton Safe Team. The outcome is to ensure Safe Team Members are in areas at a dedicated time by needs/volume of pedestrian traffic.