

## POLICY/ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE/ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

SECTION: GENERAL POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DIRECTIVES	REFERENCE NUMBER: 503.01
SUBJECT: MICROCOMPUTERS	INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/01/84
TITLE: ACQUISITION OF MICROCOMPUTERS	LAST REVISION DATE:

- 1.*The Need for Distributed Processing Recognized:* The City of Denton recognizes that the advent of microcomputers and the proliferation of software developed for microcomputers may provide the opportunity to make significant strides in improving the productivity of its workers. To take advantage of this opportunity, the City will not require that all information processing and use of computers be centralized. Consequently, these policies are established to standardize the criteria for selecting distributed processing methods and hardware while ensuring a favorable cost/benefit ratio.
  - 2.*Redundancy Discouraged:* Although the City seeks productivity improvement by decentralizing its information processing, the City will maintain a position which discourages redundant applications and data bases. To develop an effective distributed processing system, the City will require that proposed processing hardware, meeting standard specifications, include the ability to communicate with the City's information processing network.
  - 3.*City Coordinator:* The Information Services Director shall serve as the coordinator for the City-wide distributed processing. This position includes coordinating original purchases, upgrades, software questions, and maintenance.
  - 4.*Review of Proposed Distributed Processing Applications:* The City shall establish a process to determine effectiveness for proposed distributed processing applications. The Director of Information Services shall coordinate this process. In the first step of the process, the department proposing distributed processing methods shall develop detailed requirements for its data processing applications. Next the department must provide justification for these requirements.
- Finally, a cost effectiveness analysis will identify the cost associated with alternative approaches. Approaches that can be evaluated include continuing current manual operation, the use of time-sharing or service bureaus, development of the application on the computer mainframe, and the distributed processing approach. The Information Services Director will determine the best approach.
- 5.*Review of Existing Applications:* After implementation of distributed processing applications, the Information Services Director shall maintain a continuing review to ensure effective and productive use of the resources. After identifying any application which is ineffective or inappropriate, the Information Services Director will make a recommendation to the City Manager for the removal of the subject hardware and software for better use at other locations.
  - 6.*Standard Hardware Specifications:* It is to the benefit of the City of Denton to standardize the purchase of

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computer hardware. Standard hardware facilitates transferring technology, data, and programs between departments; simplifies maintenance requirements; and helps the City obtain volume discounts. Therefore, the City shall conduct an evaluation of hardware and establish, on the basis of that evaluation, a standard set of specifications and hardware manufacturers. There are, however, circumstances in which the proposed applications dictate hardware manufacturers which do not conform to this standard. These applications must be ones which do not share common data on the mainframe and, in fact, by its nature prohibit sharing common information.

*Centralized Programming Staff:* Although the City of Denton encourages distributed processing, all programming staff shall be centralized within the Information Services Department. This ensures proper supervision and the ability to allocate the resources most effectively. Departments purchasing computers obtain the cost efficiency through the use of packaged software. Departments are discouraged from having positions which do a major portion of their work in programming new applications. Departments outside Information Services may require in job specs that positions have computer literacy or familiarity, but job specs that require knowledge of programming languages are discouraged.

*8.Funding of Distributed Processing:* The purchase of all computer hardware will be funded in the Information Services budget or the General Project Fund. However, departments will develop the initial request, and it will be submitted as part of the Information Services budget.

*9.Role of the Staff Steering Committee:* The Staff Information Services Steering Committee reviews data processing plans and selects application priorities. Also, the Steering Committee will serve user departments as an appeal beyond the Information Services Director for any actions authorized under these policies.