WaTech
Washington Technology Solutions

AI Strategy and Roadmap

Serving Washington with human-focused, trusted AI

Date: June 2026

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Executive Summary

Washington (WA) state is committed to harnessing the transformative potential of AI to deliver better outcomes for our agencies, our employees, and the people of Washington State. This AI Strategy operationalizes Washington's IT Strategic Plan 2025 to 2028 by aligning AI adoption to four enterprise priorities: improving customer experience with an equity lens, strengthening the data foundation needed for trusted AI, accelerating the adoption of relevant technology, and supporting the workforce through strategic modernization. It creates a statewide approach that helps agencies adopt and scale AI by reducing barriers and moving from experimentation to real-world use. Agencies identify business challenges where AI can improve services, strengthen operations, and enhance customer engagement, while WaTech provides governance, guidance, approved tools, standards, and shared resources that deliver statewide value.

AI can improve and transform how government serves residents, businesses, and communities while modernizing how government operates. Its value lies in helping agencies improve the customer experience, reduce friction, simplify complex processes, strengthen decision-making, modernize systems, improve operations, and help the workforce focus on higher-value, mission-critical work.

Washington's approach is to apply AI where it helps solve meaningful public challenges, improves how government works, and delivers better outcomes for the people we serve. This strategy enables agencies to adopt and scale AI while applying Washington's AI Policy and guiding principles. Governance, review, and oversight are proportionate to risk, allowing agencies to move quickly on lower-risk uses while applying additional safeguards to higher-risk applications.

Purpose

This document establishes the statewide direction for how Washington will adopt, govern, and scale AI in service of better public outcomes. It translates the priorities of the IT Strategic Plan and AI Policy (DATA-04) into three strategic goals, four enabling workstreams, and an 18-month roadmap. It serves as a shared framework for agencies and WaTech to align priorities, coordinate investments, and accelerate responsible AI adoption. It is intended to guide decision-making and implementation across the enterprise rather than prescribe a single technology, vendor, or implementation approach.

Audience

This document is intended for the leaders and teams responsible for planning, adopting, governing, and supporting AI across Washington state government.

Primary audiences include:

- Agency leadership and executive sponsors responsible for investment, prioritization, and organizational direction;

- Agency IT, data, privacy, security, and business and program staff responsible for identifying, developing, implementing, and managing AI use cases;
- WaTech and enterprise IT teams across state agencies responsible for statewide governance, guidance, shared services, enterprise capabilities, and procurement support;
- Legislative and budget staff, local governments, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, and industry partners interested in Washington's strategic approach to AI.

With a focus on customer experience, operational efficiency, workforce enablement, and measurable public value, this strategy is organized around three interdependent strategic goals that inform investment decisions, agency priorities, and partnership opportunities:

Goal 1: Improve Customer Experiences and Outcomes with AI

Goal 2: Support the Workforce in Using AI Effectively

Goal 3: Scale Trusted AI Across Government

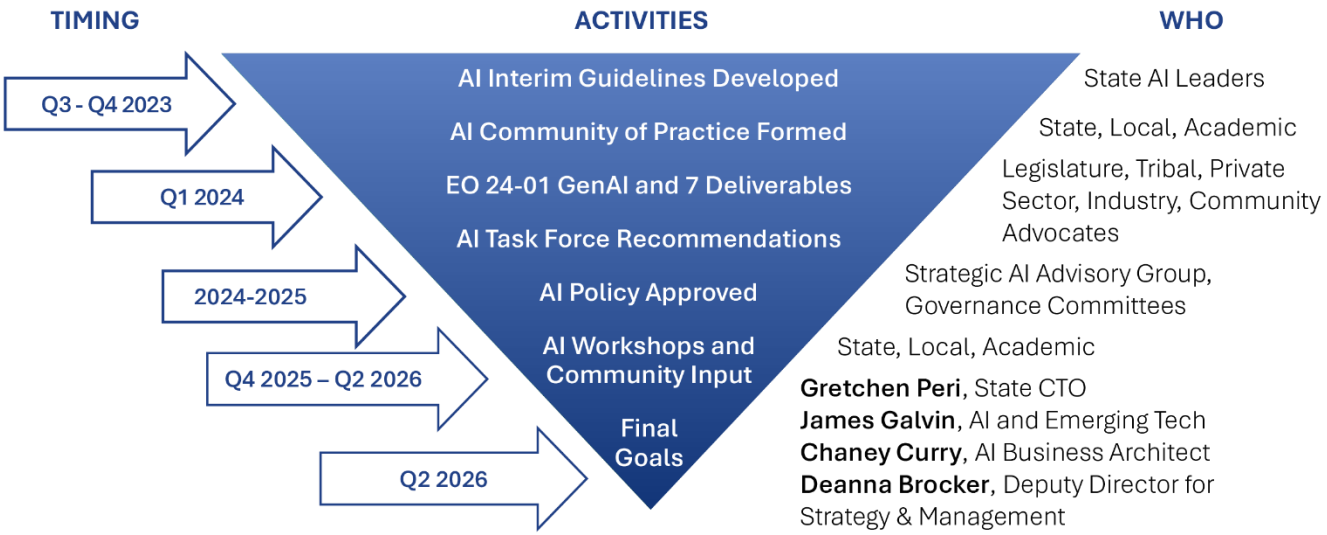
The strategy is paired with an enterprise AI Roadmap that operationalizes these goals through four statewide workstreams and an 18-month sequence of coordinated initiatives. Together, the strategy and roadmap provide a practical framework for improving services, strengthening operations, supporting the workforce, and delivering measurable public value while maintaining the security, privacy, equity, transparency, and trust expected of public service. The strategy will be updated periodically to reflect changes in technology, legislation, and agency needs.

Strategic Planning Process Overview

Developed through cross-agency workshops and statewide collaboration, this strategy reflects a clear agency priority: reduce barriers to responsible AI adoption while improving services, strengthening workforce readiness, clarifying statewide guidance, and coordinating AI shared services where they provide statewide value. It also builds on the state’s work over the past two years following Executive Order 24-01 to balance AI’s benefits and risks for Washingtonians.

Washington’s IT Strategic Plan 2025-2028 laid the groundwork for improving customer experience, turning data into insight and impact, adopting relevant technology, and transforming how we work. This AI Strategy builds on that foundation by recognizing that trusted, well-governed data is essential to successful AI adoption. It positions AI as a practical capability to improve services, strengthen decision-making, support agency operations, and advance enterprise modernization.

To develop this strategy, WaTech facilitated a collaborative, agency-led planning process to identify objectives, barriers, and statewide opportunities for AI adoption.



Discovery and Exploration, Workshops, and Co-Creation

WaTech facilitated two AI strategy workshops with participants from 35+ agencies and used additional channels to gather agency feedback on statewide AI investment objectives and initiatives. These sessions and inputs surfaced recurring themes and barriers to accelerating responsible adoption of AI, including:

- Lack of education, training, and AI literacy.
- Limited staffing capacity and overstretched IT teams.
- Need for clearer statewide guidance and vetted AI tools.
- Inconsistent data readiness, data quality, and AI governance practices.
- Lengthy procurement timelines and vendor ambiguity.
- Funding constraints for scaling pilots to production.

Agencies expressed the need for coordinated AI enablement, including approved tools, shared AI sandbox environments to test new AI capabilities, clearer procurement and security review guidance, role-based workforce training, a resource hub for shared learnings, and standard practices for moving successful pilots into production. Feedback from workshops, pilot projects, and statewide AI engagement informed the objectives outlined in this strategy. The roadmap that follows translates these needs and opportunities into a coordinated sequence of enterprise initiatives.

Strategic Context

Washington state operates in one of the world's leading technology and innovation ecosystems. The opportunity is not only to adopt AI tools, but to use AI to accelerate mission outcomes and transform how government works. Home to world-leading technology companies; nationally recognized research universities; and a diverse, digitally connected population, Washington is uniquely positioned to lead responsible AI adoption in government.

At the same time, government AI adoption must address a fundamental tension: the speed of AI adoption and enabling innovation versus the deliberate pace required for responsible, secure, equitable, and policy-aligned, public-sector deployment. This plan charts a path that accelerates AI adoption while refining the enabling environment in which Washington State employees operate. While not explicitly identified in this document, it is understood that legacy policies, standards, and processes may need to evolve as this strategy and AI adoption are matured across the state.

Guiding Principles

Washington's AI adoption is guided by a defined set of AI principles that support responsible use, public trust, and alignment with the state's AI policy. Public trust is foundational. Washington must be able to move quickly with AI without breaking public confidence. These principles guide how the state evaluates, governs, and scales AI across agencies.

- **Humans in the Lead** – People remain accountable for the outcomes of AI-enabled systems. Human oversight should be applied where appropriate based on the level of risk and potential impact to Washingtonians.
- **Equity by design** – AI systems must not perpetuate or amplify historical disparities in service delivery.
- **Transparency and explainability** – residents have the right to understand when and how AI influences decisions that affect them.
- **Data stewardship** – Washington's data is a public asset, governed with the consent and protection of the people it represents.

The full set of Washington State AI Principles is included in the appendix. Together, these guiding principles create a structure for accelerating AI adoption across state government while ensuring implementation remains trusted, secure, and aligned to mission outcomes. These principles not only guide the strategy but directly shape the roadmap initiatives that follow, ensuring each workstream advances trusted, equitable, and responsible AI adoption.

Our Washington AI Strategy Approach

Artificial Intelligence is a set of capabilities that enable systems to perform tasks such as pattern recognition, prediction, summarization, translation, and intelligent automation. When applied

responsibly, AI enhances agencies' ability to deliver services, improve operations, and advance mission outcomes.

This statewide AI Strategy positions AI as a mission and business accelerator, not a standalone technology project. It provides a unified approach that helps agencies move from exploration and pilots to coordinated, secure, and ethical adoption. This strategy ensures agencies can leverage AI confidently, consistently, and in ways that deliver measurable public value for the people of Washington.

It establishes a common direction for how agencies will advance AI to improve services, support the workforce, strengthen operations, and maintain public trust. The strategy is designed to help the state move faster and more consistently by aligning innovation with AI governance, enterprise guidance, practical resources, and shared services where they provide statewide value.

To support that work, the state will advance enterprise capabilities that help agencies adopt AI with greater consistency and confidence. These include shared AI environments, reviewed tools, standards, implementation guidance, procurement and contracting resources, prompt and playbook resources, and governance processes that support responsible use across agencies. Together, these capabilities will help improve service delivery, strengthen workforce capability, increase operational efficiency, and deliver trusted outcomes for residents and communities.

Washington will support a hybrid AI environment that allows agencies to use tools and platforms that fit agencies needs while maintaining appropriate governance, security, interoperability, and data protections for the enterprise. This includes leveraging shared enterprise environments, multiple cloud service providers, platform capabilities where appropriate, and existing state investments where and when they meet business needs. The state's approach is practical, flexible, and resilient rather than limited to a single toolset or vendor.

In alignment with Washington state's Artificial Intelligence Policy DATA-04, this strategy supports responsible, transparent, and mission-focused adoption of AI across state government. It reinforces clear accountability, documented oversight, alignment to business outcomes, ongoing risk management, accuracy and bias review, protection of sensitive data, and workforce training as conditions for trusted and effective AI implementation.

The following strategic goals define what the state aims to achieve, and the subsequent roadmap outlines how these goals will be implemented through coordinated enterprise workstreams.

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Improve Customer Experiences and Outcomes with AI

Washingtonians should be able to easily find, access, and receive the government services they need, regardless of which agency provides them. AI offers a powerful opportunity to simplify how residents and businesses interact with state agencies, improving service delivery, reducing barriers, and enabling timely access to essential information and services.

This goal aligns with IT Strategic Plan Goal 1 by using AI to improve access, responsiveness, and the resident and business experience.

Why this matters

Residents and businesses expect services that are easy to access and navigate and do not require duplicate entry of data or long wait times. AI introduces new capabilities, including language services, improved accessibility, and intelligent document processing, that can significantly improve how residents and businesses interact with state government. When deployed thoughtfully, these capabilities can increase access, responsiveness, and service speed while improving accessibility.

Strategic Objectives

- Identify and advance high-impact, agency and cross-agency AI use cases that improve resident and business experiences, building on existing and emerging efforts in permitting and licensing, emergency management, fraud prevention, transportation, and customer service.
- Deliver personalized, accessible, and trusted AI-enabled experiences by simplifying complex processes and providing intuitive services that meet residents and businesses where they are, in the language they speak, and through the channels they prefer.
- Enable agencies to securely test, validate, and implement high-value AI use cases, including agentic AI where appropriate, through shared sandbox environments, implementation support, and reusable capabilities.
- Deploy AI-powered service delivery at scale where successful AI use cases are operationalized into reusable services that improve how residents and businesses access services and receive support.
- Develop partnerships across public, private, nonprofit, and academic sectors to accelerate high-value AI use cases, and service improvements.

These objectives help improve the resident and business experience by applying AI to high impact services that reduce barriers, increase responsiveness, and improve outcomes. Workstreams 1, 2, and 4 in the roadmap include initiatives that directly advance this goal.

Goal 2: Support the Workforce in Using AI Effectively

Our state workforce is our greatest asset. To realize the promise of AI, we must invest in our people by building AI fluency at every level of government, empowering employees to use AI tools safely and creatively, and ensuring that AI augments human capability rather than displacing it. This goal aligns with IT Strategic Plan Goal 4 by preparing the workforce to use AI effectively, responsibly, and confidently.

Why this matters

AI has the potential to reshape how work is performed across state government. Agencies need a workforce that can use AI confidently and responsibly, supported by clear guidance, trusted tools, and consistent implementation practices. AI should strengthen workforce capability, reduce repetitive and lower-value work, and support employees in focusing more time on complex, service-centered, and mission-critical work. Human judgment, agency accountability, and workforce development must remain central as AI adoption expands.

Strategic Objectives

- Develop statewide AI literacy so employees have the knowledge and role-based training needed to use AI effectively and responsibly in their work.
- Equip employees with approved, standardized AI tools, guidance, and support so they can confidently and efficiently apply AI in their daily tasks, enabling them to shift more of their time to complex, high-value work.
- Share resources, implementation guidance, and lessons learned through a statewide AI resource hub that promotes reuse, accelerates adoption, and supports consistent implementation across agencies.
- Support employees in using AI to improve internal operations, reduce repetitive work, improve efficiency, and modernize how work is performed across state government.
- Partner with public, private, academic, and nonprofit organizations to expand AI literacy, workforce readiness, learning opportunities, and knowledge sharing.

These objectives strengthen the state's workforce capability by enabling employees to use AI effectively, responsibly, and with appropriate human oversight based on risk. This goal is primarily operationalized through Workstream 1: Workforce Readiness and Adoption, with support from workstreams 2 and 3.

Goal 3: Scale Trusted AI Across Government

Scaling trusted AI means using AI to improve services, strengthen agency operations, reduce duplication, support local government coordination, and deliver measurable value to Washingtonians. Washington will focus on high value uses that improve outcomes while keeping people, accountability, and public trust at the center. This goal aligns with IT Strategic Plan Goal 3 by establishing the standards, shared capabilities, and governance needed to scale trusted AI responsibly.

Why this matters

As AI adoption and use expands, Washington has an opportunity to transform how government works across agencies and with local partners. Common AI capabilities, trusted data, reusable patterns, and shared learning can streamline and automate processes, reduce complexity, improve customer service, strengthen operations, and scale solutions that no single agency can build alone. Over time, stronger coordination with local governments can help create a more connected experience for residents, reducing fragmentation and supporting a clearer, more consistent face of government. Scaling trusted AI also requires strong cybersecurity, resilient architecture, privacy and data protection, sound data practices, transparency, accountability, and readiness for evolving risks such as AI-enabled cyber threats, misuse, and future infrastructure demands.

Strategic Objectives

- Scale common AI capabilities, shared AI environments where appropriate, enterprise services, and reusable patterns that reduce duplication, improve services, and help agencies deliver more value to Washingtonians.
- Support agencies in using agentic AI and other advanced capabilities for appropriate, high-value use cases, with human oversight, authorization, and safeguards scaled to risk.
- Strengthen the data, cybersecurity, architecture, and interoperability foundation needed for trusted AI, including reusable data protection patterns and resilient solutions, and the adoption of emerging capabilities that improve cyber defense and resilience.
- Streamline responsible adoption through aligned procurement, contract standards, vendor review practices, records management, public disclosure guidance, and practical review processes.
- Measure AI outcomes, including customer experience, operational performance, service quality, workforce impact, sustainability, and technology costs.

These objectives help Washington scale AI in ways that improve services, strengthen operations, protect trust, and support secure, accountable, and sustainable adoption across agencies. This

goal is realized primarily through Workstreams 2, 3, and 4, which establish the enterprise infrastructure and safeguards required to scale trusted AI.

AI Strategic Roadmap

Washington's AI strategy establishes a statewide approach to adopting AI as a practical tool to improve service delivery, strengthen the workforce, reduce friction in government processes, and deliver measurable public benefit. Built on the direction set in the AI strategic plan, the roadmap translates that strategic intent into an actionable sequence of initiatives that allow agencies to experiment safely, easily adopt vetted vendor solutions, and scale high-value use cases responsibly across the enterprise.

Washington will not build most AI technology internally. Instead, the state will pre-vet, pre-approve, and broker access to trusted vendor solutions while providing the enterprise guardrails, shared tools, and secure environments agencies need to adopt AI safely and at speed.

Together, the initiatives in this roadmap strengthen the conditions needed for statewide adoption including:

- A confident and skilled workforce,
- Clear guidance and support,
- Transparent and strategic investment decisions,
- Safe experimentation pathways, and
- Reusable patterns and tools to improve efficiency and reduce duplication.

The roadmap is designed to evolve, ensuring Washington can respond quickly to emerging opportunities while maintaining public trust, accountability, and responsible AI governance.

Strategic Workstreams

The statewide AI roadmap is organized around four strategic workstreams intended to enable consistent, safe, and scalable AI adoption across the enterprise. These workstreams work together to improve workforce readiness, accelerate high-value use cases, ensure responsible deployment, and deliver measurable public benefit. Each workstream directly supports one or more of the strategic goals outlined earlier and carry a set of starting success metrics that establish a baseline to build upon. Together, they form the operational foundation for the integrated roadmap.

The workstreams create the structure needed to identify and advance high-value opportunities across the enterprise (e.g. digital accessibility, document-heavy workflows, permitting) so agencies can prioritize use cases with clear timelines, measurable KPIs, and meaningful public benefit.

Workstream 1: Workforce Readiness and Adoption

This workstream focuses on building the human foundation required for responsible AI use statewide. Initiatives in this workstream focus on improving statewide AI literacy, expanding peer learning and support networks, and helping employees gain the skills and confidence they need to use AI effectively in their work. These efforts help agencies adopt AI in ways that support and

enhance the work of public servants, improve service delivery, and build public trust, rather than replace employees.

Workstream 1 Success Criteria

- 80% of employees have completed foundational AI literacy training by April 2027.
- Increased attendance in the AI Community of Practice, interagency AI cohorts, and other peer-networking opportunities.
- # of hours of staff time redirected from repetitive to higher-value work (specifics on baseline and target hours to be established within individual use cases).

Workstream 2: Enterprise Enablement

This workstream establishes the statewide structures needed to help agencies identify, select, and scale high-value AI solutions, both those developed by the state and delivered through industry. Initiatives in this workstream include incorporating AI risk-review into existing processes, measuring AI outcomes through successful projects and readiness assessments, publishing use case inventories and approved vendor tool catalogs, and streamlining AI procurement practices. While the state will develop some use cases directly, most AI capabilities are expected to come from industry, whether through current solutions enhanced with AI capabilities or future ones. These efforts ensure AI investments are data-informed, transparent, and aligned to statewide priorities.

Workstream 2 Success Criteria

- Percentage of catalog tools with at least one agency actively deploying them.
- # of agency use cases submitted to the statewide use case inventory.
- Increased percentage of agencies implementing enterprise data quality and stewardship practices for high-value datasets.

Workstream 3: Enterprise Guidance and Support

This workstream provides consistent, practical, and trusted statewide guidance for navigating the full AI lifecycle. This includes risk-based design review processes with a fast-lane for low-risk use cases, unified implementation guidance (e.g. plain language notices and appeal/escalation paths), privacy and security requirements, data management expectations, and a centralized AI resource hub. Together, these initiatives remove ambiguity, strengthen compliance, and enable self-service adoption of responsible AI across the state.

Workstream 3 Success Criteria

- 100% of high-risk AI use cases are passed through design review by December 2027.
- Number of resources (guides, templates, FAQs) published and maintained on the resource hub.

- Number of agencies reporting increased clarity/confidence in AI guidance.

Workstream 4: Innovation and Implementation

This workstream enables agencies to experiment, validate, and scale AI solutions rapidly and safely. This includes a secure sandbox environment for experimentation, statewide learning labs, innovation challenge programs, academic partnerships, reusable patterns and prompts, and the development of enterprise recommendations for scaling AI-enabled services. These initiatives ensure agencies can experiment safely, move promising ideas into production, and expand access to AI across the state.

Workstream 4 Success Criteria

- # of agencies using the sandbox environment.
- # of active academic/public partnerships (e.g. internship projects).
- # of pilots that successfully meet defined criteria for production (e.g. service-to-time, accuracy/error, accessibility, multi-lingual support).

Strategic Goals	WS 1: Workforce Readiness and Adoption	WS 2: Enterprise Enablement	WS 3: Enterprise Guidance and Support	WS 4: Innovation and Implementation
Goal 1: Improve Customer Experiences and Outcomes with AI		• Demonstrate public value through enterprise AI outcome measurement • Provide a catalog of trusted AI tools and services for rapid adoption • Improve AI investment decisions through enterprise readiness insights		• Develop recommendations and a plan to deploy AI-powered service delivery at scale • Accelerate delivery through reusable AI implementation assets
Goal 2: Support the Workforce in Using AI Effectively	• Build a workforce that confidently and responsibly uses AI • Accelerate statewide AI adoption through peer learning and implementation networks	• Streamline responsible AI procurement and vendor engagement	• Expand statewide AI capacity through strategic academic and innovation partnerships • Accelerate implementation through AI advisory and enablement services	• Accelerate agency AI delivery through secure experimentation environments • Accelerate innovation through statewide AI labs and challenges
Goal 3: Scale Trusted AI Across Government		• Manage a statewide portfolio of high-value AI investments • Increase transparency and reuse through a statewide AI use case inventory • Advance AI-enabled cyber defense and resilience	• Enable responsible AI adoption through risk-based technology review • Deliver a unified AI implementation and guidance resource hub • Deliver a centralized, secure AI resource hub for statewide implementation • Strengthen the data foundation required for trusted AI	• Sustain enterprise AI through scalable funding and operating models

Figure 1: Visual depiction of workstream-to-initiative-to-goal alignment.

Each workstream described above contains several initiatives that will be undertaken to move the strategy forward. Figure 1provides a visual depiction of how each initiative aligns to the workstreams and goals outlined in the strategy (note: blank spaces do not mean there's no work to support the goal. Many initiatives cover more than one workstream/goal. This visual depicts the primary alignment only). The following sections outline how these initiatives are sequenced over time to build capacity early, scale effective solutions, and sustain long-term impact.

Integrated Roadmap

Initiatives developed within the four workstreams are sequenced across a Now/Next/Later roadmap (Table 2). The "Now" horizon is intentionally front-loaded with foundational work, so the state has what it needs in place to safely experiment now and scale later. These baselines remove ambiguity, reduce risk, and allow agencies to move faster when high-value opportunities emerge.

	NOW (0-6 months) *Build the foundation*	**NEXT** (6-12 months) *Scale what works*	**LATER** (12-18 months) *Sustain and optimize*
Workforce Readiness and Adoption	• Build a workforce that confidently and responsibly uses AI. • Accelerate statewide AI adoption through peer learning and implementation networks.	*(No additional items. Focus remains on adoption through the CoP, training, and cohorts.)*	*(No additional items. Focus remains on adoption through the CoP, training, and cohorts.)*
Enterprise Enablement	• Demonstrate public value through enterprise AI outcome measurement. • Provide a catalog of trusted AI tools and services for rapid adoption. • Streamline responsible AI procurement and vendor engagement. • Advance AI-enabled cyber defense and resilience.	• Improve AI investment decisions through enterprise readiness insights. • Manage a statewide portfolio of high-value AI investments. • Increase transparency and reuse through a statewide AI use case inventory.	• Sustain enterprise AI through scalable funding and operating models.

Enterprise Guidance Support	• Enable responsible AI adoption through risk-based technology review. • Deliver a unified AI implementation and guidance resource hub. • Deliver a centralized, secure AI resource hub for statewide implementation. • Strengthen the data foundation required for trusted AI.	• Accelerate implementation through AI advisory and enablement services.	*(No additional items. Focus remains on maturing and updating enterprise guidance)*
Innovation and Implementation	• Accelerate agency AI delivery through secure experimentation environments. • Accelerate innovation through statewide AI labs and challenge programs. • Expand statewide AI capacity through strategic academic and innovation partnerships. • Develop recommendations and a plan to deploy AI-powered service delivery at scale.	*(No additional items. Focus is on scaling the successful patterns identified in the NOW phase.)*	• Accelerate delivery through reusable AI implementation assets.

Table 2: Now/Next/Later Initiative Roadmap

NOW (0-6 months): Build the Foundation

Work in this horizon is primarily focused on preparing the people, processes, data, and shared environments so agencies can begin experimenting safely and confidently.

Now: Workforce Readiness and Adoption

- **Build a workforce that confidently and responsibly uses AI**. Equip employees with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to use AI and drive better outcomes for WA state.
- **Accelerate statewide adoption through peer learning and implementation networks.** Establish sustainable peer learning and collaboration networks that enable agencies to share their experiences, reusable practices, lessons learned, and emerging opportunities for responsible AI adoption.

Now: Enterprise Enablement

- **Demonstrate public value through enterprise AI outcome measurement.** Develop a standardized framework for measuring AI outcomes, customer impact, workforce benefits, operational improvements, and public value across statewide AI investments.
- **Provide a catalog of trusted AI tools and services for rapid adoption.** Develop and maintain a curated catalog of approved AI tools, platforms, and services that meet statewide governance, security, privacy, and operational requirements.
- **Streamline responsible AI procurement and vendor engagement.** Create standardized procurement and vendor engagement practices that simplify acquisition, improve consistency, and ensure responsible evaluation of AI technologies and services (e.g. including terms like "must not use state data to train models").
- **Advance AI-enabled cyber defense and resilience.** Advance AI-enabled cybersecurity capabilities through participation in trusted evaluation, testing, and early-access programs that improve vulnerability identification, threat analysis, and cyber defense.

Now: Enterprise Guidance and Support

- **Enable responsible AI adoption through risk-based technology review.** Integrate AI-specific governance, privacy, security, and risk considerations into enterprise technology review processes to support responsible innovation while maintaining public trust.
- **Deliver a unified AI implementation and guidance resource hub.** Establish a centralized enterprise guidance hub that provides agencies with consistent, practical, and actionable direction for implementing AI responsibly throughout the solution lifecycle.
- **Deliver a centralized, secure AI resource hub for statewide implementation.** Create a centralized destination for secured AI implementation resources, templates, tools, and reusable assets.
- **Strengthen the data foundation required for trusted AI.** Advance statewide data readiness by strengthening governance, stewardship, interoperability, quality, classification, and protection practices that support trusted AI implementation.

Now: Innovation and Implementation

- **Accelerate agency AI delivery through secure experimentation environments.** Provide secure, scalable experimentation environments that allow agencies to safely explore, test, and validate AI solutions while managing privacy, security, and operational risks.
- **Accelerate innovation through statewide AI labs and challenges.** Facilitate collaborative innovation programs in partnership with external organizations that encourage experimentation, rapid prototyping, workforce development, and cross-sector learning.
- **Expand statewide AI capacity through strategic academic and innovation partnerships.** Develop partnerships with academic institutions, research organizations, and innovation partners to identify opportunities to expand capacity, accelerate learning, and support rapid prototyping through internships, co-designed assessments, and public-sector testbeds as example.
- **Develop recommendations and a plan to deploy AI-powered service at scale.** Develop a plan and implementation recommendations for scaling successful AI use cases into shared enterprise services that improve customer experience and operational efficiency.

NEXT (6-12 months): Scale What Works

Once the foundational structures are in place, the focus shifts to scaling adoption, maturing investment decisions, and increasing reuse.

Next: Workforce Readiness and Adoption

No new initiatives added into this horizon. The focus will remain on supporting adoption through training, peer networks, statewide cohorts, and other learning opportunities.

Next: Enterprise Enablement

- **Improve AI investment decisions through enterprise readiness insights.** Establish a statewide AI readiness and maturity assessment that provides consistent insight into capabilities, workforce readiness, governance maturity, data preparedness, and implementation capacity. Results will inform targeted investments, resource allocation, and enterprise support strategies.
- **Manage a statewide portfolio of high-value investments.** Implement a standardized intake, evaluation, and prioritization process that enables coordinated investment decisions, improves visibility into AI initiatives, and aligns resources to statewide priorities.
- **Increase transparency and reuse through a statewide AI use case inventory.** Create a searchable inventory, including a public-facing view, of AI use cases, implementation experiences, reusable assets, and lessons learned to increase transparency, knowledge sharing, and reuse.

Next: Enterprise Guidance and Support

- **Accelerate implementation through AI advisory and enablement services.** Provide lightweight, scalable advisory and enablement services that help agencies navigate AI adoption, access resources, resolve implementation challenges, and accelerate delivery.

Next: Innovation and Implementation

No new initiatives added to this horizon. The focus will be on identifying and scaling successful patterns and use cases.

LATER (12-18 months): Sustain and Optimize

As the state builds momentum and proves value, the priority shifts to sustainability, optimization, and maturing shared services.

Later: Workforce Readiness and Adoption

No new initiatives added into this horizon. The focus will remain on supporting adoption through training, peer networks, statewide cohorts, and other learning opportunities.

Later: Enterprise Enablement

- **Sustain enterprise AI through scalable funding and operating models.** Develop sustainable funding and operational support models and repeatable funding pathways tightly aligned to measurable outcomes to secure long-term legislative support for enterprise AI capabilities and scaling.

Later: Enterprise Guidance and Support

No new initiatives added into this horizon. The focus will remain on maturing and updating enterprise guidance to meet end user needs.

Later: Innovation and Implementation

- **Accelerate delivery through reusable AI implementation assets.** Establish a statewide library of reusable AI implementation assets that enable agencies to rapidly deploy solutions using proven patterns, templates, prompts, code assets, and shared capabilities.

Conclusion

The AI roadmap positions the state to innovate responsibly, scale what works, and ensure that every agency, regardless of size, resources, or maturity, can benefit from trusted AI capabilities. By strengthening workforce readiness, clarifying statewide guidance, maturing enterprise enablement

structures, and expanding safe environments for experimentation, this roadmap creates the conditions for high-impact AI adoption that improves services, reduces friction, and delivers measurable public value. As the state iterates on this roadmap and agencies put these capabilities into practice, Washington will continue moving toward a modern, efficient, and people-centered government.

Our Commitment to Washington

Artificial intelligence is not a solution in search of a problem. AI is a set of capabilities that, when applied to real service and operational challenges, can help Washington move faster, reduce friction, improve decision-making, and deliver better outcomes for the people we serve.

This AI Strategy and Roadmap is our commitment to using AI with urgency, purpose, and responsibility: to improve services, support the workforce, strengthen public trust, and ensure that every Washingtonian, regardless of geography, language, income, or ability, can benefit from what this technology makes possible.

Call To Action: Moving Forward Together

AI is a strategic modernization initiative requiring coordinated action across agencies to improve outcomes for Washington residents and communities.

How we can drive this forward:

1. Get involved through cross-agency cohort teams, the AI Community of Practice, governance and advisory groups, and shared use case development.
2. Build AI literacy and workforce confidence through role-based training, clear AI use guidance, and peer learning across agencies.
3. Identify high-value AI use cases that improve customer engagement, increase operational efficiency, strengthen decision-making, or reduce administrative burden.
4. Share AI projects, outcomes, lessons learned, reusable prompts, playbooks, and implementation patterns.
5. Champion investments in workforce development, shared infrastructure, data readiness, approved AI tools, and a culture of curiosity, experimentation, learning, and responsible innovation.

AI adoption requires a defined operating model, with shared responsibility between WaTech and state agencies. WaTech facilitates enterprise IT governance, enterprise architecture, policy alignment, standards, and shared services where there is a statewide need and sustainable support model. Agencies are responsible for mission-driven use cases, data stewardship, required risk assessments, and operational oversight. Together, WaTech and agencies can improve the lives of Washingtonians through responsible AI-powered service delivery at scale.

Acknowledgements

This Washington State AI Strategy reflects the collaboration and expertise of state and local government leaders and agency partners who participated in workshops and planning sessions. It

would not be possible without the contributions of those who shared their time, insights, and commitment to shaping Washington's AI adoption.

Thank you to everyone who played a role in this effort. Through continued collaboration, this work will strengthen and modernize services to deliver measurable value to Washingtonians.

Contact

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Appendix A: AI Principles

The AI principles guide responsible AI adoption and keep public trust at the center of implementation. They include:

- **Safe, secure, and resilient**: AI should be used with safety and security in mind, minimizing potential harm and ensuring that systems are reliable, resilient, and controllable by humans. AI systems used by state agencies should not endanger human life, health, property, or the environment.
- **Valid and reliable**: Agencies should ensure AI use produces accurate and valid outputs and demonstrates the reliability of system performance.
- **Fairness, inclusion, and non-discrimination**: AI applications must be developed and utilized to support and uplift communities, particularly those historically marginalized. Fairness in AI includes concerns for equality and equity by addressing issues such as harmful bias and discrimination.
- **Privacy and data protection**: AI should be used to respect user privacy, ensure data protection, and comply with relevant privacy regulations and standards. Privacy values such as anonymity, confidentiality, and control generally should guide choices for AI system design, development, and deployment. Privacy-enhancing AI should safeguard human autonomy and identity where appropriate.
- **Accountability and responsibility**: As public stewards, agencies should use generative AI responsibly and be held accountable for the performance, impact, and consequences of its use in agency work.
- **Transparency and auditability**: Acting transparently and creating a record of AI processes can build trust and foster collective learning. Transparency reflects the extent to which information about an AI system and its outputs is available to the individuals interacting with the system. Transparency answers “what happened” in the system.
- **Explainable and interpretable**: Agencies should ensure AI use in the system can be explained, meaning “how” the decision was made by the system can be understood. Interpretability of a system means an agency can answer the “why” for a decision made by the system, and its meaning or context to the user.
- **Public purpose and social benefit**: The use of AI should support the state’s work in delivering better and more equitable services and outcomes to its residents.

Appendix B: References and Resources

Washington State AI Policy

Washington State IT Strategic Plan

Washington State Enterprise Data Strategy

Washington State AI Principles and Guidelines - State Agency Generative AI Guidelines 8-7-23 .pdf

Draft Washington State AI Policy - Washington State AI Strategic Plan draft for review.docx

Emerging Technology Program charter - GenAI Sandbox Charter 2025-01-02 - signed.pdf

Executive Order 24-01 - 24-01 - Artificial Intelligence (tmp).pdf

Executive Order 24-01 deliverables

- State of Washington Generative Artificial Intelligence Report
- Initial Procurement Guideline for GenAI
- Implementing risk assessments for high-risk AI systems
- Guidelines for Deployment of Generative AI
- Report on the impact of GenAI on state workforce
- AI risk guidance

Washington State AI Responsible AI in the Public Sector - Responsible AI in the Public Sector - WaTech & UC Berkeley Report - Final

Washington State AI Task Force Report - Inaugural Report of the Washington State Artificial Intelligence Task Force - Dec. 2024

NIST AI Risk Management Framework - AI Risk Management Framework | NIST

Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** The use of machine learning and related technologies that use data to train statistical models for the purpose of enabling computer systems to perform tasks normally associated with human intelligence or perception, such as computer vision, speech or natural language processing, and content generation. (Source: DATA-04 Artificial Intelligence Policy)
- **Generative AI**: Technology that can create content, including text, images, audio, or video, when prompted by a user. Generative AI systems learn patterns and relationships from large amounts of data, which enables systems to generate new content that may be similar, but not identical, to the underlying training data. (Source: DATA-04 Artificial Intelligence Policy)
- **Agentic AI:** Advanced AI assistants designed to perform tasks in service of human goals, but without direct human intervention (e.g. booking meetings on a user's behalf). (Source: Responsible AI in the Public Sector - WaTech & UC Berkeley Report - Final)
- **AI-enabled technology:** A technology, application, or service that incorporates AI capabilities, either acquired specifically for those capabilities or having them embedded within a broader solution. (Source: adapted from DATA-04 Artificial Intelligence Policy)
- **Intelligent process automation:** A preconfigured software instance that combines business rules, experience-based context determination logic, and decision criteria to initiative and execute multiple interrelated human and automated processes in a dynamic context. The goal is to complete the execution of a combination of processes, activities, and tasks in one or more unrelated software systems that deliver a result or service with minimal or no human intervention (Source: NIST Glossary)
- **Intelligent document processing:** The use of AI to automatically read, extract, classify, and process information from documents and forms.
- **Use case:** A specific, defined application of AI to accomplish a particular business purpose or outcome (e.g. translating documents or answering customer inquiries). Use cases are the unit at which the state identifies, reviews, prioritizes, inventories, and scales AI. (Source: Adapted from OMB M-25-21)
- **High-risk AI use case:** At a minimum, a high-risk AI use case is a use case using AI technology that creates a high-risk to natural persons' health, safety or fundamental rights. Agencies may identify additional categories of high-risk AI use cases. (Source: adapted from DATA-04 Artificial Intelligence Policy)
- **AI Governance:** The processes, structures, and activities the state and agencies use to ensure AI is adopted and used in compliance with state policies, standards, and principles. (Source: adapted from DATA-04 Artificial Intelligence Policy)
- **Responsible AI:** The use of AI in a manner consistent with Washington's AI principles (Appendix A).

- **Human oversight:** Meaningful human review, monitoring, and accountability for the outputs and outcomes of AI-enabled systems, applied in proportion to the level of risk and potential impact on Washington. People, not systems, remain accountable for decisions. (Source: adapted from DATA-04 Artificial Intelligence Policy)
- **Sandbox/sandbox environment:** A system that allows an untrusted application to run in a highly controlled environment where the application's permissions are restricted to an essential set of computer permissions. (Source: State of Washington Generative Artificial Intelligence Report)