

improvement expenses have been reflected in the its Five-Year Financial Plan.

Once fully implemented, POPS is expected to save customers and community members time and money by giving them remote access to information and services and by decreasing the need to visit the Development Services Center or BDS offices. The bureau is expected to experience significant efficiency gains in plan review, permitting, and inspection processes by relying less on paper plans and records. The bureau states that these efficiencies have been incorporated into its Financial Plan projections in the form of needing 9.0 FTEs fewer in the final two years of the Five-Year Forecast period, once the new systems are solidly in place, staff have been fully trained, and bureau processes have adjusted to the new technology.

Coordination of the POPS project is ongoing with all the development review bureaus, including Water, Transportation, Environmental Services, Fire, and Parks. BDS is assuming funding for the upgrading of existing functionality as well as the development costs for desired new functionality. But because of the bureau's interpretation of State and City regulations concerning the utilization of bureau revenues, BDS has communicated to the other bureaus that they need to fund the configuration of new functionality to meet their specific needs. It will be important to ensure that a comprehensive funding plan is in place for the entire project in order to avoid unnecessary project delays, and CBO recommends that any funding disputes between participating bureaus be resolved quickly by Council.

With the project about to enter the implementation phase, CBO believes that the current project has a much better chance of success than ITAP, which had much less involvement from BTS, lacked a governance charter as well as risk mitigation plans, and had leadership and structural problems.⁴ Unlike the situation with ITAP in which the City had no control over subcontractors, with POPS, the City is working directly with the vendors to refine requirements and will be releasing the new system incrementally. The full implementation is expected to take 18 to 20 months, with the first phase of the permitting system and ProjectDox (the electronic plan review system) to be launched in July 2018 and full implementation by October 2019.

Nevertheless, there remains significant risk to the City, as with any large technology project. One risk is that the technology is developed without a detailed and sustained analysis of City business processes, taking into account how they can be improved. To this end, BDS is looking into utilizing an outside entity to assist the bureau with process improvements, but the timeline for accomplishing this in conjunction with the project timeline is quite challenging. In addition, as POPS is being implemented, another risk involves the City's capacity to support three systems at the same time: the current permitting system, ProjectDox, and the new

⁴ IT Advancement Project Assessment for the City of Portland by Virtual Information Executives, October 2016

