

Legislative Branch

Computer System Plan

**A Report to the 58th Legislature
From the
Legislative Branch
Computer System Planning Council**

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I. Information Technology Planning in the Legislative Branch

This chapter provides background information on information technology (IT) planning in the Legislative Branch. The following topics are covered:

- statutory planning requirements for the Legislative Branch;
- IT organizational structure for the Branch;
- IT planning process; and
- overview of the Branch IT plan for the 2005 biennium.

1. Statutory Planning Requirements

In 1989, the Montana Legislature adopted a comprehensive set of laws governing IT planning in the Legislative Branch (Title 5, chapter 11, part 4, Montana Code Annotated (MCA)). The purpose of these statutes is "to establish a mechanism for computer system planning encompassing broad policy needs, long-term direction for computer use, and the effective implementation of a detailed plan for the Legislative Branch" (5-11-401, MCA). The law further provides that the purpose of the computer system plan is:

- to ensure coordination of information system decisions so that the overall effectiveness of the Senate, House, and legislative agencies may be improved; and
- to enhance coordination of Legislative Branch systems with Executive Branch systems whenever possible.

The Legislature created the nine-member Legislative Branch Computer System Planning Council (Planning Council) to develop and maintain a Branch computer system plan. Members of the Planning Council include:

- the Secretary of the Senate or another representative of the Senate designated by the President;
- the Chief Clerk of the House or another representative of the House designated by the Speaker;
- the Sergeants-at-Arms in the two houses or another representative of each house designated by the presiding officer of the Legislative Administration Committee of that house;
- the Executive Director of the Legislative Services Division (LSD), who chairs the Planning Council; the Legislative Auditor; the Legislative Fiscal Analyst; and the Consumer Counsel; and
- a person designated by the Director of the Department of Administration to represent the Department's information technology responsibilities, who serves as a nonvoting member.

In developing and maintaining the Branch computer system plan, the Planning Council is required to:

- review existing systems that are candidates for automation;
- review existing automated systems that could be improved or integrated with new applications;
- develop and maintain a description of Branch functions or services that would, through application or improvement of computer technology, provide better service;
- develop and maintain a ranking of needs, considering effectiveness and cost of alternative systems; and
- develop and maintain recommended Branch system standards and standard or custom software and hardware solutions.

By law, the LSD is required to provide technical support to the Planning Council. Statutory duties related to this support role include:

- analyzing existing and alternative systems;
- providing technical solutions and advice;
- assessing the benefits and costs of solutions;
- apprising the Planning Council on industry developments;
- maintaining a liaison with the Executive Branch; and
- assisting in purchasing of supplies and equipment.

After developing a Branch computer system plan, the Planning Council must present the plan to the Legislative Council for adoption. In addition to adopting the plan, the Legislative Council may adopt rules for the use of IT resources for the Branch with concurrence of the Legislative Audit and Finance Committees.

2. Legislative Branch IT Organizational Structure

The Planning Council is supported by several groups involved in developing, implementing, and maintaining IT resources within the Legislative Branch. A description of each group follows:

- Office of Legislative Information Technology (OLIT). The OLIT is an LSD office that provides centralized IT services to the Senate, House, and three legislative divisions (LSD, Legislative Audit Division, and Legislative Fiscal Division). It is responsible for developing, implementing, and maintaining an IT infrastructure that meets the business needs of the Legislative Branch in accordance with the computer system plan. The OLIT is organized into two sections: the Application Development Section and the Network Support Section. The Application Development Section develops and maintains computer systems, such as the legislative automated workflow system (LAWS). The Network Support Section provides a computing platform for the Branch. The Legislative Branch's main computing platform is a local area network consisting of personal computers attached to a network file server. The Branch also has several application/web servers and some applications on the state's mainframe computer.
- Technical Planning Group (TPG). Consisting of midlevel managers from the three legislative divisions, the TPG meets every week or every two weeks during the interim

between legislative sessions and less frequently during sessions. The group provides advice and guidance to the OLIT, division directors, and the Planning Council to ensure that plan goals are achievable, that everyday needs are met, and that significant IT issues are addressed.

- Technical Implementation Planning Group (TIPG). The TIPG consists of the Legislative Branch IT staff and network coordinators from each division. This group meets with the same frequency as the TPG. Once specific IT goals and objectives have been established, the TIPG works out the details of implementing the technology so that it meets the needs of the Branch.
- Web Content Organization Group (WCG). In response to the growing importance of the Internet as a tool for providing legislative information to the public, the division directors in December 2001 adopted branchwide web guidelines. These guidelines prescribe the characteristics and technical features of the Branch's website and define procedures for selecting web software tools. The directors designated the Branch librarian as the position responsible for carrying out the guidelines, determining the overall organization of information on the website, and chairing the WCG. The WCG, consisting of members from each division and an OLIT representative, provides guidance to the Branch librarian in implementing the web guidelines and redesigning the website.
- Information Policy Forum (IPF). Also chaired by the Branch librarian, the IPF serves as an IT users group to provide insight and advice to TPG and TIPG. The group focuses on ensuring that tools, policies, and procedures needed for effectively gathering, organizing, using, and disseminating information are available when required.

The Legislative Branch is not only communicating and working together internally but also externally with the Executive and Judicial Branches, the Montana University System, and local governments. Legislative representatives are active participants on the following enterprise groups:

- Information Technology Board (ITB). The ITB, created by the 2001 Legislature, provides a forum to guide state agencies and local governments in the development and deployment of intergovernmental IT resources. The board also advises the Department of Administration on statewide IT standards and policies, the state strategic IT plan, major IT budget requests, and rates and other charges for services established by the department.
- SummitNet Executive Council (SEC). The SEC provides policy-level direction for the state's and university system's data network called SummitNet. The group addresses financial and strategic planning, cost recovery, appropriate use, and other matters related to the operation of the data network.
- Information Technology Managers Council (ITMC). The ITMC, consisting of state IT managers, reviews enterprise IT issues, provides feedback regarding information

management policies, reviews opportunities for the application of new information processing technology, and participates in statewide IT planning efforts.

3. Planning Process

To comply with its statutory obligations, the Planning Council met four times during the 2001-2002 interim. A summary of the meetings follows:

- January meeting. At its organizational meeting in January 2002, members were informed of their statutory duties, adopted operating guidelines, and reviewed the current Legislative Branch IT environment, including the centralized IT budget and major technology projects. To stay informed about Executive Branch activities, the Planning Council was briefed on the state enterprise IT visioning and strategic planning efforts. Additionally, the group devoted time to defining the purpose that IT should serve within the Legislative Branch.
- March meeting. Based on discussions at its January meeting, the Planning Council adopted the following purpose statement in March:

The purpose of information technology within the Legislative Branch is to support the Montana Legislature and its processes by providing appropriate and reliable tools and services for legislators and staff to effectively perform their constitutional and statutory duties. These tools and services must:

- ✓ *aid in the efficient collection, analysis, and presentation of complete and accurate information;*
- ✓ *maintain the integrity of the information and preserve it for future use; and*
- ✓ *provide timely and direct access to the information to interested persons, groups, and entities.*

Also at the March meeting, members reviewed a preliminary list of IT projects and budget initiatives for the 2005 biennium.

- May meeting. The focus of the May meeting was on further refinement of the IT projects and initiatives list. OLIT staff presented cost estimates for each proposal under discussion. Members provided feedback on proposals, selecting those for additional study and inclusion in the computer system plan.

The Planning Council considered a major proposal for maintaining the current operational status of the Branch computer environment. Members asked staff to identify ways to reduce the cost for this proposal to bring it more in line with appropriations levels for fiscal years 2002 and 2003.

Another proposal under review was the purchase of audio equipment to record session committee hearings on searchable compact discs in lieu of producing written summary

minutes. The Planning Council recommended that this proposal be included as part of the 2003 session feed bill rather than as part of the Branch's computer system plan.

The Planning Council also considered funding to allow audio and video broadcasting of legislative floor sessions and selected committee hearings via the Internet. The proposal also provided for archiving of these proceedings for future use. The Planning Council agreed that this initiative would provide greater access to the legislative process for the general public and requested staff to provide additional information at the next meeting.

The final proposal before the Planning Council was a pilot project for legislator automation. This proposal included the purchase of some laptops and software to enable a limited number of legislators to electronically access bills, amendments, and related information during floor sessions. Although members found merit in the proposal, they chose not to seek funding for this initiative given the significant revenue shortfall projected for the next biennium. In addition, they questioned whether they had sufficient information on legislators' needs to embark on this project.

- September meeting. The Planning Council wrapped up business in September with final adoption of the Branch computer system plan and budget for the 2005 biennium. Staff presented a reduced budget for maintaining the operational status of the current computer environment, which received the Planning Council's approval. In addition, members approved a new proposal to provide funding to connect legislators' laptops to the state data network for the 2005 session. The Planning Council rejected a proposal to provide audio and video broadcasting of legislative activities via the Internet because of anticipated budgetary constraints for the next biennium.
- Legislative Council meeting. LSD staff presented the Legislative Branch computer system plan to the Legislative Council in September 2002. The Legislative Council approved the plan as presented.

4. Overview of 2005 Biennium Computer System Plan and Budget

The Planning Council's top priority for the upcoming biennium is to obtain sufficient resources to maintain the operational status of the Legislative Branch's current computer environment. Maintaining the operational status requires procurement of certain equipment and services and completion of several projects including:

- replacing computer hardware (i.e., personal computers, servers, printers, and other peripherals) in accordance with the Branch's replacement cycle;
- purchasing maintenance contracts or ensuring that warranties are in place on personal computers, servers, and printers;
- training for IT staff and for Legislative Audit Division staff involved in information system audits;
- purchasing network infrastructure, web server, and database services;

- converting to supported releases for off-the-shelf software;
- purchasing contracted services for conversion projects, network support, and application support; and
- contracting with a local college for internship services.

In addition to maintaining the operational status of the current computer environment, the Planning Council is seeking funding to connect laptops owned by legislators to the state data network during the 2005 session upon request. This proposal includes funding for contracted support services plus monthly network connection fees for 75 laptops. This service will replace the dial-up connection available to legislators during the 2001 and 2003 sessions.

The Planning Council is requesting a centralized IT budget of \$1,600,874 for fiscal year 2004 and \$1,642,089 for fiscal year 2005 (see Appendix D). Additionally, the Planning Council is asking for a biennial appropriation to provide greater flexibility in managing IT expenditures and to better accommodate the Branch's 2-year business cycle.

Looking ahead, the Planning Council recognizes that eventually the Legislature will demand more in the way of automation for the job of the individual legislator. Several states in recent years have moved in the direction of greater automation, providing tools (hardware and software) to more easily process and better manage the crush of information faced by legislators. However, the Planning Council believes that lawmakers must take an active role in defining their needs and identifying potential approaches for addressing those needs. To that end, the Planning Council recommends that the Legislative Council, Legislative Audit Committee, and Legislative Finance Committee consider appointing legislators from these committees to serve during the 2003-04 interim on a working group with legislative staff to explore the computing needs of legislators and solutions to provide for these needs. Two members from each committee (one Senator and one Representative representing different parties) could be appointed to work with House and Senate staff together with staff from the three legislative divisions. As part of its study, the Planning Council recommends that the working group explore options for providing e-mail services to legislators and Internet broadcasting of legislative activities.

Finally, in presenting the Legislative Branch's computer system plan to the Legislature Council as required in 5-11-405, MCA, the Planning Council has agreed to follow the form and content used by Executive Branch agencies in developing their agency IT plans. The remainder of this report contains the Branch's plan using this format. Items covered in the plan include:

- general information about the Branch (mission statements, program descriptions, etc.);
- previous IT accomplishments;
- description of current IT environments;
- obsolescence issues;
- summary of planned IT changes;
- summary of planned IT initiatives;
- Branch goals and objectives supported by IT; and
- Branch IT administrative objectives.

II. Legislative Branch Information Technology Plan

The 2001 Legislature enacted the Montana Information Technology Act, a comprehensive law governing the use of information technology in state government. Section 2-17-523, MCA, requires Executive Branch agencies to prepare agency IT plans. Although the Legislative Branch is exempt from this requirement, the Planning Council agreed to follow the form and content developed by the Executive Branch for its agencies. This chapter presents the Legislative Branch IT plan in accordance with the Executive Branch format.

1. Agency Contact Information

Person responsible for Information Technology Plan in the agency:

Name	Lois Menzies
Phone Number	444-3066
E-mail	lomenzies@mt.gov

Person to contact for additional information about the agency Information Technology Plan (e.g. IT managers):

Name	Hank Trenk
Phone Number	444-4021
E-mail	htrenk@mt.gov

If **this document** will be posted on your agency's website, please provide the URL for this document:

http://leg.mt.gov/Interim_Committees/Computer_System_Planning/index.htm

2. Agency Description & Technology Overview

A. Mission Statements

- The mission of the **Legislature** is to exercise the legislative power of state government vested in the Legislature by The Constitution of the State of Montana.
- The mission of the **Legislative Branch**, i.e., the consolidated legislative agency, is to provide the administrative structure to support accomplishment of the mission of the Legislature and the other entities included in the consolidated agency.
- The mission of the **Legislative Services Division** is to provide research, reference, legal, technical, information technology, and administrative support services to the

House, Senate, and other divisions of the Legislative Branch in support of effective and efficient operation of the Legislative Branch and to support the mission of the Legislative Council.

- The mission of the **Legislative Fiscal Division** is to provide the Legislature with objective fiscal information and analysis relevant to Montana public policy and budget determination.
- The mission of the **Legislative Audit Division** is to conduct independent audits under supervision of the Legislative Audit Committee, as provided by law, and to provide factual and objective information to the legislative and executive managers of the public trust.

B. Agency Profile

1) Program Description(s)

The structure and function of the Montana Legislature are prescribed by constitutional law, statutes, and legislative rules. The Branch divisions established to support the Montana Legislature and its committees are the Legislative Services Division (LSD), the Legislative Audit Division (LAD), and the Legislative Fiscal Division (LFD). The legislative responsibilities include areas such as lawmaking, appropriation, taxation, oversight of the Executive Branch, and representation of local interests. The primary function of the Legislature, however, is lawmaking, which consists of the consideration of bills. Other responsibilities of the Legislature that support its primary function include research, fiscal analysis, legislation and policy development, information distribution, oversight, and administration. These are described briefly below.

- **Research**

The LSD, LAD, and LFD all provide nonpartisan research services to the Legislature. The LSD staff provides reports and prepares bills for the legislators and committees and also provides legal research and a reference library for the Branch. The Legislative Environmental Policy Office, within the LSD, provides research and analysis of environmental issues. The LFD provides research support in matters related to budgeting. The LAD is called upon to research, analyze, and report on audit issues.

- **Fiscal Analysis**

The LFD provides an independent analysis of the Governor's budget. It also conducts research and analysis of revenue and expenditure trends and provides reports on the impact of economic changes on both enacted and proposed legislation. By performing fiscal analysis and by assisting legislators in understanding agency budgets, the LFD helps the Legislature make responsible

decisions about the collection of state revenue and the subsequent investment of, and allocation to, state government programs.

- **Legislation and Policy Development**

The LSD, House and Senate staff, and the LFD provide staff support to the Legislature as it proposes, debates, and makes decisions on legislation. The Central Services Office of the LSD provides clerical support for the drafting, introduction, engrossing, enrolling, and codifying of bills. House and Senate staff provide clerical support to committees, support the flow of bills through the House and Senate, and generally support the operation of the House and Senate.

- **Information Distribution**

All legislative divisions participate in the distribution of information to the Legislature and the public. For example, legislative audit reports are available to the public, as are budget analysis, fiscal, and interim reports. The Data Distribution Center in the LSD distributes all legislative proceedings in printed format to the Legislature and the public during the session. These include bills, resolutions, status reports, and journals. The Legislative Information Office provides direct in-person and telephone access to the public on the status of legislative proceedings and the daily calendar of events. The Office of Legislative Information Technology supports the systems that allow the creation and maintenance of electronic information and that make electronic access to bill status and text possible. The Legal Services Office, the Central Services Office, and the Office of Legislative Information Technology are responsible for preparing and distributing the MCA, legislative rules, journals, annotations, and other documents related to the proceedings of the Legislature.

- **Oversight**

The LAD provides oversight by regularly auditing the functions of state government and gives the Legislature and the public an independent analysis of the effect of laws and rules. These reviews allow the Legislature to analyze whether the Executive Branch or other elected officials comply effectively and efficiently with the laws and policies of the Legislature. In addition, the LAD is required by federal and state law and bonding agents to issue independent audit opinions on the fairness of the financial statements and the results of operations of state government agencies and of state government as a whole. The LAD also investigates reports and allegations of fraud in state government. The Legislative Environmental Policy Office serves in an oversight capacity for state government on environmental issues. The LFD is statutorily charged with oversight responsibility for the appropriations process, revenue, and other fiscal policy issues. The LSD has monitoring responsibilities incorporated in support of the six permanent interim committees.

- **Administration**

The Central Services Office of the LSD provides purchasing, personnel, and accounting services for the entire Legislative Branch. These services help to efficiently expedite daily business issues and needs of the Branch.

- i. **Specific URL(s)**

- <http://www.leg.mt.gov>
 - <http://leg.mt.gov/services/index.htm>
 - <http://leg.mt.gov/fiscal/index.htm>
 - <http://leg.mt.gov/audit/index.htm>
 - <http://leg.mt.gov/Services/lepo/index.htm>

- 2) **Size of Agency**

- i. **Number of FTE:** There are 128 permanent staff, 130 session staff, and 150 legislators in the Branch.

- ii. **Number of FTE that are IT Related:** 11

- iii. **Number of Locations:** Permanent staff, session staff, and legislators are located in the State Capitol. Some Legislative Audit Division (LAD) staff are located in the Mitchell Building. Additionally, some LAD staff are temporarily located in different buildings throughout the state while conducting audits of state agencies.

- iv. **Operating Budget:** \$27.4 million (2003 biennium)

- v. **IT Budget as a % of Total Operating Budget:** 16.3%, including personnel services

- vi. **Other Pertinent Information:** None

- C. **Previous IT Accomplishments**

- **Novell Cluster Servers Implemented**

The Branch has implemented a cluster environment for its Novell file server. This environment has redundant components. If failure of any component occurs, another hardware component of the cluster will take over. The net result of implementing this environment will be less down time for the Novell server, which means fewer disruptions to users.

- Offsite Backup Server

The Branch has also purchased a backup Novell server to be located offsite in the event of a disaster in the Capitol server room. During a legislative session, this server will be kept up-to-date with the main server in the Capitol. In the event of a disaster that causes the main server in the Capitol to go out, this server can be activated and brought up to date within as little as 24 hours.

- Information Request System Rewrite

Because of inefficiencies in the user interface to the current information request system, the Branch has rewritten this system to use a web browser interface. This has made this system more user-friendly and has increased usage. A key enhancement during this rewrite was the ability to automatically e-mail a staff person once that person has been assigned a request in the system.

- Website Redesign

The Branch redesigned its website to make it easier for the public to find information. This redesign allows the public three ways to access: (1) through the Branch division that produces the information; (2) through the type of information; and (3) through a general search engine. The look and feel of the site was also updated. A Branch web master was also hired and charged with keeping the website updated.

- University System Banner Interface

The Branch worked extensively with the University System to get access to and develop user-friendly interfaces to financial and human resource data (Banner system). This project helped the Legislative Audit and Legislative Fiscal staff do a better job of analyzing University System financial and human resource data.

- Special Session

The Branch IT staff set up and maintained 58 computers and printers, set up and maintained LAWS, and generally supported the IT needs of the Branch for the August 2002 Special Session.

- Internet Connection for Legislators' Laptops During 2001 Session

The Branch IT staff supported connecting legislators' personal laptops to a local Internet service provider through a telephone connection in the Capitol for the 2001 session. Approximately 45 legislators used this service.

- Conversion to Windows 2000

The Branch converted its desktop operating system environment from Windows 95 to Windows 2000. Microsoft no longer supports Windows 95.

- Reapportionment System/GIS

Under its responsibility to provide support to the Districting and Apportionment Commission, the Branch has purchased and is supporting a redistricting system (autoBound). The Branch has also purchased and is supporting ArcView, a general geographic information system. The Legislative Services Division and Legislative Audit Division are using this software to analyze and present geographic data.

- Disaster Recovery of LAWS

The Branch, in conjunction with the Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Administration, has successfully tested recovery of the Oracle component of LAWS at the disaster recovery hot site in Federal Way, Washington. The next step is testing the Internet interface to LAWS at the hot site.

- Conversion to WP 10

The Branch has converted from WordPerfect 8 to WordPerfect 10. Corel, the company that sells WordPerfect, is providing very little support for WordPerfect 8. WordPerfect 8 is not supported on Windows 2000. Part of this conversion involved converting several WordPerfect macros written for LAWS.

- Publication Management System Rewrite

The Branch rewrote its publication management system using Microsoft Access. This system is used to invoice the purchasers of Branch publications such as the MCA. This system was originally written in DOS dBase IV. The system had difficulty operating under Windows 2000.

- Capitol Group Implementation

The Branch maintains several electronic databases of legislator names and addresses and other information about legislators. The Branch had difficulty keeping all of these databases up to date. This project successfully combined several of these electronic databases of legislator information into one database, making it easier to keep the data current.

- Hotline and Penal Violations Rewrite

The Branch has rewritten its hotline and penal violations databases to run under Microsoft Access. These were previously spreadsheet databases and as such were not providing the functionality needed.

- Project Time Accounting and Billing System Rewrite.

The Branch has rewritten its project time accounting and billing system using Microsoft Access. The system downloads employee timesheet data from PeopleSoft and uses that data to produce reports.

D. Description of Current IT Environment

The paragraphs that follow briefly describe the technology used by the Branch.

Computer Hardware

The Branch has determined that most of its internal computing needs can be met cost-effectively by using microcomputer hardware. Currently, there are approximately 200 desktop and laptop PCs in the Branch network. These PCs are connected to one Novell Branch file server.

The Branch will continue to rely on the state's midtier services (operated by the Department of Administration) for large statewide systems, such as SABHRS and MBARS. The mainframe is used for a few Branch systems, such as the MCA codification process. The Branch also leases Oracle server services from the Department of Administration for LAD SBAS, LAD CAFRS, and LAWS. Web server services are also provided to the Branch by the Department of Administration and the Office of Public Instruction.

Computer Software

The Branch has standardized its microcomputer software. These standards are the same as those used by the Executive Branch with a few exceptions. Appendix C contains the Branch software standards.

The Branch has developed and supports the following systems: LAWS (Oracle, web, WordPerfect macros), audit reports, audit billing, office macros, publications management, Capitol group, information request, Branch website, MEPA documents, audit hotline, LAD SABHRS, LAD SBAS, Banner interface, audit management reports, CAFR/trial balance, legislative messages, checkout board, revenue estimation, budget book development, and many smaller systems.

Telecommunications

The local area network (LAN) and the SummitNet wide area network (WAN) provided by the Department of Administration provide a fast, efficient pathway for data network traffic within the Branch, to other state government agencies, and to the "outside world". The Branch makes significant use of the Internet for contact with the public through this network.

IT Architecture Maturity

The following table summarizes the IT architecture in the Legislative Branch in terms of its maturity and thus how well it is supported. The categories used are emerging, mature, declining, and obsolete. Emerging technology is technology that is new and typically the latest release. Mature technology is fully supported technology, typically a year old or older, but not necessarily the latest release. Declining technology is technology that has a sunset date set and has limited support. Obsolete technology is technology that is past its sunset date and is no longer supported.

Type		PC*	PC OS**	Desktop Software	Mid-Tier Hardware	Network OS	Major Applications
1	Emerging	50%	1%	1%	20%	100%	10%
2	Mature	49%	97%	94%	80%	0%	80%
3	Declining	1%	1%	5%	0%	0%	10%
4	Obsolete	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%

* PC - Personal Computer

** OS – Operation System

E. Obsolescence Issues

- Mainframe TextDBMS System

The Branch uses a mainframe system called TextDBMS to update and maintain the MCA. The Branch has extensively used the programming language for TextDBMS to enhance the process used. The Branch has a significant investment in this system and has used this system for the last 12 years. The system currently meets all of the needs of the Branch and requires very little maintenance. However, the original owners of TextDBMS no longer want to be involved in the legislative market. About 4 years ago, they sold the rights to TextDBMS to a smaller company (2 to 3 employees), which the Branch currently contracts with for support. This system is in the declining stage and will need to be replaced sometime in the next 4 to 6 years. The estimated cost for replacement is approximately \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 in current dollars.

- House and Senate Voting Systems

Both the House and Senate use electronic voting systems to record their votes. The House originally purchased its voting system in the 1970s. Upgraded in 1986, a PC was integrated into the House system to provide the main computing power for the system. The House voting system software was written in 1986 to run under the DOS environment. The Senate voting system was totally replaced in 1994. It also uses a PC as the main computing power for the system. The voting software for the Senate vote PC was written to run under Windows 3.1. It is becoming increasingly difficult to make these systems run under the current PC operating systems (i.e., Windows 9x or higher). The company that supplied the House and Senate voting systems (Daktronics) has indicated that neither the House or Senate voting system software will run under Windows 2000 without a major rewrite.

The voting stations on the Senate voting system have from time to time been susceptible to static electricity. During particularly dry periods, when there is a lot of static, one of the Senate voting stations can be inactivated every 2 to 3 days. To reactivate the voting station, it is necessary to call a maintenance person. Daktronics has indicated that they have newer voting station technology that will fix this problem.

The House voting system still contains parts that were originally installed in the 1970s. Although this system runs effectively, this technology will eventually need replacement.

- LAWS

The Branch has developed a system to process and track bills as they move through the Legislature. This system is called the legislative automated workflow system or LAWS. This system was originally developed in 1997-1998. LAWS has a web interface to all of its data. Since this LAWS web interface was developed in 1997, the Branch website has been redesigned and improved significantly. Also, since 1997, web technology has moved forward significantly. These two factors combined have made the LAWS web interface somewhat obsolete and not compatible with the rest of the Branch website.

When LAWS was originally designed, each legislative session's data was stored in a separate database. The Branch currently has a LAWS database for the 1999, 2001, and 2003 sessions and three special sessions. The Branch wants to explore the possibility of combining these databases into one database to save on storage costs.

- Mainframe COBOL Process for Generating Appropriation Bill Numbers

The Branch has automated the process for producing the main appropriation bill (HB 2). This automated process uses a mainframe COBOL program to format a set of numbers that are eventually merged into the appropriation bill. These numbers are originally generated by MBARS. This COBOL program was written in the early 1990s and still functions adequately. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep it functional because of lack of support staff in the Legislative Branch with COBOL/mainframe knowledge.

F. Summary of Planned IT Changes

- LAWS and Office WordPerfect Macros

The bills, journal, and committee minutes processing part of LAWS is written in WordPerfect macros. This part of the system was developed in 1997-1998 using the WordPerfect 8 macro language. Since then Corel has released WordPerfect 9 and WordPerfect 10. The Branch is currently upgrading the LAWS macros to WordPerfect 10. This mostly involves some minor changes and a recompilation of the macros. WordPerfect 10 now supports the original WordPerfect macro language (PerfectScript) and a Visual Basic-like macro language. Corel chose to support a Visual Basic macro language because that is now an industry standard development language. This portion of LAWS is about 4 years old. With as quickly as technology moves at the PC level, the life expectancy of a system using that level of technology is about 6 to 10 years. At some point in the next 4 to 6 years, Corel will probably drop support for PerfectScript or some other similar technology change will cause the Branch to have to rewrite the bills, journal, and committee minutes processes (as well as other office processes currently using WordPerfect macros) using different technology. This will be approximately a \$500,000 to \$700,000 project, in current dollars.

- Branch Network Operating System

The Branch currently uses Novell Netware as its only network operating system. Novell still has a good part of the market share of network operating systems, although Microsoft Windows Server is slowly gaining ground on Novell Netware. It is still too early to tell which of these two network operating systems will dominate in the future. The Branch has a significant investment in personnel skill levels, training, hardware, and software in the Novell Netware arena. Novell Netware currently meets all of the Branch's needs. However, it may be wise for the Branch to begin to gain some expertise in the Microsoft Windows Server area in order to smooth out a conversion to that network operating system if it becomes necessary to do so.

- Document Request System

In 1988, the Legislative Services Division developed a system to help automate the process of finalizing office reports and correspondence. This system is called the document request system. It was originally written using WordPerfect macros and a dBase IV database. Over the years, the macros have been rewritten to accommodate the newer releases of WordPerfect, and the database has been rewritten to run under Microsoft Access. However, at some point the whole system needs to be reviewed again. Some of the underlying processes that the original system is based on are no longer valid but are still kept in place because that's the way the system currently operates.

G. Summary of Planned IT Initiatives

- Legislator Automation

The functions that a legislator performs have always been a prime candidate for automation. Several state legislatures have provided legislators with laptops. Similar proposals have been brought before the Montana Legislature but have failed to gain approval. The main prohibiting factor is cost. At some point, the benefits will outweigh the cost, and the Legislature will move forward in this area.

- Internet Broadcast of Session Activities

With the addition of cameras in the House and Senate Chambers and certain committee rooms, the Branch needs a way to make this audio and video broadcast available to the public. Under this initiative, the Internet would be used to broadcast House and Senate floor sessions and some committee hearings live and also offer the ability to view previously recorded committee hearings and floor sessions. The Legislature has taken some small steps toward accomplishing the full objectives of this initiative; however, cost is a limiting factor here.

- Interface to Executive Branch and University System Data

This initiative is to assist the Branch in obtaining the data needed from the new administrative, financial, and revenue systems recently implemented by the Executive Branch and the University System. The Branch needs this data to perform its functions of audit and fiscal analysis. The key systems that the Branch needs data from are SABHRS, POINTS, and the Banner system.

- Improvements to the Branch Website

This initiative is to continue to make more data available on the Branch website, to keep it current, and to organize it in such a way that the appropriate data is easily found. This is a key initiative for the Branch, since its main product is information.

- Geographic Information Systems

The Branch plans to continue to investigate geographic information systems and how best to apply their capabilities to the research and information presentation functions.

3. Agency IT Goals and Objectives Supported by IT

A. Description of Agency IT Direction

Purpose Statement

The Legislative Branch Computer System Planning Council adopted the following purpose statement in March of 2002:

The purpose of information technology within the Legislative Branch is to support the Montana Legislature and its processes by providing appropriate and reliable tools and services for legislators and staff to effectively perform their constitutional and statutory duties. These tools and services must:

- aid in the efficient collection, analysis, and presentation of complete and accurate information;
- maintain the integrity of the information and preserve it for future use; and
- provide timely and direct access to the information to interested persons, groups, and entities.

Best Practices Assessment

The Montana Legislative Branch is a member of the National Association of Legislative Information Technology (NALIT), a group consisting of IT professionals from each state legislature. NALIT's purpose is to share knowledge on how best to apply IT to the legislative process.

Based on information collected by NALIT on the structure and operation of IT agencies in state legislatures, Montana has achieved a significant degree of centralization of IT systems and functions. Compared to other states that have separate systems and staff for each chamber, the Montana Legislature has an integrated bills processing and status system; one data network supported by centralized staff; and a centralized systems development staff. This level of centralization enables the Branch to make best use of its limited resources, provides a high degree of efficiency in delivery of services, and ensures that systems are developed and maintained from a branchwide perspective.

Over the next two bienniums, the Branch seeks to continue to develop systems and apply IT resources from a Branch perspective. Cooperation and coordination within the Branch will result in effective and cost-effective decisions. Having an active Legislative Branch Computer System Planning Council will ensure that this goal is achieved.

B. How IT Supports Agency Mission, Goals, & Objectives

Role of IT Within the Legislative Branch

The Legislature is information. All that it works with and all that it produces are information. In this information age, enhancing the ability to gather, process, and distribute legislative information more quickly and more accurately is a necessity.

Technology is the primary tool used by the Branch to collect, analyze, and disseminate information. Therefore, the Legislature is highly reliant on its technology. When deciding how

and for what purposes to use technology, it is critical to understand how it is incorporated into the legislative process. The technology planning process, established by Title 5, chapter 11, part 4, MCA, helps ensure that the Legislature is making effective decisions about incorporating technology into the legislative process.

There are extraordinary opportunities for applying technology to an organization whose main product is information. The Legislative Branch recognizes this and has in the past boldly funded and applied technology.

Legislative Branch Coordination and Collaboration

Within the Legislative Branch, the following groups ensure coordination and collaboration in planning and implementing IT:

- Legislative Branch Computer System Planning Council;
- Office of Legislative Information Technology;
- Technical Planning Group;
- Technical Implementation Planning Group; and
- Web Content Organization Group.

Externally, the Legislative Branch is an active participant in the state IT enterprise through membership in the following interbranch and intergovernmental groups:

- Information Technology Board;
- SummitNet Executive Council; and
- Information Technology Managers Council.

Risk Factors

The Branch faces two major risks in carrying out its IT strategy:

- the ability to obtain adequate IT funding; and
- recruitment and retention of skilled IT personnel.

Other factors impacting the Branch in implementing its IT strategy include:

- 2-year budget cycle. Given the rapid pace of change in the IT arena, state government's 2-year budget cycle puts IT managers at a significant disadvantage. To accommodate the budget cycle, managers often must predict technological solutions and costs up to 2.5 years before implementation. Significant IT changes may occur during this period resulting in managers implementing entirely different solutions at entirely different costs.

- Leadership turnover. Legislative leaders (e.g., Senate President, House Speaker) are elected less than 2 months before a regular legislative session convenes. A change in leadership from one session to the next (which is likely because of term limits) may result in the hiring of new House and Senate staff, including appointment of a new Secretary of the Senate and Chief Clerk of the House. This creates a significant challenge for centralized IT staff to train new staff on the Branch's IT infrastructure. Additionally, Senate and House staff may request modifications or enhancements that cannot be accommodated in the short period of time before the session begins.

Use of the Internet

While the Legislative Branch does not use the Internet to conduct electronic transactions, the Internet still plays an important role in distributing Branch policy information, such as laws, reports, etc. The Branch sees the Internet as a key tool in providing information about the Legislature to the public and improving the Legislature's image.

In-House Resources and Outsourcing

The Legislative Branch uses internal IT staff for daily operation and maintenance and for minor enhancements to IT systems and infrastructure. The Branch uses external IT resources (outsourcing) for major enhancements and to implement new technology for which the internal IT staff has not been trained. This outsourcing strategy fits well with the Legislature's 2-year business cycle, which allows a 1-year window between regular sessions to make major enhancements. Often the planned enhancements require more time than the IT staff has available, thus making outsourcing necessary.

Staff Retention

The Branch has made a significant effort to retain IT staff by granting pay exceptions based on market surveys. Twice during the last 4 years, the Branch has adjusted IT salaries to better align pay with the internal and external markets. Before these adjustments were made, there was significant turnover among IT staff; since the adjustments, the turnover rate has slowed considerably.

C. IT Goals & Objectives

Goal #1: Maintain the Operational Status of the Current IT Environment Within the Legislative Branch		
Supported State Goal/Objective/Initiative: Well-Managed, Shared Information Resources, Information Technology Expertise.		
Objective(s)	Timeframe	Measure
Objective #1 Replace PCs, servers, printers, and other peripherals on a regular basis to keep them current with technology.	Ongoing.	Printers, PCs, and servers are supported by the latest releases of software and are not failing excessively due to age. The Branch currently has a 4-year replacement cycle for printers, PCs, and servers.
Objective #2 Purchase maintenance contracts (or ensure that warranties are in place) on PCs, printers, and servers.	Beginning of each FY, ongoing throughout the FY.	Maintenance contracts or warranties are in place.
Objective #3 Keep IT staff trained and up to date on latest release of supported technology.	Ongoing.	IT employees receive at least 5 days of training each year.
Objective #4 Contract with ITSD for network infrastructure.	Beginning of each FY, ongoing throughout the FY.	Branch workstations are able to communicate with servers (which they are allowed access to) located anywhere on SummitNet and the Internet.
Objective #5 Contract with ITSD and OPI for web server services.	Beginning of each FY, ongoing throughout the FY.	The public, state agencies, and Branch personnel are able to view appropriate web pages on the Branch website.
Objective #6 Contract with ITSD for Oracle database services.	Beginning of each FY, ongoing throughout the FY.	The public, state agencies, and Branch personnel are able to access data from the Branch Oracle database.
Objective #7 Continue to convert to supported release of off-the-shelf software.	Ongoing throughout each FY.	PCs, servers, and printers are on currently supported software.
Objective #8 Supplement current IT staff by contracting with MIS services contract vendors for LAWS support, Windows XP conversion support, Word macro support, and network support.	Ongoing throughout each FY.	Current IT staff is not accruing excessive overtime, and customer service is adequate.
Objective #9 Supplement current IT staff by contracting with local colleges for intern services.	Ongoing throughout each FY.	Current IT staff is not accruing excessive overtime; customer service is adequate.

Goal #2: Expand and Improve Electronic Access to Information about the Legislative Branch and Information Produced by the Branch		
Supported State Goal/Objective/Initiative: e-Government		
Objective(s)	Timeframe	Measure
Objective #1 Identify information within the Branch that would be of value to the public.	Ongoing.	Document results.
Objective #2 Establish procedures for putting the information on the Branch website or establish an alternative method of providing the information to the public.	Ongoing.	Document results.
Objective #3 Continue to stay current with web hardware and software technology.	Ongoing.	Website is functional with latest version of popular browsers. Website user feedback is mostly positive.
Objective #4 Continue to keep staff trained on the latest ways to use web technology to the advantage of the Branch.	Ongoing.	Each employee whose job duties involve web technology receives at least 3 days of web training each year.

Goal #3: Ensure the Mission-Critical Applications Are Protected and Recoverable		
Supported State Goal/Objective/Initiative: Business Continuity		
Objective(s)	Timeframe	Measure
Objective #1 Develop a disaster recovery plan.	December 31, 2003.	Document results.
Objective #2 Implement and test the disaster recovery plan.	March 31, 2004.	Successful recovery from a simulated disaster.
Objective #3 Participate on statewide disaster recovery and business continuity committees.	Ongoing.	Meeting attendance.

Goal #4: Provide Efficient Interfaces to Enterprise Systems to Allow for Branch Oversight and Analysis		
Supported State Goal/Objective/Initiative: Efficient Use – Use of Technology to Enable Business Processes		
Objective(s)	Timeframe	Measure
Objective #1 Continue to work with the University System to gain access to accounting and HR data.	Ongoing throughout FY 04-05.	University System data is made available to the Legislative Branch.
Objective #2 Develop user-friendly interfaces to University System data.	Ongoing throughout FY 04-05.	Successful test of user interface.
Objective #3 Continue to work with ITSD to support and maintain the LAD interface to SABHRS.	Ongoing throughout FY 04-05.	LAD SABHRS system is still functional and meets original requirements and any additional requirements.
Objective #4 Continue to work with Executive Branch agencies to gain access to revenue, HR and other data necessary to perform the fiscal and auditing functions of the Branch.	Ongoing throughout FY 04-05.	Executive Branch data is made available to the Legislative Branch.
Objective #5 Develop user-friendly interfaces to Executive Branch agency data as necessary.	Ongoing throughout FY 04-05.	Successful test of user interface.

Goal #5: Explore Ways to Automate the Work of the Individual Legislator		
Supported State Goal/Objective/Initiative: Efficient Use – Use of Technology to Enable Business Processes		
Objective(s)	Timeframe	Measure
Objective #1 Form a subcommittee of the Legislative Council consisting of legislators and IT staff to study the issues and impediments.	July 31, 2003.	Legislators and staff assigned to the study committee; meeting schedule and study plan developed.
Objective #2 Publish a report detailing the findings of the study committee.	September 30, 2004.	Report published.

D. Agency IT Administration Objectives

Under state law (5-11-403 and 5-11-406, MCA), the Legislative Branch must adopt hardware and software standards; these standards should be compatible with Executive Branch standards when possible. Legislative Branch software standards are contained in Appendix C of this plan.

The Branch has submitted a budget for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 that keeps the Branch current with hardware and operating on supported releases of software.

The Branch has adopted procedures to ensure that critical data is backed up and recoverable and established fault tolerant procedures for its critical file servers. The Branch has tested and

successfully recovered the database portion of one of its most critical applications, the legislative automated workflow system (LAWS), but is lacking in a comprehensive disaster recovery plan. Branch employees are active participants in Executive Branch continuity and disaster recovery planning committees.

The Branch has kept its IT staff well-trained and has requested funding to continue to keep its staff current on technology in use by the Branch.

4. Uses of Information Technology - IT Initiatives

The Legislative Branch has no major initiatives to be proposed.

APPENDIX A
MEMBERSHIP OF ADVIORY GROUPS

Legislative Branch Computer System Planning Council

Lois Menzies, Executive Director, Legislative Services Division, Chair (ex officio)
Chris Ahner, House Sergeant-at-Arms
John Brueggeman, State Representative, House District No. 74
Chuckie Cramer, Senate Sergeant-at-Arms
Tony Herbert, Deputy CIO, Information Technology Services Division, Department of Administration
Clayton Schenck, Legislative Fiscal Analyst
Scott Seacat, Legislative Auditor
Rosana Skelton, Secretary of the Senate

Technical Planning Group (TPG)

Tori Hunthausen, Legislative Audit Division
Terry Johnson, Legislative Fiscal Division
Henry Trenk, Legislative Services Division

Technical Implementation Planning Group (TIPG)

Mike Allen, Legislative Fiscal Division
Karen Berger, Legislative Services Division
Alysa Eaton, Legislative Services Division
Steve Eller, Legislative Services Division
Jim Gordon, Legislative Services Division
Tori Hunthausen, Legislative Audit Division
Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Legislative Services Division
Mark Javornik, Legislative Services Division
Terry Johnson, Legislative Fiscal Division
Jeanette Nordahl, Legislative Services Division
Jan Orsello, Legislative Audit Division
Rick Peaslee, Legislative Services Division
Margie Peterson, Legislative Services Division
Dustin Temple, Legislative Services Division
Jeff Thomas, Legislative Services Division

**APPENDIX B
GOVERNING STATUTES**

**Montana Code Annotated, 2001
Title 5, Chapter 11, Part 4
Computer System Planning**

5-11-401. Purpose. It is the purpose of this part to establish a mechanism for computer system planning encompassing broad policy needs, long-term direction for computer use, and the effective implementation of a detailed plan for the legislative branch. It is the purpose of the plan to assure coordination of information system decisions so that the overall effectiveness of the senate, the house of representatives, and legislative agencies may be improved. It is the further purpose of the plan to enhance the coordination of legislative branch systems with executive branch systems wherever possible.

5-11-402. Legislative branch computer system planning council. There is a legislative branch computer system planning council composed of:

- (1) the secretary of the senate or another representative of the senate designated by the president;
- (2) the chief clerk of the house of representatives or another representative of the house designated by the speaker;
- (3) the sergeants-at-arms in the two houses or another representative of each house designated by the presiding officer of the legislative administration committee of that house;
- (4) the executive director of the legislative services division, who shall chair the planning council;
- (5) the legislative auditor;
- (6) the legislative fiscal analyst;
- (7) the consumer counsel; and
- (8) a person designated by the director of the department of administration to represent the information technology responsibilities of the department, who shall serve as a nonvoting member of the planning council.

5-11-403. Duties of legislative branch computer system planning council. (1) The legislative branch computer system planning council shall develop and maintain a legislative branch computer system plan. In developing and maintaining this plan, the planning council shall:

- (a) continuously review or have reviewed existing information systems that are candidates for automation or enhancement, as well as review existing automated systems that may be improved or integrated with new applications;
- (b) develop and maintain a description of functions or services in the legislative branch and its agencies that would, through application or improvement of computer technology, provide better service to members of the legislature, legislative agencies, and the public;
- (c) develop and maintain a ranking of needs, taking into consideration the relative effectiveness and probable cost of alternative systems; and

(d) develop and maintain recommended system standards for the legislative branch and standard or custom software and hardware solutions appropriate to the needs and environment of the legislative branch and its agencies.

(2) To the extent possible:

(a) future applications should be explicitly identified in the plan;

(b) current applications should allow a high degree of flexibility so that future applications are not limited; and

(c) both current and future applications should be coordinated and compatible with the standards and goals of the executive branch as expressed in the state strategic information technology plan provided for in 2-17-521, as well as the legislative branch standards developed in accordance with the requirement in subsection (1)(d).

5-11-404. Technical support. (1) The executive director of the legislative services division shall provide technical staff support to the legislative branch computer system planning council. In performing this duty, the legislative services division shall assist the planning council by:

(a) developing or having developed analyses of existing and alternate systems;

(b) providing technical solutions and advice related to the standards set by the planning council;

(c) assisting in assessing benefits and costs of optional solutions;

(d) apprising the planning council of developments and directions in the industry;

(e) maintaining a liaison with and informing the planning council of plans and directions within the executive branch; assisting in the selection and purchasing of supplies and equipment; and

(f) providing other assistance as may be requested.

(2) The executive director shall encourage participation of appropriate personnel of the senate, the house of representatives, and other legislative entities in the provision of technical support.

5-11-405. Legislative branch computer system plan -- adoption. The legislative branch computer system plan must be approved and adopted by the legislative council.

5-11-406. Legislative branch systems -- conformity to standards. Computer hardware and software systems installed by the senate, the house of representatives, and legislative branch agencies must conform to standards established in the legislative branch computer system plan in effect at the time the purchasing decision is made.

**APPENDIX C
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH IT STANDARDS**

The following standards have been adopted for the Branch. All legislative divisions are required to follow these standards for new purchases or to convert to these standards when it is most cost-effective. These standards are periodically reviewed and updated as Branch needs or state and computer industry standards change.

<u>Application</u>	<u>Standard</u>
Word Processing	Microsoft Word and WordPerfect
Spreadsheet	Microsoft Excel and Lotus 1-2-3
Database	Oracle for large development projects; Microsoft Access for midlevel development projects; Lotus Approach for low-end user development and data analysis
Desktop Publishing	Ventura Publisher
Presentation	Microsoft PowerPoint
Desktop OS	Windows NT/Windows 2000
3270 Emulation	Attachmate EXTRA!
E-Mail	Outlook/Exchange
Internet Browser	Internet Explorer
LAN Operating System	Novell NetWare
Computer Hardware	State Term Contract PCs

All legislative divisions are to maintain, when feasible, the same release level for each software standard. Transition from older software applications to current standards is provided for in the plan.

**APPENDIX D
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH FY 2004-2005
IT BUDGET**

	FY 04	FY 05
1. Maintain the Operational Status of the Current Computer Environment		
Hardware and Software for Life Cycle Costs - Replacement Cycle	\$300,000	\$267,000
Upgrade Novell Servers	50,000	50,000
Hardware Maintenance and Supplies	30,000	30,000
Network Connect Fees - @ \$73.00 per Connection per Month	181,332	261,048
Interns (4 Interns Year Round)	45,000	45,000
Training	20,000	20,000
Audit IT Training	19,924	20,483
Support Costs for Existing Oracle Systems (ITSD Service)		
LAD CAFRS	2,750	3,025
LAWS Server Costs (99, 01, 03, 05, SS & Test Instances)	26,400	29,040
LAWS Support (1/4 Contractor Nonsess. Yr.; 1/2 Contrctr Sess. Yr. @\$80)	41,600	86,400
Convert Desktop to Windows XP (Contracted Services - 2080 hrs @ \$72)	74,880	74,880
Network Support (Full-Time Contractor for Each FY)	140,000	140,000
LAD SABHRS/Banner Support (Contracted Services)	75,800	75,800
Reapportionment System Maintenance	5,000	5,000
Web Server Lease from OPI	7,000	0
Web Server Lease from ITSD	7,200	7,200
Remote Dial-Up (ITSD \$5/month for 70 Connections)	4,200	4,200
Maintenance of LAD Reporting System (Word Macros) Contracted Services	4,200	4,200
Interface to Enterprise Systems		
LAD SABHRS Interface - Contracted Services	95,000	95,000
GASB 34 Conversion - Contracted Services	30,000	30,000
LAD and LFD Interface to BANNER - Contracted Services	158,388	158,388
LFD Interface to POINTS, and Other Systems - Contracted Services	75,000	75,000
Vote System Maintenance to Run Under Windows 2000/XP	40,000	0
American Disabilities Act Compliance		
Branch Website Analysis	5,000	5,000
Improve Accessibility and Effectiveness of Branch Web Environment		
LAWS Web and Database Analysis - Contracted Services	60,000	0
Branch Website - Contracted Services	5,000	5,000
Library Databases to the Internet	14,000	1,000
Contracted Services to Support LFD Applications (1 Contrr 1/2 Time Each FY)	83,200	83,200
TOTAL	1,600,874	1,575,864
2. Connect Legislator Laptops to State Network for 2005 Session		
Support Staff (6 Months @ 1/2 Time \$75/hour)		39,000
Network Connections - 75 Legislators		27,225
TOTAL		66,225