



# Capstone Project Proposal

Project Title: Teton County Administrative Policy: Website Design, Update, and Maintenance

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Track: East

Agency: Teton County

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## Project Title

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Teton County Administrative Policy: Website Design, Update, and Maintenance v1

## Problem Statement & Rationale

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Teton County Idaho's website, *tetoncountyidaho.gov*, is old, poorly maintained, contains outdated information, is difficult to navigate, has broken links, and does not serve the community well. This failure impacts transparency, equity, and diminishes Teton County's ability to interact with other government entities, nonprofits, local businesses, interest groups and the public. There is currently no internal administrative policy that addresses the website as a whole, including a style guide, update requirements, information retention, equity considerations, or visitor interaction tracking.

I have been employed by Teton County for two years, and this has been a persistent problem identified by elected officials, staff and the public. The public often reaches out to the County for help navigating the website. It is difficult to find department information, like upcoming land use proposals, or other materials regarding pending County decisions, or even, our job application form. This results in the inefficient use of staff time.

One example resulting from the lack of an administrative policy is when the County recently removed a link to an external site, *quitday.org* (presumably a smoking cessation resource), that redirected website visitors to *vapingdaily.com*, a site that reviewed vaping products and linked supplier websites. It seems that instead of helping individuals quit smoking, Teton County has unknowingly supported vaping and vaping product vendors.

For another example, in *Figure 1*, under the sub header "Minutes," there is a link that says "Minutes" that does not work and under the date, January 31, 2015, there is another link for "All County Commissioner Minutes can be found here" that also appears to be broken.

# Teton County Administrative Policy: Website Design, Update, and Maintenance

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Department Information	Minutes	Contact Information
<a href="#">Department Home</a> <a href="#">Announcements</a> <a href="#">Contact Info</a> <a href="#">FAQ</a> <a href="#">Forms</a> <a href="#">Links</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a> <a href="#">Services</a> <a href="#">Public Meeting Audio Files</a> <a href="#">Priorities</a>	<b>Minutes</b>  January 31, 2015 <a href="#">All County Commissioners minutes can be found here</a>	<b>Location</b> Teton County Courthouse 150 Courthouse Drive Driggs, ID 83422  <b>Mailing</b> 150 Courthouse Drive Driggs, ID 83422  <b>Other</b> 208-776-8254 (phone) 208-776-8150 (fax) <a href="mailto:commissioners@tetoncountyidaho.gov">commissioners@tetoncountyidaho.gov</a>  <b>Hours</b> Monday - Friday: 9 - 5
<b>Additional Information</b>		
<a href="#">Bertin Ranch Subdivision Preliminary Plat</a> <a href="#">Boundless Sky Subdivision Final Plat Hearing</a> <a href="#">Dorothy Gayle Ranch Preliminary Plat</a> <a href="#">Greystone Subdivision Preliminary Plat Continued</a> <a href="#">LDC Redlines May 6 BoCC Review</a> <a href="#">Northern Lights Preliminary Plat</a> <a href="#">Wildsprings Ranch Subdivision Preliminary Plat</a> <a href="#">Click Here for Agendas &amp; Minutes Pre June 2023</a> <a href="#">Click here for Agendas &amp; Minutes June 2023 to Now</a>		

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Figure 1, This page is uncovered by finding the Board of County Commissioners' department page and then selecting, "minutes," under the sub header, "Department Information."

Again in Figure 1, under the sub header, "Additional Information", there are two more links that contain the word "minutes," that actually route to pages that contain Board of County Commissioners' meeting minutes, and other things. There are other issues throughout this one page that don't consider user experience. The email address under "Other", under the sub header "Contact Information", is cut-off after the period. The hours are listed as "9 – 5" without a.m. or p.m. Everything under the sub header "Additional Information," other than the two minutes links, are land development packets. Some visitors to our website might find this information here, others might think to look under the Planning Department's page, and yet, what is this information additional to or supporting?

One of the major reasons why the website is un-maintained, lies in the "behind the scenes" content management system that hosts the current website. In an effort to save funds, a vendor was chosen to create a "bare bones" website that cost the County less than \$3,000 annually. The website, which came with a management system, where the actual content editing occurs, is extremely difficult to use. This resulted in the majority of staff who were not legally obligated a legal obligation to provide information on the website to stop updating their pages.

In 2023, Teton County purchased a new website through a national vendor. This website will be much easier for staff to interact with, but considering the current sentiment surrounding website maintenance, a clear policy that sets expectations and helps inform content decisions is essential to keep history from repeating itself.

The development of an Administrative Policy would ensure that pages are unified in appearance and easy to navigate, information is accessible, and the website as a whole is accessible for all users. This will result in increased transparency through improved information dissemination, and reduce the amount of time staff spend trying to navigate the website internally and externally.

## Current Reality

Teton County, Idaho, (established in 1915) has a population, of 11,630 (2020 census), is known for the Teton Mountain Range, Its proximity to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, and its abundance of recreational opportunities. The incorporated cities within Teton County include Driggs (County Seat), Teton, and Victor.

The Demographic breakdown of Teton County is 81% white, and 16.3% Hispanic. This appears to be proportionately reflected in staff. The County does not currently track demographics of its roughly 90 employees.

County government has a unique structure that is regulated by state statute.

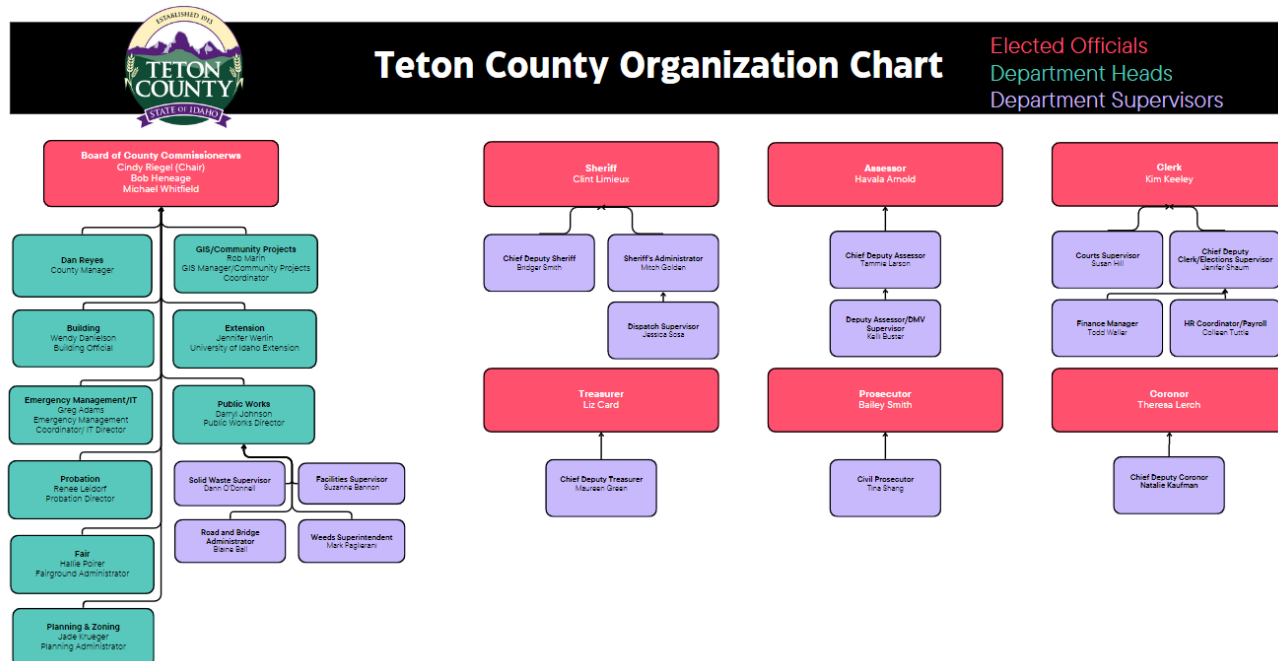


Figure 2: Teton County Organization Chart

There are nine elected officials, three comprise the Board of County Commissioners who head another twelve departments and control the budget for the entire county. Each elected office is independent of the others and beholden only to the public. Creating policy that each elected official's department follows is difficult; however, the Board of County Commissioners is tasked with implementing administrative policies for the entire organization.

**Events:** Teton County contracted with a new website provider at the end of 2022. The website design and development took longer than anticipated and is now fully created and ready for publishing; however, the project simply took the old information and put it into a new tool. Department heads, elected officials, and staff update all of the information. Training was provided to all staff responsible for the information on the website; however staff will need to digest the

training and begin the process of updating their pages.

**Mental Models:** Generally, everyone within the organization understands how important accurate information dissemination is to the public. Departments understand the serious work required to start; however, there is hesitation to start something that will become a regular part of each department's work plan. Each department will have to assign someone to website maintenance, which will require learning how to use the editor, as well as what is required from this proposed policy in order to maintain the standards set.

**Patterns of Behavior:** Department heads are currently vocal about their inability to update the current website because of the complicated and cumbersome management program; however, no department has taken steps to address the problem. It will be easy for departments that do not report to the Board of County Commissioners' to lapse in their website maintenance.

**Systematic Structures:** Without an administrative policy that outlines expectations, departments do not assign website maintenance to any of their staff unless there is required information that must be regularly updated to comply with state laws.

## Vision

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The administrative policy is an internal document that assigned content creators can use to help guide the process of making information public facing. The policy will help: staff determine if information is appropriate to face the public; if the information is complete; anticipating what information the intended audience needs to take away from the content; is the information accessible to all; and many other considerations.

### Customer Benefits:

- Standardized information across pages should look similar so that site visitors do not have to guess what one sub header means unless it is completely unique to a specific department.
- The public should be able to quickly look at the County website and find what they are looking for when they have questions before deciding to call or visit the County.
- County projects, plans, forms, etc., will be more accessible to the public.

### Staff Benefits:

- Staff will not be asked to create content blindly; there will be clear standards to help guide content creation.
- Processes will be quick and repeatable.
- Required regular maintenance will reduce the amount of time staff spends speaking with members of the public who could get the information they need from the website.
- Staff will have access to more information, using the website as a resource, to better understand the organization they work within.

### Agency Benefits:

- Teton County will project a unified image.
- Teton County's relationship with the public may improve as initiatives become more transparent.
- The public will have easier access to information and how to participate in public processes

and provide feedback to decision makers.

Teton County's current motto is "Cultivating Community to Enrich Lives" and the fourth goal in the Teton County Comprehensive Plan is to "Contribute to our strong sense of community providing quality facilities, services and activities to benefit the Community". Although a strong website policy is not directly linked to these goals, providing a quality product that ensures transparent and equitable information dissemination is vital to enriching lives and providing services to the benefit of the Community.

## Gap Analysis

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Without a policy detailing the layout and style points of how the new website should look, the minimum content that should be created, and maintenance goals, the County website may end up looking like the current website that Teton County has now. Entirely new content will need to be created to meet these minimum standards, and departments will need to follow-up with regular maintenance. This will be an ongoing part of department work plans from now on.

In order to ensure that the website is published in a timely manner, it will need to be published before the administrative policy is complete. The County holds regular monthly Elected Officials and Department Heads (EODH) meetings, where consensus will need to be reached by the EODH group to ensure consensus on decisions about the websites policy.

**Problem 1:** Website has old, out-of-date information and is missing relevant archival data.

**Summary:** Because the old content management system is so difficult to use, departments have stopped updating the website. This will increase the initial workload required to get the new website up-to-date.

**Vision:** The policy will need to address records retention rules, determine what information needs to be deleted, what records need to be added, and the format for information display. The public will then have access to historical data for research, up-to date information that impacts their daily lives, and a resource for important initiatives.

**Problem 2:** Regular maintenance

**Summary:** Because the old content management system is so difficult to use, departments have stopped updating the website. This will increase the workload required to get the new website up-to-date.

**Vision:** The policy will need to address standards for regular maintenance to ensure that the most up-to-date information is available in a timely manner, and there is a way to hold departments accountable for updates.

**Problem 3:** Uniform style guide

**Summary:** The current website has information presented however the content creator thought would be most appropriate at that time. No consideration was given to how similar information is presented in other places. Link names, presentations, events, sub headers, photos (or no photo) and any other kind of information are presented however the content creator at the time determined.

**Vision:** A style guide will need to be developed so that pages look uniform. Consensus by EODH will

need to be achieved so that no department's page does not follow the guide. This will also help with accessibility.

**Problem 4:** Ease of Use

**Vision:** The public, as a stakeholder, will need to provide input so that changes addressing problems 1-3 are relevant to the primary audience.

## Strategic Goal & Target

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The outcome of this project is to develop an administrative policy to ensure minimum content standards, style standards, maintenance standards and accountability for the new Teton County Website.

The goal of this project is to increase transparency and support public participation in county government. When our projects, strategic goals, and important information like budgets, personnel, volunteer boards, etc., is accessible, the public can develop informed opinions and participate through the many opportunities provided by Teton County. The process will require EODH audit, inventory and update department pages to ensure content relevancy and completeness. The policy will focus primarily on standards, but will ensure that the website presents a unified front.

To ensure cost effectiveness, the new website will need to be published as soon as pages are updated; however, the policy, like the pages will be a continuous work in progress. Once the website is published, EODH can find consensus on standards, and go back and make minor changes to meet uniform requirements.

Google Analytics training will be needed to determine historic trends and compare them to the new website.

## Deliverables & Impact

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The overall impact of the Administrative policy should result in a better governance and public relations. The accessibility of information will be dramatically increased resulting in various anticipated short-term and long-term results.

**Short-Term Impacts:**

Current website visitors, including external agencies, members of the public, prospective employees, etc. will have an easier time navigating the new website. They should be able to intuitively look for the information they are seeking. New website visitors should also be able to quickly learn what projects the County has taken on and quickly become familiar with the state of the County. Staff will also have a resource that helps them better understand the organization as a whole.

**Long-Term Impacts:**

The types and number of website visitors should increase reducing the burden on staff to answer calls and walk-ins that can be addressed through the website. There will always be a small group of individuals that prefer to call or come to the courthouse, but the number of overall calls and walk-ins will reduce. There may also be a decrease in public records requests (PRR) because many records will be more easily accessible through the website.

## Action Plan

There are many tools at the disposal of the County. For phase one of the project, tools like [Trello](#), Figure 3, will be used to track progress, and flesh out ideas.

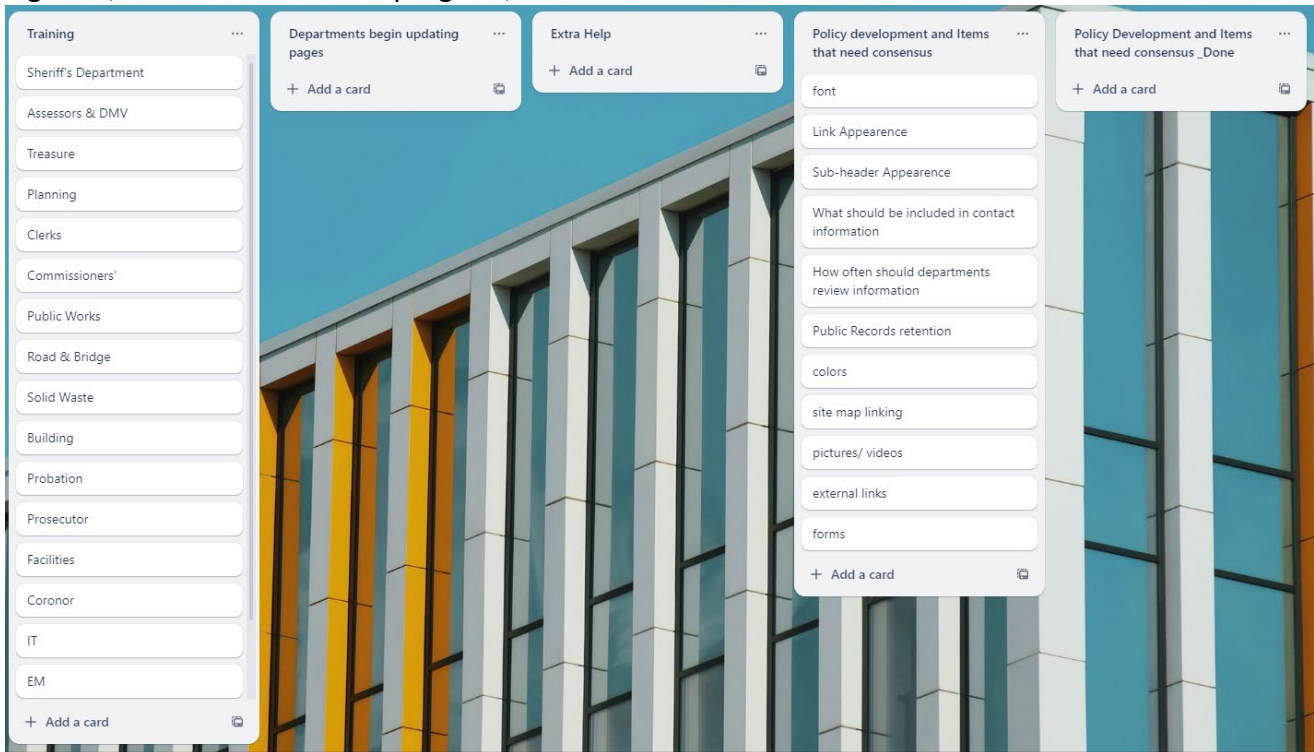


Figure 3: Trello Board to track Department and Policy Progress

This project relies heavily upon all County departments, and Trello cards can be used to add details, and make notes for each department. The Gantt chart in Figure 4 itemizes each phase of the website and the policy development. Although this proposal addresses policy creation, these phases will occur in tandem until we can begin regularly maintaining the new website.

- Phase 1: EODH buy in, training, and getting the team on the same page.
- Phase 2: Draft Policy creation
- Phase 3: Policy finalization
- Phase 4 (concurrent with phase 2): Website content creation
- Phase 5: Publishing website to the public
- Phase 6: Ensuring website is complaint with new policy
- Phase 7: Evaluation of project
- Phase 8: Maintenance cycles begin

# Teton County Administrative Policy: Website Design, Update, and Maintenance

## Revize website

Project start **Tue, 6/14/2024**

Display week

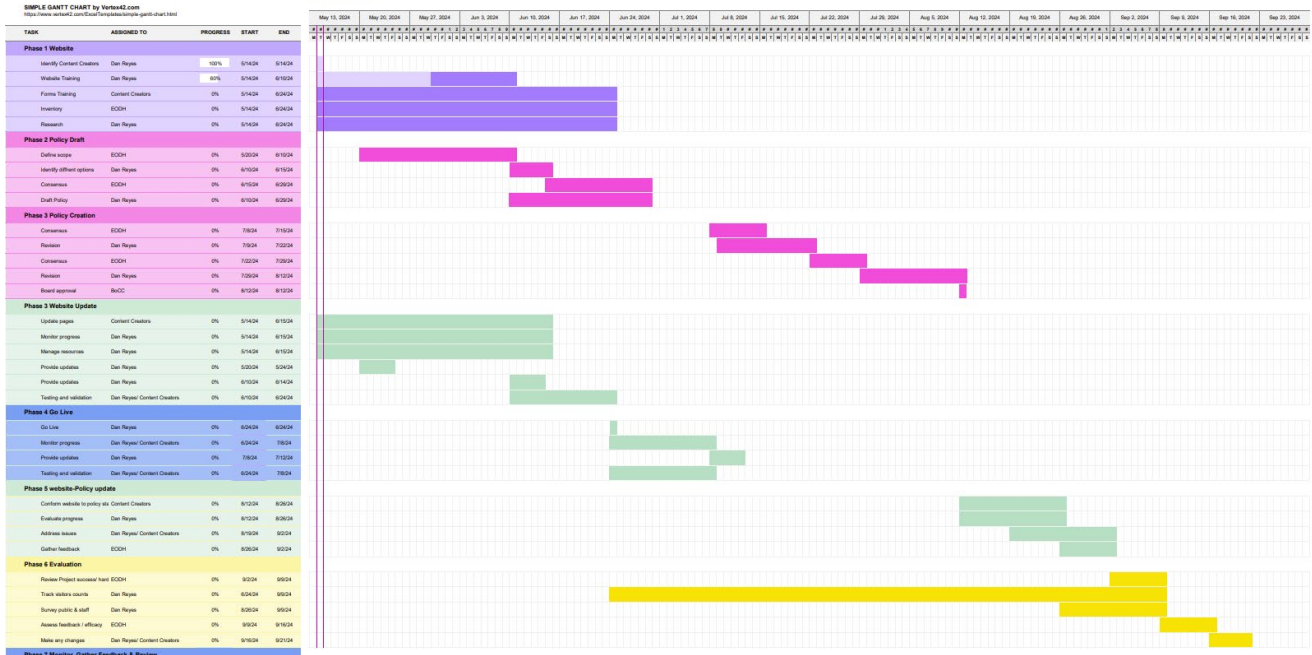


Figure 4: Gantt chart detailing the Project

## Critical Factors & Measurement Metrics

### MEASUREMENT #1 COST SAVINGS

A cost-benefit analysis will be conducted to compare the cost of the County Manager’s time when answering inquiries related to the website before the new website goes live and after. Figure 5 shows how data will be collected for a cost benefit analysis.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Name	website Issue	Start of help	End of help	Total Time	Transfer to another Department?	Cost	Is Issue addressable in Policy	Email Address
2	example	Looking for County Minutes	10:55:00 AM	11:35:00 AM	0.66	no	\$24.34	yes	example@example.com
3									
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Figure 5: Input method for comparing cost of inquiries.

For example, assume one week the County Manager receives four inquiries, resulting in, an average of 30

minutes per inquiry, or a total of \$73.76. This number is found by  $((30/60)*4)*36.88$  = the average time per inquiry divided by time in an hour, multiplied by number of inquirers, multiplied by gross per hour wage. If we assume that this is the average cost per week, there are 52 weeks in a year, resulting in a cost of 3,835.52 for one year. Please note, that, anecdotally, the County Manager receives less phone calls from the public than most departments. Comparing before and after data will inform the savings provided by this project.

**MEASUREMENT #2 STAFF SURVEY**

Survey of Staff to determine the efficacy of the policy will be developed and disseminated during phase 5 of the project. Questions regarding time saved, ease of use and other qualitative and quantitative indicators will be used to help inform future policy changes.

**MEASUREMENT #3 PUBLIC SURVEY**

Survey of the public will be administered. It will be disseminated via social media, the website, and the newspaper to gather data on different qualitative and quantitative measurements. It will be sent out to anyone that provided their email address when inquiring about website during cost-benefit analysis data collection as well. This will inform future policy changes.

## Stakeholders & Team Analysis

Name & Title	Project Role	Project Contribution	Communication
Dan Reyes	County Manager	Project Manager	
Elected Officials and Department Heads	Stakeholders	Assign content creators, determine content needed, collaborate on policy	EODH meetings, Email, in person.
Board of County Commissioners	Website Owner	Approve Policy, Approve final output.	BoCC meetings, County Manager Memos, EODH meetings
Content Creators	Content Creators	Data input, policy and website auditors.	Email through EODH, or directly as needed appropriate, & survey data
Public	Stakeholders	Project reviewers, auditors.	Survey data

## Self-Scored Project Screener

Instructions: Score the following statements using the four-point scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Agree), and 4 (Strongly Agree) in the space provided. The goal is to achieve a score of three on each item. Evidence of how you fulfilled each statement should be evident in the proposal.

Project Screening Statement	Score	Comments or Notes
<b>Problem Statement</b> I have defined the problem my project will solve.	3	
<b>Constraint #1: Time</b> I have enough time in my schedule to devote to the project, given the deadline.	2	This project is priority for my organizations
<b>Constraint #2: Cost</b> I am confident that the project budget is well-defined and contains sufficient funds.	3	This project will only cost time in productivity.
<b>Constraint #3: Quality &amp; Scope</b> I understand what is in and out of scope for the project.	3	
<b>Stakeholders</b> I have identified the project sponsors, customers, team members, and others who are impacted by the project. I understand their roles and responsibilities.	3	This project will require many people throughout the entire organization as well as the public's input.
<b>Outcomes</b> I am confident that completing my project will solve the problem as described.	3	
<b>Outputs &amp; Metrics</b> I can identify the project deliverables, and I have defined how to measure them.	3	
<b>Tasks &amp; Timeline #1</b> I can list the start, end, and duration of each task in order of occurrence.	3	See Gantt chart
<b>Tasks &amp; Timeline #2</b> I know how to develop a schedule and how to calculate the critical path for the project.	3	
<b>Risks &amp; Mitigation</b> I can identify risks to success and how to mitigate them. I understand the likelihood and seriousness of each risk.	3	

## Authority & Resources

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I anticipate spending several hours weekly on this project both as a content editor and as the project manager. Coordination with EODH will be slow and time consuming in order to gather feedback and consensus. I also anticipate spending time pushing content creators along who are trying to manage their regular duties. A large amount of the work required to finish this project will be done by the County Manager; however the coordination of page updating will have to be done by each department. This coordination will require staff meetings with EODH, and direct communication with departments.

## Agency Acknowledgment

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This is an acknowledgement from all parties that the capstone work aligns with and supports the agency's mission and goals. By providing your signature below, you agree that the CPM® participant can pursue the capstone work for the duration of the CPM® program. Participants need adequate time and resources to complete work on a Capstone project so any major changes to the Capstone six months or less to the due date might delay a CPM® participant's graduation timeline. If a significant change to the capstone project needs to take place after the submission of this proposal, please contact the CPM® Program Manager.

Agency or Authorized Official's Name, Signature & Date.

Cindy Riegel,  
County Commissioner (Chair)

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Michael Whitfield  
County Commissioner

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Bob Heneage  
County Commissioner

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_