

**Report on the Performance Audit of the County  
Clerk's Office**

**CLACKAMAS COUNTY, OREGON**

**FINAL REPORT**



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# **1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document is the performance audit report for the Clackamas County Clerk's Office. This first chapter provides an introduction and an executive summary of the report. This summary identifies the information and approach used in this study and delineates key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Matrix Consulting Group was retained by Clackamas County to perform a performance audit of the County Clerk's various operational functions to include Elections, Recording, and Records Management Departments. This report provides the project team's efforts related to this study. Our analysis focused on a wide range of issues including staffing, work practices, service levels, organizational structures, information technology issues, etc.

Specifically, the scope of work for this project is detailed in eight chapters which include:

- An executive summary as shown in this chapter.
- A profile chapter describing general operational characteristics of the County Clerk's Office and departments within this study.
- A best management practices chapter comparing operational characteristics to a variety of best practices collected and developed by the Matrix Consulting Group.
- A comparative survey chapter juxtaposing Clackamas County Clerk operations against other regional agencies.
- Four County Clerk operational chapters.

To develop this analysis the Project Team conducted an extensive number of interviews, conducted tours, performed comparative analysis and collected various data

in an effort to develop an understanding of the County Clerk operations. Examples of data collection efforts included the following:

- Interviews with an extensive number of staff to include managers, leads, and the vast majority of line staff in the County Clerk's Office.
- Collection and review of data from a wide range of sources including budgetary information, personnel data, workload information, etc.
- Review of key documents including SOPs, and other relevant reports or manuals.

The following section provides a summary of the major findings and conclusions of this study.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The following table summarizes the primary improvement opportunities identified by the Project Team in the analysis of the County Clerk's Office. Overall, the Project Team observes that the Clackamas County Clerk's Office is well run with respect to a variety of analytical protocols used including comparison to best management practices, comparison to other agencies, field observations and a various other diagnostic methods. Opportunities noted, with few exception, should not be viewed as critical operational shortcomings; rather, they serve as opportunities to enhance current service delivery methods which are generally founded on sound operational and management principles.

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#	Recommendations	Recommended Timing
#1	Recommendation: The County Clerk with support of the Board of Commissioners should designate the Records & Information Manager the final authority relative to records management decision-making. The Records Management Department should be identified as an authoritative department as opposed to an advisory department, having final authority over records management decisions with respect to records retention, destruction, etc.	Q4-2009
#2	Recommendation: Various protocols should be developed that facilitate the authoritative role of the Records Management Department. This includes Records Destruction Notifications which are based on exception reporting from the departments as opposed to "permission to destroy notices" which do not have a mandated turn-around time.	Q2-2010
#3	Recommendation: Department Records Coordinators should be trained to be a QA/QC extension of the Records Management Department, ensuring that records management regulations are followed within their respective organizations.	Q2-2010
#4	Recommendation: The Records Management Department should only be designated and budgeted as an Internal Service Fund if all departments are mandated to use the services. Otherwise, the Records Management Department should become a General Fund operation. Fees for service could be charged for the various records services provided to help off-set General Fund costs. This model would help determine the total cost recovery of the Records Management operation and would facilitate prediction of future staff resource needs.	Next Fiscal Year
#5	Recommendation: Ensure that the Records Management van is always locked, particularly when it contains records.	Immediate
#6	Recommendation: Update the Records Management Policies and Standards Manual as soon as practical into a comprehensive document incorporating all relevant Records Management Department operational protocols. This effort should be completed within twelve months. Identify the 17-page 2009 Records Manual as a "desk reference" or incorporate this content into the policies and standards noted.	Q4-2010
#7	Recommendation: Adopt and implement a Records Management Advisory Council that meets on a quarterly basis.	Q4-2009
#8	Recommendation: To the extent possible continue to accelerate documentation destruction to free up space in the records management Records Center.	Q4-2009

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#	Recommendations	Recommended Timing
#9	Recommendation: The County plans to tear down the current County Archives building. This should be prefaced by a facility needs assessment on the Records Center or a new structure to include storage space needs as well as building features to including security, temperature / humidity control, fire prevention / suppression elements, etc.	Q4-2009
#10	Recommendation: All future County Clerk Office information technology initiatives should be based upon a developed needs assessment business proposal to be included in an Information Technology Strategic Plan developed for the County and sponsored by the TS Department.	Immediate
#11	Recommendation: Resolve with the District Attorney and the TS Department the file label printing problems.	Immediate
#12	Recommendation: Authorize (7.4) positions in the Records Management Department, including one manager and 6.4 line staff.	Immediate
#13	Recommendation: Continue informal job rotation assignment program in the Recording Department for the Records and Election Technician I positions.	Q4-2009
#14	Recommendation: Reduce the QA / QC indexing and scanning expectation from 100% of records to 5% of records. If errors are discovered, perform a more focused sampling to identify potential problems and effect solutions. Perform this QA / QC consistently on a move forward basis, addressing back-log as time is available.	Q4-2009
#15	Recommendation: Continue communications with Title Company managers via County Clerk representatives to address various business-related issues that influence and impact both parties in the delivery of Title Company document services to mutual end-users.	Q4-2009
#16	Recommendation: Update the Recording Department's Policies and Procedures Manual as soon as practical. Develop quick reference desk manuals subsequent to this effort.	Q4-2010
#17	Recommendation: Implement a QA / QC protocol in the Recording Department for the Document Reject process as a substitute for the on-going approval performed by the Records and Elections Technician II positions.	Q4-2009
#18	Recommendation: Aggressively explore optional payment methods for Recording Department services to include potential credit card acceptance.	Q1-2010

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#	Recommendations	Recommended Timing
#19	Recommendation: Transfer archival files from Recording to Records Management using the County's intranet or exchangeable high-capacity flash drives instead of disposable CDs. Explore use / cost of TIS for microfilm production which would eliminate the attendant process.	Q4-2009
#20	Recommendation: Continue to explore implementation of Auto-indexing, E-Recording, and subscription-based document inquiry for the Recording Department.	Immediate
#21	Recommendation: Authorize eight (8) positions in the Recording Department, including one manager and 7 line staff.	Immediate
#22	Recommendation: Perform formalized and fully documented bi-annual security audits of the County's ballot and envelope printing contractor and the mail services contractor. The Security audit should include an audit of access controls, chain of custody procedures for handling ballot stock, adequate supervision, fire detection and suppression equipment and security cameras.	Q4-2009
#23	Recommendation: The County should formally request that a permanent elections staff member be present at the U.S. Postal Service mail processing facility whenever a batch of outgoing ballots is sent to the processing facility by the County's contract mail house. The monitor should ensure that outgoing ballots are handled expeditiously and segregated from bulk rate mail flow. It is recognized that the U.S. Postal Service may be reluctant to allow total access to mail processing facilities without a formal exception.	Q1-2010
#24	Recommendation: The Department should implement a dual custody procedure for retrieving incoming ballots from the Post Office. Implementing this recommendation would require two elections staffers or volunteers to retrieve all incoming ballots.	Q4-2009
#25	Recommendation: Implement chain of custody protocols in all ballot processing efforts.	Q4-2009
#26	Recommendation: The Department should install a cardkey lock on the Supervisor's door (to be used whenever ballots are present). A security camera should be installed in the hallway outside.	Q1-2010
#27	Recommendation: The County should submit a modification request to the Secretary of State to extract address information from the DMV database when a positive identification is made and populate the corresponding fields in Oregon Central Voter Registration software (OCVR). This field could be over-ridden and adjusted by data entry staff if circumstances warranted.	Q4-2009

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#	Recommendations	Recommended Timing
#28	Recommendation: The County should follow-through on a modification request to the Secretary of State to automatically activate voters when they reach 18 years of age in OCVR. Saber development team is currently designing this functionality.	Q4-2009
#29	Recommendation: The County should perform a cost/benefit study and, if deemed cost-effective, submit a modification request to the Secretary of State to implement scanning signatures on ballot return envelopes and split-screen signature verification where dual columns of voter signatures (from registrations and ballot return envelopes) are displayed on a monitor for verification workers.	Q2-2010
#30	Recommendation: The County should implement an elected official lookup feature.	Q1-2010
#31	Recommendation: The County should implement online candidate filing and fee payment.	Q1-2010
#32	Recommendation: Eliminate the Assistant Elections Manager position upon that classification's vacancy.	Upon Vacancy
#33	Recommendation: The County Clerk should develop a succession plan for the Elections Department to identify potential gaps in managerial and technical expertise in the next 3-5 year period and a plan for addressing those gaps. This should be expanded to the remainder of the Clerk's Office as soon as practical.	Q4-2009
#34	Recommendation: Authorize (8) positions in the Elections Department, including one manager and seven line staff.	Immediate
#35	Recommendation: Maintain the existing staffing levels of two (2) positions in County Clerk's Administration. Explore opportunities for the Administrative Assistant to provide additional clerical support to the Records Management Department.	Immediate
#36	Recommendation: Maintain BOPTA operations in the County Clerk's Office as currently administered.	Immediate

## **2. PROFILE OF THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE**

The chapter, which follows, provides a descriptive profile of the County Clerk's Office in Clackamas County.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The County Clerks Office is comprised of three departments. These departments include: Recording, Records Management, and Elections. These departments are overseen by the County Clerk within the Office's administration unit. All operations in these functional units are the subject of the study and discussed within this Descriptive Profile. The purpose of the descriptive profile is to document the project team's understanding of the organizational structure, allocation of staff by unit and function, and principal assigned roles and responsibilities of staff. Data contained in the profile were developed based on the work conducted by the project team including:

- Interviews with managerial, supervisory, administrative and line staff in all functional units representing nearly all of the County Clerk's staff.
- Initial review of various data provided by the Clerk's Office to include organization and staffing, workload and service levels as well as costs.

The descriptive profile does not attempt to recapitulate all organizational and operational facets of County Clerk's Office. Rather, the profile reflects our understanding of the organization based upon initial data collection efforts which is foundational for issues identification and further analysis. In this chapter, the structure of this descriptive profile is as follows:

- Description of staff positions, by classification, and description of appropriate reporting relationships.

- Summary descriptions of key roles and responsibilities of staff. The responsibility descriptions provided in the Descriptive Profile also summarize the team's understanding of the major programs and service activities to which staff are currently assigned. It should be clearly noted that responsibility descriptions are not intended to be at the "job description" level of detail. Rather, the descriptions are intended to provide the basic nature of the job and including deployment, work schedules where appropriate, major duties and responsibilities, and the like.
- Relevant service data describing representative operational characteristics based upon data collected thus far. These are not yet all inclusive, nor represent all data provided to date, but present some important data elements reflective of existing operations.

As part of the interactive process, these data were reviewed for accuracy and completeness by the Project Steering Committee and appropriate Office supervisory staff.

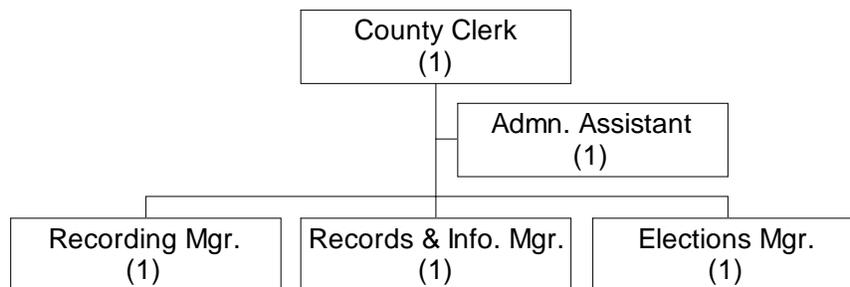
## **2. ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE.**

The following provides an overview of the organizational structure of those services under study.

**(1) Organizational Structure – Executive Team**

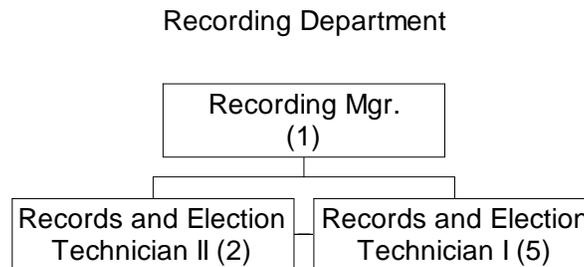
The following reflects the direct reports associated with what can be defined as the County Clerk's "Executive Team."

Executive Team (Administration)



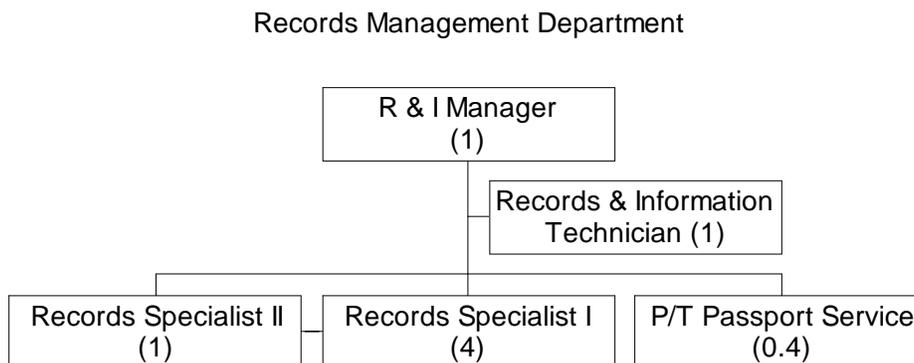
**(2) Organizational Structure – Recording Department.**

The following reflects the current organizational structure and authorized staffing for the Recording Department.



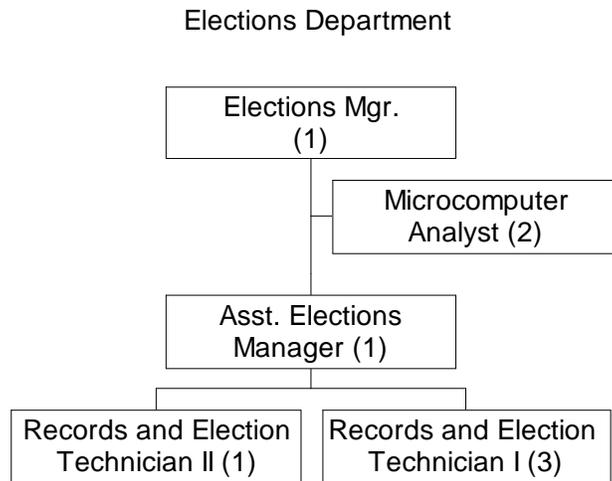
**(3) Organizational Structure – Records & Information Department.**

The following reflects the current organizational structure and authorized staffing for the Records Management Department.



**(4) Organizational Structure – Elections Department.**

The following reflects the current organizational structure and authorized staffing for the Elections Department. Note that one Microcomputer Analyst was vacant at the start of the engagement but is now filled.



**3. STAFFING.**

In the table, which follows, is a summary of the organizational units, staffing, and key elements of how staff are deployed.

Unit / Position(s)	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
<b>COUNTY CLERK ADMINISTRATION</b>			
County Clerk	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The County Clerk, an elected position in Clackamas County, provides Office oversight to include planning, budgeting, operational and fiscal management, and frequent interaction with the general public.</li> <li>Highlighted specific oversight duties include management of the Clerk's Office three departments including Recording, Records, and Elections; processing all real property transactions, plats, Commissioner's Journal documents, Board of Property Tax Appeal petitions and orders for Clackamas County; processing marriage licenses, making public records available to the general public, and maintaining the security and preservation of all records; overseeing the planning, coordination and conduction of elections; and plans, coordinates and records Board of Property Tax Appeal hearings.</li> </ul>
Administrative Assistant	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Administrative Assistant is a para-professional position reporting directly to the County Clerk.</li> <li>Provides a variety of administrative and clerical tasks in support of the Office.</li> <li>Performs Accounts Payable functions including account # validation, payment vouchers, line item reconciliation, etc.</li> <li>Performs payroll time card QA/QC and data entry for Office staff.</li> <li>Performs purchasing related functions including purchase requisitions, supply ordering, travel arrangements for staff, etc.</li> <li>Conducts personnel facilitation tasks to include processing personnel action forms and job requisitions.</li> <li>Provides oversight and administration of Board of Property Tax Appeals process.</li> <li>Facilitates development of annual budget paperwork.</li> <li>Performs various clerical duties as assigned, (e.g. memo development, meeting scheduling, certified mail processing, etc.).</li> <li>Note most of functions performed (excluding personnel-related) are not accomplished for the Records Management Department but only Recording and Elections.</li> </ul>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	

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Unit / Position(s)	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
<b>RECORDING DEPARTMENT</b>			
Recording Manager	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Recording Manager, an exempt position within the County, provided direct supervision over the operations and staff of the Recording Department composed of seven (7) subordinate staff. Reports directly to the County Clerk.</li> <li>• Oversees all Recording Department functions including document recordation, vital records, customer support services, records scanning, data entry, liquor license processing, front counter assistance, Board Orders / agreements and contracts, etc.</li> <li>• Provides back-up assistance to all staff related to all noted functions.</li> <li>• Supervises staff, addresses personnel issues, and conducts annual performance evaluations.</li> <li>• Participates in Office-related management decision-making as part of Clerk's "Executive Management Team."</li> </ul>
Records and Election Tech II	2.0	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performs all duties of Records and Election Technician I in addition to more complex duties and responsibilities including acting in a "lead" capacity to Records and Election Technician I staff (e.g. training, work direction, etc.), research, update and design forms needed for day-to-day business.</li> <li>• Records and Election Technician II staff are generally cross-trained but typically perform unique duties and responsibilities assigned to each position.</li> <li>• One position performs the daily treasury deposits, refunds and receipt balancing; examines atypical documentation presented to Department, distributors mailed-in documentation to staff and rejects incomplete documentation sent through U.S. mail, acts as recording clerk for Board of Property Tax Appeals process; maintains the 'legal opinion book;' answers telephone inquiries and serves as first-line position for Department employees' questions.</li> <li>• One position performs Accounts Receivable and invoice processing; QA / QC on indexing, imaging and scanning functions; image zip-file archiving and transfer to FTP site; processing of Recording Department CDs to include archived records and intelligence-embedded index (metadata) sent to Records Management Department for processing; updating of satisfied lien documents; processing and recording of plats; and special projects, as assigned.</li> </ul>

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Unit / Position(s)	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Records and Election Tech I	5.0	5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Records and Election Technician I positions are responsible for the recording and preservation of property transaction documents (trust deeds, deeds, etc.) and processing marriage and domestic partnership licenses, and military discharges.</li> <li>• Providing customer service at the front counter (answering questions regarding marriage licenses, assisting with property research projects, making certified copies of land documents, collection of fees, cash handling, etc.)</li> <li>• Responsible for Title recording coming from regular mail and the Title Companies (who have accounts set up)</li> <li>• Scanning, imaging, and indexing documents in order to be retrieved and viewed at a later date.</li> </ul>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>8.0</b>	
<b>RECORDS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT</b>			
Records and Information Manager	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Records and Information manager, an exempt position within the County, provides direct supervision over the operations and staff of the Records Department composed of six (6) subordinate staff. Reports directly to the County Clerk.</li> <li>• Oversees all Records Management Department functions including the full suite records management functions pertaining to internal County records and management of the County Records Center.</li> <li>• Provides administration of services and supervision of staff related to records storage, records filing, records scanning / imaging, records retrieval, records retention, records destruction, records delivery, records warehouse management, passport program management, and contract oversight of agencies provided records management services (i.e. Lake Oswego and Wilsonville).</li> <li>• Contract oversight of on-site shredding services.</li> <li>• Supervises staff, addresses personnel issues, and conducts annual performance evaluations.</li> <li>• Provides back-up to staff, as necessary.</li> <li>• Participates in Office-related management decision-making as part of Clerk's "Executive Management Team."</li> </ul>

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Unit / Position(s)	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Records and Information Tech	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Records and Information Technician position provides a variety of support activities for the Records Department.</li> <li>• Assists in ensuring Department operations are consistent with Oregon Administrative Regulations.</li> <li>• Assists in updating department policies and procedures..</li> <li>• Trains staff on specific functions, roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Trains County department Records Coordinators on RC Web software.</li> <li>• Among the first line contact for external County departments relative to Records Department questions.</li> <li>• Assists in maintaining and updating records relative to warehouse inventory.</li> <li>• Assists in maintaining and applying County records retention schedules; interfaces with Oregon State Archives.</li> <li>• Processes approved destruction of records based on governing rules for retention periods.</li> <li>• Performs special projects, as assigned.</li> <li>• Performs other duties, as assigned, including passport application processing backup, treasury deposits, supply ordering, etc.</li> </ul>
Records Specialist II	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performs all duties of Records Specialist I in addition to more complex duties and lead worker responsibilities to Records Specialist I staff (e.g. training, work direction, etc.).</li> <li>• Creates work orders for scanning and microfilming jobs requested by other departments and customers.</li> <li>• Assigns jobs to appropriate staff resources and tracks the progress toward completion utilizing a shared log which tracks job number, progress, hours, etc.</li> <li>• Conducts quality control on projects and the close out process for job completions.</li> <li>• Interfaces with Oregon State Archives.</li> <li>• Processes approved destruction of records based on governing rules for retention periods.</li> <li>• Assists with updating scanning duties on the staff work schedule.</li> <li>• Assists in updating department policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Posts file information to FTP site for subsequent microfilming.</li> <li>• Responds to staff inquires, particularly those related to microfilming and scanning.</li> <li>• Performs other duties, as assigned, including passport application processing backup, treasury deposits, supply ordering, etc.</li> </ul>

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Unit / Position(s)	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Records Specialist I	4.0	4.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Records Specialist I positions are responsible for completing document conversion processes and assisting in County Records Center operations.</li> <li>Processes large volumes of records requests and re-files from other County departments (including the District Attorney, Mental Health, and Public Health); performs data entry; delivers and picks up records to/from County departments; uses hardware and software to track records; locations.</li> <li>Processes the work order requests from various County departments, including two (2) outside jurisdictions for document capture operations, including prepping and scanning of records using hardware and software and other tools to process images into the County's electronic document management system and/or to microfilm as required to Oregon Administrative Rules.</li> <li>Interfaces with State Archives.</li> <li>Performs other duties, as assigned, including passport application processing backup, treasury deposits, supply ordering, etc.</li> </ul>
Part-time (Passports)	0.4	0.4	
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.4</b>	
<b>ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT</b>			
Elections Manager	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Elections Manager, an exempt position within the County, provides direct supervision over the operations and staff of the Elections Department composed of seven (7) subordinate staff. Reports directly to the County Clerk.</li> <li>Oversees and manages all Election Department functions and attendant full and part-time staff to include development and lawful conduct of all County elections encompassing Clackamas County, local cities, townships and special district elections.</li> <li>Supervises major functional processes such as candidate filings, ballot and voter pamphlet preparation, voter registration, mailings, ballot receipts, ballot validation and counting, and election result notification.</li> <li>Participates in Office-related management decision-making as part of Clerk's "Executive Management Team."</li> </ul>

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Unit / Position(s)	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Assistant Elections Manager	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Assistant Elections Manager, an exempt position within the County, provides direct support to the Elections Manager, assisting him in all assigned duties and responsibilities, and acts on his behalf during absence.</li> <li>• Provides task and special project work direction to Records and Election Technician I and II positions.</li> <li>• Assists subordinate positions in the performance of their duties (e.g. proofreading, candidate filings acceptance, etc.).</li> <li>• Responsible for Out-of-County military voters.</li> <li>• Performs cross-training of staff on various tasks such as absentee and replacement ballot processing.</li> <li>• Updates Voter Notification Cards program.</li> <li>• Scans Returned Confirmation cards.</li> <li>• Trains temporary staff on certain functions such as petition signature verification and addresses "challenged ballot" issues.</li> </ul>
Microcomputer Analyst	2.0	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Microcomputer Analyst, a professional position, provides a variety of database management and other services in support of the Elections Department.</li> <li>• Performs as database administrator and troubleshooter for Statewide OCVR (Oregon Centralized Voter Registration) software.</li> <li>• Develops variety of election ballot styles based upon information required for each ballot.</li> <li>• Performs as database administrator for Unity ballot-counting system.</li> <li>• Oversees various ballot preparation, labeling, stuffing and mailing tasks and administers third-party contract relative to labeling / stuffing services to include on-site QA / QC activities.</li> <li>• Performs fee-for-service "marketing research" activities for candidates, using Crystal Report Writer and other tools, based upon request.</li> <li>• Provides training to temporary staff regarding a variety of election protocols.</li> <li>• Performs special projects, as assigned.</li> </ul>

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Unit / Position(s)	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Records and Election Tech II	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performs all duties of Records and Election Technician I in addition to more complex duties and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Handles many elections “front counter” duties including walk-in voter registration, verification of candidate eligibility, petition assistance, mail registration processing, telephone answering, etc.</li> <li>• develops petition filing forms, candidate and Election Department “Requirement Check-Lists,” and other relevant informational documents.</li> <li>• Performs filing and retrieval of various records including candidate statements, voter pamphlet statements, ballot proofs, et. al.</li> <li>• Interfaces with Precinct Committee Persons to maintain an elected profile for all County jurisdictions (e.g. who is serving, pending retirements, etc.).</li> <li>• Interfaces with third party vendor preparing voter pamphlets and ballots.</li> <li>• Serves as proctor in Processing Room during elections.</li> <li>• Performs special projects, as assigned.</li> </ul>
Records and Election Tech I	3.0	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall responsibility is to prepare for, execute, and closing-out the election events, involving the processing the forms for candidates and measures, preparing ballots and voter pamphlets, training seasonal workers, administering the tally machines, processing write-ins, processing the exceptions, etc.</li> <li>• Conduct continuous updating and verification of registered voters within the Oregon Centralized Voting Registry, including registering new voters, updating new voter information, and purging voters based on relocation out of the state, death, and other criteria.</li> <li>• Provide front-counter assistance, answer phone calls regarding elections and other inquiries, reviewing and improving policies and procedures based on lessons learned.</li> <li>• 1 position is serving as a floater between Elections Department, Board of Property Tax Appeals, and Recording Department.</li> </ul>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>8.0</b>	
<b>Total County Clerk's Office FTEs</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>25.4</b>	

**4. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS**

In the table, which follows, is provided a brief summary of some of the programs and services provided by the Clackamas County Clerk's Office. Significant additional data collection efforts relative to operations, workloads, service levels, outputs and outcomes continue to occur throughout the engagement. The below information is only a small portion of the types of data to be analyzed in this engagement, and should only be considered illustrative of the kind of workload performed by the respective departments.

<b>Function</b>	<b>Description of Primary Services</b>	<b>Service Level Information</b>
<b>Recording Department</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserves public records dealing with real property transactions (including deeds for property transfers, mortgages, construction liens, etc.).</li> <li>• Fully processes various vital records and documents, including applications for marriage licenses, domestic partnerships, military discharges, deeds, mortgages, judgments, foreclosures, construction liens and liquor licenses, Board orders / agreements and contracts.</li> <li>• Adhere to the Oregon Uniform Recording Standards which provide customers standardization for the recording and collection of fees for instruments submitted for recording.</li> <li>• Utilizes legibility standards (including minimum standards for recordings, first page requirements).</li> <li>• Provides on-going front counter and telephone answering services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hours of public service include Monday (8 AM to 5 PM), Tuesday through Thursday (7 AM to 5 PM), and Friday (10 AM to 3 PM)</li> <li>• Staff work 4/10 and "split" 37.5 hour schedules (half day Friday) to accommodate customer needs.</li> </ul>

Function	Description of Primary Services	Service Level Information
<p><b>Records Management Department</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performs document conversion services to include document scanning, microfilm scanning, and document microfilm services for County departments and local governments Lake Oswego and Wilsonville.</li> <li>• Provides records storage services through management of the County Records Center to include the storage, retrieval, delivery, and destruction of records for various County departments.</li> <li>• Oversees the records retention policies and procedures based upon Federal and State statutes and regulations.</li> <li>• Records Management represents the County in records management issues and serves as the liaison to the Oregon State Archives.</li> <li>• Processes passport application and photo services for the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal County customers can order and return files through RC Web (internet-based application) and records typically arrive the same or following day dependent upon time of order.</li> <li>• ~ 20,000 boxes in storage: 10,000 County and 10,000 State Court records.</li> <li>• Staff work 5/8 split schedules from 8 AM to 4:30 PM and 8:30 AM to 5 PM Monday thru Friday.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Elections Department</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administers and conducts all Federal, State, County, City, and Special District elections.</li> <li>• Conducts and oversees election filings and forms, including the preparation of ballots and voter pamphlets.</li> <li>• Maintains Voters' Registration roll of approximately 225,000 continually throughout the year.</li> <li>• Manages and supervises full-time and temporary staff relative to all tasks associated with elections processing and reporting, consistent with law.</li> <li>• Maintains and updates Elections' historical records.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 designated election dates per year per the Secretary of State (March, May, September, and November).</li> <li>• Odd Year – at least 1 election.</li> <li>• Even Year – at least 2 elections.</li> <li>• Staff work 5/7.5 schedule 8:30 – 5:00 Monday through Friday whereas management works 5/8 schedules (On Election Day, open from 7 AM to 8 PM).</li> </ul>

### **3. DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

While the organizational and management analysis of the County Clerk's Office is designed to provide an analysis of operations, organizational structure, management and staffing, this chapter represents an important interim step for the project team to help identify preliminary findings and issues. In order to make the assessments of operational strengths and improvement opportunities, the project team developed a set of measures or "best management practices" (BMPs) against which to evaluate the various divisions.

The best management practice measures utilized have been derived from the project team's collective experience and research to include:

- Statements of "effective practices" based on the study team's experience in evaluating numerous operations in other jurisdictions. This includes identifying best-in-class operations for a variety of public sector operations.
- "Standards of the profession" from a variety of specialized professional organizations such as such as the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA), U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Association of Records Management Administrators (ARMA International) and the National Association of County Recorders, Election Officials, and Clerks (NACRC).
- Desirable planning, administrative, budgeting, etc., business practices as perpetuated by higher learning or widely recognized professional groups such as the International City / County Management Association (ICMA), Harvard School of Business, etc.

The matrix, which follows, identifies County Clerk operations' strengths and opportunities for improvement in the context of these best practices. It should be noted, however, that agencies may not be able (or are unwilling) to completely implement a best practice for a variety of reasons that include:

- Insufficient resources, whether personnel or fiscal, to adopt a best practice.
- Inadequate available time to emphasize and proactively implement new practices as a consequence of focus on managing critical day-to-day issues (core business).
- Insufficient support from political, executive, or managerial personnel to adopt a best practice.
- Inadequate buy-in from line staff to implement a best practice.
- Disagreement that the best practice, although successfully implemented in other agencies, would not be successful (for various cultural, organizational, or local/regional issues) in the agency under BMP review, and therefore is not a “best practice” from said agency’s perspective.

Although there are relevant reasons, as noted above, to not implement an identified best practice, the ultimate intent should be to strive for implementing as many practices as feasible. The following best management practices are to provide the County with a framework from which possible issues are developed within the remainder of this report. These BMPs have been previously reviewed and commented upon by the County’s Project Steering Committee members as well as County Clerk supervisory staff.

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<b>GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>		
A strategic plan has been developed within the last 5 years.	Staff writes Study Session packets to educate on key decisions and to make requests.	There is presently no strategic plan.
The strategic plan incorporates all relevant demographic, technical and regulatory trends and developments.		A strategic plan has not been prepared. Therefore, none of these elements exist in the County Clerk's planning and management processes.
The Clerk's Office has grouped like functions together to support the organizational mission and goals.	The organizational structure supports the organization's mission. Functions are grouped similarly to other well-managed County Clerk's Offices across the State of Oregon and the country.	
The County Clerk's Office formally plans and schedules work relating to recurring workloads.	The elections department works from an elections calendar (prepared by State)	Formal workload planning is limited to the Elections Department. In other Divisions there are recognized work cycle peaks such as increased marriage license applications in May and June, additional recording activity at month end, quarter end and year end, and filings during the filing period for BOPTA. However, managing these functions for peaks and valleys in workload are not formally planned and scheduled.
The County Clerk's Office utilizes a performance based budgeting process.	A performance-based budget has been in place since 2003.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<p>The County Clerk and staff keep current with legislative changes that affect their Department.</p>	<p>The Secretary of State delivers a biannual orientation on election law changes. The Oregon Association of County Clerks provides orientation on changes in Recording, Marriage and Domestic Partnership processes, Elections and Records Management by use of email and at conferences. IACREOT, NACO, The EAC and The Election Center, among other organizations, provide needed information on pending and passed federal legislation and rule making.</p>	
<p>Salaries are competitive given the local market and skills required.</p>	<p>County Department of Employee Services (DES) recently conducted a compensation study for elections staff. DES also conducts comparisons of all salary ranges for positions within the Clerks Office when necessary.</p>	
<p>Public access to documents (Agendas, Adopted Ordinances/Resolutions) is provided via the Internet.</p>		<p>There is no public access on the website. Public can query Board docs at Records office on public terminals and print.</p>
<p>The County Code is available electronically for staff and the public and is updated at least quarterly.</p>	<p>The County Code is available on the County website and updated weekly.</p>	
<p>The County Clerk's Office periodically conducts surveys to determine how the public perceives the Department and the functions it performs.</p>	<p>The County does occasional citizen surveys.</p>	<p>The County Clerk does not provide comment cards to filers and those using the public information terminals.</p>
<p>Front Counter staff receives customer service training annually.</p>		<p>Counter staff are not trained on customer service in a systematic way. Problems are addressed as they occur. All front line staff should receive periodic customer service training as soon as it is financially possible.</p>

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
The Clerk's Office has designated responsibility for training programs in the office.		There is not a designated training officer. County DES offers customer service training, but the Clerk's office has not taken ownership of a formalized training program.
Information technology has been administratively centralized to assure the effective fulfillment of an IT strategic plan and the efficient use of IT resources in the County Clerk's Office.	The County Clerk does not have a centralized IT manager or staff. The Elections Department has two microcomputer analyst positions who support IT applications in Elections. All other IT services are provided by the County IT Department as per County policy. This centralization works very well to achieve the department's IT goals and objectives that support effective customer services and easy accessibility to records.	
The County Clerk's Office utilizes computer systems to document work loads, vendors, permits, etc.	These systems exist and are used extensively by the staff.	
<b>RECORDING</b>		
All requests for marriage licenses are issued within one week of receipt of the request.	All marriage licenses are issued the same or next day.	
All documents received by the Clerk's Office that require recording are processed within one week.	All documents are recorded same day.	
All legal actions of the County (i.e., ordinances, resolutions, agreements, etc.) are indexed electronically. Access to the index is provided to staff and the public via internet access.	All actions are scanned and indexed. They are not available on the public website but can be queried and printed at the Recorder's office.	Ordinances and resolutions of the County Commission could be posted on the County's website to improve records accessibility for the general public.
Fees charged for all services reflect the maximum amounts allowed to be charged under State Statutes (Chapter 205.320, 205.323)	All fees are currently at the statutory maximum.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
A County Clerk's Records Fund has been established to fund storage and retrieval systems, payment of expenses incurred in collecting fees, and maintaining and restoring records.	A County Clerk Recording Fee and a Clerk's Record Fund Fee is collected and held in a dedicated fund for technical updates and upgrades, as provided by law.	
A disaster response plan is in place for salvaging and restoring records damaged by disasters.	Offsite backups and State Archives can replace records.	
All electronic records and systems are backed up on a regular basis	Digital images are backed up nightly by outside service. New microfiche is backed up monthly to State Archives.	
<p>The organization has in place systems – manual or automated – that can locate and retrieve records in a reliable and timely manner to meet user needs. These systems would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filing and locator systems with documented policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Finding aids (such as indexes) are prepared and used.</li> <li>• Policies and procedures regarding access restrictions are developed and used.</li> </ul>	Records from July 2000 forward are scanned and indexed. Prior to that they are available on microfilm and can be queried via electronic indexes, pulled by the public and printed. All boxes and open files are bar-coded and tracked in the EDC records management system and labeled on file boxes. Boxes are pulled for destruction and destroyed once an agency is notified. Destroyed file boxes are recorded in the system.	
Employees in the Department are cross-trained.	All department employees are cross-trained.	
Individuals handling money are appropriately trained on cash management practices and internal controls.	Cashiers are trained in cash practices.	
All cash received is processed daily with the total received reconciled to deposit activity.	Cashiers have individual tills and reconcile cash receipts to the Helion recording system at end of day. Lead workers also reconcile cash receipts to Helion.	
All cash received is deposited on a daily basis with either the County Treasurer/Collector or a financial institution.	Cash is deposited with the Treasurer's office on 4 <sup>th</sup> floor each day by a lead worker in a sealed bag.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<p>Physical security procedures are in place during work hours and non-working hours for all funds received and change drawers maintained.</p>	<p>Panic buttons are under counter connected to security service with police backup.</p>	
<p>Technology is used appropriately to support recording to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business requirements are identified through needs assessments.</li> <li>• The capacity to support technology is identified through feasibility studies.</li> <li>• Business process analysis is part of technology planning and implementation.</li> <li>• Recordkeeping requirements are taken into account in technology implementation.</li> <li>• Adequate technical support is available internally or through contract.</li> <li>• Formal electronic filing structures and policies for electronic recordkeeping are in place.</li> <li>• Adequate training is offered for staff in the use of technology.</li> </ul>	<p>Business requirements are documented using Study Session worksheets that analyze the need, cost and feasibility of technology. Technical support is provided through contracts with vendors that are based in Oregon (except the records management system which is based in Montreal). The County (Clerk/Recording) and State will soon be piloting an electronic filing system for title documents.</p>	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<b>RECORDS MANAGEMENT</b>		
<p>The records management program retains and/or stores only the records it needs and retains no redundant or unnecessary records by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping unneeded records and copies to a minimum.</li> <li>• Identifying the official copies of records.</li> <li>• Records related to litigation are readily available.</li> <li>• State of Oregon statutes and guidelines are followed in records creation.</li> </ul>		<p>User County department should ensure that appropriate records destruction practices occur prior to sending the records to the County Clerk's Office.</p>
<p>Regular and systematic disposition of records according to a State Archives retention schedule is followed as indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of Archival records early in their life cycle</li> <li>• Retention schedules are adopted and used in the normal course of business.</li> <li>• Records are systematically disposed of.</li> <li>• Electronic records are retained and disposed of according to retention schedules.</li> <li>• Plans are in place to ensure that electronic records continue to be accessible following technology changes.</li> <li>• Records disposition is routinely documented.</li> </ul>	<p>All boxes and open files are barcoded and tracked in the EDC records management system. Retention schedules are tracked in the system and labeled on file boxes. Boxes are pulled for destruction and destroyed once an agency is notified. Destroyed file boxes are recorded in the system.</p>	
<p>The organization has in place systems – manual or automated – that can locate and retrieve records in a reliable and timely manner to meet user needs. These systems would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filing and locator systems with documented policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Finding aids (such as indexes) are prepared and used.</li> <li>• Policies and procedures regarding access restrictions are developed and used.</li> </ul>	<p>Records management records received from other departments beginning July 2000 forward are scanned and indexed. Prior to that they are available on microfilm and can be queried via electronic indexes, pulled by the public and printed</p>	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<p>Technology is used appropriately to support records management to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business requirements are identified through needs assessments.</li> <li>• The capacity to support technology is identified through feasibility studies.</li> <li>• Business process analysis is part of technology planning and implementation.</li> <li>• Recordkeeping requirements are taken into account in technology implementation.</li> <li>• Adequate technical support is available internally or through contract.</li> <li>• Formal electronic filing structures and policies for electronic recordkeeping are in place.</li> <li>• Adequate training is offered for staff in the use of technology.</li> </ul>	<p>Business requirements are documented using Study Session worksheets which analyze the need, cost and feasibility of technology. Technical support is provided through contracts with vendors which are based in Oregon (except the records management system which is based in Montreal). The County (Clerk/Recording) and State will soon be piloting an electronic filing system for title documents.</p>	
<p>The preservation of archival records and the appropriate public use is a component of the records management program.</p>	<p>State Archives has responsibility for valuable records but are available on microfilm.</p>	
<p>Records management policies and procedures are in place and are updated regularly.</p>	<p>Updated policies are available.</p>	
<p>Records policies and procedures are routinely and consistently communicated to staff.</p>	<p>Policies are available on the intranet. Staff meets twice a year with records coordinators from County agencies to talk about updated policies.</p>	
<p>A records management advisory council is appointed and active.</p>		<p>There currently is no advisory council.</p>
<p>Records preservation planning has been conducted to include factors such as security, environmental conditions, handling, storage, and fire protection.</p>	<p>Planning has been conducted and implemented.</p>	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Protective storage is utilized to include fire-resistant and environmentally controlled records protection equipment and vaults.	Records are stored in an area with fire suppression equipment (water-based) and heating but not cooling. Cooling should not be required in this climate.	The storage area lacks a non-water based fire suppression system.
Duplicate microfilm is stored a sufficient distance from original microfilm to ensure survival during a major disaster.	Duplicate microfilm is stored at State Archives and other Clackamas locations. Digital images are backed up offsite.	
<p>Records storage has the following space components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The heating and cooling system maintains temperatures between 65 and 70 degrees; relative humidity 45-50%.</li> <li>• Smoke detectors are present</li> <li>• Water sprinklers or other fire extinguisher systems safeguard the records.</li> <li>• Storage boxes are uniform in size (typically one cubic foot with a separate lid).</li> <li>• Boxes made of acid-free cardboard for storing permanent and long-term records.</li> <li>• Shelving units should be sized to ensure the weight of the loaded shelves meets the floor load capacity; sturdy enough to hold boxes with as much as 50 pounds of paper.</li> </ul>	Records storage facility is heated but not cooled (not really needed in Oregon). Facility is sprinklered but no smoke detectors. Boxes are of uniform size but are purchased by agencies, not records management. Shelving units can hold 5-6 levels of boxes. Facility is at capacity with some boxes stored on floor or in offices.	Smoke detectors should be purchased and installed in the records storage area. A non water-based fire suppression system should be evaluated.
<b>ELECTIONS</b>		
There are a sufficient number of trained managers for key areas such as voter maintenance, print/mail vendor monitoring, and signature verification.	Office has 7 positions, 6 are staffed while recruiting for a microcomputer analyst. Office has up to 150 temps for statewide elections.	
An integrated election management system is used.	All Oregon counties use the Centralized Voter Registration System (CVRS)	

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<b>Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
There is documentation from election management system vendor regarding current certification. Verify this information with the appropriate certifying authority (e.g., National Institute of Standards and Technology).	The election management system is fully certified.	
There is a candidate filing packet including forms, explanation of laws including campaign finance rules, how to access voting history, deadlines, orientation session information, rules of conduct, explanation of voting and recount procedures. Information should also be available on elections website.	Candidate filing are available on website in pdf format. No online fee payment. The Secretary of State handles all campaign finance reporting. They do not do candidate forums or orientations. Candidate manuals are available on the Secretary of State website via a link from Clackamas County Elections website.	
Establish dual custody and chain of custody procedures for all processes that involve handling ballots and vote tabulation. Procedures should include requiring staff signatures for all tasks and checkpoints.	The Office has a security plan for handling ballots.	
There is a business continuity plan for managing elections in event of crisis or disaster (e.g., line of succession for elections staff, crowd control, security, public information).	A business continuity plan is included in the security plan.	
There is controlled access to all facilities where ballots are stored and processed including motion detectors, cameras, limited card keys or security keypads, alarms.	The facility is secured with security cards, cameras (taped), alarms.	
Ballot printing facilities are audited at least bi-annually for security measures.	Ballots printed by Rydergraphics in Bend – also prints for 31 other Oregon counties using ES&S tabulation equipment.	An annual audit of the ballot printing facilities is not performed. The Clerk's Office should perform a bi-annual security audit of Rydergraphics.

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<b>Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
Vote tabulation software is backed up and stored offsite.	System software is backed up to the current version by the vendor and maintained in an escrow account available to Clackamas County per the procurement contract for the system.	
The Office uses vendor-certified or pre-qualified printing companies that comply with security measures (e.g., cameras, controlled access, chain of custody rules).	Rydergraphics are certified by ES&S and have been printing ES&S compatible ballots since 2003.	
All voter signatures are scanned and indexed.	All voter signatures are scanned.	
Older signatures are updated regularly through mailings or other means.	Older signatures are updated if they can't be verified from ballot returns.	
Inactive voters are periodically purged after notifications are sent.	Annual purge of inactive voters occurs with confirmation cards sent.	
There is automated interface with corrections (felon status), Health (deaths), USPS (address changes), motor vehicles, or interface with a statewide voter registration system.	Automated interfaces are available with motor vehicles. The Office obtains death lists and address changes from State for further processing.	
The Office partners with required language community representatives for assistance in translating and transliterating election materials and ballot stock.	No required languages in Clackamas.	
The Office retains all ballot proofs, and vendor communications. Never allow vendors to proof ballots.	The Clerk's Office proofs all ballots.	
There is full-time on-site monitoring of ballot printing and insertion (if outsourced) by elections staff at the contract mailing facility.	Envelopes are ink jetted and inserted by vendor, Send-It, in Portland. County monitors are present during ballot preparation period (about 3 days for a statewide election).	

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<b>Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
There are automated systems that integrate voter registration, race definition and ballot printing for high speed ballot printing and voting packet assembly.	OCVR system handles all these functions.	
There is cross referencing of the voter registration file with the USPS database to ensure address accuracy.	This is handled at State level and not by the Clerk's Office.	
There is an annual review of elections policies and procedures with contract ballot printing and mailing services staff. Include procedures on tracking of print, sort and mail batches including creating audit trails. Insist on dual custody and chain of custody rules with contract facilities.	County conducts a debriefing with printing and ballot insertion firms.	County should review security and custody procedures with Send-It and perform an annual audit.
Office prints addresses directly on envelope stock rather than labels. Print envelopes in ballot order. Print voter ID bar codes on return envelopes to facilitate signature verification and updating voting history.	Addresses and voter ID barcodes are ink jetted directly on envelope stock.	
Have the USPS review envelope stock to ensure that it complies with USPS guidelines for automated sorting and postage.	Envelopes are reviewed with USPS if there is a format change.	
The Office conducts logic and accuracy testing immediately upon receiving ballot samples. Verify test results before ballot distribution.	Testing occurs right after receiving ballots.	
Storage facilities for ballot stock should be climate controlled, secure, and use non-water based fire suppression equipment.		Office should audit security and fire safety procedures and installations at Rydergraphics and Send-It.
Automated system tracks replacement ballots and cancels earlier ballots. Voter must sign affidavit confirming that initial ballot has not been voted.	OCVR tracks replacement ballots, invalidates first ballot. Affidavit is part of the "replacement ballot statement" on the replacement ballot envelope, and is signed by the voter.	

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<b>Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
Have backup servers available on Election Day to ensure reliability of vote tabulation.	Clackamas and Washington Counties exchange election data so that either may use the other's system in an emergency. Clackamas does use a redundant server backup system as the ballots are being tallied.	
There is annual recalibration of optical scanning equipment. Also have canned air sprayers available on Election Day to ensure scanners are free of dust and paper debris.	Tabulators are recalibrated prior to each election. Compressed air with an air dryer is used to keep tabulators clean of dust.	
Use real world test decks during logic and accuracy testing (e.g., under and over voted ballots, red ink, ballots marked with 'X's and check marks).	Test decks use real world permutations.	
Incoming return envelopes are logged, identified, sorted and batched electronically using high speed scanners. Signatures from return envelopes are clipped, batched and presented to signature verification workers using a split screen format.	Incoming envelopes are scanned and batched. Voter ID barcodes are scanned and used to pull voter signatures from the voter file.	Signatures are not clipped from return envelopes, batched and presented on monitors using a split screen to expedite signature comparisons. The County should investigate the financial feasibility of a system modification to OCVR to facilitate split screen signature verification. This would entail clipping signatures from return envelopes.
Signature verification is started as soon as possible within statutory limits.	This is current practice.	
Provide elections staff with training on signature verification criteria (e.g., capital letters match, spacing, slant of letters).	Secretary of State provides a handwriting expert to train verification staff.	
There is electronic signature verification software (if available) for expediting verification.		This software is not available in Oregon. The County Clerk and Elections Manager should clarify the Secretary of State's position on electronic signature verification and perform a feasibility study to determine the potential costs and benefits to Clackamas County.

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<b>Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
Voter registration data such as history and signature is automatically updated via the return envelope scan.	Signatures can only be updated from a registration. History is updated during canvass.	
Challenged ballots are batched and tracked through the system.	OCVR system tracks challenged ballots.	
Challenged ballots are reviewed and cleared, rejected within 24 hours using three-level review: 1) verification worker, 2) Supervisor or elections staff, 3) Canvass Board.	Three levels of review: 1) verification worker – usually a temp, 2) permanent staffer reviews ballot, 3) A Supervisory Election Worker provides the final review.. All are cleared or rejected within 24 hours.	
Voters with challenged ballots are notified immediately in writing regarding the nature of the challenge and are provided an opportunity to remedy the challenge (e.g., update registration and/or signature).	Letters are sent to challenged voters with reg card to update signature.	
There are two-person teams for establishing voter intent and/or duplicating ballots. Use different party affiliations for those states that register affiliation. Original ballots are retained and marked with a unique identifier to match up with duplicate ballot for canvass purposes.	There is dual custody on ballot enhancement and duplication. Different parties. Originals are kept with identifier traceable to duplicated ballot.	
There is an orientation and a code of conduct for observers. Establish a security perimeter for observers.	Viewing areas separated from ballot processing areas by glass barriers and secured doors.	
There are written logs of all canvass activities and individuals responsible.	Written logs are kept of all canvass activities and responsible individuals.	
The Office compiles and analyzes under-vote and over-vote statistics for improving ballot layout and voter education efforts.	This data collection occurs at a State-wide level.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
The Office provides essential functions and services on the elections agency website (e.g., downloadable registration form, on-line registration status lookup, campaign/candidate filing section including filing fees online, information for overseas and military voters, historical voting statistics, elected official directory keyed to addresses).	There is online elected official lookup.	
The Elections Website is translated into required languages.	No required languages in Clackamas.	
Partner with members of required language communities to provide translators for public information, press conferences, staffing phone banks, etc.	Not Applicable in Clackamas County.	
The Office employs a public information officer for dealing with media inquiries.	The County Clerk acts as PIO.	
Provide one or two tours and open houses of election facilities to the media, political parties, candidates, elected officials.	Tours are provided on request.	
Invite media, campaigns, parties to review logic and accuracy testing of ballot tabulation systems.	The media and other interested groups are invited and often attend.	
Provide an observation room overlooking the ballot verification, processing and tabulation operation on Election Day.	Observations of these processes are allowed.	
Develop and make available a speech for civic groups, chambers of commerce, etc. regarding elections management.	The County Clerk speaks when invited to civic groups and tailors the address to each audience.	
Conduct an annual high school voter registration day.		The County does not conduct an annual high school voter registration drive in its election outreach efforts.

<b>Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
Conduct outreach to groups representing required language communities, disabled persons, and political parties.	The County has a voter assistance program.	

## **4. SUMMARY OF THE COMPARATIVE SURVEY**

The following chapter presents the results of the comparative survey conducted as part of the performance audit of the Clackamas County Clerk's Office. The Matrix Consulting Group developed and distributed a survey to eight county clerk departments in Oregon and Washington State as a means of benchmarking Clackamas' elections, records management, and recording divisions.

As in any comparative survey, identifying jurisdictions that completely align along the numerous demographic, economic, and geographic factors is difficult. By example, the roles and responsibilities of Clackamas' elections division are drastically different than those in most states, as Oregon is one of two states that conduct their elections entirely by mail. Washington is the only other state in the region that conducts its elections by mail. Due to Oregon's unique election laws, only counties in Oregon and Washington were chosen for comparison. The counties are presented below.

- Lane, OR;
- Marion, OR;
- Jackson, OR;
- Spokane, WA;
- Clark, WA;
- Thurston, WA;
- Kitsap, WA; and
- Yakima, WA.

As with any telephonic information collection survey, the accuracy of much of the data is dependent upon the quality of information provided by the various respondents. Validating the preciseness of all comparative information presented to the project team through audit practices is beyond the scope of this study. However, the project team attempted to validate the information through direct contact with survey agencies.

All eight of the comparative counties responded to the survey. These counties' organizational structures and assigned roles and responsibilities may be dissimilar to Clackamas with regard to what unit of government performs the services; however, all services provided by the Clackamas County Clerk are also provided by the comparative counties. Further details are described in the following pages.

The first section, which follows, provides some overall background information on the survey respondents and summarizes the size and number of registered voters in each of the comparison counties.

## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The table below presents background information for each of the eight responding counties.

**2008 Population / Registered Voter Comparisons – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population as of July 2008</b>	<b>Number of Registered Voters in 2008</b>	<b>Percent of Population Registered to Vote</b>
Lane, OR	346,560	210,799	61%
Marion, OR	314,606	149,708	48%
Jackson, OR	201,138	119,645	59%
Spokane, WA	462,677	258,952	56%
Clark, WA	424,733	216,508	51%
Thurston, WA	245,181	148,911	61%
Kitsap, WA	239,769	144,690	60%
Yakima, WA	234,564	97,856	42%
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>380,576</b>	<b>227,750</b>	<b>60%</b>

The population and registered voter information provides an introductory framework to the organizations in Oregon and Washington that have common characteristics to Clackamas. Key comparisons are summarized in the following points:

- Clackamas County is the fastest growing county in Oregon, and the third most populous in the state according to the Oregon Employment Department.
- The Clackamas County Elections website shows that the number of registered voters has decreased since 2004 by roughly 5%.
- The average number of registered voters in the other eight counties is 168,384 compared to 227,750 in Clackamas.
- The average percentage of the population registered to vote compared to total population is 55% in the eight surveyed counties and is 60% in Clackamas.

The next section identifies key components of elections operations in the responding jurisdictions.

## **2. ELECTIONS OPERATIONS**

The following provides comparative data regarding election operations in the various counties surveyed.

### **(2.1) Election Information Overview.**

The following table shows the broader operational characteristics of elections operations in the various organizations.

**Comparative Registered Voter Characteristics (Current) – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Current No. of Registered Voters</b>	<b>% of Registered Voters Voting in Presidential Election</b>
Lane, OR	210,000	87.66%
Marion, OR	151,000	84%
Jackson, OR	120,375	85.2%
Spokane, WA	258,815	81%
Clark, WA	216,000	85.31%
Thurston, WA	147,391	85.96%
Kitsap, WA	144,717	86.3%
Yakima, WA	234,564	79.9%
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>218,861</b>	<b>85.21%</b>

Important points to note concerning the data contained in the table above are presented below.

- The average number of registered voters in the surveyed counties totaled 185,358, while Clackamas has 218,861 registered voters.
- Most of the surveyed election departments are receiving anywhere between 80 – 87% of the ballots sent out to voters, a considerable percentage when compared to the national voter turnout rate of 56%. The comparative county average is 84.4% compared to 85.21% in Clackamas County.
- According to the Clackamas County Elections website, the number of registered voters who participated in the 2008 presidential election was up 16% from 2004.

As the table above shows, Clackamas has similar percentages of voters participating in the Presidential Election, as did the surveyed counties.

The table below identifies the number of unique ballot styles prepared for the 2008 Presidential Election.

**Comparative Election Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Total No. of Elections Held in CY 2008</b>	<b>No. of Unique Ballot Styles Prepared for Presidential Election</b>
Lane, OR	2	174
Marion, OR	3	91
Jackson, OR	3	27
Spokane, WA	5	296
Clark, WA	6	205
Thurston, WA	5	14
Kitsap, WA	4	177
Yakima, WA	4	147
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>88</b>

As shown above, the number of elections in calendar year 2008 didn't vary dramatically. However, the number of unique ballot styles varied substantially. The variation in number of ballot styles can be attributed to the number of cities and / or special jurisdictions (e.g. special district) within each county and the number of styles required, and the attendant workload, are beyond the control of the respective counties.

**Comparative Hours of Operation – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>
Lane, OR	M – F / 8 – 5
Marion, OR	M – F / 8:30 – 5
Jackson, OR	M – F / 8 – 4
Spokane, WA	M – F / 8:30 – 5
Clark, WA	M – F / 8 – 5
Thurston, WA	M – F / 8 – 5
Kitsap, WA	M – Th / 8 – 5
Yakima, WA	M – F / 9 – 4
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>M – F / 8:30 – 5</b>

The key comparisons can be summarized in the following bullet points:

- Four of the eight surveyed offices are open 8 AM until 5 PM Monday through Friday (45 hours per week).
- Three offices (including Clackamas) are open 8:30 AM until 5 PM Monday through Friday (42.5 hours per week).

As the above table shows, most jurisdictions are open Monday through Friday for up to 45 hours, with the exception of Kitsap, which is only open on Fridays when the Friday happens to be an election day.

**(2.2) Election Software.**

The following table provides comparative information on election software used in the surveyed county offices.

**Comparative Election Software Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Election Software Products Used</b>
Lane, OR	Sequoia Voting Systems
Marion, OR	OCDR EMS, Aero, & OIV-C
Jackson, OR	ES&S 650 & Unity, OCDR
Spokane, WA	ES&S Power Profile, Unity for Tabulation
Clark, WA	Hart Intercivic for Tabulation, Diebold for Registration
Thurston, WA	DSMISM for Registration, ES&S for Tabulation, Unity for Ballot Design
Kitsap, WA	Premier DIMS for Registration, Sequoia for Counting
Yakima, WA	DIMS for Registration, Hart Intercivic for Tabulation
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>ES&amp;S and OCVRS</b>

As is revealed in the data above, the surveyed organizations use a variety of election software products, with EMS and DIMS being the most common.

**(2.3) Voter Outreach.**

The table below summarizes comparative information regarding voter outreach and online campaign filing information.

**Comparative Voter Outreach Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Types of Targeted Voter Registration Drives</b>	<b>Maintain a website that includes Campaign Filing Information</b>
Lane, OR	None	No
Marion, OR	None	No
Jackson, OR	None	No
Spokane, WA	None	Yes
Clark, WA	None	No
Thurston, WA	None	No
Kitsap, WA	None	Yes
Yakima, WA	None, but do public outreach at schools and fairs.	Yes
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>Voter assistance program</b>	<b>Yes</b>

As the table above indicates, the surveyed jurisdictions do not specifically target any particular types of voters for registration drives. In fact, only Yakima County does any type of voter outreach, which includes booths at local fairs, and schools. Clackamas County runs a voter assistance program. All of the Oregon counties listed have links on their websites to the State Election Division's site which contains the campaign filing information. Four counties, including Clackamas, maintain websites with campaign filing information packets.

**(2.4) Ballot Storage.**

The following table provides comparative information regarding ballot storage and access.

**Comparative Ballot Storage Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Ballot Storage Area Controlled Via “Limited or Identified Access” Security Features?</b>
Lane, OR	Identified by badges, access granted to one person per party affiliate.
Marion, OR	Onsite in a secured building
Jackson, OR	Onsite storage requiring badges
Spokane, WA	Onsite storage requiring electronic badges
Clark, WA	Onsite storage requiring badges
Thurston, WA	Offsite storage, badges required, alarmed doors and security cameras
Kitsap, WA	Key card access only
Yakima, WA	Onsite storage, Badges and key code access only
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>Secured facility with security cards, cameras, and alarms</b>

As required by statute, all of jurisdictions surveyed keep their ballots in secured locations that use badges as a minimum entry requirement. Clackamas, along with Thurston and Yakima, are the only jurisdictions that employ a combination of methods of ballot storage including the use of cameras and alarm systems.

**(2.5) Election Staffing.**

The following tables show full time, part time, and volunteer staffing characteristics of election operations in the various jurisdictions. The first table identifies the full-time equivalent staffing levels.

**Comparative Full Time Staffing Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Total No. of Full Time Staff</b>	<b>Managers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Professional Staff</b>	<b>Para-Professional / Clerical Staff</b>
Lane, OR	8	0	1	1	6
Marion, OR	5.5	1	0	1	3.5
Jackson, OR	3	1	0	0	2
Spokane, WA	8	1	2	0	5
Clark, WA	9	2	2	0	5
Thurston, WA	9	1	2	6	0
Kitsap, WA	8	1	1	0	6
Yakima, WA	5	1	1	1	2
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>

The table below identifies the ratio of full-time equivalent positions to the total number of registered voters in each county.

**Comparative Elections Staff per 100,000 Registered Voters – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Registered Voters</b>	<b>Total No. of Full Time Staff</b>	<b>Staff per 100,000 Registered Voters</b>
Lane, OR	210,000	8	3.81
Marion, OR	151,000	5.5	3.64
Jackson, OR	120,375	3	2.49
Spokane, WA	258,815	8	3.09
Clark, WA	216,000	9	4.17
Thurston, WA	147,391	9	6.11
Kitsap, WA	144,717	8	5.53
Yakima, WA	234,564	5	2.13
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>218,861</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3.66</b>

The key comparative elements of the table above are summarized in the following bullet points:

- The number of election staff FTEs ranged from a low of 2.13 staff per 100,000 registered voters (Yakima, WA) to a high of 6.11 staff per 100,000 registered voters (Thurston, WA).
- The average number of elections staff in the surveyed Oregon counties was 3.31 per 100,000 registered voters. Clackamas has 3.2 staff per 100,000 registered voters.
- The overall average number of staff in all surveyed counties is 3.87 staff per 100,000 registered voters. The median number of elections staff is 3.73 staff per 100,000 registered voters.

The following table indicates the part-time and volunteer staffing characteristics for the surveyed agencies.

**Comparative Part Time / Volunteer Staffing Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>No. of Permanent Part Time Staff</b>	<b>Temporary Part Time Staff Hours for CY 2008</b>	<b>No. of Volunteer Staff Hours Expended in CY 2008</b>
Lane, OR	0	Up to 250 staff, no more than 520 hrs / FY	0
Marion, OR	6 seasonal temps	907 hrs per person per year	0
Jackson, OR	0	Depends on budget allotted	0
Spokane, WA	0	Up to 140 staff, 5 months each	0
Clark, WA	0	Up to 150 people	0
Thurston, WA	0	Depends on Election	0
Kitsap, WA	0	35 staff for up to 2 weeks	0
Yakima, WA	0	18 staff, Less than 650 hours each	0
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>0</b>

As the above table shows, only Marion County uses permanent part time staff to help out with election operations. None of the jurisdictions surveyed use volunteer staff for elections support, as they prefer to have only County employees handling election materials. The use of temporary part time staff varies by jurisdiction depending on current staffing and budgetary constraints.

**3. RECORDING OPERATIONS**

The following section identifies the comparative data received on recording division operations in the jurisdictions surveyed.

**(3.1) Recording Information Overview.**

The following table provides comparative information regarding the types of records recorded by the various jurisdictions surveyed.

**Comparative Records Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Vital Records Processed</b>	<b>Property Documents Processed</b>	<b>Licenses Processed</b>
Lane, OR	Marriage / Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Marriage
Marion, OR	Marriage / Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Marriage and Liquor
Jackson, OR	Marriage / Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Marriage
Spokane, WA	Marriage / Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Process Server, Dance Hall Instructor, Second Hand Dealer
Clark, WA	Marriage / Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Process Server
Thurston, WA	Marriage / Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Marriage and Business
Kitsap, WA	Birth, Death, Marriage, Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Business, Marriage, Process Servers, Pawn, Erotic Dancers
Yakima, WA	Marriage / Domestic Partnership	All property related documents	Marriage
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>Marriage / Domestic Partnership</b>	<b>All property related documents</b>	<b>Marriage and Liquor</b>

As shown in the table above, the only jurisdiction that handles all vital records at the Clerk level, including birth, death, and marriage certificates, is Kitsap County. In all other jurisdictions surveyed, the Health Department handles birth and death certificates, while the Recording operations handle marriage and domestic partnership certificates. The only time that Recording would process a death certificate would be for property related matters, such as removing or changing a name on a deed. All jurisdictions surveyed handle all property transaction documents including deeds, title company documentation, trusts, etc.

The biggest difference between the surveyed jurisdictions is in comparing the types of licenses they process. All of the surveyed jurisdictions process marriage licenses, and most process liquor licenses, however some also handle process server, pawn broker, and even dance hall and erotic dancer licenses. While Thurston and

Kitsap counties handle business licenses (both counties are in Washington state), Clackamas does not, as these licenses are only required by the cities within the County.

**Comparative Records Processed – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>No. of Vital Records Processed in CY 2008</b>	<b>No. of Deed Related Records Processed in CY 2008</b>	<b>No. of Other Transactions Processed in CY 2008</b>
Lane, OR	2,472	70,000	0
Marion, OR	2,700	69,000	100 Liquor
Jackson, OR	1,933	45,962	0
Spokane, WA	2,526	118,957	NA
Clark, WA	2,618	104,844	NA
Thurston, WA	1,808	8,447	NA
Kitsap, WA	6,543	7,228	NA
Yakima, WA	1,210	43,311	0
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>2,598</b>	<b>84,784</b>	<b>340 Liquor</b>

As the table above shows, the majority of surveyed jurisdictions handled between 1,500 and 2,500 marriage and domestic partnership records last year. Kitsap County is the exception, as its records total includes birth and death records as well. The vast difference in property transaction records can be attributed to the varying size and population of the counties surveyed. Most surveyed jurisdictions do not keep detailed records of non-marriage license transactions they process; Spokane, Clark, Thurston, and Kitsap being the prime examples of this fact. Clackamas does show a high number of liquor licenses processed, but this is, in part, due to the need for renewal every year.

The following table compares the numbers of vital records and deed related records processed during calendar year 2008.

**Vital and Deed-Related Records Processed per 1,000 Population – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population as of July 2008</b>	<b>No. of Vital Records Processed in CY 2008</b>	<b>Vital Records Processed per 1,000 population</b>	<b>No. of Deed Related Records Processed in CY 2008</b>	<b>Deed Related Records Processed per 1,000 population</b>
Lane, OR	346,560	2,472	7.13	70,000	202
Marion, OR	314,606	2,700	8.58	69,000	219
Jackson, OR	201,138	1,933	9.61	45,962	229
Spokane, WA	462,677	2,526	5.46	118,957	257
Clark, WA	424,733	2,618	6.16	104,844	247
Thurston, WA	245,181	1,808	7.37	8,447	34
Kitsap, WA	239,769	6,543	27.29	7,228	30
Yakima, WA	234,564	1,210	5.16	43,311	185
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>380,576</b>	<b>2,598</b>	<b>6.83</b>	<b>84,784</b>	<b>223</b>

The key comparative elements of the table above are summarized in the following bullet points:

- The number of vital records processed ranged from a low of 1,210 per 1,000 population (Yakima, WA) to a high of 6,543 vital records processed per 1,000 population (Kitsap, WA).
- The average number of vital records processed in the surveyed Oregon counties was 2,368 per 1,000 population. Clackamas processed 2,598 vital records per 1,000 population.
- The overall average number of vital records processed in all surveyed counties is 2,726 per 1,000 population. The median number of vital records processed is 2,499 per 1,000 population.
- The number of deed related records processed ranged from a low of 30 per 1,000 population (Kitsap, WA) to a high of 257 deed related records processed per 1,000 population (Spokane, WA).
- The average number of deed related records processed in the surveyed Oregon counties was 217 per 1,000 population. Clackamas processed 223 deed related records per 1,000 population.
- The overall average number of deed related records processed in all surveyed counties is 175 per 1,000 population. The median number of deed related records processed is 211 per 1,000 population.

The following table indicates the recording software used by the surveyed agencies.

**Comparative Recording Software Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Recording Software Used</b>
Lane, OR	Helion
Marion, OR	ACS Landmark
Jackson, OR	Helion
Spokane, WA	Eagle Recorder
Clark, WA	Eagle Recorder
Thurston, WA	Eagle Recorder
Kitsap, WA	Tyler
Yakima, WA	Fidlar
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>Helion</b>

As the table above shows, the two most common software products used for recording are Helion and Eagle Recorder. It is interesting to note that those using Helion are Oregon counties, and those using Eagle Recorder are Washington counties.

The comparative hours of operation are identified in the table below.

**Comparative Hours of Operation – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>
Lane, OR	M - F / 9 - 12 & 1 - 4
Marion, OR	M - F / 8:30 - 5
Jackson, OR	M - F / 8 - 11:15 & 12:30 - 4
Spokane, WA	M - F / 8:30 - 5
Clark, WA	M, T, TH, F / 8 - 5 & Wed. 9 - 5
Thurston, WA	M - F / 8 - 4:30
Kitsap, WA	M - Thursday / 8 - 5
Yakima, WA	M - F / 8:30 - 5, (9 - 4 to the public)
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>Monday / 8 - 5, T-Th. / 7 - 5, Friday / 10 - 3</b>

As the above table shows, most jurisdictions surveyed are open Monday through Friday with varying hours of operation. Yakima County was the only jurisdiction surveyed that had separate hours of operation for the public.

**(3.2) Recording Division Staffing.**

The following tables provide information regarding the full time and part time staffing levels of the jurisdictions surveyed.

**Comparative Full Time Staffing Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Total No. of Full Time Staff</b>	<b>Managers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Professional Staff</b>	<b>Para-Professional / Clerical Staff</b>
Lane, OR	3	1	0	2	0
Marion, OR	7	1	0	6	0
Jackson, OR	4	0	1	0	3
Spokane, WA	10	2	0	0	8
Clark, WA	6	1	0	0	5
Thurston, WA	7	0	2	0	5
Kitsap, WA	4	1	1	2	0
Yakima, WA	5	1	0	0	4
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

**Comparative Part Time and Front Counter Assistance Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Total No. of Part Time Staff</b>	<b>No. of Staff Dedicated to Front Counter Assistance</b>
Lane, OR	0	3
Marion, OR	0	7
Jackson, OR	0	4
Spokane, WA	0	10
Clark, WA	0	6
Thurston, WA	0	7
Kitsap, WA	1	3
Yakima, WA	0	5
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>

As shown in the tables above, the full time staffing levels vary widely between surveyed jurisdictions, with most jurisdictions classifying the bulk of their staff as Para-Professional / Clerical. Only Kitsap County uses part time staff to help with their workload, and this person is predominantly used to help with front counter and clerical work. In all jurisdictions surveyed, all Recording employees are cross-trained to help out and work the front counter. This provides complete coverage of phones and counter

assistance throughout the day. In the case of Lane, Jackson, and Yakima County, recording employees also handle records management duties.

The table below compares the number of recording staff per 100,000 population in the surveyed counties. Since some of the counties use the same staff for recording and records management functions, these comparative statistics should not be viewed as an apples to apples staffing comparison of the functions.

**Recording Staff per 100,000 Population – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population as of July 2008</b>	<b>Total No. of Full Time Staff</b>	<b>Staff Per 100,000 Population</b>
Lane, OR	346,560	3	0.87
Marion, OR	314,606	7	2.23
Jackson, OR	201,138	4	1.99
Spokane, WA	462,677	10	2.16
Clark, WA	424,733	6	1.41
Thurston, WA	245,181	7	2.86
Kitsap, WA	239,769	4	1.67
Yakima, WA	234,564	5	2.13
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>380,576</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.10</b>

The key comparative elements of the table above are summarized in the following bullet points:

- The number of recording staff ranged from a low of 0.87 per 100,000 population (Lane, OR) to a high of 2.86 recording staff per 100,000 population (Thurston, WA).
- The average number of recording staff in the surveyed Oregon counties was 1.69 per 100,000 population. Clackamas has 2.10 recording staff per 100,000 population.
- The overall average number of recording staff in all surveyed counties is 1.91 per 100,000 population. The median number of recording staff is 2.06 per 100,000 population.

The final section identifies the comparative statistics related to the records management functions in the surveyed County Clerk offices.

**4. RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

The following provides comparative data regarding records management operations in the various jurisdictions surveyed.

**(4.1) Records Management Overview.**

The following tables reflect broader operational characteristics of records management operations at the various counties surveyed.

**Comparative Centralization and Funding Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Is Records Management Department Centralized?</b>	<b>Is Records Management Operated as an Internal Service Fund?</b>
Lane, OR	Yes	Bill other departments for services
Marion, OR	No	No
Jackson, OR	Part of Recording	Yes
Spokane, WA	No	No
Clark, WA	Yes	No
Thurston, WA	Yes	General Fund & Bill other Departments
Kitsap, WA	Yes	No
Yakima, WA	No	No
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

As shown in the table above, most (5 of 8) of the jurisdictions surveyed including Clackamas, have a centralized Records Management Department. Clackamas and Jackson County are the only jurisdictions that operate their records management departments as internal service funds. However, Lane and Thurston do bill outside departments for the services they provide.

**Comparative Records Management Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Are all Departments Mandated to use Records Management Services?</b>	<b>Are There Any Departments That are Exempt From Using Records Management Services?</b>
Lane, OR	Not mandated, but all partake	No
Marion, OR	Not Mandated	Sheriff is separate
Jackson, OR	Not Mandated	Sheriff is separate
Spokane, WA	Not Mandated	Departments keep their own records
Clark, WA	Not Mandated	Departments keep their own records
Thurston, WA	Not mandated, but all partake	No
Kitsap, WA	Not mandated, but all partake	No
Yakima, WA	No	NA
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	Not mandated, but most partake	<b>Sheriff Administrative Records are stored at Records Management. Sheriff retains criminal records.</b>

While none of the jurisdictions surveyed mandate departments use their Records division for the storage and or destruction of their records, in almost all of the jurisdictions, all county departments utilize the records management function located in the County Clerk's office. In Clark County, the Records department is not utilized by county departments at all, and is mostly used for the storage of vital records only. In Marion and Jackson County, the Sheriff departments are responsible for their own records retention. Clackamas County Sheriff's Department is responsible for criminal records retention.

**Comparative Records Retention, Policy and Courier Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Formalized Records Retention and Destruction Policy</b>	<b>Records Storage</b>	<b>Courier Services Provided</b>
Lane, OR	Follow State Mandates	Stored Offsite	Once a month
Marion, OR	Follow State Mandates	Onsite Vault and Offsite storage	Yes
Jackson, OR	Follow State Mandates	Onsite Image copies, hard copies off site	No
Spokane, WA	Follow State Mandates	Onsite	No
Clark, WA	Follow State Mandates	Onsite	Yes
Thurston, WA	Follow State Mandates	Onsite	Yes
Kitsap, WA	Follow State Mandates	Onsite and offsite with Vendor	Only for Offsite
Yakima, WA	Follow State Mandates	Onsite electronic	No
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>Follow State Mandates</b>	<b>Onsite</b>	<b>Yes</b>

All jurisdictions follow their state mandates for records retention and destruction, in Oregon the standards can be found under OAR 166. Most of the jurisdictions surveyed store electronic records onsite, and hard copy records offsite. Clackamas County Technical Services is responsible for electronic records management. Only Kitsap County uses an outside vendor to store its offsite records. A courier service is provided by most of the jurisdictions with offsite storage, usually on a regularly scheduled basis, depending on the needs of those requesting the records.

**Comparative Hours of Operation – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>
Lane, OR	M - F / 8 – 5
Marion, OR	M - F / 8:30 - 5
Jackson, OR	M – F / 8 – 11:15 & 12:30 – 4
Spokane, WA	M – F / 8:30 – 5
Clark, WA	M - F / 8 – 5
Thurston, WA	M – F / 7 – 5 (Not open to public)
Kitsap, WA	M – F / 8 – 5
Yakima, WA	M – F / 8:30 – 5, (9 – 4 to the public)
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>M - F / 8 - 5</b>

Only one jurisdiction surveyed, Thurston County, is not open to the public. Clackamas County Records Management is open to the public for passport application acceptance. Public access to historical records is by special arrangement. Public records requests are processed through the department of record. All other jurisdictions have varying hours of operation. Access to stored records depends upon the location of the records, either onsite or offsite.

**(4.2) Records Management Staffing.**

The following tables reflect full time and part time staffing comparisons of the five jurisdictions surveyed based on population only. Generally, population is not a definitive workload driver for Records Management and this is for illustrative purposes only.

**Comparative Full Time Staffing Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

County	Total No. of Full Time Staff	Managers	Supervisors	Professional Staff	Para-Professional / Clerical Staff
Lane, OR	3	1	0	2	0
Marion, OR	1	0	1	0	0
Jackson, OR	4	0	1	0	3
Spokane, WA	0	0	0	0	0
Clark, WA	3	1	0	0	2
Thurston, WA	4	0	1	0	3
Kitsap, WA	1	0	0	1	0
Yakima, WA	5	1	0	0	4
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

Clackamas County maintains a higher number of records management staff than any of the other counties surveyed.

**Comparative Part Time and ARMA<sup>1</sup> Member Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

County	Total No. of Part Time Staff	Paid Staff Members of ARMA International
Lane, OR	0	0
Marion, OR	0	3
Jackson, OR	0	0
Spokane, WA	0	Unknown
Clark, WA	0	1
Thurston, WA	0	1
Kitsap, WA	0	3
Yakima, WA	0	0
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>0.4<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>2</b>

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<sup>1</sup> ARMA International is a not-for-profit professional association and the authority on managing records and information. The association also develops and publishes standards and guidelines related to records management.

<sup>2</sup> Clackamas County Records Management is a designated passport application acceptance facility. The one part-time staff processes passport applications and assists with preparing county documents for scanning as passport duties allow.

Of the counties surveyed one-half had at least one paid member of ARMA International on their staff, while three counties had no employees participating. Clackamas has two employees participating.

The following table indicates the number of staff members for records management functions in each county. The counties of Lane, Jackson, and Yakima have been excluded from the table since their staff performs both records management and recording duties.

**Comparative Records Management Staffing per 100,000 Population – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population as of July 2008</b>	<b>Total No. of Full Time Staff</b>	<b>Staff Per 100,000 Population</b>
Lane, OR			
Marion, OR	314,606	1	0.32
Jackson, OR			
Spokane, WA	462,677	0	0.00
Clark, WA	424,733	3	0.71
Thurston, WA	245,181	4	1.63
Kitsap, WA	239,769	1	0.42
Yakima, WA			
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>380,576</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1.84</b>

The key comparative elements of the table above are summarized in the following bullet points:

- The number of records management staff ranged from a low of zero per 100,000 population (Spokane, WA) to a high of 1.63 records management staff per 100,000 population (Thurston, WA).
- The average number of records management staff in the surveyed Oregon counties (one county, Marion had dedicated staff) was 0.32 per 100,000 population. Clackamas has 1.84 records management staff per 100,000 population.
- The overall average number of records management staff in all surveyed counties is 0.61 per 100,000 population. The median number of records management staff is 0.42 per 100,000 population.

As noted in the previous section, Lane, Jackson, and Yakima County use the same staff for both Records and Recording functions. As the bulk of records in Marion and Kitsap are stored offsite, they are minimally staffed, whereas the other jurisdictions use more staff to help with the transfer of hard copy records to electronic formats. Clackamas is the only county that uses a part time employee, who helps with passport application processing.

## 5. RECORDS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

This chapter of the report provides the Project Team's evaluation of the operations, staffing, organizational structure and management of the Records Management Department. The following section provides a brief descriptive summary of the Department.

### 1. DEPARTMENT SUMMARY

The Records Management Department performs all duties and responsibilities related to the full suite of records management functions that pertain to internal County records and management of the County Records Center. This includes document capture, preservation, access, and records storage in compliance with all applicable laws and rules. Services include scanning, microfilming, storing, and delivery of County records to client departments. Other duties include records retention scheduling, records-related training, and the development of records policies and procedures. Details regarding specific roles and responsibilities of staff within the Records Management Department are provided in the Profile Chapter of this report. In summary, however, the Records Management Department functions in four primary service areas:

- **Document Capture Services** includes document scanning, microfilm scanning, and document microfilm services. Digital documents are accessed through the County's electronic document management system. County historic and permanent records are microfilmed in compliance with all applicable laws and rules. In addition to County departments, Records Management also provides scanning and microfilming services to the cities of Wilsonville and Lake Oswego.
- **Records Storage Operations** provides management of the County's Records Center through the storage and retrieval of County records, and oversight of the County confidential records shredding services. Storage operations also include

the filing, retrieval and transport of records via in-house courier to end-users. A variety of record types including court records are stored in the County's Records Center.

- **Passport Application Processing and Passport Photo Services** are offered to the public as Records Management is a designated Passport Acceptance Facility.
- **Information Management** services are records retention scheduling, records management training, and development of County-wide records policies and procedures. Records Management represents the County in records management concerns and is the liaison between the County and Oregon State Archives.

The Records Management Department currently maintains 7.4 positions—one manager, six line staff and one part-time position processing passports.

With respect to the Records Management Department operations, current organization, staffing, processes, legislation mandating certain operations, etc., these areas were analyzed using varied methodologies—from a comparison to best management practices from a variety of sources to a comparison to organizational “peer agencies” (both of which are provided under separate chapters). Additionally and importantly, much of our review is framed by both the philosophies and concepts of ARMA International,<sup>3</sup> a not-for-profit professional association and the authority on managing paper and electronic records and information, as well as ISO 15489, the first international standard devoted to records management that provides detailed specifications for the structure, content, and implementation of records management programs. Findings, conclusions and recommendations based on these analyses are included herein. In summary, the Records Management Department is, overall, notably well run when compared against a variety of metrics. As a result, the main focus of the

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<sup>3</sup> Also known as the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA).

following chapter identifies various opportunities for business re-engineering and improvements.

## **2. CENTRALIZED VERSUS DECENTRALIZED RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

The proper filing and storage of public records are extremely important to an organization. A streamlined and effective records maintenance and management system allows an organization to function at much greater levels of efficiency and effectiveness compared to an agency that has poor document control. There are currently several national legislative directives that dictate local government behavior with respect to records these include:

*Freedom of Information Act (FOIA):* Requires agencies to locate, retrieve, screen, and respond with documents deemed to be legally releasable at any point in the document/record life cycle.

*Electronic Freedom of Information Act (E-FOIA) Amendments of 1996:* Requires agencies to provide documents in electronic format when requested.

*The E-Government Act of 2002:* Requires the management and promotion of electronic Government services and processes. This has broad application to the accessibility, usability, and preservation of government information, including records.

*Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 192.001, Public Records Policy, and ORS 192.410 to 192.505, Inspection of Public Records.*

*Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 166-150, County and Special District Retention Schedule.*

The State of Oregon is very progressive in the nation with respect to the records management profession. Critical records generated by local government are also

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maintained in the Oregon State Archives. The following list provides Clackamas County records either maintained and accessible at the Oregon State Archives or located within the County proper<sup>4</sup>:

**Oregon State Archives Clackamas County Critical Records on File**

Aerial Photographs	Insane Commitment Case Files
Animal Bounty Records	Judgment and Execution Records
Assessment and Tax Rolls	Justice Court Case Files
Assumed Business Names Registers	Justice Court Dockets
Attachment Records	Land Subdivision Records
Birth Records	Land Title Registers
Census Records	Maps, Plans, and Drawings
Circuit Court Case Files	Marks and Brands Records
Circuit Court Dockets	Marriage Records
Circuit Court Journals	Married Women's Property Registers
Clerk's Miscellaneous Recordings	Medical Profession Registration Records
Clerk's Official Filings	Military Records
Commissioners Administrative Journals	Mining Claim Records
Commissioners Orders and Ordinances	Mortgage Records
Corner Survey Records	Naturalization Certificates
Coroner and Inquest Records	Naturalization Declarations of Intention
County Budgets	Naturalization Petitions and Orders
County Comprehensive Plans	Pension and Relief Records
County Court Case Files	Planning Commission Minutes
County Court Judicial Journals	Prisoner Registers
County Fair Records	Probate Case Files
County Officials Reports	Probate Estate Records
Death Records	Probate Registers
Deeds and Indexes	Road and Bridge Records
Delayed Birth Records	Road Maps and Survey Notes
Dower Records	School District Records
Election Poll Books	Superintendent of Schools Records
Election Voting Abstracts	Surveyor Field Notes and Plats
Farm Name Registration Records	Tax Lot Cards
Federal Land Grant Records	Water Rights Records
Foreclosure Records	Zoning Records
Health and Human Services Records	

<sup>4</sup> Go to <http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/county/cpclackamasdescrip.html> to see locations for each of the noted records.

Furthermore, with respect to framing legislation for records management, State law is comprehensive as demonstrated by the excerpt below from the Oregon Revised Statutes:

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 192.001 states:

(a) The records of the state and its political subdivisions are so interrelated and interdependent, that the decision as to what records are retained or destroyed is a matter of statewide public policy.

(b) The interest and concern of citizens in public records recognizes no jurisdictional boundaries, and extends to such records wherever they may be found in Oregon.

(c) As local programs become increasingly intergovernmental, the state and its political subdivisions have a responsibility to insure orderly retention and destruction of all public records, whether current or noncurrent, and to insure the preservation of public records of value for administrative, legal and research purposes.

To implement the statutory directives, the State Archives was instrumental in developing Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) governing records management. As found in the *Clackamas County Records Management Policy and Standards Manual*<sup>5</sup>, OAR 166 is referenced as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> This manual was adopted by Board Order 88-80, filed 02/02/1988.

1.0 Policy

- 1.1 The following directive, as issued by the State Archives, requires compliance by Clackamas County:

(OAR 166-005-0000) "It is the policy of the State of Oregon to assure the preservation of records essential to meet the needs of the state, its political subdivisions, its citizens, and to assure the prompt destruction of records without continuing value. Unlawful destruction of any public record, regardless of medium or physical format, is a crime punishable under the provisions of ORS 162.305. Public records may be created and retained in a variety of media and physical formats, including but not limited to paper, microfilm, sound recordings, video recordings, magnetic tape and disk, and optical disk."

2.0 Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to support and implement the following directive:

(OAR 166-005-0005) "The purpose of these rules is to implement the provisions of ORS 192.005 to 192.170 and 357.825 to 357.895, by providing procedures for the orderly retention and disposition of public records, regardless of medium or physical format; standards for appropriate use of microfilm and digital imaging; standards for the protection and storage of public records;...General Records Retention Schedules provide state and local agencies with the lawful authority to destroy or otherwise dispose of commonly occurring public records."

Whereas ORS 192 and OAR 166 provide the underlying mandates and principal guidelines relative to State-wide records management, generally the implementation of records management is left to the authority of the local agency. Therefore, a framing philosophy regarding the business of records management at the local governance level must be established. This core philosophy, whether formally or informally embraced, revolves around the competing interests of centralized versus decentralized records management. Ultimately the chosen philosophy guiding records business approaches has a dramatic impact on the organization with regard to the efficiency, effectiveness, and the quality of service delivery. When establishing a records management program, an organization must decide if centralized, decentralized, or an amalgamation of these two approaches is most appropriate. Briefly, centralization refers to both the location where hardcopy (and other) records are stored and archived as well as, perhaps more importantly, how records are actually *managed* in the organization.

**(1) Centralized Versus Decentralized Records Management Control Model.**

To centralize or not to centralize is one of the most common questions in records management. By bringing otherwise organizationally distributed records together into one large collection, and managing such records under one authority, a records centralization project can bring tremendous return-on-investment in by improving user efficiency, consistency, space utilization, security, and legislative compliance. Whether an organization will realize such benefits remains a function of the implementation strategies adopted. As informational support for daily business activities and potential legal evidence to defend those activities, physical file collections have remarkable potential to add value (or cost through poor practice) to an organization. The final decision on how to manage records is generally based upon the potential advantages of centralization against not only the resources needed to make centralization happen but also the decentralization or optional alternatives available. Of critical note, centralized records management control models depend on the cooperation of all organizational participants; however, centralization regularly meets with resistance from different sources given perceived downsides as discussed later in this chapter.

**(1.1) Centralized Model – Internal Controls Benefits.**

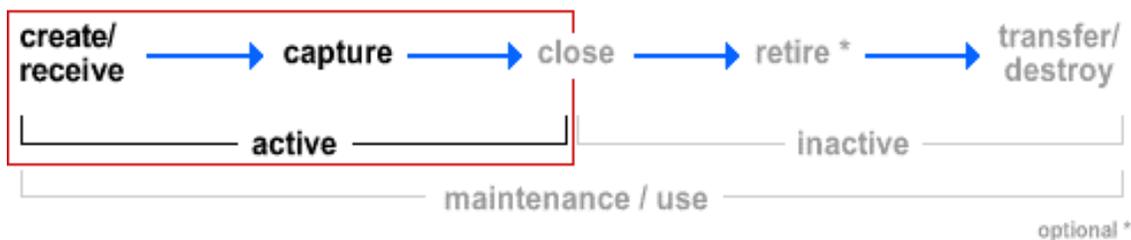
In a centralized records management control model, one person or one assigned group of employees is specifically responsible and accountable for the records management program. Designated staff keeps track of which records are being created and where the records are stored. Such staff also manages the scheduling and disposition of the records. There are many internal control advantages to having a centralized records management model to include:

- One location (both physical and computer-based) to go for information on the records that the organization has in its possession. This “organizational centralization” can apply to the corporate, division, department, section and / or unit level.
- A single point of contact in the organization for all records management activities.
- Greater control over the creation and distribution of records-related information.
- More efficient management of records. Annual or periodic tasks, such as sending records to a Records Center, are not delayed based upon perceived ancillary duties but part of existing core business practices.
- A greater degree of consistency between different organizational units within the business with respect to records management.

Specifically related to audit protocols and best management practices, a centralized records management model generally facilitates appropriate internal controls above and beyond most decentralized options.

**(1.2) Centralized Model – Legislative Compliance Benefits.**

With regard to legislative compliance, an effective centralized records management system supports legal risk management by offering a single control point for the active an inactive records life-cycle. This life-cycle is diagramed below<sup>6</sup>:



Centralized control of the life cycle means improved compliance with generally accepted best practices as well as the many local, state and federal statutes and regulations impacting records management such as:

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<sup>6</sup> Environmental Protection Agency RM Model.

- *Records retention requirements:* Many of the legislative directives impacting an organization's business processes set requirements for records retention (re: OAR 166-150-0005 to 166-150-0215). These include explicit mandates to keep certain records for specified periods of times, as well as implied retention requirements in the form of limitation periods for law suits, monetary claims, audits, and other legal actions. Relevant records will need to be kept for the duration of the limitation period to initiate or defend against a legal action. Whether through centralized or de-centralized records management practices, records retention requirements must be met, and doing so requires a documented due diligence process, preferably at the corporate level. By centralizing many of the processes related to the records life-cycle, including storage and retrieval, an organization is better able to apply records retention schedules by reviewing files for possible disposal, thereby avoiding the risks associated with individual retention and disposal habits.
- *Corporate Accountability Requirements Applicable to Governance:* Legislators have responded to high profile corporate accounting scandals with new reporting and accountability requirements. The Sarbanes Oxley Act (SOX) of the United States requires senior corporate executives to sign off on the integrity of their company's information and sets jail terms for inappropriate alteration or disposal of records. Whereas SOX is applicable only to U.S. public company boards, management and public accounting firms, the fundamentals relative to records management are appropriate. For senior executives to attest to the integrity of records, corporate-level controls must be in place to guard against the inconsistencies and gaps that may arise from too much reliance on individual habits. A centralized records management system can provide this control by limiting and monitoring the number of staff who can create, access, modify and dispose of critical recorded information.
- *Privacy legislation:* The United States has developed legislation to protect personal information and individual privacy rights (e.g. Title II of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)). While the details of laws related to privacy rights vary across different jurisdictions, certain fundamental requirements are more or less universal. The large majority of privacy laws require organizations to limit the collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal information which is necessary for the completion of authorized business purposes. When multiple records are maintained throughout an organizational structure, documents containing sensitive personal information may be unnecessarily replicated. This not only violates directives to limit the collection and retention of personal information, it also increases the risk of a records-based security breach, whereby information is inadvertently used or disclosed either internally or externally for unauthorized purposes. In contrast, centralized records management systems support the legislated restrictions by minimizing the duplication of sensitive documents and managing information creation and access via a single control point.

In summary, a decentralized control model is, from a records management standpoint, not an ideal model for managing records. In this kind of system, each work unit manages its records on its own. Some individual work units may manage their records effectively, but as a result, there will be inconsistency across various organizational functions as the level of due diligence related to records management protocols and tasks often differs. Usually there is also a lack of coherent records management knowledge across the organization that inadvertently facilitates inconsistency. Further, when records management issues arise, in different work units, they may resolve these issues in different fashions if there is no recognized centralized authority, thereby exacerbating the variations in the ways records management is conducted.

## **(2) Centralized Versus Decentralized Records Management Storage.**

In addition to centralized versus decentralized records management control models, there are centralized and decentralized records management storage approaches.

### **(2.1) Centralized Model – Business Process Efficiency.**

There are a number of persuasive arguments that have some validity relative to the accessibility of records that are in stored in central locales. Yet even in the face of these admittedly popular arguments, real world application has most often demonstrated that central filing can improve both efficiency and reliability. Any employee opposed to “walking down the hall” or “waiting for the file courier” should consider how much time that is spent searching for files on a cluttered work space, within a less than ideal internal filing system located in a bank of personal file cabinets,

or phoning, emailing or visiting colleagues to track down complimentary documents needed to complete their own file content. Additional time is often spent photocopying and compiling documents for inclusion in their own desk files that are infrequently accessed or, at worst, referenced one time. Clearly it will take time to access records in a centralized storage facility. But over the longer term, that small time investment may be returned several-fold.

What is more difficult to quantify than time spent accessing decentralized versus centralized records is the time management impact of making misinformed decisions in the absence of accurate, comprehensive records. Centralized filing can help alleviate this problem by making file content more reliable. At the document level, there can periodically be several versions of one file; moreover, any one record can take on a very different context when combined with other records. By consolidating all records related to a given activity, project, transaction or process into one central file, every user of that file is provided with a comprehensive and consistent picture on which to base business decisions and perform their own transactions. This is even more important when it comes to 'living' documents which are updated, revised or incorporated into new documents throughout the course of a project or ongoing initiative. When multiple copies of the same document are stored across different locations, competing and incomplete revisions may develop over time. Employees expected to collaborate based on consistent information may act based on two very different versions of what was presumably the same document. Combined with processes for authorizing and tracking changes or annotations to documents, centralized filing minimizes version confusion, as all file users are provided the same information.

**(2.2) Centralized Model – Physical Space Utilization.**

As many of today's businesses grow their operations, physical space for performing daily activities is becoming scarcer and increasingly expensive. Shrinking space is especially troublesome for records managers, particularly as records volumes increase to support the growth in activity. Given more robust records management requirements over the past years, organizations have more physical and information technology-based records than ever before and consequently much less space in which to store them.

The management of storage space for mandated items, whether a physical file kept per records retention requirements or a law enforcement case file maintained for evidentiary purposes, is becoming increasingly problematic nationally. An illustrative commentary by the International Association of Property and Evidence (IAPE) that is equally attributable to other records management functions states, "There is no procedure more important to keeping (physical) inventory at a manageable level than an effective purging program. There is also no responsibility that is ignored more frequently." In the Project Team's experience, inventory turnover management is one of the most common issues faced by professionals that manage storage facilities; turnover management frequently and often by necessity, takes a lower priority compared to operating the day-to-day business. This is particularly true if there are no centralized control mechanisms in place that are focused on space utilization requirements for inventories and the attendant cost impacts. By example a recent client of the Project Team spent over \$200,000 in expanding physical inventory space by constructing

ancillary storage facilities despite the fact much of their inventory was lawfully disposable.

The records management industry has responded, in part, to the space problem with space-efficient storage solutions ranging from streamlined folder designs to high density mobile shelving systems. When advanced storage solutions are integrated with progressive records retention and disposal programs, organizations can potentially store up to three times the amount of records into a space half the size<sup>7</sup> occupied by some more traditional records management approaches (e.g. filing cabinets or standard fixed shelving). These cost benefits cannot be fully realized, however, as long as records collections are decentralized in an organization and scattered across individual offices. And, these cost benefits could potentially be substantial: in FY 1998, one cubic foot of records could be stored in a federal records center for \$1.59 annually while that same cubic foot cost \$23.10 to maintain in typical office space and equipment.<sup>8</sup> Storage options which make little or no sense for an individual office can translate into significant space and resultant cost savings when files from many offices come together as one large collection.

### **(2.3) Centralized Model – Security.**

For organizational staff, transferring their records to a central location raises the questions of security. Does centralization mean that these files will be accessible to all personnel across an organization or unnecessarily restrict access to those with entitled records needs? While one should never ignore security risks for confidential information, the reality is that a well designed file storage area can be more secure than

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<sup>7</sup> TAB White Paper – *Strategies in Centralized Filing*, pg. 3.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

conventional office storage. A dedicated records storage room may be equipped with intrusion detection, monitoring systems, card access locks and other security controls which are often deemed unnecessary or unaffordable for single offices, let alone open work stations work areas. Furthermore, every set of records does not have to be accessible to every person with access to the central file room. Within a room, different collections may be stored in separate locking cabinets based on who can or should access the files, entry can be restricted to only records staff that can retrieve records or access can be chaperoned, etc. Within large high efficiency storage systems such as stationary and mobile shelving, locking 'tambour doors' can be installed, restricting specific sections of shelving to an identified user group. In summary, centralized records management actually enhances security opportunities rather than detracts from them.

#### **(2.4) Decentralized Model – Perceived Benefits.**

Beyond the noted benefits of centralized records management, there are some disadvantages that decentralized records management mitigates. Some of the notable benefits of decentralization include the following:

- *Active working files:* For very current projects and transactions, certain documents may be accessed on a daily basis. When groups of employees contribute regularly to the same initiative, each may have a legitimate need to keep their own working files in their office or desk, at least while they are actively engaged in the project. In this case, the decentralized nature of these records need not be permanent. A particular user's documents may easily be integrated later into a central set of records, either when the project ends or when the user's own role in the project ceases.
- *Sensitive records content:* Some records (or portions thereof) may contain sensitive or confidential information such as individual personal information, proprietary data, trade secrets, or business negotiations. Such information should be accessible only to those with an authorized business need to know the information, which may be limited to one or two persons, such as a divisional

manager or Human Resources representative. While security concerns can certainly be mitigated in most central storage locations, the rationale for installing these specialized security measures is limited when the cost benefits of shared filing no longer apply as is the case for sensitive materials where only a handful of staff need access. This does not preclude other benefits of centralized records management control as noted in the prior discussion, but does note the impacts on centralized records filing for sensitive information.

- *Geographic Concerns:* Centralized records work well when their different users are located on the same premises or have access to a prompt file delivery service. But sharing a consolidated file collection may be less practical when staff are located throughout different campuses, cities, or regions. This is often the case in the natural resources sector, whereby a corporate headquarters located in an urban center will be supported by operational field offices, which may be located in remote areas with limited access to same-day couriers and other file retrieval aids. Organizations with geographically dispersed operations and employees may need to maintain separate records collections at the field sites, even when doing so means duplicating documents which are stored at the corporate headquarters records management facilities.

In conclusion, the decisions about whether to centralize or decentralize records management operations involves numerous important variables to include legislative directives, operational and organizational philosophy, resource availability, space needs, security requirements, service options, and overall convenience. The following sections discuss the current state of records management in Clackamas County.

### **(3) Clackamas County Clerk Records Management – Impacts of “Voluntary Centralization.”**

As discussed previously with regard to federal and Oregon state legislation, records management is taken seriously. Clackamas County governance also takes this seriously as reflected by the following. In 1988 the Board of Commissioners adopted Order 88-80 memorializing a Records Management Policy and Records Management Standards Manual for the County's records management programs. The fact that the County has a Records Management Department within the County Clerk's Office is clear evidence there is some component of records centralization in place at Clackamas

County. The intent of centralization is further demonstrated by the fact that the Records Management Department is operated as an Internal Services Fund (ISF)<sup>9</sup>.

Internal service funds are established to account for any activity that provides goods or services by one department to other departments in the jurisdiction and to other government units on a cost reimbursement basis. Costs in the internal service funds are allocated to the benefiting funds in the form of fees and charges. Many federal, state, and local governments have established an ISF to facilitate development of a cost charge-back system and to improve the overall management of their internal services operation. The use of an ISF is often considered a best management practice among financial practitioners. The experiences of the Project Team are generally uniform, in the absence of extenuating circumstances, in suggesting that use of an Internal Service Fund (as opposed to a conventional budgeting process) is often appropriate and beneficial.

Despite the aforementioned information that may suggest the Clackamas County Clerk's Records Management Department oversees a fully integrated and centralized operation with the authority to perform records management controls, records management storage, and other core business records management functions for the entire County, this is not the case. Indeed, use of the Records Management Department services is largely voluntary. The following table provides County department and division information which shows which agencies used the Records Management Department's varied services during FY 08/09 as outlined in the Department Summary section of this chapter.

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<sup>9</sup> See page 267-269 of the County's FY 2008/09 Budget by Fund Section of the County budget.

**CLACKAMAS COUNTY, OREGON****Final Report of the Performance Audit for the County Clerk's Office****Representative County Departments that Use / Don't Use the Records Management Department Services**

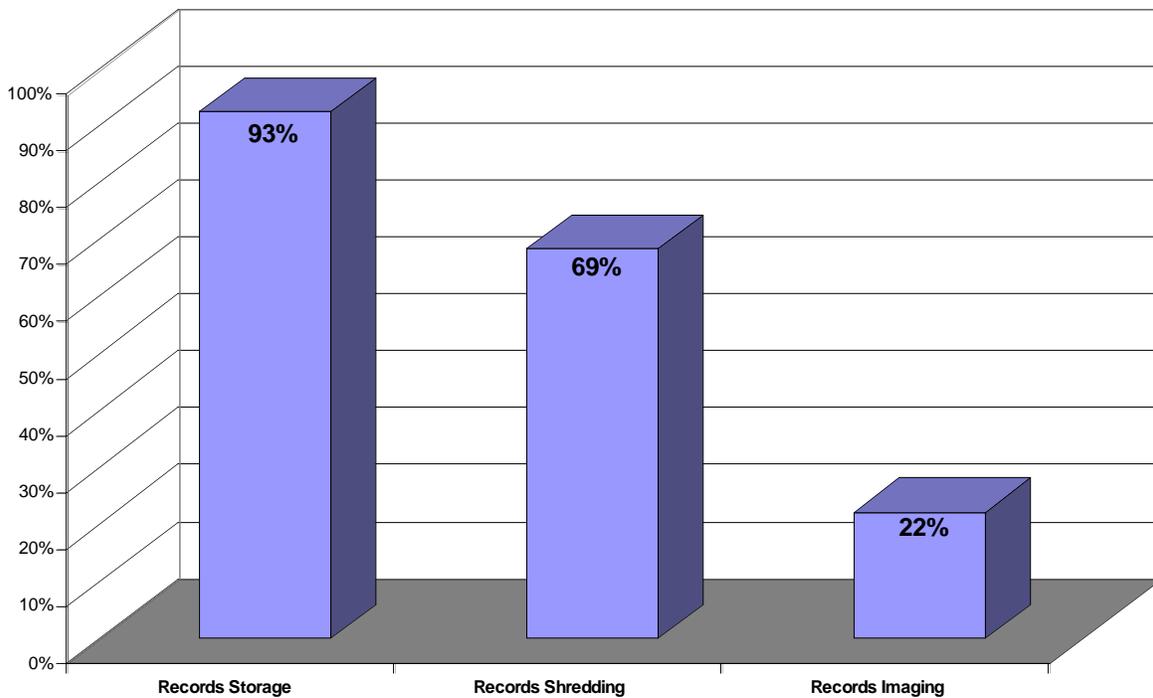
Department	Division	Imaging	Storage	Shredding
Assessor		x	x	x
Board of County Commissioners		x	x	x
Bus & Community Services	Business Development			x
Bus & Community Services	Library Network		x	x
Bus & Community Services	Property Management		x	x
Bus & Community Services	Recreation		x	
Bus & Community Services	Library		x	x
C-Com - Central Dispatch			x	
County Clerk	BOPTA		x	x
County Clerk	Elections	x	x	x
County Clerk	Recording	x	x	
County Administration		x		
County Counsel			x	x
District Attorney	Administration		x	x
District Attorney	Family Support		x	x
District Attorney	Juvenile		x	
District Attorney	Medical Examiner		x	x
District Attorney	Prosecution	x	x	x
District Attorney	Victim Assistance			x
Employee Services	Benefits/Risk	x	x	x
Employee Services	Employee Services		x	x
Emergency Management			x	
Family Court Service			x	x
Finance			x	x
Housing Authority			x	x
Human Services	Administration		x	x
Human Services	Behavioral Health	x	x	x
Human Services	Community Dev		x	x
Human Services	Community Health Admin.		x	x
Human Services	Community Solutions		x	x
Human Services	Office of Children & Families		x	
Human Services	Public Health		x	x
Human Services	Social Services		x	x
Juvenile Dept			x	x
N CPRD (N Clack Park)			x	x
Public & Gov Relations	Cable Administration		x	x
Public & Gov Relations			x	
Sheriff	Community Corrections		x	x
Sheriff		x	x	x
Technical Services	Electronic Services		x	x
Technical Services			x	x
Tourism Development Council			x	
Transportation & Development	Administration		x	
Transportation & Development	Building Services (Codes)		x	
Transportation & Development	Community Environment		x	

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Transportation & Development	Dog Control		x	x
Transportation & Development	Engineering		x	x
Transportation & Development	Maintenance		x	
Transportation & Development	Parks			
Transportation & Development	Planning (Land Use)	x	x	
Transportation & Development	Roads (Transportation)		x	
Transportation & Development	Surveyor		x	x
Treasurer			x	x
Water & Environment Services		x	x	

As noted by the above table, the use of the Records Management Department is voluntary, whereby core services offered may or may not be used by another County department dependent upon the perceived value and actual cost of services incurred. This table provides details related to each department, the following bar chart summarizes the proportion of County departments using the noted core services.

**% of County Departments Using Records Management Department Services by Service Type**



As shown by the graph, there is no universal usage of any Records Management Department service. The vast majority of County departments use the records storage service; however only a small proportion uses the records imaging service. This reflects an operation that is a fusion of centralized and decentralized records management philosophies, and where such a union of competing philosophies can work under some circumstances, it is typically one which is problematic. This is the case in Clackamas County as demonstrated by the following sub-sections.

**(3.1) Inconsistent Use of Records Management Department Services Impacts Internal Service Fund Charges and the Cost of Business to Service Recipients.**

As discussed previously, an Internal Service Fund (ISF) allocates service department costs to the benefiting department recipients in the form of fees and charges. These charge-backs are designed to capture the fully-loaded costs of operating the service department. Yet if these charge-backs are not distributed to all departments, or only partially distributed because some services are not used, then the overall costs of service to the actual recipient departments is higher as fewer “customers” must pay for the operating costs. It is extremely uncommon for an Internal Service Fund operation to provide voluntary services. This is tantamount to end-user departments selecting a fleet maintenance division's services (typically an ISF operation) cafeteria-style, choosing to take preventive maintenance services but foregoing corrective maintenance services or alternately electing to take a building maintenance department's (another ISF in many organizations) facility maintenance service but not their custodial offerings. A review of the comparative survey information in another chapter will show no other comparative county operates in this fashion. The

few Records Management Department counties that run under an ISF model do so with full participation from other county departments. Alternately, as shown in the comparative survey, there is a General Fund cost model whereby records management operates as a General Fund department or operates as a General Fund department charging direct end-user fees.

In summary, the County's current philosophy of Records Management providing "optional services" that can be refused, combined with an ISF model, precipitates difficulties such that some end users perceive Records Management services as "too expensive." This problem can be compounded if the Records Management Department loses customers as remaining "fixed" costs will be distributed to a smaller customer base, thereby raising the cost of business for each end-user even higher.

**(3.2) Lack of Centralized Records Management Authority and Control is Problematic.**

Beyond fiscal issues that can result from the voluntary use of centralized records management services as discussed in the prior sub-section, there are perhaps more critical operational and administrative issues that result from a lack of centralized authority and control. With respect to the primary services provided by the Records Management Department, the following observations are noted:

- **Document Capture Services** includes document scanning, microfilm scanning, and document microfilm services. As noted in the above table and graph, only 22% of the divisions in the various County departments take advantage of the Records Management Department's records imaging services; the majority performs digitized scanning internally. At issue is there are no standard Quality Assurance and Quality Control steps in place in the departments similar to the specific QA/QC tasks undertaken in the Records Management department. Failure to perform QA/QC on the digitized records can result in incomplete records (e.g. missing pages, blurred text, etc.) for a document that should ultimately become the "Record Copy." Incomplete records, particularly those that are essential, can result in significant operational and potentially legal issues for

the County. Furthermore, given the frequency in which Records Management Department staff conduct imaging, it is extremely likely they have developed processes that, from a time-on-task standpoint, are more efficient than their counterparts in most other County agencies.

- **Records Storage Operations** provides management of the County's Records Center through the storage and retrieval of County records, and oversight of the County confidential records shredding services. Whereas the vast majority of County departments use the Records Management Department's storage, only approximately two in three use document shredding. These pose specific problems such as:
  - Records that are not stored at the Records Center are not subject to the same internal controls and security features used by the Records Management Department and therefore may be at higher risk of loss, damage, etc. Furthermore, de-centralized records control / storage can result in excessive and duplicative records at various sites resulting in not only wasted space (and the associated costs therewith) but potential opportunity cost related to unofficial records that may be subject to discovery during legal action.
  - Records that are not shredded in a timely manner consistent with records destruction policies place the County at risk as such items can become discoverable during legal actions. Similarly, records that are not easily located and retrievable consistent with records retention schedules is equally problematic.

A lack of consistent internal controls related to records storage, records, shredding, and records retrieval can lead to particularly costly problems. The following excerpts reflect the kinds of problems that result from less than effective records management protocols:

*City officials have turned over 28,729 pages of documents to Nike in response to its lawsuit seeking annexation records. Another 70,372 pages are on the way. But Nike's lawyers, who once complained city leaders weren't handing over enough, now complain they are being buried in minutiae. The documents, culled from 12 million pages of city records, include at least one of 16 key words requested by Nike. But city reviewers did not remove documents unrelated to the annexation issue. The records include about 5,000 traffic citations from Murray Boulevard, a page from a Ticketmaster purchase for "The Nutcracker" and the Beaverton Arts Commission's annual report. (As a consequence of varied actions surrounding the Nike case) Washington County Circuit Judge Gayle Nachtigal ruled in September that city officials were in contempt for deliberately withholding public documents, including a 19-page draft annexation plan that showed city leaders considered forcing Nike's headquarters into city limits in 2002. Nachtigal reaffirmed her ruling Tuesday and awarded Nike \$175,000 in attorney fees*

*instead of the \$436,000 its lawyers had requested. The bill increases to nearly \$900,000 (on this records-related case) the total the city has paid, which also includes computer searches and attorneys in its defense<sup>10</sup>.*

- **Information Management** services are records retention scheduling, records management training, and development of County-wide records policies and procedures. The latter services—policies and procedures—will be discussed in a subsequent section. Of significant importance, is what Information Management duties and responsibilities currently entails versus what they should entail? The following observations are noted:
  - With respect to records destruction, the Records Management Department notifies end-user departments of records filed in the Records Center that can be lawfully destroyed based on retention schedules. However, this notification requires voluntary compliance on the part of the end-user departments as opposed to mandated requirements to address these records. Essentially, end-user departments do not have to address the records destruction notification and they, as opposed to the Records Management Department, are the primary determining factor whether or not records identified for destruction will remain stored beyond their “useful life.”
  - Similar to records destruction, by association the length of records retention is also under the purview of end-user departments as opposed to the Records Management Department. As noted in the 2009 Records Manual there are many legitimate reasons to keep records longer than their retention period, such as on-going audits, litigation or business need. Consequently, destruction of these types of records may be put on hold for a specified period of time. However, this should be the exception as opposed to the rule—the vast majority of records that have been retained longer than their records retention schedule should be destroyed.
  - The Records Management Department staff, and the Records & Information Manager, is largely perceived as advisory as opposed to an authoritative body. In sum, departments are generally the deciding factor relative to the management of their records as opposed to the Records Management Department. This is evidenced by the following examples:

*The Elections Department and County have chosen to image the vote-by-mail envelopes, although it is not required, creating additional Records Management Department workload. Retention on the vote-by-mail envelopes should be compliant with OAR 166-150-0035 - County Clerk – Elections (14) Vote by Mail Records which states: Records are used to prepare, administer and abstract elections conducted by mail. Records include: Ballots counted, duplicated, rejected and or defective; Envelopes*

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<sup>10</sup> Oregonian, May 10, 2006. Washington County Bureau, January 17, 2007.

*returned signed envelopes, non-deliverable envelopes, and secrecy envelopes; and other documents used to prepare, administer and abstract elections conducted by mail. (Minimum retention: (a) Retain counted, duplicated, rejected and or defective ballots 22 months for elections containing federal candidates and 90 days after the last day to contest the election for all other elections (b) Retain returned signed envelopes 2 years for elections containing federal candidates and 90 days after the last day to contest for all other elections (c) Retain secrecy and non-deliverable envelopes for 60 days after the last day to contest for all elections regardless of federal/nonfederal candidates (d) Retain all other documents used to prepare, administer and abstract elections conducted by mail 2 years following the election to which it relates).*

*Clackamas County Recording records a Clackamas County Surveyor's Plat, when the Surveyor sends the Recording Department a digital image of the recorded original Engineering-sized plat reduced to fit on an 8 ½ x 14" paper to which Recording has that image transferred to 16mm microfilm. According to the Oregon State Archives: "the Surveyor's reduction protocol is not consistent with best practices as it is important to properly record the scale of the plats. The scale of the plats is often lost when they are reduced in size. The solution is to digitally image the original full-sized plat, not the reduced version, and to record the output to 35mm microfilm. Clackamas County should designate 35mm film as the official copy for plats." In sum, the current Surveyor protocol violates the definition of OAR 166-025-0010 which states: "In addition to the definitions contained in this rule, the following definitions apply to this division: (4) "Certification (Certificate of Legality)" -- The confirmation that images recorded on microfilm are accurate, complete, and **unaltered reproductions** of the original records." Despite the Records Management Department's position on this issue, pressing the best practice that is consistent with the noted OAR, current scanning methods continue as directed by the Surveyor.*

*The Surveyor withdrew 146 boxes from the Records Center to scan into ApplicationXtender, to then be destroyed. Most of these records have a permanent retention notation on the box; however, the County Surveyor **decided** (emphasis added) the retention on these records is not permanent, but should be 3 years, based upon the language in based upon OAR 166-150-0205 (4)(b). Records Management Department expressed concern relative to this withdrawal and **advised** (emphasis added) a destruction authorization list should be maintained of what was destroyed, when, based on which retention schedule, and who authorized the destruction. The destruction authorization list is a permanent record per OAR.*

*Issues regarding the status of Technical Services storage of 800 back-up tapes with the Records Center indicated a misunderstanding relative to the*

*actual necessity of maintaining such tapes. The tapes are not considered the "Record Copy" as the sole purpose of backup tapes is to restore data in the event of a disaster. These tapes should be destroyed in a timely manner as retaining information beyond its designated retention creates risk in the event of litigation, as the information on the tapes is subject to discovery. Many of these tapes were identified so old that the County no longer has the software or hardware to view the data. The Records Management Department had no authority to direct destruction of these tapes, and could only request removal from the Records Center to facilitate additional storage space.*

The totality of information analyzed by the Project Team indicates that Clackamas County does not truly have what is considered a centralized records management program with the necessary authority and control to effectively and lawfully manage the County's records through the Records Management Department. Current centralization features are the result of voluntary compliance of end-user departments. The Records Management Department is an advisory and service-based department as opposed to an authoritative and service-based department despite credentials of senior management certifying records management capability. By comparison, this department is not provided the same level of authority as, by example, the District Attorney's Office or County Council who is the final authority relative to various legal matters. Lack of authority on the part of the Records Management Department can create significant problems as noted in the foregoing paragraphs.

In conclusion, the various issues noted with regard to centralization versus decentralization should be addressed. The following is recommended.

**Recommendation:** The County Clerk with support of the Board of Commissioners should designate the Records & Information Manager the final authority relative to records management decision-making. The Records Management Department should be identified as an authoritative department as opposed to an advisory department, having final authority over records management decisions with respect to records retention, destruction, etc.

**Recommendation:** Various protocols should be developed that facilitate the authoritative role of the Records Management Department. This includes Records Destruction Notifications which are based on exception reporting from the departments as opposed to “permission to destroy notices” which do not have a mandated turn-around time.

**Recommendation:** Department Records Coordinators should be trained to be a QA/QC extension of the Records Management Department, ensuring that records management regulations are followed within their respective organizations.

**Recommendation:** The Records Management Department should only be designated and budgeted as an Internal Service Fund if all departments are mandated to use the services. Otherwise, the Records Management Department should become a General Fund operation. Fees for service could be charged for the various records services provided to help off-set General Fund costs. This model would help determine the total cost recovery of the Records Management operation and would facilitate prediction of future staff resource needs.

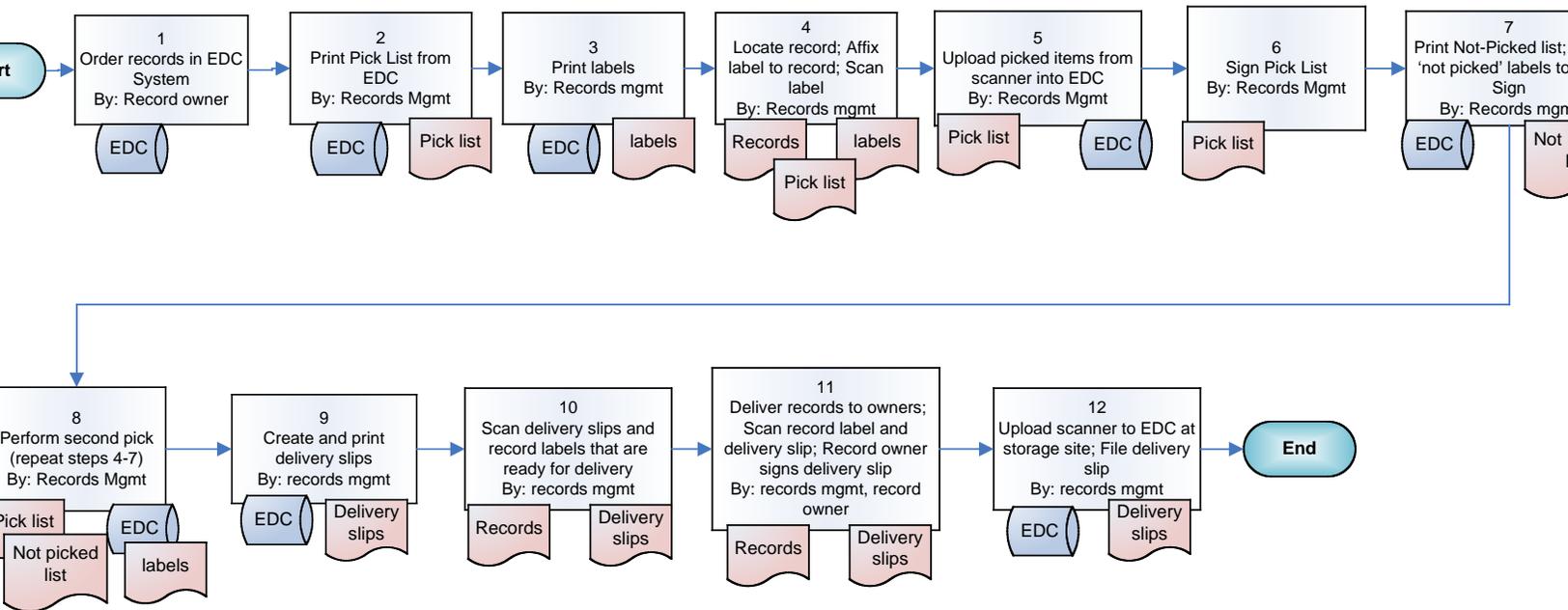
### **3. SECURITY AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

The following sub-sections provide observations related to security and operational issues impacting the Records Management Department.

#### **(1) Records Security could be Improved in the Transport Van.**

During the course of this engagement, the Project Team performed process mapping on a number of internal processes that were deemed both relatively sophisticated from the standpoint of number of steps involved, as well as important to the County Clerk's operations. One of these process maps included the steps involved in Records Management Ordering and Delivery as shown below. The process map shown in Figure 1.1 demonstrates how end-user departments order records to ultimate delivery by internal courier service.

Figure 1.1 – Records Management Records Ordering / Delivery



As noted in the profile chapter, two staff positions as part of their core duties provide daily courier service for stored records. Records are transported between the Records Management warehouse and various county offices using a van as presented in Step 11 in the previous Figure 1.1. It was noted during our data collection efforts that this van is parked while Records Management staff are picking up or delivering records. Records Management staff insist they always lock the van when it is unattended. While this may be intended, during our site visits the Project Team noted one instance when the vehicle was outside the warehouse unlocked and open with health clinic records inside. This parking location may be perceived as a minimal security risk given staff are in the adjoining structure or this may have been a rare oversight; however, due to the sensitive nature of these records and increasingly stringent privacy laws such as HIPAA, it is imperative that the van always be locked while the vehicle is unattended. Staff should be reminded of this requirement during relevant in-house training sessions and periodic spot checks should be performed by supervision to ensure this procedure is consistently followed.

**Recommendation: Ensure that the Records Management van is always locked, particularly when it contains records.**

**(2) Update the Clackamas County Records Management Policy and Standards Manual and Fully Differentiate from the County Records Manual.**

As noted earlier in this chapter, the Board of Commissioners approved both a records management policy and manual. The Project Team obtained the manual from both 1988 as well as the most recent version. The Records Management Policy and Standards Manual contains many important elements in nineteen (19) unique sections

(RMS 1.1 – RMS 5.3); however, it is currently aged. The following table shows the status of these 19 sections with respect to its status / last revision.

**Status of Records Management Policy and Standards Manual**

<b>Sections with Noted Status</b>	<b># of Sections with Status / Last Revision Date</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Draft or To Be Completed	5	26%
Revision Date 2/1988	1	5%
Revision Date 5/1999	1	5%
Revision Date 7/2003	12	63%

As shown by the information in the table, approximately one-third of the manual's sections are in draft, to-be-completed form, or have not been updated in the last decade. The remaining 63% have not been updated since calendar 2003. This information suggests that the current manual is relatively aged. Conversely, the Department has also developed a 17-page Clackamas County Records Manual which has been updated in 2009. Whereas this manual's information proves valuable, it could potentially be confused with the Policy and Standards Manual; it is unclear which manual is the definitive resource. By example, the 2009 manual has information related courier services (Section 2.3.3), the Policy and Standards Manual has no such information, and neither have a discussion relative to courier service operation protocols which could include a directive for locking the transport van. Administrative best practices suggest that policy and procedure manuals should be consolidated into one manual unless one has been developed as a "quick reference" desk manual. Further, all manuals should be updated regularly. Consequently, the Records Management Department should fully differentiate the recommended use of the two noted manuals, or consolidate them, and update the Records Management Policies and Standards Manual as soon as practical.

**Recommendation: Update the Records Management Policies and Standards Manual as soon as practical into a comprehensive document incorporating all relevant Records Management Department operational protocols. This effort should be completed within twelve months. Identify the 17-page 2009 Records Manual as a “desk reference” or incorporate this content into the policies and standards noted.**

**(3) Form a Records Management Advisory Council.**

Currently the Records Management Department meets with department Records Coordinators on a semi-annual basis to discuss a variety of topics. Records Coordinators are designated staff from each department serving as liaisons between their department and Records Management. Records Coordinators support their department's records program; assists in the identification of records series titles; sends records to the Records Center; requests records from the Records Center; and assists Records Management in obtaining their department's approval for destruction of records. Whereas these coordinator positions and the joint meetings attended are designed effectively, there is no broader oversight committee designated to address important issues impacting the records management profession. Such issues could include pending legislation, the implementation of procedures to meet legislative intent, etc. The committees are most often composed of department or senior manager representatives with significant interest / impact on records management and may actually include elected representatives. Far less often this is a seated special committee of the elected body. The Project Team recommends that the former committee structure be adopted, and that such a committee should meet on a quarterly basis driven by a specific agenda prepared by the Records & Information Manager.

**Recommendation: Adopt and implement a Records Management Advisory Council that meets on a quarterly basis.**

**(4) Address Lack of Space and Other Facility Issues in the County Records Center.**

According to the 2009 County Records Manual the County Records Center has over 20,000 cubic feet of space to securely and efficiently store records. Local circuit court records are also stored in the County Records Center. Using the Records Center to store less active records frees up valuable office space and reduces the need to purchase additional file equipment and supplies. Records sent to the Records Center remain under the control of the department storing the records; however Records Management is responsible for preserving and locating department records based upon information provided by the department storing the records. Space in the Records Center is limited, thus, only the "Record Copy" will be accepted for storage therein.

According to the FY 2008/09 budget document, the County Records Center is at over 90% records capacity, despite recent addition of extra shelving creating more box and open shelf storage space. Records Management should continue to send out destruction authorizations and follows up when departments do not respond promptly. Social Services is in the process of removing approximately 130 boxes to transfer to the State of Oregon. Public Health Patient Treatment records will become eligible for destruction in January 2011. The number of boxes eligible for destruction will increase exponentially each year through 2020. Despite this, storage issues are currently still problematic. The Project Team observed boxes of records stored on the ground in offices with makeshift location markers use to identify the records. These temporary solutions to capacity problems should be phased out as soon as possible to avoid difficulties locating records. The best solution would be to accelerate documentation disposal or destruction efforts by eliminating those records which have exceeded their

retention requirements. An alternative, and more expensive solution, would be to establish another records annex where records with no history of recent use can be stored, freeing up space in the warehouse for more active records.

In addition to these storage space issues, the previously mentioned budget document also identified, “environmental issues not conducive to long-term storage of microfilm and paper documents of historical value to include insects, dust and fluctuations of temperature and humidity.” The Project Team noted during our engagement that there were no smoke detectors in the storage area and although there were fire sprinklers, a non-water based fire suppression system was not installed. Further, the records storage facility is heated but not cooled.

A space utilization and building refurbishment study, and the attendant costs, is beyond the scope of this report. However, the Project Team strongly recommends that the previously noted issues be addressed in a more thorough facility needs assessment as soon as practical. In the interim, the Records Management Department should examine the ability to accelerate records destruction, consistent with records destruction guidelines, to free valuable storage space.

**Recommendation: To the extent possible continue to accelerate documentation destruction to free up space in the records management Records Center.**

**Recommendation: The County plans to tear down the current County Archives building. This should be prefaced by a facility needs assessment on the Records Center or a new structure to include storage space needs as well as building features to including security, temperature / humidity control, fire prevention / suppression elements, etc.**

### **3. TECHNOLOGY**

The Records Management Department relies on various software tools to conduct business. This primarily includes DocuData Software Corporation's EDC

Active File and EDC RC Web software suites and EMC<sup>2</sup>'s ApplicationXtender software.

The following technology related issues were identified during this project engagement.

**(1) ApplicationXtender Software has Feature Shortcomings which Impact the Effectiveness of Records Management Operations.**

Although ApplicationXtender is an off-the-shelf product, and such software solutions are typically desirable compared to internally developed technology options, there are concerns related to the existing design and implementation of the software suite. ApplicationXtender is advertised with an ability to integrate document imaging, report management, workflow, and document management services. Nevertheless, staff perceive shortcoming having used the software. This includes the scanned images produced by ApplicationXtender lacking advanced search capabilities; rather, these images largely serve as just a repository of digitized information. In effect, a "record" could be one scanned image of a document or an entire series of documents stored in a box with no embedded intelligence allowing a content search. Of further note, the previously noted DocuData EDC used by the Department has an imaging module which, based upon feedback, has more capabilities than ApplicationXtender. In summary, there are universal department staff concerns with regard to this software tool as it relates to managing the County's records management business effectively.

Implementation and utilization issues with information technology such as the ApplicationXtender software are important. More broadly, however, is not the specific implementation status of this particular software system, but how this entire initiative fits into a broader information technology strategic plan that facilitates effective and efficient Department operations. Given end-user opinions, this project was likely preceded by issues regarding its selection, development and implementation. In the absence of

details regarding the various "ApplicationXtender project phases," the outcome is the ApplicationXtender software is perceived as unwieldy and somewhat ineffective. This point of view is consistent with approximately 60% of all information technology initiatives that are perceived as a "failure" in any IT endeavor managed by any private or public agency. The reasons for such failure are multi-faceted but lie somewhere between appropriate information technologies strategic visioning and effectuating that vision through consistent and well-developed project planning and management. The role of the Records Management Department should be focused on visioning, whereas the project planning and management of an information technology initiative is the role of an Information Systems Department. These are some of the primary steps required in effective IT strategic planning.

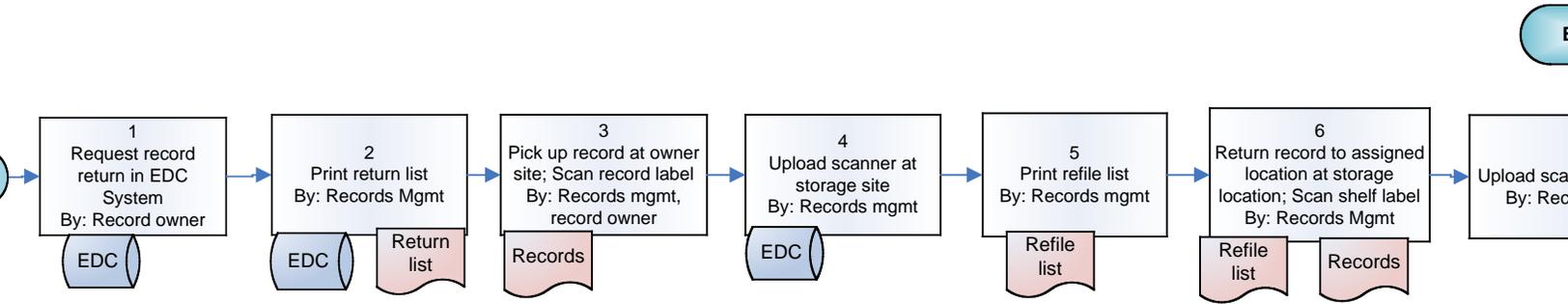
As it relates to the future of ApplicationXtender and other technology initiatives that impact the Records Management Department, it is important these initiatives be part of a broader information technology strategic plan. To that end, the Records Management Department (and the County Clerk's Office) should be included in a formalized Information Technology Strategic Plan sponsored by the County's TS Department. The Records Management Department should participate in development of this future strategic plan by developing a needs assessment business proposal for future technology initiatives that would beneficially impact Department operations. This would include a proposal to re-design or replace ApplicationXtender with an EDC scanning module or other IT solution.

**Recommendation: All future County Clerk Office information technology initiatives should be based upon a developed needs assessment business proposal to be included in an Information Technology Strategic Plan developed for the County and sponsored by the TS Department.**

**(2) Correct District Attorney File Labeling to Improve Efficiency.**

The Records Return process map is shown in the following Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2 – Records Management Records Return



As reflected by the requirements in Step 3, identification barcodes on District Attorney file labels cannot be scanned using the Records Management scanning devices. This is most likely due to a label printing problem at the District Attorney. The unscannable labels oblige the Records Management staff to create a unique folder ID in the EDC system, print a new ID label, affix it to the file, and then file and associate a file location. The creation of their own unique record identifier that must then be associated with the District Attorney record identifier in the EDC system increases the data management requirements and provides additional complications for Records Management staff. Some staff have indicated that such work can take up to 90 minutes daily dependent upon this workload. Records Management has begun to address this. Currently all data entered by DA staff into the DA database is being auto-uploaded nightly into EDC RC. Records Management staff are planning with Technical Services to go back and auto-upload all DA file data that are not currently in EDC RC. This will eliminate the need for Records Management staff to hand-enter all new DA files into EDC RC. The noted issues should be resolved as soon as possible.

**Recommendation: Resolve with the District Attorney and the TS Department the file label printing problems.**

#### **4. ORGANIZATIONAL AND STAFFING REVIEW**

When evaluating organizational structure, the purpose is to address some fundamental questions regarding lines of authority, responsibility and accountability. Well-managed organizations are designed to deliver services to customers and to maximize management control over service delivery. The intent to ensure the following:

- **The organizational structure fosters accountability.** The organizational structure fosters accountability among management and supervisory staff.

- **The plan of organization enhances communication and coordination.** The number of handoffs/exchanges required among staff providing service to the public or internal clients is minimized.
- **Staff resources are utilized efficiently.** The plan of organization minimizes administrative overhead.
- **The span of control for any manager or supervisor does not exceed the number which can be feasibly and effectively supervised.** The trend is to widen the span of control. In the last decade, the introduction of information technology spurred the trend toward wider spans of control.

These organizational parameters should be considered in evaluating any organizational structure of reasonable size.

**(1) The Number of Management / Supervisor Positions in the Records Management Department is Appropriate.**

The one (1) Records & Information Manager directly supervising the 6.4 staff is an appropriate span of control for this organizational structure.

**(2) Based upon Comparisons with Other Counties, the Clackamas Records Management Department Staffing is Significantly Higher, Although Types of Work in These Departments Differ.**

As shown in the Profile Chapter, the Records Management Department fields a total of 7.4 authorized staff positions. During the course of the engagement the Project Team performed a Comparative Survey of other Oregon and Washington counties' operations and staffing patterns. The following data is illustrative:

**Comparative Full Time Staffing Characteristics – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Total No. of Full Time Staff</b>	<b>Managers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Professional Staff</b>	<b>Para-Professional / Clerical Staff</b>
Marion, OR	1	0	1	0	0
Spokane, WA	0	0	0	0	0
Clark, WA	3	1	0	0	2
Thurston, WA	4	0	1	0	3
Kitsap, WA	1	0	0	1	0
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

Whereas Clackamas County has the largest portion of full-time staff<sup>11</sup> dedicated exclusively to Records Management, this is not necessarily persuasive with regard to necessary staff resources as such staffing is based on the various services provided and the attendant workloads. Lane, Jackson, and Yakima County are note included in the above table as they use the same staff for both Records and Recording functions. As the bulk of records in Marion and Kitsap are stored offsite, they are minimally staffed, whereas the other jurisdictions use more staff to help with the transfer of hard copy records to electronic formats. Clackamas is the only county that uses a part time employee, who helps with passport application processing.

In summary, no relevant conclusions can be drawn related to staffing patterns based exclusively on this comparative metric.

**(3) Transactional Data Indicates the Department is Adequately Staffed.**

When evaluating staffing resource requirements there are various transactional and workload data that can be analyzed to help draw conclusions. The following table shows Records Management Department statistics relative to primary workload services.

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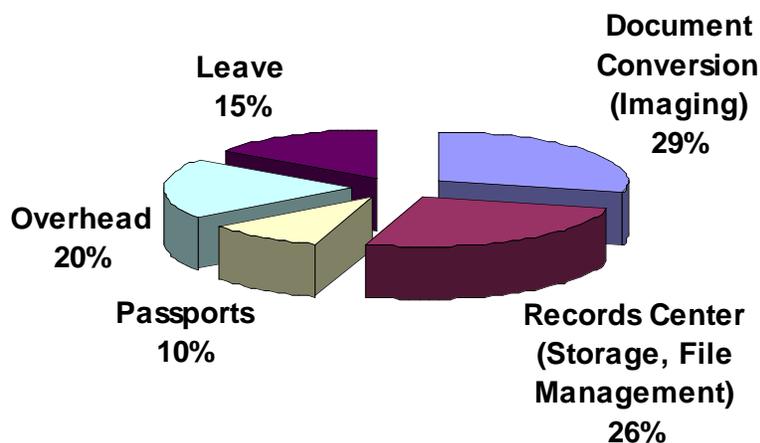
<sup>11</sup> Including a 0.4 part-time position dedicated to Passports; other counties do not have such part-time personnel

**Records Management Department Output Statistics – FY 2007 - 2008**

<b>Records Center Statistics</b>	<b>FY 2007 -2008 Data</b>
Number of images scanned and/or microfilmed	1,210,928
Files delivered from Records Center to County Dept Requester	8,311
Files added to the Records Center	18,846
Files Received or re-filed in the Records Center	21,623
Boxes delivered from Records Center to a County Dept Requester	1,907
Boxes added to the Records Center	3,292
Boxes Received or re-filed in the Records Center	2,603
Boxes Destroyed	871
"Rush' (special-delivery) records delivered	587
% of same-day records requests delivered when request received before 11am	99.70%

Based exclusively on the number of records "touched" during Department work days, given the above data approximately 5,050 different records transaction types occur, on average, daily and an average of approximately 650 occur hourly in the Records Management Department. This information can be juxtaposed to the proportion of time recorded to various activities as shown in pie chart below:

## **Distribution of Records Management Department Time FY 2007/08**



The Project Team has developed various production benchmarks, based on a variety of industry best practices, which indicates that expected outputs of a “production business” should reflect from 60% to 70% of the total operational time / resources dedicated to that business. That is, core business tasks performed by that business should reflect this proportion of time when considering operational overhead such as scheduled and unscheduled leave, training, supervisor and management positions, etc. Based upon the allocation of time in the above pie chart, the Records Management Department spends 65% of their efforts dedicated to core business tasks; this falls within the previously mentioned benchmark range.

In addition to the above data, the following was provided to the Project Team reflecting the proportion of time spent by the Records Specialist I positions.

**Records Specialist I Position Time on Task Estimates**

<b>Task #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Percentage of Time</b>
1	Prepares a wide variety of documents for scanning and/or microfilming following written processes, procedures, and individual project specifications and standards; examines documents for poor reproduction and viewing properties; notifies lead worker of any discrepancies; sets up scanners and prepares targets and certifications; scans documents and/or microforms in a production environment.	38%
2	Inputs data efficiently into various applications and spreadsheets.	5%
3	Inspects microfilm and microfiche; measures density and resolution of serialized (roll) microfilm following established laws, rules, and standards; prepares inspection sheets verifying quality review, records flaws detected and corrective actions taken; processes microfilm into unitized microforms meeting client specifications, and/or, submits microfilm to Oregon State Archives following established standards and procedures; ensures equipment is properly maintained and in good working condition; performs daily maintenance and minor repairs.	5%
4	Performs records storage duties in a secure warehouse environment in compliance with all applicable legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• processes large volumes of internal records requests from various departments; performs routine and specialized records searches; ensures appropriate retrieval and delivery of records</li> <li>• inputs new and returned records; identifies and inventories records</li> <li>• operates records management barcode application to track locations of records</li> <li>• organizes and maintains open-shelf records, boxed records, and rolled maps filing systems for various County departments</li> <li>• files loose medical and criminal documents into correct case files</li> <li>• prepares records, bar code labels, and delivery slips for delivery and pickup of records to/from various County department locations</li> <li>• purges records within established guidelines</li> <li>• resolves technical or procedural problems and issues with records retrieval; assists other County departments' personnel with querying and requesting their records through the web-based records management software application</li> <li>• resolves concerns regarding efficiency and accuracy of delivery system</li> <li>• operates a pallet lift</li> <li>• May drive a County vehicle to distribute and pickup sensitive and/or confidential records from various County locations within a time schedule.</li> </ul>	39%
6	Assists with passport application acceptance process; calculates and collects fees; issues receipts and balances cash received; prepares bank deposits; and submits processed passport applications in compliance with established rules.	13%

The data above suggest the allocation of tasks is appropriate and reasonable given job descriptions and workload requirements.

Based on the totality of data provided, the Project Team believes the current Records Management Department is appropriately staffed and organized given current authorized positions.

**Recommendation: Authorize (7.4) positions in the Records Management Department, including one manager and 6.4 line staff.**

## **6. RECORDING DEPARTMENT**

This chapter of the report provides the Project Team's evaluation of the operations, staffing, organizational structure and management of the Recording Department. The following section provides a brief descriptive summary of the Department.

### **1. DEPARTMENT SUMMARY**

The Recording Department performs all duties and responsibilities, consistent with Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules related to the processing, recording, preservation and archiving of many public and vital records to include marriage licenses, domestic partnerships, military discharges, deeds, mortgages, judgments, foreclosures, construction liens, IRS liens, plats, liquor licenses, UCC-3 Fixture Filings, Declaration of Lost property, oaths of office, City budgets, County Certified Tax Rolls, Board orders / agreements and contracts. In the performance of these duties the Department must manage fee collection, invoice processing, treasury deposit and other fiscal matters. Critical functions include customer service functions both at the front counter and on the telephone. Staff assists with the Board of Property Tax Appeal (BOPTA) hearings, as necessary. Details regarding specific roles and responsibilities of staff within the Recording Department are provided in the Profile Chapter of this report.

The Recording Department currently maintains eight (8) positions—one manager and seven line staff. One of the positions is cross-trained and periodically assigned to the Records Management Department on a consistent basis.

With respect to the Recording Department operations, current organization, staffing, processes, legislation mandating certain operations, etc., these areas were analyzed using varied methodologies—from a comparison to best management practices from a variety of sources to a comparison to organizational “peer agencies” (both of which are provided under separate chapters). Findings, conclusions and recommendations based on these analyses are included herein. In summary, the Recording Department is, overall, notably well run when compared against a variety of metrics. As a result, the main focus of the following chapter identifies various opportunities for business re-engineering and improvements.

## **2. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

The following sub-sections provide observations related to a variety of operational issues impacting the Recording Department. In effect, many of these are potential process re-engineering opportunities for consideration by the County Clerk's Office.

### **(1) Continue the Job Rotation Assignment Program in the Recording Department.**

There is a wealth of literature related to the topic of job rotation. According to the *Human Resources Development Council* job rotation is a career development strategy where an individual temporarily moves laterally into an established position. The intent is to broaden knowledge, to motivate and challenge, and to cross-train staff. According to *Alagese*, a consortium of management practitioners, “Job rotation is the surest way of keeping the employee away from complacency and boredom of routine. It is difficult for an employee to sustain interest in a given job for any substantial length of time as humans have the tendency of outgrowing their jobs through the learning and experience

that they gain over a period of time. Stimulating the human mind through diversity of challenges is a sure way to bring to forefront creative instincts and enhancing individual and organizational performance.” In summary, the benefits of a job rotation program are considered as reductions in boredom, work stress, absenteeism, and turnover and an increase in innovation, production, and loyalty whereas the difficulties of implementing a job rotation program focus on such aspects as experienced staff not wanting to learn new job skills or move to other locations, complications related to educating and training staff for the new jobs, the fitting of staff (skill level) and job (skill and pay structure), and the direct and opportunity costs (e.g. less efficiency for a period of time) of implementing a rotation program.

The Recording Department functions along generally definitive assignment philosophies as follows:

- **The Front Counter and Telephone Assignment.** Two staff positions are generally assigned the Recording Department's Customer Service Counter.—This includes walk-in traffic whereby customers obtain certified copies of various documents, obtain assistance in researching public records found in the Recording Office, Record Documents received over the counter, and issue Marriage Licenses and Domestic Partnership Certificates. A variety of telephone inquiries are responded to related to these and other questions by all staff including Counter staff.
- **Title Company Documents and Mailings.** One staff position is generally assigned to process Title Company documents as well as receipting of other documents to be recorded sent via U.S. Mail. A variety of tasks are performed to include review and verification of document information, label printing, scanning, photocopying, reject processing, answering the phone etc.
- **Scanning.** One staff position performs scanning services of provided hardcopy records and QA / QC's scanned information entered into the Helion system. This position regularly performs other duties such as title and mail recording, indexing, answering incoming phone calls and assisting at the front counter.
- **Indexing.** Each staff position enters relevant informational data from scanned images thereby allowing records to be searched via a number of variables. This

position regularly performs other duties such as title and mail recording, indexing, answering incoming phone calls and assisting at the front counter.

- **U.S. Mail Processing.** All staff on any given day are processing / recording/receipting documents received in the US mail and from the Title Companies as well as answer incoming phone calls.

Whereas most of the above assignments are periodically shared or temporarily transferred among various personnel, in general these assignments are performed by the same staff positions on a daily basis—there is no formal job rotation performed with the attendant benefits noted previously.

Currently in the Recording Office all employees are cross trained and are able to perform all duties. Staff work in the position for which they are most comfortable with the option to rotate to another position when they like or when needed. The important distinction however, is this is not a formalized rotation practice. The Project Team is a strong proponent of a formal job rotation program, particularly for positions that must periodically provide coverage during absenteeism, that must respond to fluctuating customer demand (e.g. a significant back-log of front counter customers), and that are of the same job classification in the same work area. However, the project team has been notified that the present informal job rotation practice works well given the present compliment of employees.

**Recommendation: Continue informal job rotation assignment program in the Recording Department for the Records and Election Technician I positions.**

**(2) Re-Visit Indexing / Scanning Quality Assurance and Quality Control Process.**

Current procedures direct the Records and Election Technician II positions to perform QA / QC on indexed and scanned records. Currently the requirement is to perform such a Quality Assurance and Quality Control check on 100% of these to

assure legibility and preciseness. Staff have been unable to comply with this rate of QA / QC and, according to interview, are backlogged approximately seven years.

The expectation to perform QA / QC at a 100% level is unreasonable and unnecessary. Whereas some staff believe this is tantamount to only randomly checking voter signatures on ballot envelopes, 100% verification of voter signatures is mandated; QA / QC for indexed and scanned records has no such legislative directive. Importantly, only a small proportion of these records need to undergo QA / QC to make a statistically valid assumption that the records have been managed appropriately. If the intent is to ensure a zero percentage error rate, then the Department should rely on the two-step process of scanning and indexing that is generally performed by two independent staff positions. Quality Assurance and Quality Control programs are important; however, establishing output expectations that cannot be met or are not necessary should be resolved. To that end, the QA / QC program should be revised for reviewing indexed and scanned records. Only one in twenty records needs to be initially reviewed to have significant confidence that this sample size result represents the totality of the population. If errors are discovered based upon this sampling, a more targeted and comprehensive QA / QC can be done based upon the data entry personnel performing the duty, a date range, or other relevant variable.

**Recommendation: Reduce the QA / QC indexing and scanning expectation from 100% of records to 5% of records. If errors are discovered, perform a more focused sampling to identify potential problems and effect solutions. Perform this QA / QC consistently on a move forward basis, addressing back-log as time is available.**

**(3) Develop an Ad-Hoc Committee with County Clerk staff and Title Companies to Address Various Operational Issues Impacting Services.**

The processing of Title Company documentation is one of the core business tasks offered by the Recording Department. As noted previously, it is a specific staff assignment given the magnitude of the work as well as the need to be thorough and focused on such workload. During the course of this engagement various process issues related to Title Companies were brought to the Project Team's attention that could benefit from resolution. These include, but are not limited to: Reasons for Recording Department document rejection are inconsistently relayed from the Title Companies to the Lender and other parties resulting in repetitive rejections and re-processing and therefore unnecessary workload and resulting frustrations. This seems to be a communication issue for the Title Companies to their customers as there is no indication that the Recorder is not providing the Title Company accurate and adequate information.

The above is illustrative of issues with one of the primary Recording Department client groups. Given the number of elements and varied specifics associated with these types of issues, resolution is beyond the scope of this report. Nevertheless, addressing these types of perceived issues that impact workload, operating costs, etc. should be afforded priority.

**Recommendation: Continue communications with Title Company managers via County Clerk representatives to address various business-related issues that influence and impact both parties in the delivery of Title Company document services to mutual end-users.**

**(4) Update the Clackamas County Recording Department's Standard Operating Procedures Manual and Devise "Quick Reference" Desk Manuals.**

The Recording Department has a variety of resources at their disposal to provide work direction relative to job function. These include such resources as a share drive duty listings for particular responsibilities, a Legal Opinion Book maintained by one of the Technician II positions, typed report of discussions and decisions from weekly staff meetings, and an aged Policies & Procedures Manual.

The Recording Department's Policies and Procedures Manual is from 1992. Clearly technology use, operating standards, etc. have changed significantly in the last several years. By example, the Oregon Uniform Recording Standards 2002 one of many resources used to establish recording practices was developed a decade after the policies and procedures that are currently recorded and thus are not referenced in this Manual. Best management practices suggests that formalized policies and procedures be developed, are written, and kept up-to-date. Whereas the Recording Department has fulfilled the former two requirements it has not filled the latter given the age of the Manual. This is particularly important given during the Project Team's interviews subjective comments were shared related to "there is no established one way of doing things." A Policies & Procedures Manual can rectify such impressions, and as a result the Manual should be updated in the near term.

Ideally, Policies & Procedures Manuals are truncated with important highlights and become "Quick Reference" Desk Manuals. These manuals generally serve as a "how to" for the major standard operating practices undertaken by each service area (such as indexing or scanning). Although the Project Team noted some of these practices are maintained by individual employees on share drives or recorded

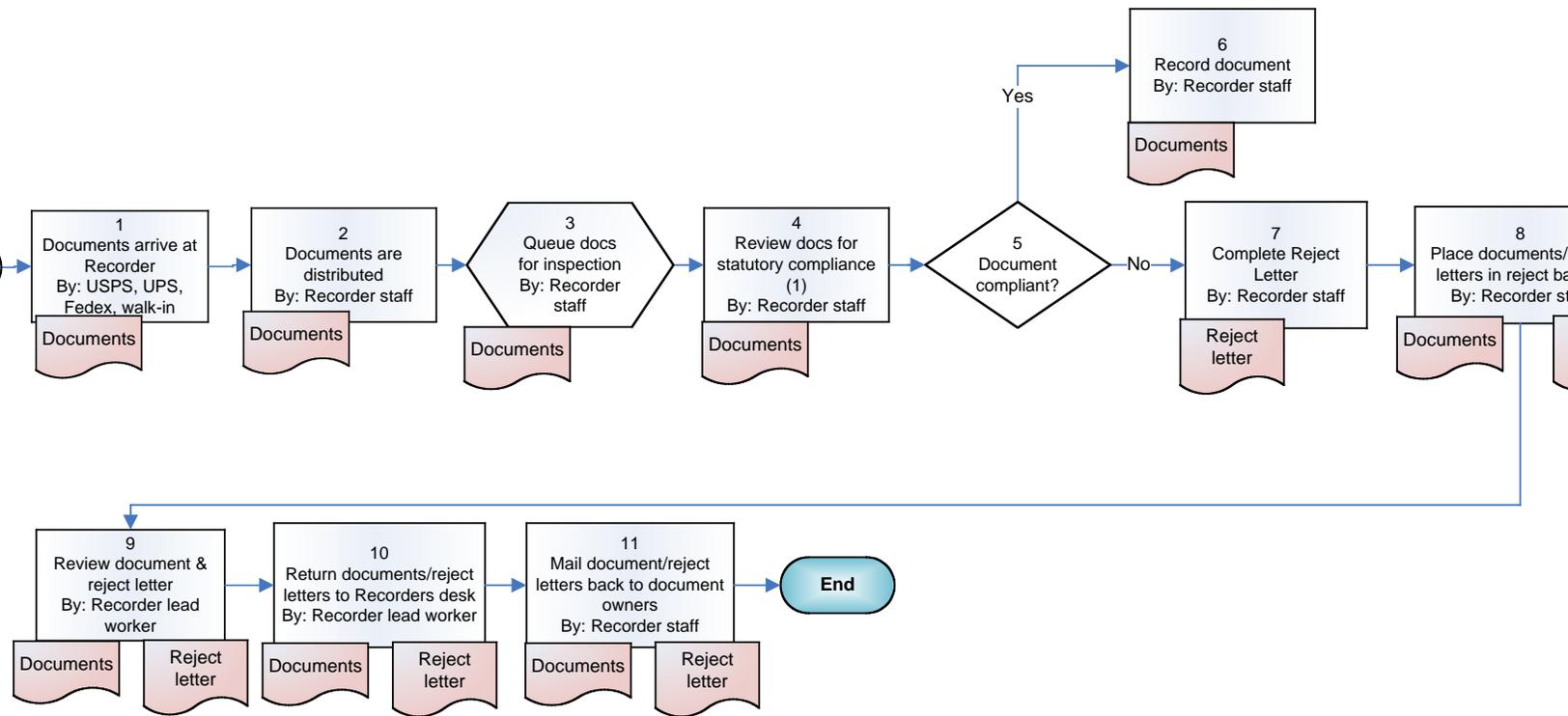
elsewhere, there are no formal Desk Manuals which can be readily referenced by existing or new employees. As time permits, after update of the Policies & Procedures Manual, the Recording Division should develop Quick Reference Desk Manuals for the primary work areas.

**Recommendation: Update the Recording Department's Policies and Procedures Manual as soon as practical. Develop quick reference desk manuals subsequent to this effort.**

**(5) Reconsider the 100% Approval Steps in the Document Reject Process and Replace with a QA / QC Step.**

During the course of this engagement, the Project Team performed process mapping on a number of internal processes that were deemed both relatively sophisticated from the standpoint of number of steps involved, as well as important to the County Clerk's operations. One of these process maps included the steps involved in the Document Reject process as shown in Figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1 – Document Rejects



As shown in Steps 8 – 10 in Figure 1.1 above, the lead work (Records and Election Technician II) reviews and approves all documents and reject letters prepared by the Technician I position. Although the Project Team believes in regular oversight of work performed, we further believe it is unnecessary to review and approve every document reject that is prepared by staff. The Document Reject process entails tasks and skills that are repetitive and accomplished with frequency. As such, staff should be well versed on Document Reject protocols and thus the on-going approval of this process by leads should not be necessary. What is important is that the Technician II's have in place a QA / QC program whereby a small proportion of Document Rejects are checked for accuracy and completeness. If a performance issue is noted during this QA / QC process, steps can be taken to rectify the problem. Furthermore, in unusual Document Reject cases, the Technician I's can obtain feedback from the Technician II's prior to submittal.

By revising the Document Reject process as noted, additional time will be freed for the Technician II positions to perform other duties and the process should be expedited for the customer by eliminating some of the steps shown in Figure 1.1 previously.

**Recommendation: Implement a QA / QC protocol in the Recording Department for the Document Reject process as a substitute for the on-going approval performed by the Records and Elections Technician II positions.**

### **3. TECHNOLOGY**

The following technology related issues were identified during this project engagement for the Recording Department.

**(1) Aggressively Explore Optional Payment Methods for Recording Department Services.**

Currently the Recording Department does not accept Credit Card payments. Checks, Money Orders, or cash are required to conduct a transaction. According to *Gaebler Ventures* a progressive organization for business professionals:

*If your business doesn't accept credit cards you've probably got more dissatisfied customers than you realize. Whether for convenience, security, loyalty awards or just plain habit - today's consumer prefers to pay with plastic. In record numbers, they are foregoing checks in favor of credit cards. True, the business will have to give up a transaction fee to the credit card companies with the average fee usually between 2.5 percent and 5.5 percent of the transaction, but the risks associated with non-cash receivables then goes away-- once the credit card transaction is authorized the business has been paid. Finally, the process of setting up a business to accept card payments is neither mysterious nor costly.*

Credit card transactions can also be integrated into websites, such that online services can be provided, as practical. Such optional online transactions should be explored in concert with the Information Technology Department, as feasible.

Additionally or alternately, the Recording Department could request the County install an on-floor ATM machine such that cash can be conveniently withdrawn. During the course of interviews, it was indicated that many customers unfamiliar with transacting business with the Recording Department arrived without cash or check and thus were required to make a return visit.

It is noted that as it relates to credit card transactions which have a service fee that the County would pay that there is no statutory authorization for the County to net less than the fee specified in the law and thus transactional costs could not be absorbed in the existing Recording Department fees. Moreover, there is currently no legal authority to charge more for credit card transactions. Many jurisdictions resolve this

issue by charging a service fee (e.g. \$3.95) for use of the credit card, the fee formally approved and adopted by the jurisdiction's governing body. This has been found lawful throughout many states in the nation particularly as offering credit card services is a *voluntary method* for making payment. With respect to ATMs, these will incur setup and operational costs and present unique security issues. Despite this, satellite ATM machines are now widely used in various locales.

**Recommendation: Aggressively explore optional payment methods for Recording Department services to include potential credit card acceptance.**

**(2) Transfer Archival Files from the Recording Department to the Records Management in a Different Fashion.**

Currently archival files are transferred from the Recording Department to the Records Management Department on CD. Information is then taken from the CD, processed (e.g. microfilmed) and the CD disposed of. Although the relative cost is minor, using CD to transfer information on a one-time basis is not cost-effective. Optional file delivery or processing should be explored including transferring such files in a compressed (e.g. .zip or .rar file) fashion over the County's intranet, switching to Technical Imaging Systems, Inc. (TIS) for microfilm production which would eliminate the records management process and the resulting purchase of CD's and expense of employee time, or exchanging high-capacity flash drives which can be re-used.

**Recommendation: Transfer archival files from Recording to Records Management using the County's intranet or exchangeable high-capacity flash drives instead of disposable CDs. Explore use / cost of TIS for microfilm production which would eliminate the attendant process.**

**(3) Continue Exploring Progressive Uses of Information Technology to Enhance Services.**

The County Clerk has conducted various progressive research and planning related to using information technology to enhance services and potentially revenue.

These include:

- **Auto-Indexing-** Auto-indexing would be used for property records. Essentially software from a company such as Creative ICR, Inc. would use intelligent character recognition technology to reduce the amount of time to get paper forms into a database. Key information from property documentation would be abstracted when the documentation was scanned, thereby updating the indexing and eliminating such keystroke database entry. Auto indexing will be in place by September 2009 as the County has purchased the license for Extract (auto indexing software) with Helion installing the application.
- **E-Recording-** Documents would be submitted via .pdf files and recorded, thereby circumventing paper filing of records. This would largely be used by Title Companies to expedite large volume filings. The State of Oregon wishes to pilot such technology and approaches with two counties, one of which Clackamas County.
- **Document Query via Subscription-** Frequent or "power" users of Recording Department information would pay a moderate subscription-based fee to have unlimited remote access to Recorder Department records. Such technologies have been successfully implemented in a variety of national counties such as a recent client of the Project Team in Monroe County, Michigan.

These proactive initiatives undertaken by the County Clerk's Office should continue, as the progressive use of technology can reap important efficiency, effectiveness, and service delivery benefits.

**Recommendation: Continue to explore implementation of Auto-indexing, E-Recording, and subscription-based document inquiry for the Recording Department.**

**4. ORGANIZATIONAL AND STAFFING REVIEW**

When evaluating organizational structure, the purpose is to address some fundamental questions regarding lines of authority, responsibility and accountability.

Well-managed organizations are designed to deliver services to customers and to maximize management control over service delivery. The intent to ensure the following:

- **The organizational structure fosters accountability.** The organizational structure fosters accountability among management and supervisory staff.
- **The plan of organization enhances communication and coordination.** The number of handoffs/exchanges required among staff providing service to the public or internal clients is minimized.
- **Staff resources are utilized efficiently.** The plan of organization minimizes administrative overhead.
- **The span of control for any manager or supervisor does not exceed the number which can be feasibly and effectively supervised.** The trend is to widen the span of control. In the last decade, the introduction of information technology spurred the trend toward wider spans of control.

These organizational parameters should be considered in evaluating any organizational structure of reasonable size.

**(1) The Number of Management / Supervisor Positions in the Recording Department is Appropriate.**

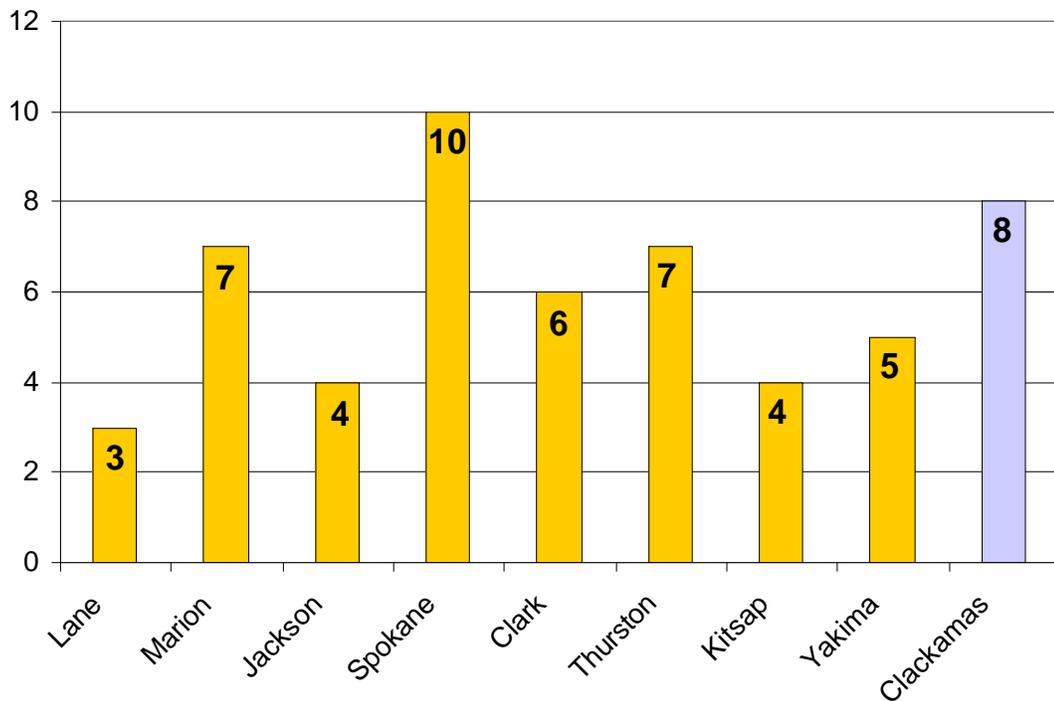
The one (1) Recording Manager directly supervises two lead positions as well as five other line positions. Although the Elections and Records Technician II positions provide some work direction and assistance to the Technician I positions, the Recording Manager provides formal supervision, direction, employee review and discipline. This is an appropriate span of control for this organizational structure.

**(2) Based Upon Various Data, Maintain Existing Staffing Levels in the Recording Department.**

As shown in the Profile Chapter, the Recording Department fields a total of 8 authorized staff positions. During the course of the engagement the Project Team performed a Comparative Survey of other Oregon and Washington counties' operations and staffing patterns. As with any comparative data there is some risk relative to the

accuracy of information provided. Nevertheless, such benchmark information can be of significant value. These comparative data were juxtaposed against various other metrics to arrive at comparative Recording Department staff deployment examples. The first graphic shows a comparison of full-time Recording staff.

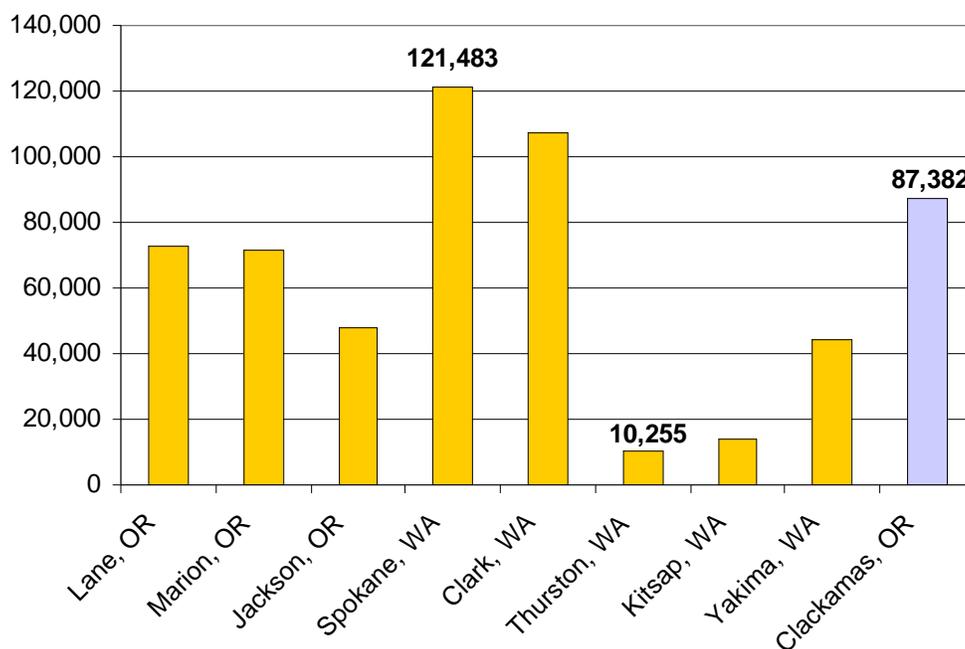
**Washington and Oregon Comparative Full-Time Staffing Levels - Recording Department**



The above bar chart shows the comparative staffing levels for Recording operations in the respective counties. The average staffing level of comparative counties is 5.75 FTEs, with one or more of these positions being manager / supervisor classifications. With respect to Lane, Jackson, and Yakima County, Recording employees also handle records management duties; during the survey there was no way to distinguish the amount of work performed between Recording and Records

Management. The graph shows that Clackamas County has comparatively higher staffing levels than all but Spokane County; this is particularly interesting given the cross-trained nature of Lane, Jackson and Yakima County staff which would indicate that the actual FTEs dedicated to Recording work would be less than that shown in the graph. Despite this, these staffing levels are in the absence of any workload measures and thus are not conclusive with respect to staffing requirements. The following graphs provide additional information, the first being the number of primary records processed.

**Comparative Counties - Deed-Related and Vital Records Processed (2008)**

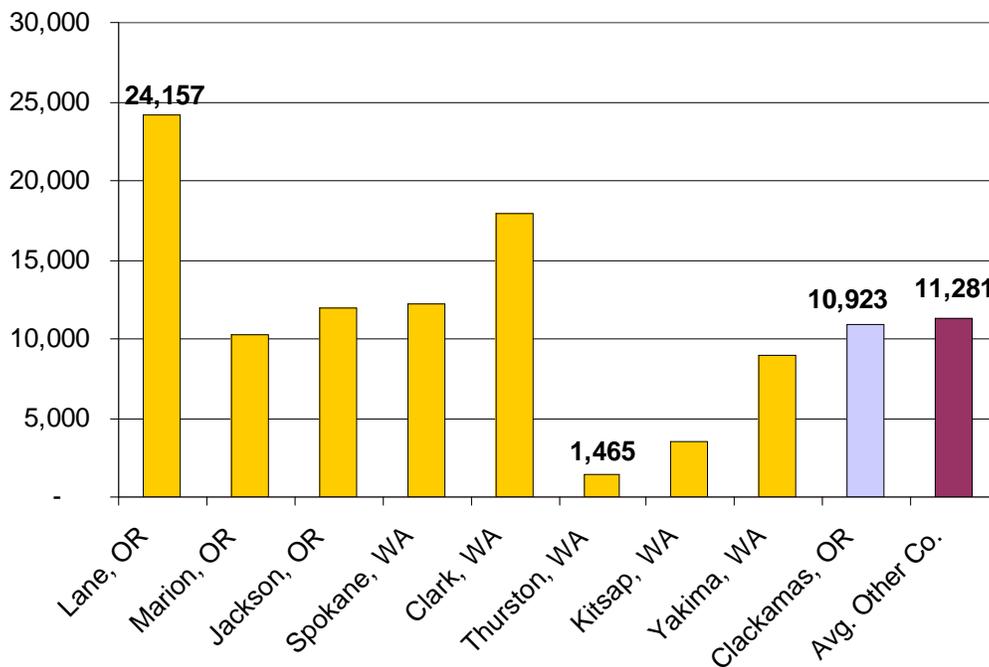


As shown by the above graph, the number of deed-related and vital records processed by the Recording organizations is extremely varied, running from a low 10,255 per year to 121,483 per year. The average of all other county records was 61,195 records compared to Clackamas County's processing of 87,382 such records.

Such workload helps demonstrate why Clackamas County likely has more staff than other jurisdictions as records workload is approximately 43% higher than the average of other agencies. Of interest, if this same proportion was used to increase the average staffing levels of 5.75 FTEs in other counties, the resultant would be 8.2 FTEs—extremely similar to the 8 FTEs currently deployed by Clackamas in the Recording Department.

The following graph consolidates information from the prior two data sets.

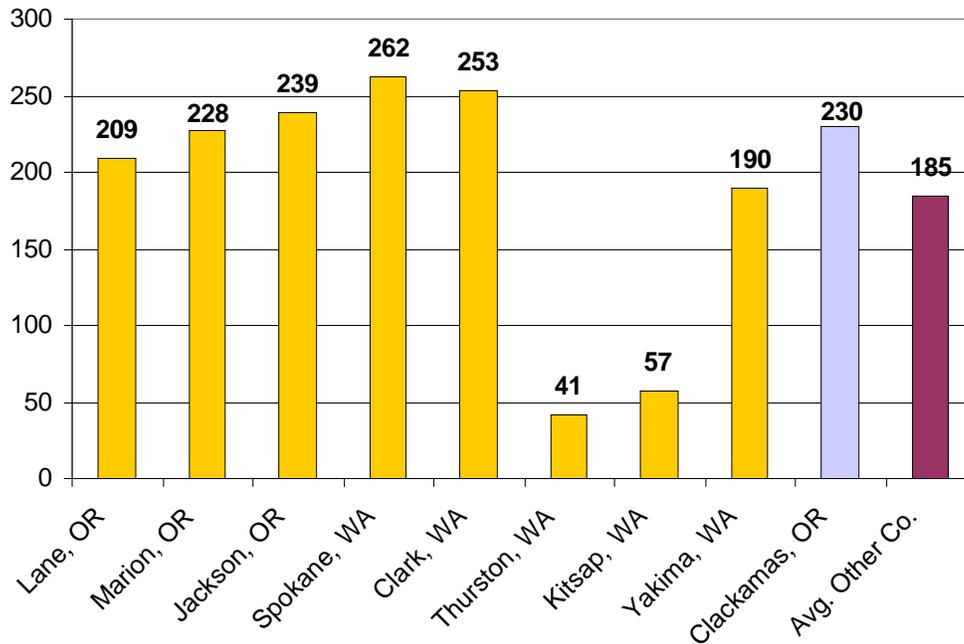
**Comparative Counties - Ratio of Records Processed per Staff Position (2008)**



As shown by the bar graph above, the ratio of records processed per staff position also has extremes, ranging from 1,465 to 24,157. The average is 11,281 for the comparative counties; this is slightly higher (3%) than the 10,923 figure experienced in Clackamas County. These data reflect staffing levels based on prior work. Other

metrics can help measure workload, but only in the broadest sense. There is a likely correlation between population served (which generates records workload related to land purchases, marriage certificates, etc.) and ultimately the resource requirements necessary to administrate those records. Thus, staff to population ratios can represent potentialities as shown in the bar graph below.

**Comparative Counties - Records Processed Per 1,000 Population**



As shown by the bar graph above, another wide ranging data set results from the calculation, with records processed per 1,000 population that range from a low of 41 to a high of 262. With respect to the average of all comparative counties 185 records are processed compared to the 230 records per 1,000 population in Clackamas County. This could indicate the Recording Department would need more personnel than the average number of staff fielded in counterpart agencies. Interestingly, eliminating the

lowest two counties from the above graph (Kitsap and Thurston, Washington) the resulting average of the remaining counties is also 230 records per 1,000 population.

The table below compares the number of recording staff per 100,000 population in the surveyed counties. Since some of the counties use the same staff for recording and records management functions, these comparative statistics should not be viewed as an apples to apples staffing comparison of the functions.

**Recording Staff per 100,000 Population – Surveyed Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population as of July 2008</b>	<b>Total No. of Full Time Staff</b>	<b>Staff Per 100,000 Population</b>
Lane, OR <sup>12</sup>	346,560	3	0.87
Clark, WA	424,733	6	1.41
Kitsap, WA	239,769	4	1.67
Jackson, OR	201,138	4	1.99
<b>Clackamas, OR</b>	<b>380,576</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.10</b>
Yakima, WA	234,564	5	2.13
Spokane, WA	462,677	10	2.16
Marion, OR	314,606	7	2.23
Thurston, WA	245,181	7	2.86

The key comparative elements of the table above are summarized in the following bullet points:

- The number of recording staff ranged from a low of 0.87 per 100,000 population (Lane, OR) to a high of 2.86 recording staff per 100,000 population (Thurston, WA).
- The average number of recording staff in the surveyed Oregon counties was 1.69 per 100,000 population while the average for all counties in both Washington and Oregon was 1.91. Clackamas has 2.1 recording staff per 100,000 population, approximately 10% higher than the comparative counties average.

In summary, a review of all Recording Department data sets noted previously appears to indicate no significant difference in staffing deployment based upon workload and other metrics when comparing Clackamas County to other agency

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<sup>12</sup> Lane County lost a large proportion of positions early in 2009 resulting in the current staff of three personnel.

counterparts in Oregon and Washington. Combined with information from our interviews and spot observations, there is no convincing information to suggest a modification in existing staffing. The County Clerk's Office has been attentive in reducing staffing patterns based upon changing workloads over the last several years. By example, Recording Department staffing has been reduced from 12 positions in 2002 to 8 presently. Given the totality of information, the Project Team recommends maintaining existing authorized staffing levels in the Recording Department.

**Recommendation: Authorize eight (8) positions in the Recording Department, including one manager and 7 line staff.**

## **7. ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT**

This chapter of the report provides the Project Team's evaluation of the integrity, security, staffing, operations and management of the Elections Department. The following section provides a brief descriptive summary of the Department.

### **1. DEPARTMENT SUMMARY**

Details regarding specific roles and responsibilities of staff within the Elections Department are provided in the Profile Chapter of this report. In summary, however, the Elections Department:

- Administers and conducts all Federal, State, County, City, and Special District elections.
- Registers voters and maintains voter registration data.
- Oversees candidate filing and coordinates with the Secretary of State on certifying ballot measures and initiatives.
- Prepares and distributes ballots and voter pamphlets.
- Processes and tabulates ballots during election periods.
- Conducts the canvass to ensure voting accuracy and certify election results.
- Maintains voter history records and provides data to political parties and other interested parties.
- Manages and supervises full-time and temporary staff relative to all tasks associated with elections processing and reporting, consistent with State and Federal laws.

The Elections Department currently maintains eight (8) positions, six of which are line staff and two managers / supervisors.

With respect to the Elections Department operations, current organization, staffing, processes, framing legislation mandating certain operations, etc., these areas were analyzed using varied methodologies—from a comparison to best management practices, to a comparison to organizational “peer agencies” (both of which are provided under separate chapters), to field observations and other data collections efforts. Findings, conclusions and recommendations based on these analyses are included herein. In summary, the Elections Department is, overall, notably well run when juxtaposed against a variety of metrics. As a result, the main focus of the following chapter identifies various opportunities for business re-engineering and improvements.

## **2. FIELD OBSERVATIONS**

On Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, staff of the Project Team visited the Elections Department to view for the day both full-time and temporary staff performing core duties and responsibilities related to that day’s election. The following table provides our field observations and attendant notes relative to the protocols of the Department on Election Day.

Reviewing Protocol	Observations / Comments
<p><b>Ensure that the ballot processing area is secure at all times. Access is only with a key card and security cameras are operating. Secure doors are not propped open with door-stops to allow restroom access, etc. A deputy sheriff present to control crowds, maintain area security, etc. would be optimal, though not required.</b></p>	<p>The Elections building is separate from the County Services Building (where the Clerk's office is located), with its own lobby and front-counter operation (which includes cubicles and offices), and includes access to a public-viewing area to see into the rooms where the ballot processing and counting takes place.</p> <p>This processing area is secured by a number of electronic key-card access points (all doors are continuously closed), and is generally organized into the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Intake" where the ballots are brought in directly from the outside (from either the post office or the ballot drop-off locations) – this is the area where the ballots are scanned by the bar-code reader and placed in batches</li> <li>• "Signature verification" where the envelope signatures are matched against scanned images on the voter registration card</li> <li>• "Sorting" where the envelopes / ballots are sorted (first A through H, and then by precinct number) – numbered up to 589 for an actual total of 189 precincts</li> <li>• "Cutter" room where the envelope tops are cut open by a machine for later manual processing</li> <li>• "Processing" tables where the "ballot secrecy envelope" is manually separated from the mailing envelope, the ballot is removed from the secrecy envelope, and where the initial quality control occurs for the ballots</li> <li>• "Tabulation Room" where the 5 scanners are located, in addition to a separate room (which has its own security card access), where the boxes that are pending to be scanned, and those actually scanned, are placed and stored until the election is certified within 20 days</li> </ul> <p>Security cameras are in place throughout the floor; however, no security personnel are present.</p>

Reviewing Protocol	Observations / Comments
<p><b>Ensure appropriate chain of custody procedure for handling large groups of ballots from the moment they arrive from the post office until they are tabulated, re-boxed and stored. Each group of ballots should have a control number. Ballots are typically carried around in trays or boxes and should be numbered. Every time ballots are moved from an area or station to another, the sender and receiver should sign off on a log so that they can pinpoint who had custody in the event ballots go missing.</b></p>	<p>The ballots which come in are kept in their trays (or “batches”) – these grouped ballots are given a batch number, bar-coded in order, and move onto the signature verification process. On average, there are between 250 – 300 ballots in each batch. For this off-year election, the batches are primarily 150-200 per batch.</p> <p>There is no logging / signatures recorded as the batches (and ballots) are moved around to the different processing areas (i.e., from scanning to signature verification to sorting to cutting to processing to counting). Consequently, there should be some additional batch control “transition signatures” to strengthen chain of custody. This is not related to total ballots received, just batches.</p>
<p><b>Dual custody would be ideal though not mandatory. Every time ballots are moved from an outside location (e.g., post office) into the elections office two people should be present. Both personnel should sign a log showing that they were present and what batch of ballots they were moving.</b></p>	<p>A single staff person retrieves ballots from the post-office. Ballots picked up from designated drop-site locations are picked up using 2-person teams (who are of different political parties) along their assigned “routes”. These ballots are organized into trays and prepared for scanning and signature verification.</p> <p>The teams (Team 1, 2, and 3 which are each assigned a number of communities) record the time of the day they drop off ballots on a log-in sheet. Ballot drop-offs occurred on Friday, May 8, Friday, May 15, Monday, May 18, and Tuesday, May 19.</p>

Reviewing Protocol	Observations / Comments
<p><b>Evaluate processing procedures for incoming ballots, particularly the signature verification process. Evaluate the ballot “challenge” and review process related to possible unmatched signatures on ballot compared to source records. Track how staff handle and process these challenged ballots; for example, what do staff do with challenged ballots while they are awaiting a review? Evaluate signature verification training, as practical. Are permanent staffers available to supervise, review challenges, etc?</b></p>	<p>Once the ballots are physically organized into their batches, they are bar-coded and loaded into the Oregon Centralized Voting Registry. The signature verifiers bring up the scanned images of the voter registration cards (focused on the signature and showing 5 signatures per screen) and review the scanned image with the envelope signature. Per batch, the signatures are either accepted or unaccepted (the default is in the “accepted” status), and the staff person can mark unaccepted and indicate a reason (i.e., the signatures do not match, spouses signed each-others’ envelope, etc.). The unaccepted signatures are set aside for later review by the assistant election manager or another full-time staff member, including following up with the voter to address any problems as necessary before the 8 pm deadline. There is a 10 day after-the-election deadline for adjudicating signature issues.</p> <p>Staff who conduct signature verification have received training from a former FBI signature verification professional (at least one 2-hour class). Refresher training is available if needed.</p>
<p><b>Evaluate use of verification software. By example, when the signature verification workers are verifying signatures, review their monitors to ensure that all the scanned signatures are appropriately displayed.</b></p>	<p>This did not seem to be an issue for this particular election - there were no observations of missing scanned images of voter registration cards (for at least 3 batches). Because it is an off-year election, typically the regular voters who are engaged consistently are participating this year (thus, their voter information is up to date and in the system). Further, the County has no active voters without full scanned images and signature files. A module exists in OCVR that will search and then produce any voter who does not have an image attached. All voter information is up to date using Special, Primary, and General elections as an intermittent purge process as required by the post office. NCOA is also used to update voters’ records.</p>

Reviewing Protocol	Observations / Comments
<p><b>Evaluate ballot duplication and enhancement procedures. Two people should be working together (from opposing political parties) on all ballot duplications and enhancements. The organization should also have a procedure for tracking the duplicated ballot back to the original.</b></p>	<p>The afternoon “processing” of separating out secrecy ballots and / or addressing enhancements begins at 1600 hours, which involves providing the processing teams with trays of envelopes / ballots per precinct; this also contains the Inspection Control Log.</p> <p>The overall processing procedures by the teams include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifying the precinct numbers on the envelopes are correct</li> <li>• Separating the secrecy envelopes from the mailing envelopes</li> <li>• Separating the ballots from the secrecy envelopes</li> <li>• Reviewing the ballots for to ensure the tally machine can read and separating out write-ins, those needing enhancement, those needing to be duplicated, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Currently, there are 6 processing tables set up with 1 captain and 2 workers staff each (who are a mix of different political parties), for a total of 18 part-time staff people.</p> <p>In larger elections (such as the one in November 2008), the enhancements were not necessarily addressed during election day, but rather the following days as a result of volume. For this off-year election, the enhancements will be primarily addressed the same day. Ballots needing duplication are set aside and will be re-created – there have been few for this election and these are typically the last priority to be addressed by staff. Further, the tally machines also conduct quality control and will reject problem ballots (over-votes blank ballots). Tabulating staff will set these aside for the processing teams to review and re-submit. The tally machines do not count rejected ballots, therefore after they are enhanced, re-submitted, and accepted by the tally machine, it is only at that point the ballot is counted.</p> <p>Based on this review it appears that the statutory processes for comparing, tracking and logging ballots during the duplication process are rigorously followed and documented.</p>

Reviewing Protocol	Observations / Comments
<p><b>The tabulating room should be well supervised by a permanent staffer with strict chain of custody procedures for tracking the ballots should be in place. By example, do staff promptly box up the tabulated ballots and put them back in storage? Evaluate how well the tabulating machines perform relative to operations and breakdowns (e.g. do they malfunction frequently and do they have to re-feed ballots?).</b></p>	<p>Of the 5 staff members running the scanning / tallying machines, 2 of them were full-time staff members (including the Senior Micro-computer Analyst) and 3 were temporary. During observations, all questions (regarding both equipment and questions on ballots) were directed at the full-time senior staff member.</p> <p>Each box contains approximately 500 ballots (when full), and requires an average of 16 minutes for 1 box to be scanned (based on a sample of 5 processed boxes – 12 minutes, 17 minutes, 18 minutes, 16 minutes, and 17 minutes). Staff estimates they can process 4 boxes per hour, or 15 minutes each).</p> <p>This processing time includes placing the ballots through the machines and when necessary, placing the exceptions in one of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Write-Ins</b> – write-in names are manually counted separately</li> <li>• <b>Rejects</b> – ballots that are rejected and need to go back to processing to be addressed and re-run after review (typically are the over-votes and under-votes)</li> <li>• <b>Re-Runs</b> – typically are the ballots that are rejected and double-checked to be re-run through the machine by the staff</li> </ul> <p>The total processing times above include staff asking questions, re-feeding the machines, etc. During observations, there were approximately 3-4 instances where the machine had to be opened up and re-fed ballots during the processing of 1 box. It is important to note that each of the machines behave differently, as some are more efficient / effective than others.</p> <p>Boxes are opened at the tally machine, ballots processed, and boxes are closed promptly and placed back in the staging / storage room until election certified.</p>
<p><b>Is the County Clerk present during the processing/tabulating? Is the Public Information Officer (PIO) for the County related to elections in attendance?</b></p>	<p>The County Clerk is the PIO and has a dedicated office in the Elections building (next to the Elections Division manager). The County Clerk walked through the processing areas at least twice in the morning to observe and monitor staff, and at least once in the afternoon.</p>

Reviewing Protocol	Observations / Comments
<p><b>In general, everyone present in the ballot processing/tabulation areas should be productive, professional, have ID badges, etc. Full-time and part-time staff should appear to be trained, alert, well supervised, etc. There are no unauthorized or unescorted staff in the elections processing areas.</b></p>	<p>All full-time and part-time personnel have an identification and electronic key card worn around their necks (for access to the main processing room). Further, only the full-time personnel have electronic key card access to the Tabulation Room, and to the room where all the ballot boxes are stored (both those pending to be counted, and the boxes which have been counted). The part-time processing teams seem to be the most experienced crews (some have been doing this for up to 25 years).</p> <p>There have been no outside individuals present for observations or who are "wandering around".</p>

With respect to our observations, the various protocols and procedures that have been established are generally within standard as well as many which reflect best practice guidelines. As noted in the table, there are a few exceptions which are discussed later in this chapter.

### **3. SECURITY AND INTEGRITY**

Since the 2000 Presidential Election, the issue of election integrity has gained importance among election professionals and elected officials. The 2000 election exposed vulnerabilities in a democratic electoral process that most people had taken for granted. Well-publicized, if not always verified, stories about conspiracies involving election equipment vendors and computerized voting systems have only added to the unease about the electoral process. In response, legislation at the state and Federal level such as the Help American Vote Act (HAVA) has been passed in the intervening years. A beneficial effect of all this has been more interest, attention and funding into the machinery of elections by policy makers and constituents. What once was a little-noticed function of local government has been significantly elevated for additional scrutiny as a result of the 2000 presidential election and Florida contention, and elections have been increasingly professionalized through new technology, better

training, improved standards and procedures, and more qualified managers. As part of our performance audit procedures, the Project Team compiled best management practice criteria relating to election security and integrity, details of which are in the Best Management Practices chapter. As discussed in that chapter, there are various caveats that may preclude implementation of some best management practices; however, the Project Team is confident such practices generally reflect appropriate protocols for the vast majority of elections programs. Sources for such practices include, but are not limited to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission *'Best Practices Tool Kit'*; the U.S. election Assistance Commission *'Quick Start Management Guide'*; the Elections Center best practices database; and Premier Elections Solutions. Clackamas County has implemented several of these best practices such as securing access to all areas where ballots are stored and handled, dual custody procedures for ballot processing, and chain of custody features in the County's election system (OCVR). The following findings point to areas where the County can continue to fine-tune the security and integrity of County elections and ensure the continued confidence of Clackamas County voters in their local election system. These findings are listed in the order in which they occur relative to elections processing.

**(1) Security Can Be Improved At Ballot Printing And Mail Processing Contractors.**

As is the case with most counties, Clackamas contracts out the printing, insertion, sorting and mailing of outgoing ballots. Printing is contracted to Rydergraphics of Bend. Printing of outgoing envelopes (with voter addresses and identification barcode), insertion of ballots, security envelopes and return envelope, and sorting and mailing of outgoing ballots is handled by a Portland-based firm, Sendit

Direct Mail & Fulfillment. Rydergraphics prints ballots for 31 other counties in Oregon that use tabulation machines manufactured by Election Systems & Software, Inc. (ES&S) of Omaha, Nebraska. ES&S certifies Rydergraphics for printing these ballots.

During the ballot insertion process at Sendit, County elections staff members are present to monitor the process and perform quality assurance consistent with best practices. Conversely, County staff members are not present at Rydergraphics during the ballot printing; however, ballot stock is proofed before production runs are commenced thereby providing important quality control elements. Despite these important steps, the County does not perform a periodic security audit of either the printing or mailing facility to formally validate that appropriate internal controls are maintained. Although the Project Team obtained differing information from staff relative to the frequency and scope of security audits being accomplished at the Sendit mailing facility, there was no formal documentation reporting upon such outcomes. Such internal security audits would include, but not be limited to:

- Accessibility and control over ballots to ensure only privileged (authorized) personnel can facilitate ballot print/mail tasks.
- Chain of custody procedures are in place and followed. Generally speaking, Chain of custody refers to the chronological documentation (paper trail) showing the custody, control, transfer, and ultimate disposition of the ballots until they leave the lawful possession of the County Clerk (e.g. have been sent to the registered voter). The security audit would ensure such chain of custody is effectively maintained at the contractors.
- Appropriate supervision is provided over ballot print/mail processing.
- Appropriate storage-related security features are in place that help ensure the protection of the ballots to include fire detection and suppression equipment as well as other features (lock systems, security cameras, etc.)
- A formal report identifying the strengths and opportunities for improvement related to the security audit.

The ES&S manufacturer's certification of Rydergraphics does provide a level of assurance as it relates to security. Nevertheless, this should be augmented through, at minimum, formalized and fully documented bi-annual audits and preferably annual audits of the noted contractors.

**Recommendation: Perform formalized and fully documented bi-annual security audits of the County's ballot and envelope printing contractor and the mail services contractor. The Security audit should include an audit of access controls, chain of custody procedures for handling ballot stock, adequate supervision, fire detection and suppression equipment and security cameras.**

**(2) Oversight Of The U.S. Postal Service Should Be Strengthened, as Practical.**

Completed outgoing ballot packages are sorted and delivered to U.S. Postal Service (USPS) processing facilities by Sendit staff. These ballots are sent using a non-profit standard mail rate and are processed at the USPS in a distinctive fashion. Ballots are segregated from daily mail immediately upon delivery to the post office, and processed immediately and separately upon arrival. Ballots pallets are clearly marked "Official Election Mail" and pallet markers are designed and provided by the Post Office. USPS staff members are aware of the time-sensitive nature of ballot materials and undoubtedly make an effort to ensure that it is delivered in a timely fashion. Generally, all counties have a good working relationship with the postal service and as a consequence there is informal agreement that ballot packets are treated as "first class mail." Helping facilitate this, the U.S. Postal Service has granted election mail a specific logo--the only specific logo authorized in U.S. Postal history--as a tool to help identify and manage election mail. Notwithstanding the additional care for ballot packets, unlike first class mail different processes and procedures are used that normally cannot guarantee timely delivery despite assurances. In other counties, including one that the

Project Team noted first-hand this particular issue, ballot materials were lost in the bulk mail process and did not get delivered in a timely fashion. A recommended practice for mitigating this potential problem is to request that staff monitors be present at USPS facilities whenever ballot materials are delivered from the mail house. These monitors would, where allowed in appropriate locations, observe the processing of ballot materials to ensure timely delivery and inspect the USPS sorting facility afterwards to avoid any misplacing of ballot materials. It is recognized that the U.S. Postal Service may be reluctant to allow total access to mail processing facilities as a consequence of new internal security features resulting from 9/11 and subsequent Homeland Security protocols. However, discussion with Postal Service officials about the concerns and best practices for ballot processing indicates that some exceptions can be made. As a result, Elections staff should attempt such access to ensure ballots are processed properly during handling by U.S. Postal Service employees.

**Recommendation:** The County should formally request that a permanent elections staff member be present at the U.S. Postal Service mail processing facility whenever a batch of outgoing ballots is sent to the processing facility by the County's contract mail house. The monitor should ensure that outgoing ballots are handled expeditiously and segregated from bulk rate mail flow. It is recognized that the U.S. Postal Service may be reluctant to allow total access to mail processing facilities without a formal exception.

**(3) Dual Custody Should Be Implemented For Picking Up Incoming Ballots.**

The County has dual custody procedures for handling ballots at the County's processing facility in Oregon City. In addition, permanent County elections staff and numerous volunteers are present when ballots are present rendering the potential for accidental or intentional loss of ballots almost non-existent. However, one task within the process still features sole custody of ballot materials: This sole custody task occurs

when ballots are picked up from the USPS office in Oregon City. During this portion of the process only one election worker is present. A dual custody arrangement where two workers pick up the ballots would provide additional security and assurance and be consistent with best practices.

**Recommendation: The Department should implement a dual custody procedure for retrieving incoming ballots from the Post Office. Implementing this recommendation would require two elections staffers or volunteers to retrieve all incoming ballots.**

**(4) Chain of Custody Procedures should be Implemented in Other Elections Processes.**

As noted in our observations in a prior table, chain of custody procedures for handling large groups of ballots from the moment they arrive from the post office until they are tabulated, re-boxed and stored, is an important practice. As ballots are moved from one location or station to another, the sender and receiver should sign off on a log so that they can pinpoint who had custody in the event ballots go missing. Currently, there is no logging / signatures recorded as the batches (and ballots) are moved around to the different processing areas (i.e., from scanning to signature verification to sorting to cutting to processing to counting). Although such chain of custody logging may be perceived as onerous, it does institute best practices to help ensure personnel accountability for these critical election documents throughout ballot processing.

**Recommendation: Implement chain of custody protocols in all ballot processing efforts.**

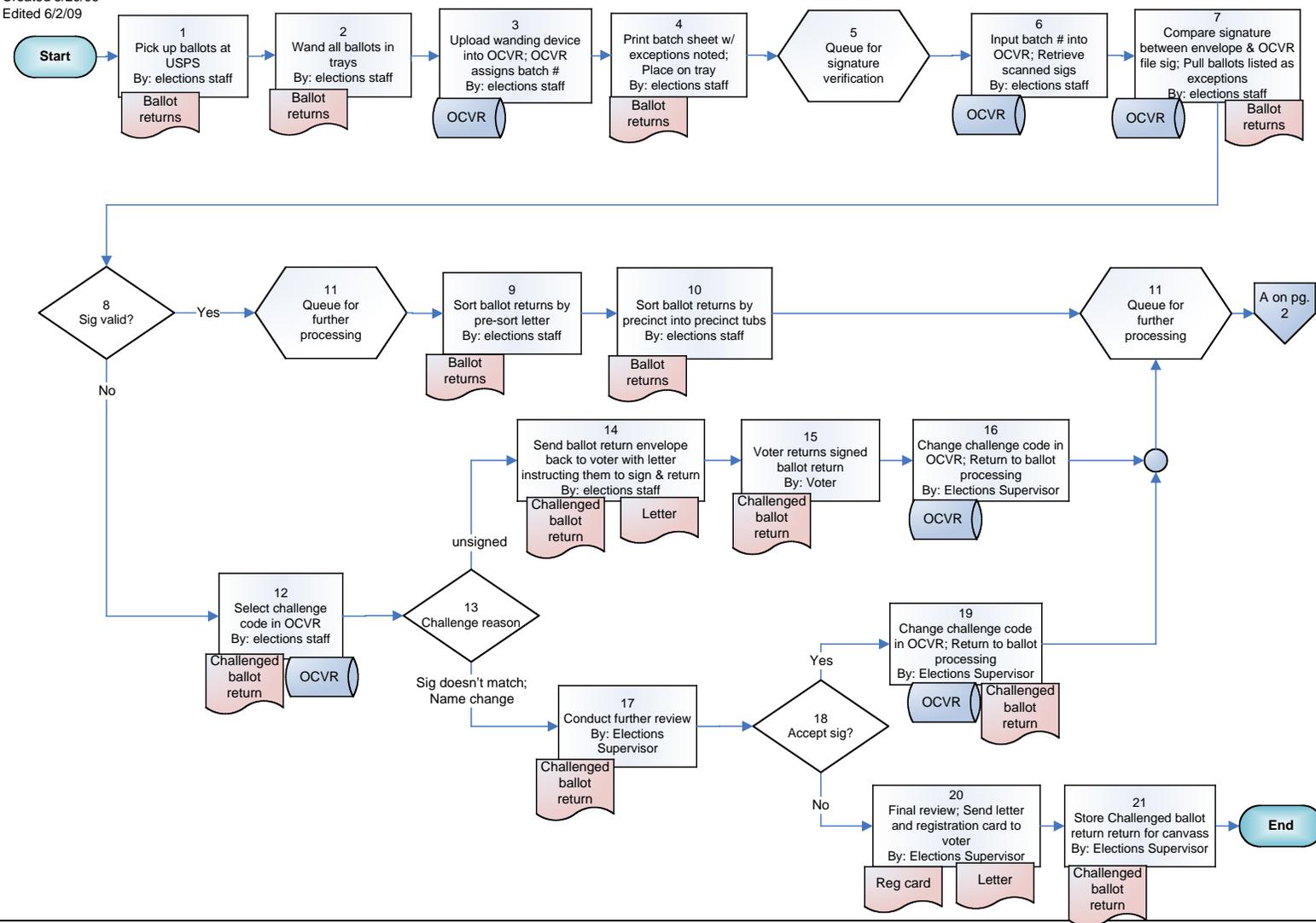
**(5) Secure Access Should Be Implemented For Challenged Ballots.**

When incoming ballot signatures are challenged, the ballot return envelopes are removed from their batches and taken to the Elections Department Assistant Manager for further examination and processing. During the course of this engagement, the

Project Team performed processing mapping on a number of internal processes that were deemed both relatively sophisticated from the standpoint of number of steps involved, as well as important to the County Clerk's operations. One of these process maps included the steps involved in the Returned Ballot process as shown below. The process map shown in Figure 1.1 also demonstrates how this incoming ballot signature challenge process operates.

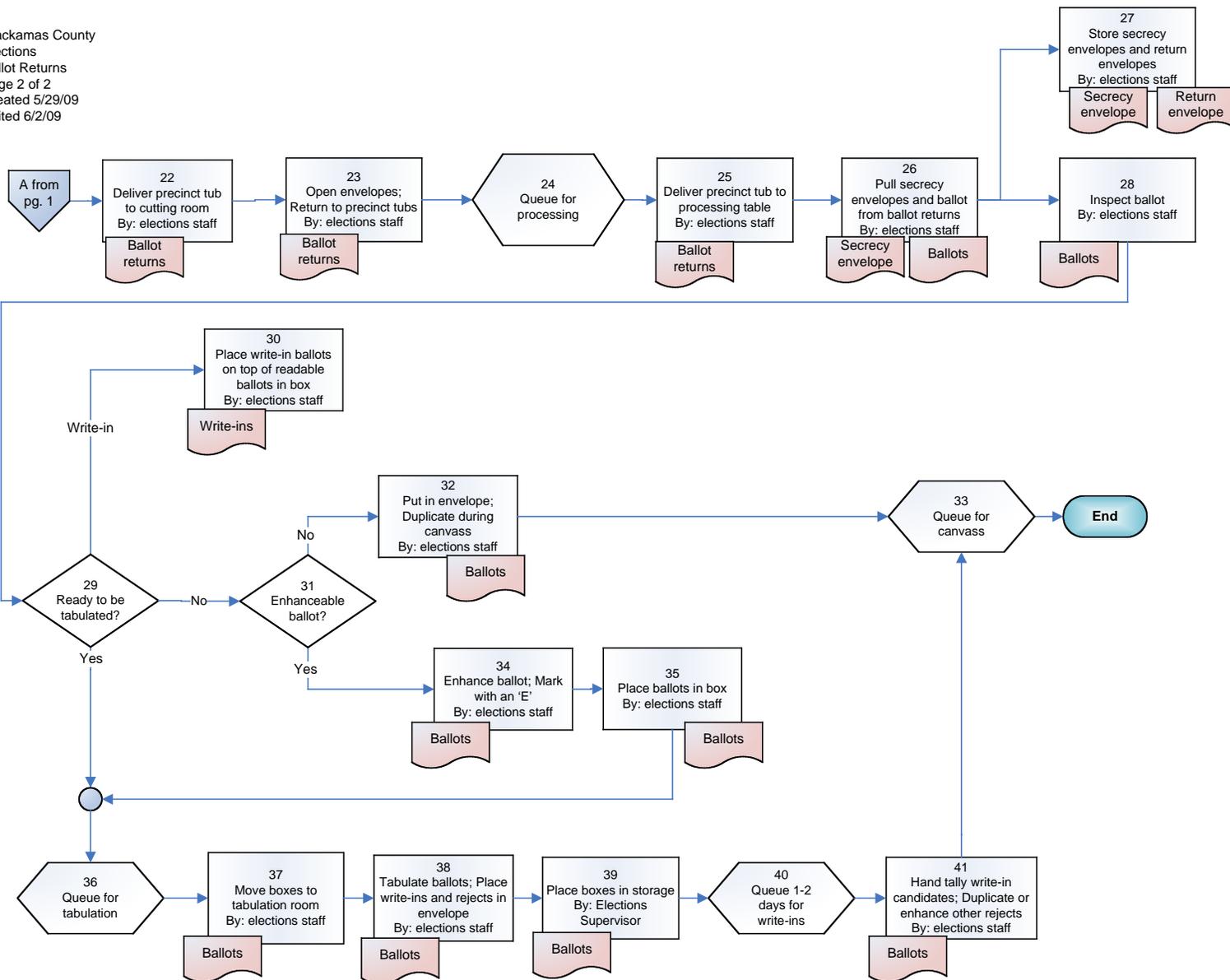
Figure 1.1 – Returned Ballot Processing

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 Edited 6/2/09



**CLACKAMAS COUNTY, OREGON**  
**FINAL DRAFT Report of the Performance Audit for the County Clerk's Office**

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As shown in Figure 1.1, beginning with Step 12, challenged ballots are flagged in Oregon Centralized Voter Registration (OCVR) software by selecting a challenge code during initial signature verification. The ballots themselves are stored in the Assistant Manager's office until the challenges can be cleared or otherwise resolved, which can take several days. Presently, the level of security for the Assistant Manager's office is not as high as the main ballot processing area. Although the general public cannot access the office freely, the office is not controlled using an access card key, nor is it monitored by a security camera.

**Recommendation: The Department should install a cardkey lock on the Supervisor's door (to be used whenever ballots are present). A security camera should be installed in the hallway outside.**

#### **4. TECHNOLOGY**

The Elections Department relies on an enterprise elections management system developed by Saber Consulting for the Oregon Secretary of State called Oregon Central Voter Registration (OCVR). OCVR is used by every Oregon County and is just one of the statewide voter registries implemented in the U.S. since they were mandated by HAVA in 2002. In addition to voter registration, OCVR also includes many other key elections management functions such as return ballot processing, challenged ballot processing, race definition, voting history, and precinct management.

In addition to OCVR, the Elections Department has a presence on the County's website. The website includes functions such as voter registration lookup, a downloadable registration form, election results and candidate filing information. Finally, vote tabulation is handled by machines manufactured and maintained by Election

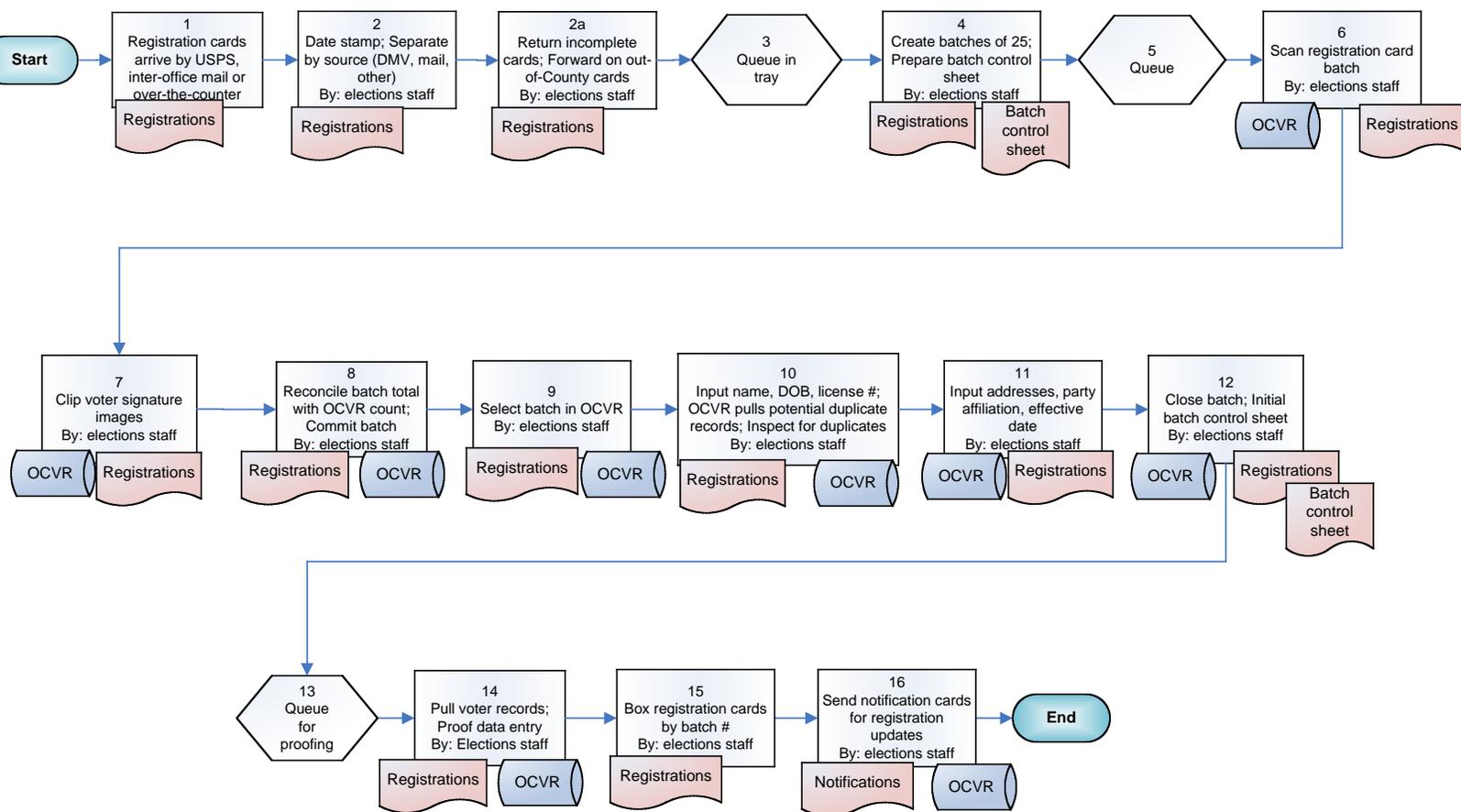
Systems and Software (ES&S). The following recommendations identify opportunities for improvement in the Elections Technology for the Elections Department.

**(1) Request Modifications to OCVR to Enhance Voter Registration.**

As noted previously, the Project Team performed processing mapping on a number of internal processes. One of these process maps included the steps involved in the Voter Registration process as shown in the process map, Figure 1.2, below.

Figure 1.2 – Voter Registration Processing

Clackamas County  
 Elections  
 Voter Registration  
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 Created 5/31/09  
 Edited 6/2/09



As seen beginning with Step 10 of the voter registration process Figure 1.2 above, elections staff search for existing voter registrations when they process voter registration forms. This search is designed to ensure that each eligible voter only has one registration record in OCVR, and to avoid voter confusion or sending out multiple ballots to the same voter. Voters often submit voter registration cards to the County when they move, change their name, change party affiliation, or just to ensure that they can vote in an upcoming election. The voter registration staff is trained to discern between a registration update and a completely new voter registration in the County.

A primary technical tool in discerning this is a link to the driver's license database maintained by State Driver and Motor Vehicle Services Division (DMV) of the Department of Transportation. Using the license number listed on the registration form, OCVR compares the license information to voter records and lists potential matches according to the probability of being the same person (e.g., same birthdates). Using this information, registration staff can determine if the voter is already in OCVR but has just moved or changed their name. If the voter has moved, registration staff members update OCVR with the new address and any other changes that need to be made. The Elections Department has an address library database that reconciles address information entered. If incorrect information is entered into the voters address record, staff are unable to complete the registration process and the voter is listed as a pending voter with a non existent address based upon the address library. By law, DMV records should have the correct updated address of the registrant although the DMV does allow business and other non-residence addresses to be recorded on the license. Based upon the process noted, the Project Team believes a useful system modification

would be the ability to populate the address fields for the voter in OCVR with address data from the DMV database. Automatically populating fields based on data already present allows for reduced data entry keystroke time and can limit data entry inaccuracies (e.g. transposed numbers) that can result from the same data undergoing repetitive manual entry. This address field, of course, could be over-ridden and re-populated by data entry staff under certain circumstances (e.g. DMV address is not a residence).

Voters who submit registration forms prior to attaining the age of 18 are pended in OCVR as they are ineligible to vote. Removing these pending registrations and activating the voters when they turn 18 is performed periodically by elections staff and requires a manual intervention in OCVR. A simple, time saving modification would be an automatic pending removal routine in OCVR.

**Recommendation: The County should submit a modification request to the Secretary of State to extract address information from the DMV database when a positive identification is made and populate the corresponding fields in Oregon Central Voter Registration software (OCVR). This field could be over-ridden and adjusted by data entry staff if circumstances warranted.**

**Recommendation: The County should follow-through on a modification request to the Secretary of State to automatically activate voters when they reach 18 years of age in OCVR. Saber development team is currently designing this functionality.**

## **(2) Request Modifications to OCVR to Enhance Ballot Processing.**

As seen in Steps 2-7 in the returned ballot processing map (see Figure 1.1 previously), returned ballots, upon arrival from the Post Office, are initially wanded to capture the voter identification number. These identification numbers are used to access voter records and scanned signatures from the voter registration cards on file. These scanned signatures are presented on monitors and compared to the signatures

on the ballot return envelopes by temporary election workers. Ballots with signatures that are verified are then cleared for further processing, while those that are not verified result in a challenged ballot. Many counties that process high volumes of mail ballots have installed high-speed scanning equipment that scan the signatures from ballot return envelopes and pair the resulting images with the voter signatures on file in a split-screen format (i.e., 2 columns of signatures) on the computer monitors. This allows the election workers to do the signature comparison by looking just at their monitors rather than going back and forth between their monitor and a tray of ballot return envelopes. With a split-screen system, election workers only have to handle return envelopes for just those whose signatures require a more extensive review by a supervisor or in more complicated situations such as missing signatures or where one person signs for their spouse. For the majority, ballots are cleared for further processing without manual handling of the envelopes. This process can save time during the laborious and time-consuming signature verification process that can ultimately enhance operational efficiency and vote results turnaround time.

**Recommendation: The County should perform a cost/benefit study and, if deemed cost-effective, submit a modification request to the Secretary of State to implement scanning signatures on ballot return envelopes and split-screen signature verification where dual columns of voter signatures (from registrations and ballot return envelopes) are displayed on a monitor for verification workers.**

**(3) Enhance The Clackamas County Elections Website.**

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Clackamas County website includes several pages on elections. These pages include several useful functions such as voting registration verification, a downloadable voter registration form, downloadable voter pamphlets, and election results. One useful feature that is not present includes a

function where a voter can look up their elected officials based on their address. Allowing voters to see their elected officials will assist in creating a more informed electorate.

Another useful feature that is currently lacking on the County's website is the ability for candidates for elections to file their candidacies and to pay filing fees online. Such costs should be negligible and the benefits derived through web-based access important as electronic document management, e-commerce, etc. is becoming more prevalent as a community service feature for progressive public sector entities. These website features are consistent with best management practices and thus should be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

**Recommendation: The County should implement an elected official lookup feature.**

**Recommendation: The County should implement online candidate filing and fee payment.**

#### **4. ORGANIZATIONAL AND STAFFING REVIEW**

When evaluating organizational structure, the purpose is to address some fundamental questions regarding lines of authority, responsibility and accountability. Well-managed organizations are designed to deliver services to customers and to maximize management control over service delivery. The intent to ensure the following:

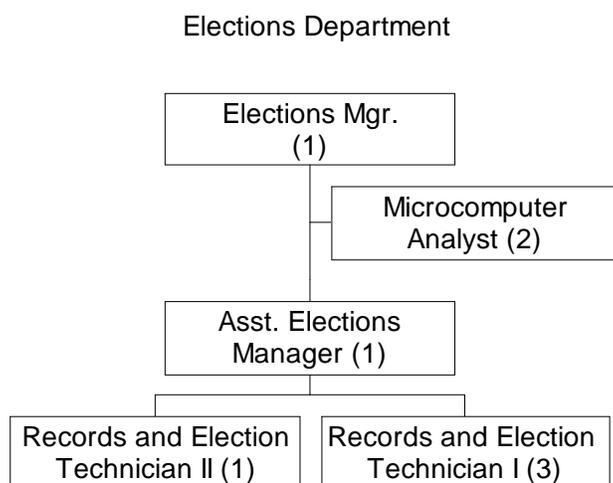
- **The organizational structure fosters accountability.** The organizational structure fosters accountability among management and supervisory staff.
- **The plan of organization enhances communication and coordination.** The number of handoffs/exchanges required among staff providing service to the public or internal clients is minimized.
- **Staff resources are utilized efficiently.** The plan of organization minimizes administrative overhead.

- **The span of control for any manager or supervisor does not exceed the number which can be feasibly and effectively supervised.** The trend is to widen the span of control. In the last decade, the introduction of information technology spurred the trend toward wider spans of control.

These organizational parameters should be considered in evaluating any organizational structure of reasonable size.

**(1) The Number of Management / Supervisor Positions in the Elections Department Suggests an Opportunity for Streamlining.**

As shown in the organization chart below and noted in the Profile, the Elections Department fields a total of eight (8) authorized staff positions with various duties and responsibilities.



As is the trend in elections management, the structure is weighted towards technical and professional classifications rather than clerical classifications. This reflects the increasing technical and policy sophistication of election management. Job description data and our observations show that the structure features adequate accountability for each discrete task and responsibility. Furthermore, the small number

of staff and well-designed work area foster easy communication and accountability. The structure also features minimal administrative (clerical) overhead. In fact, clerical staff is centralized in the administrative unit of the County Clerk. No positions in the Elections Department are devoted to an overhead function.

With regard to the organizational structure of the Elections Department, spans of control are minimal until election periods when temporary staff are used. Temporary staff mostly handle operational tasks during election cycles during which time spans of control become quite broad. As it relates to the existing organizational structure, the Project Team notes the following:

- Supervisor to staff ratio guidelines generally suggest a range from 1:6 to 1:11, dependent upon numerous variables such as the amount of administrative and field work accomplished by the supervisor/manager beyond personnel oversight, the type and complexity of the profession, etc. Presently the Elections Department has two (2) Manager positions overseeing operations—the Elections Manager and Assistant Elections Manager. This is not to suggest that such supervisory positions only oversee staff; rather, it indicates that this is one of the core business functions performed in addition to other duties and responsibilities. The magnitude of these other duties and responsibilities essentially drives the total number of staff that can be overseen by these supervisor positions. The broad roles and responsibilities are defined as follows:

**Representative Responsibilities of County Clerk's Office  
Elections Department Management Staff**

The **Elections Manager**, an exempt position within the County, provides direct supervision over the operations and staff of the Elections Department and reports directly to the County Clerk. The position oversees and manages all Election Department functions and attendant full and part-time staff to include development and lawful conduct of all County elections encompassing Clackamas County, local cities, townships and special district elections. The Manager supervises major functional processes such as candidate filings, ballot and voter pamphlet preparation, voter registration, mailings, ballot receipts, ballot validation and counting, and election result notification and participates in Office-related management decision-making as part of Clerk's "Executive Management Team."

The **Assistant Elections Manager**, an exempt position within the County, provides direct support to the Elections Manager, assisting him in all assigned duties and responsibilities, and acts on his behalf during absence. The position provides task and special project work direction to Records and Election Technician I and II positions and assists subordinate positions in the performance of their duties (e.g. proofreading, candidate filings acceptance, etc.). The Assistant is directly responsible for Out-of-County military voters; performs cross-training of staff on various tasks such as absentee and replacement ballot processing; updates Voter Notification Cards program; scans Returned Confirmation cards; and trains temporary staff on certain functions such as petition signature verification and addresses "challenged ballot" issues.

In effect, two positions are providing functional oversight of six (6) line staff; this results in an effective supervisor to staff ratio of 1:3.

- Despite specific and unique duties and responsibilities performed regularly and independently by the two managerial positions, the need for two manager positions results in essentially a "one-over-one" report relationship that is questionable unless there are extenuating circumstances. Best practices suggest such organizational structures are too narrow unless one position is essentially a technical/functional specialist (calling into question the actual job classification of the position).
- There has been extenuating circumstances relative to the Assistant Elections Manager position. In addition to the technical and professional duties performed as noted previously, there was some level of turnover in the Election Manager's position over recent years to prompt the promotion of one staff to Assistant Elections Manager to help facilitate Department continuity.

Based upon the totality of information available to the Project Team, we understand previous reasons for development of an Assistant Elections Manager. Nevertheless, this level of management is unnecessary in an organization of this size, despite the technical duties and responsibilities performed. As a result, the position, upon vacancy, should be eliminated from the Election Department's organizational structure and the attendant duties and responsibilities of the Assistant position re-allocated to existing staff. Either the County Clerk or the Records and Election Technician II, dependent upon circumstance, should act in the Election Managers capacity during short-term absence.

**Recommendation: Eliminate the Assistant Elections Manager position upon that classification's vacancy.**

**(2) The County Clerk should Perform Succession Planning for the Elections Department and Remainder of the Office.**

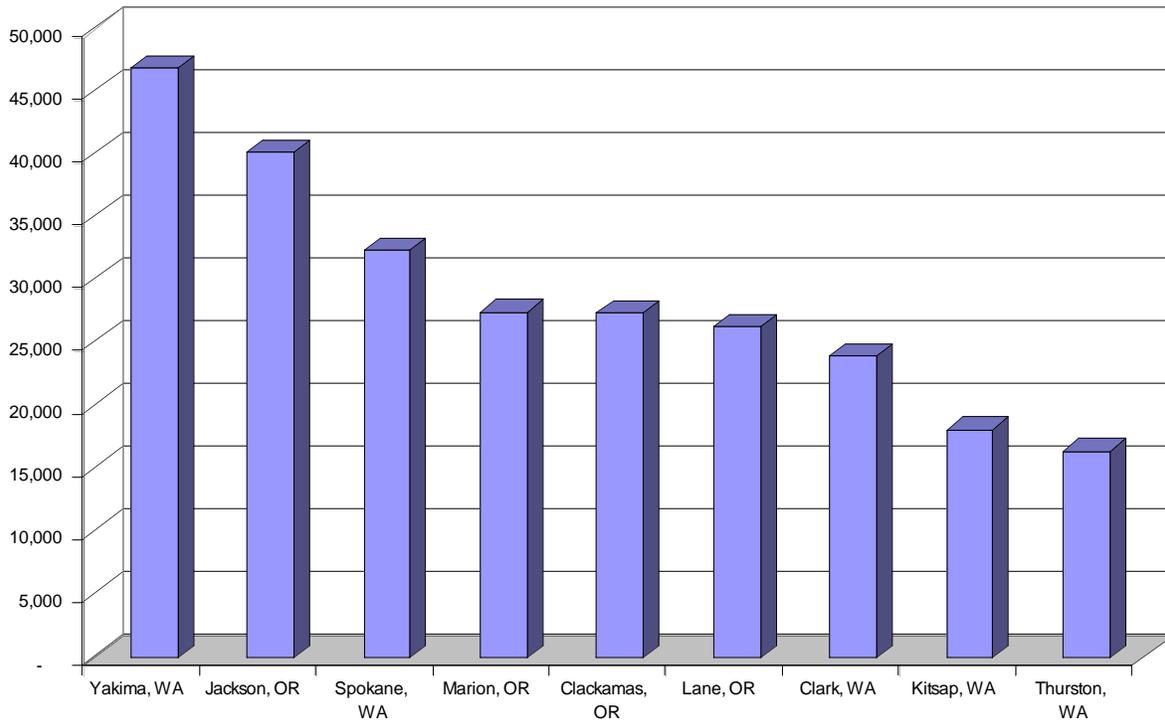
Two of the existing Elections Department classifications are presently filled by staff members who are eligible for retirement in the foreseeable future. Another position, the Assistant Elections Manager, recently became vacant due to an expected retirement. The County should have a key concern about the real and potential loss of technical experience due to the tenure of the existing staff. The management of the County Clerk is aware of this issue and should engage in a formal succession planning effort to catalog the skills and knowledge of their existing staff and develop a plan for how these skills and knowledge will be transferred to either existing staff persons or newly recruited staff to avoid the potentially troublesome loss of experience and knowledge that could occur in the near future.

**Recommendation: The County Clerk should develop a succession plan for the Elections Department to identify potential gaps in managerial and technical expertise in the next 3-5 year period and a plan for addressing those gaps. This should be expanded to the remainder of the Clerk's Office as soon as practical.**

**(3) Based upon Comparisons with Other Counties and Other Data, the Clackamas Elections Department Staffing is Generally Adequate.**

As shown in the above organization chart and noted in the Profile, the Elections Department fields a total of eight (8) authorized staff positions. During the course of the engagement the Project Team performed a Comparative Survey of other Oregon and Washington counties' operations and staffing patterns. The following chart shows each county's Elections Department staffing level with respect to the number of registered voters each department serves.

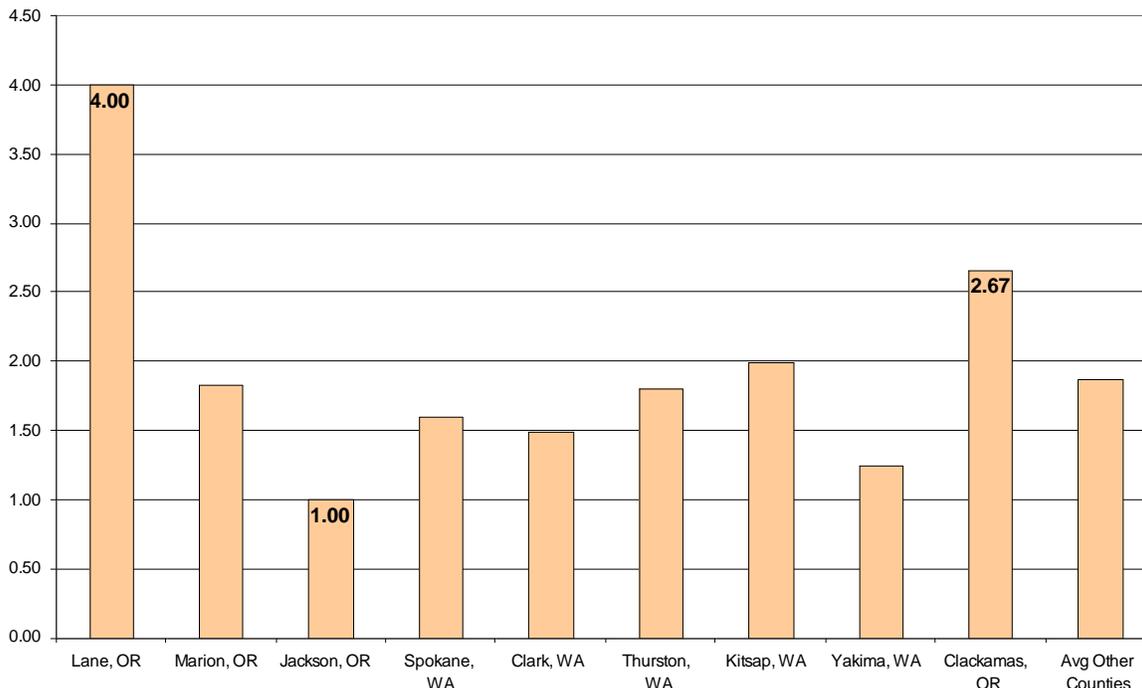
**# of Registered Voters Per Elections Department Staff Position**



As shown by the graph above, staffing levels in Clackamas County are essentially average with the Clackamas agency handling approximately 27,400 voters per FTE, compared to the average of 28,900 for other counties within the survey. These data reflect existing authorized staffing levels and do not account for the previously recommended elimination of the Assistant Elections Manager.

In this next bar chart, staffing ratios are shown compared to the number of elections each County conducted in calendar 2008. Whereas the number of elections can vary from year to year, the magnitude of elections-related work increases with more elections thereby resulting in the need for more staff. Although this graphic is only representative for one year, it is nevertheless both illustrative and informative.

**# of Authorized Full-time Elections Staff per Election (CY 2008)**



As seen in this chart, Clackamas County is on the higher end of the comparative range<sup>13</sup>, second only to Lane County Oregon, indicating that more full-time staff are used in Clackamas County to process the totality of elections (at least in calendar 2008) than most counterparts. Indeed, Clackamas is approximately 42% higher than the average of all other counties using this metric.

Given the totality of the data such as the noted various staff-to-metric ratios, as well as our observations, interview results and comparison to best practices, the Project Team recommends no further staff increases or decreases in the Elections Department beyond addressing the previously mentioned Assistant Elections Manager position.

**Recommendation: Authorize (8) positions in the Elections Department, including one manager and seven line staff.**

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<sup>13</sup> It should be reiterated this reflects authorized staffing levels; actual full-time staffing levels was one less in calendar 2008 due to vacancy.

## 8. COUNTY CLERK ADMINISTRATION

This chapter of the study provides our review County Clerk Administration.

### 1. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES PERFORMED BY COUNTY CLERK ADMINISTRATION ARE APPROPRIATE.

The County Clerk's Administration Office is staffed by two (2) personnel: the County Clerk and the Administrative Assistant. The following describes the general duties and responsibilities performed by both positions:

#### Representative County Clerk and Administrative Assistant Duties and Responsibilities

The **County Clerk**, an elected position in Clackamas County, provides Office oversight to include planning, budgeting, operational and fiscal management, and frequent interaction with the general public. Highlighted specific oversight duties include management of the Clerk's Office three departments including Recording, Records, and Elections; processing all real property transactions, plats, Commissioner's Journal documents, Board of Property Tax Appeal petitions and orders for Clackamas County; processing marriage licenses, making public records available to the general public, and maintaining the security and preservation of all records; overseeing the planning, coordination and conduction of elections; and plans, coordinates and records Board of Property Tax Appeal (BOPTA) hearings.

The **Administrative Assistant** is a para-professional position reporting directly to the County Clerk. The position provides a variety of administrative and clerical tasks in support of the Office to include performing Accounts Payable functions including account # validation, payment vouchers, line item reconciliation, etc; payroll time card QA/QC and data entry for Office staff; purchasing related functions including purchase requisitions, supply ordering, travel arrangements for staff, etc; personnel facilitation tasks to include processing personnel action forms and job requisitions; oversight and administration of Board of Property Tax Appeals (BOPTA) process; facilitates development of annual budget paperwork and performs various clerical duties as assigned, (e.g. memo development, meeting scheduling, certified mail processing, etc.).

With respect to the primary duties and responsibilities noted, these are not uncommon compared to many other national County Clerk's Offices. However, the following operational characteristics are highlighted.

**(1) Current Staffing Levels in the County Clerk's Administration is Appropriate.**

Clearly with one manager and one para-professional position there are limited opportunities for staffing changes. At most, changes could be made to para-professional support to augment positions or workload or, alternatively have the work absorbed by other staff in the various County Clerk departments. Based on our review, staffing levels in County Clerk Administration is appropriate, with the one Administrative Assistant providing a variety of support to the Office. The Project Team has noted that the Assistant presently does not perform most of the functions noted (excluding personnel-related) for the Records Management Department but only Recording and Elections. This is due to a variety of factors including facility location, budgeting protocols, etc. Nevertheless, strong consideration should be given to having the Administrative Assistant provide such services, as practical, to the Records Management Department as the manager and staff currently do not have dedicated clerical support and must perform it themselves. The Project Team understands there may be cost allocation issues associated with this support, but suggests that such costs be absorbed by the County Clerk's general fund if time is available to perform the services.

**Recommendation: Maintain the existing staffing levels of two (2) positions in County Clerk's Administration. Explore opportunities for the Administrative Assistant to provide additional clerical support to the Records Management Department.**

**(2) Maintain BOPTA Operations as Currently Administered.**

The County Clerk currently administrates Board of Property Tax Appeals (BOPTA) for the County. This involves oversight by the County Clerk, administration by the Administrative Assistant, and recording support from Recording Department staff.

The Project Team reviewed the quite thorough twenty-chapter *Board of Property Tax Appeals Manual* and the twenty-one chapter *BOPTA Clerk's Manual* both prepared by the Oregon Department of Revenue. Given our review of these documents, and based upon interview with Clackamas County Clerk staff, the Project Team could find no relevant modifications of significance to recommend with respect to the County's present BOPTA operations.

**Recommendation: Maintain BOPTA operations in the County Clerk's Office as currently administered.**