NWRDC
FLORIDA'S CLOUD BROKER

2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Northwest Regional Data Center

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

About NWRDC

Florida's Leading Data Center Provider

The Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) is Florida's leading computing provider, delivering services to a wide range of universities, colleges, and K-12 school districts, as well as state, county, and city government.

Established in 1972 under Florida State University, NWRDC began by offering mainframe services to universities across the state. Over the past decade, we have expanded to include a wide range of services well beyond the traditional data center footprint. And through multiple strategic business partnerships, we have positioned ourselves as Florida's Cloud Broker, providing cybersecurity, cloud, and end-user support solutions at significant discounts.

NWRDC strengthened its commitment to serving the IT needs of Florida's public and educational communities with the addition of the Florida State Data Center in 2022. With over 50 years of experience, we pride ourselves on our superior customer service, cost-effective solutions, and unwavering dedication to customer satisfaction.



Introduction

Tim Brown, Ph.D., Assistant Vice President FSU ITS, NWRDC & FLVC



This strategic plan is the result of a comprehensive process designed to gather input from NWRDC's stakeholders to assess current strengths, challenges, and areas of opportunity. The planning process was designed to ensure a wide range of perspectives were considered, informing the development of a strategy that considers both current and future needs of internal and external stakeholders. NWRDC contracted with a vendor to facilitate this process, leveraging their significant experience in strategic planning to design and implement objective data collection, analysis, and collaborative discussions.

Initial data collection began with preliminary interviews conducted with key stakeholders from the NWRDC Policy Board and host institution. These one-on-one conversations provided valuable insights from organizational leaders familiar with NWRDC's governance and services. Next, focus groups were held with selected customers and staff to explore issues in greater depth and to capture common themes across groups.

Recognizing the importance of giving all stakeholders a voice in the strategic planning process, information gathered during the initial data collection activities was used to develop surveys distributed to all NWRDC customers and staff. These surveys generated quantitative and qualitative data that helped identify trends and highlight opportunities for future growth. The wide-ranging input gathered through these surveys was critical to ensure that the strategic plan reflects both the needs of the customers who rely on NWRDC services to make their organization successful and the perspectives of the staff who carry out our critical work every day.

All collected data was then integrated and analyzed to assess key findings, stakeholder alignment, and priority issues. Utilizing this analysis as a foundation, workshops were conducted with the NWRDC Policy Board and senior leadership staff. These sessions focused on developing strategic priorities and aligning a shared vision for the future. This collaborative process established the updated mission and goals that form the foundation of this strategic plan.

Together, these activities ensured a strategic plan informed by varied perspectives and collaboratively developed to position NWRDC to move forward with clarity, purpose, and confidence.

The plan is organized around four strategic goal areas, outlined in the following sections.

Within each goal area, goals and objectives define the specific strategic outcomes NWRDC plans to achieve. As work implementing this plan progresses, goals and objectives may be added or modified to adapt to changing conditions. Addendums and modifications will be presented to the Policy Board for approval prior to implementation.

Mission and Vision

Since our previous strategic plan, NWRDC has grown significantly with the incorporation of Florida's State Data Center. This integration brought a new facility, additional staff, and expanded our reach among state agencies and other state-level public entity customers. Recognizing the impact of this expansive growth, NWRDC refined our mission and vision statements to strengthen our positioning and provide a clear guidepost for the organization's future.

Our Mission

Northwest Regional Data Center's mission is to empower Florida's public sector by optimizing technology services for the State of Florida, delivering efficient, innovative, and secure data centers and cloud solutions. We advance statewide strategy through modern roadmaps, strong partnerships, and unwavering commitment to service excellence.

Our Vision

To be Florida's trusted leader in technology services through advancing innovation, strengthening resiliency and security, and enabling customers to achieve greater efficiencies.



Four Strategic Goal Areas

An integrated approach to organizational excellence, modernization, customer partnerships, and sustainable growth.



Goal Area 1: Unified Organizational and Operational Excellence

Achieve unified organizational excellence by aligning operational processes, standardizing service frameworks, strengthening leadership capacity, enhancing efficiency, and enhancing internal communication.

Goal 1.1: Enterprise Process Integration and Standardization

Establish a unified, enterprise-wide operational framework that standardizes core processes, eliminates silos, increases transparency, and enables consistent, measurable performance across all service areas.

Objective 1.1.1: Standardize Core Operational Processes

Document and align NWRDC processes across all departments to improve cross-team communication and collaboration, resulting in an increase in operational speed and ensuring a consistent experience for all our customers.

Objective 1.1.2: Implement Enterprise Performance, Accountability and Process Governance Structure

Drive consistency and growth by pairing clear operational ownership with performance metrics. This ensures NWRDC standards are upheld across all locations, optimizing our ability to meet the long-term needs of our team and our partners.

Objective 1.1.3: Streamline FSU Business Process Integration

Align with FSU to streamline core service delivery processes, fostering stronger cross-departmental relationships through regular performance reviews to identify efficiencies and ensure a consistent, high-quality experience for every customer.

Goal 1.2: Leadership Capacity and Organizational Resilience

Build sustainable leadership depth and organizational continuity by implementing structured succession planning, talent development pathways, and knowledge transfer systems that reduce risk and enhance organizational effectiveness.

Objective 1.2.1: Establish Structured Succession and Leadership Continuity Framework

Design and implement a formal succession and leadership continuity framework that identifies critical roles, assesses strength, develops high-potential talent, and institutionalizes knowledge transfer to reduce dependency on individual roles and ensure long-term organizational stability.

Objective 1.2.2: Implement Enterprise Talent Development & Capability Planning Program

Create a structured talent development and workforce capability planning program that aligns skill development, leadership training, and technical advancement with NWRDC's strategic priorities to support modernization, innovation, and competitive advantage.

Objective 1.2.3: Improve Internal Communication

Develop and implement an integrated internal communication architecture to ensure that all staff understand NWRDC's strategic direction, feel connected to decision-making processes, and collaborate effectively as a single, unified entity.

i. **Between Teams:** NWRDC will eliminate technical silos and the legacy "us vs. them" culture by standardizing operational workflows across all data center locations. The organization will also foster deeper collaboration by implementing cross-functional briefings and involving technical staff earlier in the project design phase.
ii. **Between Supervisor/Management and Employees:** Management will establish regular communication cycles and provide clear, documented priorities to ensure staff remain aligned during high-workload periods. To reduce bottlenecks, supervisors will focus on empowering employees at all levels to make decisions and contribute proactively to organizational goals.
iii. **From Executive Leadership:** Leadership will strengthen strategic alignment by regularly communicating NWRDC's vision and high-level goals through strategic and targeted communication to all staff. By prioritizing visionary guidance over granular task management, executives will improve staff morale and ensure a shared understanding of the organization's direction.

Goal Area 2: Technology Leadership and Modernization

Lead enterprise modernization by delivering secure, scalable, and future-ready technology capabilities, including but not limited to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced analytics, that reduce technical debt, strengthen performance, and prepare customers for the future.

Goal 2.1: Enterprise Technology Modernization and Resilience

Accelerate enterprise modernization by reducing technical debt, strengthening cybersecurity posture, and enhancing infrastructure resilience to ensure secure, reliable, and high-performing technology operations.

Objective 2.1.1: Develop and Execute a 3-Year Enterprise Technology Roadmap

Establish and maintain a rolling three-year enterprise technology roadmap, reviewed annually, to align with changing business and technology needs. The roadmap will assess current state capabilities, prioritize technical debt reduction, strengthen cybersecurity posture, define infrastructure upgrades, and sequence investments to improve performance, resilience, and scalability.

Objective 2.1.2: Strengthen Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Resilience Framework

Implement a structured cybersecurity and infrastructure resilience enhancement program that establishes clear security standards, continuous risk monitoring, incident response maturity, and performance benchmarks for both NWRDC's own services and its vendor partners to ensure secure, reliable, and uninterrupted service delivery to our customers.

Goal 2.2: Secure Innovation and Emerging Technology Enablement

Advance forward-looking technology capabilities by establishing secure, scalable frameworks for AI, advanced analytics, and emerging technologies that prepare customers for future demands while maintaining governance and risk control.

Objective 2.2.1: Establish Emerging Technology Governance Framework

Design and implement a formal emerging technology governance framework that defines security standards, risk controls, ethical guidelines, compliance requirements, and evaluation criteria to enable secure, responsible, and scalable adoption across customer environments.

Objective 2.2.2: Implement Continuous Innovation Engine for Technology Evaluation

Establish a systematic research and development (R&D) process to identify, evaluate, and pilot emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Post-Quantum Cryptography, and Advanced Data Analytics, to determine their operational feasibility and value for the NWRDC ecosystem. This framework will utilize the security and risk standards defined in the Objective 2.2.1 framework to ensure all innovations are rigorously vetted before being integrated into the 3-year technology roadmap or offered as advisory services to customers. The framework should allow for the input and participation of NWRDC staff, customers, and other stakeholders.

Objective 2.2.3: Encourage NWRDC Research and Development

Cultivate a 'Continuous Innovation Engine' by formalizing team-led research and development initiatives, where teams represent both NWRDC staff and external stakeholders. Research topics may be suggested by NWRDC staff, customers, or other stakeholders. By encouraging teams at all levels to recommend and test secure technologies, NWRDC will evolve into a consulting-led Center of Excellence that anticipates market shifts and drives digital transformation across the Florida ecosystem.

Goal Area 3: Customer Experience and Strategic Partnerships

Strengthen NWRDC's role as a trusted strategic partner by simplifying service interactions, improving cross-team coordination, and expanding collaborative partnerships that advance interoperability and shared success.

Goal 3.1: Seamless, Coordinated Customer Experience

Improve coordination between technical and customer-facing teams to reduce complexity and administrative friction by streamlining the entire customer lifecycle, from initial procurement to daily support. By first assessing the current environment and then implementing unified service delivery workflows, NWRDC will ensure a consistent, "one-organization" experience that eliminates the confusion caused by legacy silos.

Objective 3.1.1: Standardize Coordinated Service Delivery Model

Design and implement a coordinated enterprise service delivery model that aligns cross-team workflows, clearly defines roles, responsibilities, and handoffs across teams, and standardizes customer-facing processes to improve consistency, reduce duplication, and enhance overall service performance.

Objective 3.1.2: Improve Customer Communication and Engagement

Based on performance metrics resulting from Objective 1.1.2, deliver enhanced customer reporting to provide regular, clear insights into resource utilization, service optimization, and SLA performance. This initiative will move beyond basic consumption billing to provide trend analysis and actionable metrics that empower customers to identify operational efficiencies and realize measurable cost savings. The reports will allow customers to identify optimization opportunities, improve planning, and make more informed decisions.

Goal 3.2: Strategic Partnership and Interoperability Expansion

Strengthen NWRDC's ecosystem by deepening customer and supplier partnerships, advancing interoperability initiatives, and formalizing collaboration models that create shared value and long-term strategic alignment.

Objective 3.2.1: Conduct Enterprise Customer Needs Assessment

Execute a multi-level assessment of customer - needs, analyzing both individual organizational requirements and broad market trends, to identify priority opportunities for interoperability, managed service enhancements, and collaborative value-added offerings. This comprehensive evaluation will result in a formal strategy and actionable roadmap to drive statewide digital transformation and cost efficiencies. A key objective of the needs assessment should be to

identify unmet needs among public sector entities and the constituents they serve throughout the State of Florida.

Objective 3.2.2: Evolve into a Proactive Knowledge Partner/Leader

Transition from a traditional infrastructure provider to a knowledgeable solution advisor that actively helps customers navigate emerging technologies like AI and advanced analytics. To address the "market visibility paradox," NWRDC will implement a proactive engagement strategy, utilizing "lunch and learn" sessions and technology roundtables to raise awareness of existing capabilities. This goal preserves NWRDC's "high-touch service identity" by fostering personal relationships through team "meet and greets," while using data-driven marketing tools to demonstrate real-world cost savings and value to the customer ecosystem.

Goal Area 4: Disciplined Growth and Market Positioning

Drive disciplined, sustainable growth by clarifying NWRDC's market identity, strengthening competitive positioning, expanding innovative offerings, and aligning growth initiatives with operational capacity and financial resilience.



Goal 4.1: Clarified Market Identity and Competitive Differentiation

Define and communicate a clear, differentiated market identity by refining NWRDC's value proposition, modernizing the service portfolio, and strengthening competitive positioning across target markets.

Objective 4.1.1: Define and Formalize NWRDC's Market Value Proposition

Develop and formally adopt a clearly articulated market value proposition that defines NWRDC's strategic identity, differentiators, target markets, and core service strengths supported by updated messaging and positioning materials.

Objective 4.1.2: Modernize and Align Service Portfolio and Brand Strategy

Conduct a comprehensive review and modernization of the service portfolio and brand strategy to align offerings, service descriptions, pricing models, and marketing materials with NWRDC's clarified market position and growth priorities.

Goal 4.2: Structured, Capacity-Aligned Growth Execution

Implement a disciplined growth model that balances market expansion with financial planning, resource availability and operational capacity to ensure sustainable revenue diversification and long-term resilience while minimizing negative impact to existing customer base.

Objective 4.2.1: Implement Capacity-Aligned Growth Model

Develop and implement an integrated growth and financial planning model that aligns customer needs, service expansion, staffing capacity, infrastructure readiness, and capital investment to ensure sustainable, scalable expansion.

Objective 4.2.2: Establish Structured Marketing and Growth Pipeline Management System

Design and execute a formal marketing and growth pipeline management system that defines target segments, tracks opportunity progression, streamline procurement coordination, and measures performance to support disciplined market expansion.

Objective 4.2.3: Diversification of Customer Base

To drive disciplined and sustainable growth while establishing a clear market identity, NWRDC should implement a diversification strategy that leverages its non-profit cost advantages and robust compliance capabilities (such as HIPAA and CJIS) to meet the specific needs of these five sectors.

i. **K-12 Education:** Focus on capturing the untapped market of smaller K-12 districts, particularly those with under 12,000 students, who may lack the internal resources for complex infrastructure, position NWRDC as the primary partner for disaster recovery and secure hosting.

ii. **City/County (Local Government):** Actively recruit municipal and county governments looking for regional redundancy and alternatives to expensive hyperscale cloud providers. Market flexible "landing zone" services and data-driven cost savings to local governments, establishing NWRDC as a trusted regional leader that provides "unique value commercial providers cannot match."

iii. **College (Higher Education)**: Deepen existing relationships with Florida's colleges by moving beyond commodity services toward high-level design, consulting, and managed cloud management.

iv. **Private Education (ex: ICOF):** Leverage the Policy Board's charge to support all Florida education entities, market NWRDC's cost advantage over commercial providers to offer private institutions a non-profit, trust-based alternative for secure data center and cloud solutions.

v. **Healthcare**: Capitalize on NWRDC's existing HIPAA compliance and strong security capabilities to enter the specialized healthcare technology market for municipal or not-for-profit healthcare organizations. Establish a "Center of Excellence" for healthcare security, providing specialized managed security services to protect sensitive medical data against rising ransomware threats.



Leadership and Governance

Executive Leadership

Tim Brown, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice President
FSU ITS, NWRDC & FLVC

Julia Cunningham
Director, Finance & Administration
NWRDC & FLVC

Matt Stolk
Director of IT / Chief Technology Officer, NWRDC & FLVC

Senior Leadership

Geoff Burda
Associate Director, Infrastructure Services

Sharon Clark
Deputy Director, Administrative Services

Jim Jackson
Program Director, Windows

Cathy Kreiensieck
Associate Director, Infrastructure & Operations

Brett Simpson
Deputy CTO, Strategic Cloud / Applications

Thomas Stevenson
Deputy Director, Finance

Elisa Weber
Program Director

George Zimmerman
Chief Information Security Officer

Hans Cardenas
Program Director, Enterprise Architecture, Commercial Cloud & DR

Derick Jackson
Program Director, IT Service Management (ITSM)

Ulysses Jenkins
Director, Compliance & Risk Management

William Lamb
Deputy CTO, Strategic Coud Infrastructure

Carlene Smith, PMP
Director, Enterprise Service Engagement & Communications

Scott Sutterfield
Associate Director, Core Services

James Stewart
Mainframe Manager

Policy Board Members

Gene Kovacs - Chair
SUS Office Representative; Chief Information Officer, Board of Governors

Dr. Andre Smith - Vice Chair
Large Customer Representative; Deputy Commissioner, Division of Technology & Innovation, Department of Education

Jonathan Fozard
Host Institution Representative; Vice President of Information Technology Services & Chief Information Officer, Florida State University

Jimmie Harrell
Midrange Customer Representative; Chief Information Officer, Department of Revenue

Dr. Russell E. Kaufman
Small Customer Representative; Chief Information Officer, Palm Beach State College

Ken Kicia
Large Customer Representative; Chief Information Officer, Department of Corrections

Wendy Ling, PMP
Large Customer Representative; Chief Information Officer, Department of Children & Families

Henry Martin
K-12 Representative; Chief Information Officer, Walton County School District

Leo Schoonover
Large Customer Representative; Chief Information Officer, Department of Health

Warren Sponholtz
At-Large Representative; State of Florida CIO

Sandra Stevens
City, County & Local Government Representative; IT Director, City of Boca Raton

V.Y. "Trey" Tillander III, P.E.
Large Customer Representative; Executive Director of Transportation Technology, Department of Transportation

Acknowledgements

The development of the 2026 Strategic Plan was a collaborative effort made possible by the meaningful contributions of many individuals and groups. NWRDC extends its sincere appreciation to the Policy Board, our host institution, customers, staff, and partners who shared their insights, time, and expertise throughout the planning process.

Policy Board
For their leadership, guidance, and strategic directions.

Florida State University
For its continued partnership and support as our host institution.

Customers
For providing valuable input, perspectives, and priorities.

NWRDC Staff
For their engagement, expertise, and dedication to our mission and customers.

Business Partners
For their collaboration and shared commitment to advancing technology services for Florida's public sector.

CONTACT US:

Northwest Regional Data Center

PHONE

(850) 645-3500

EMAIL & WEB

info@nwrdc.fsu.edu

www.nwrdc.fsu.edu

NWRDC
FLORIDA'S CLOUD BROKER