

AUSTIN **ANNUAL**  
2018 **CONFERENCE**  
**& SHOWPLACE**

**HFA**s AT THE  
CENTER

North Carolina

NC's Digital Journey



## Who we are...

- Create affordable housing opportunities for North Carolinians whose needs are not met by the market
- Created in 1973 by the General Assembly
- Self-supporting public agency
- 269,000 affordable homes and apartments
- \$21.2 billion in real estate production
- We Care, We Act, We Lead

NORTH CAROLINA

HOUSING

FINANCE

AGENCY

# Housing Opportunities for North Carolina

- Single-Family
  - Low-cost mortgages and down payment assistance
  - Rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes
  - Foreclosure prevention assistance
- Multi-Family
  - Affordable homes and apartments
  - Supportive housing
  - Project Based Contract Administration

## 2002 – 2012

- Scott
  - Manager of Rental Investment, then Director
  - Executive Director (since Jan. 2017)
- Tim
  - Programmer -> Analyst/PM -> Manager of IT (2011)
  - CIO (since 2014, director since May 2018)

# Today's Presentation

- History of IT @ NCHFA back to 2002
  - Success stories
  - Challenges
- Current approach – alignment of IT with the business
- How we innovate
- Success factors

# Director Team

as of May 2018

Executive Director

CFO

CIO

Director of  
Administration

Director of  
Business  
Services and  
Solutions

Director of  
Community Living  
and Rental Asset  
Management

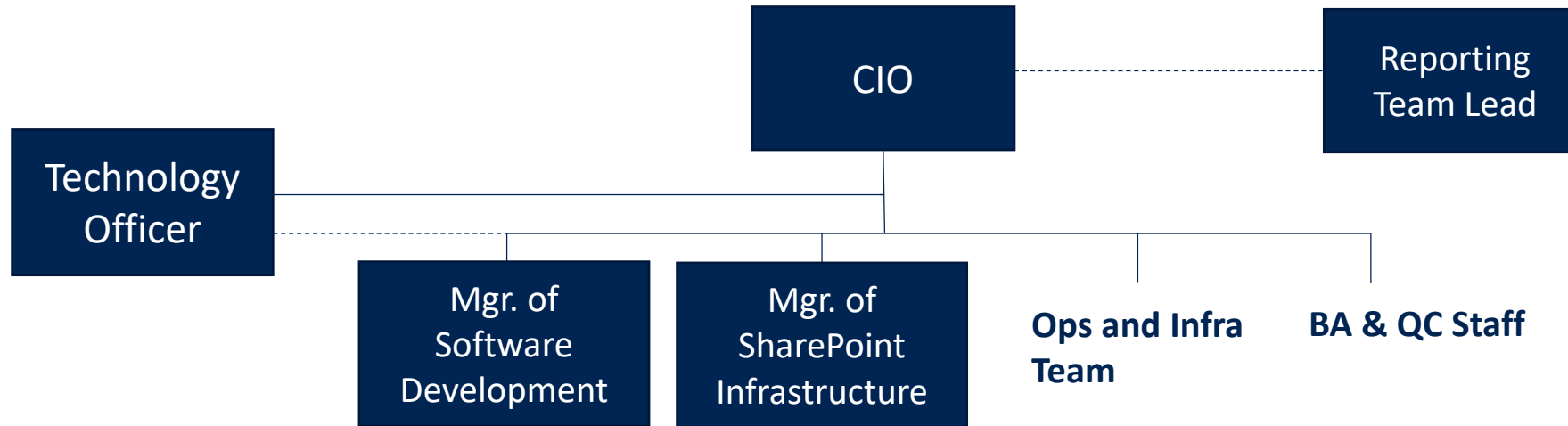
Director of  
Homeownership  
Programs

General  
Counsel,  
Director of  
Legal Affairs

Director of  
Rental  
Investment

165 Staff Members

# IT Structure



23 IT Staff including contractors; 14 software developers

CIO has 10 direct reports; mix of supervisors and staff

## 2002 – 2012: Successes

- Executive Director support for IT
- Close relationship between the ED and the Director of Policy, Planning, and Technology
  - The drive to be successful and accomplish sometimes the impossible
  - Began addressing disparate, antiquated systems, business processes, and Agency-wide reporting needs
  - Vision for custom software applications for lines-of-business, including B2B Portals
  - Push to hire multi-talented and skilled IT staff
  - Introduced project management methodologies

## 2002 – 2012: Successes

- Focus on software application development
  - Started with online portal for the Federal Tax Credit program in 2002
  - Continued with replacement of legacy systems
  - Vision for a fund tracking system (Fund Control)
  - Vision for going “paperless” (EDRM)
  - Continuous IT support for single-family lending during financial crisis
- Agency challenges drove IT innovation
  - Hardest Hit fund was a game-changer for many reasons
- Switch to Agile software development practice

# 2002 – 2012: Successes

- Infrastructure Upgrades
  - Virtualization (VMWare)
  - Wireless network
  - New firewall and switches

# 2002 – 2012: Challenges

- Lack of a common understanding of IT
  - Who's making the decisions?
  - Why is that project a priority?
  - Why does it cost so much?
- Lack of trust between IT and a few key Agency stakeholders
  - Shadow IT
- Too many competing priorities, with various failed attempts to prioritize
- Infrastructure and Security lacked attention

# 2012 – Turning Point

- Director of Policy Planning and Technology and Manager of IT worked to create a plan to address major IT gaps in **infrastructure** and **security**
- TechVision team created
  - Vision: Shared Knowledge, Governance, Prioritization
  - Building a common understanding was very difficult at times
  - Budget transparency (wow!)
  - Cost of Delay prioritization method
  - Complete IT transparency
- It took a while, but TRUST was established

## Most Recently...

- 2014 – Manager of IT promoted to CIO, first CIO for the Agency
- 2015 - CIO was invited to the Director Team and Board meetings
  - Although not a director, was viewed as key Agency strategic resource
- 2016 - Information Security became Agency strategic goal
- 2018 - Org change to promote the CIO to a director and establish IT as a stand-alone business group, formerly a part of the Policy, Planning, and Technology business group

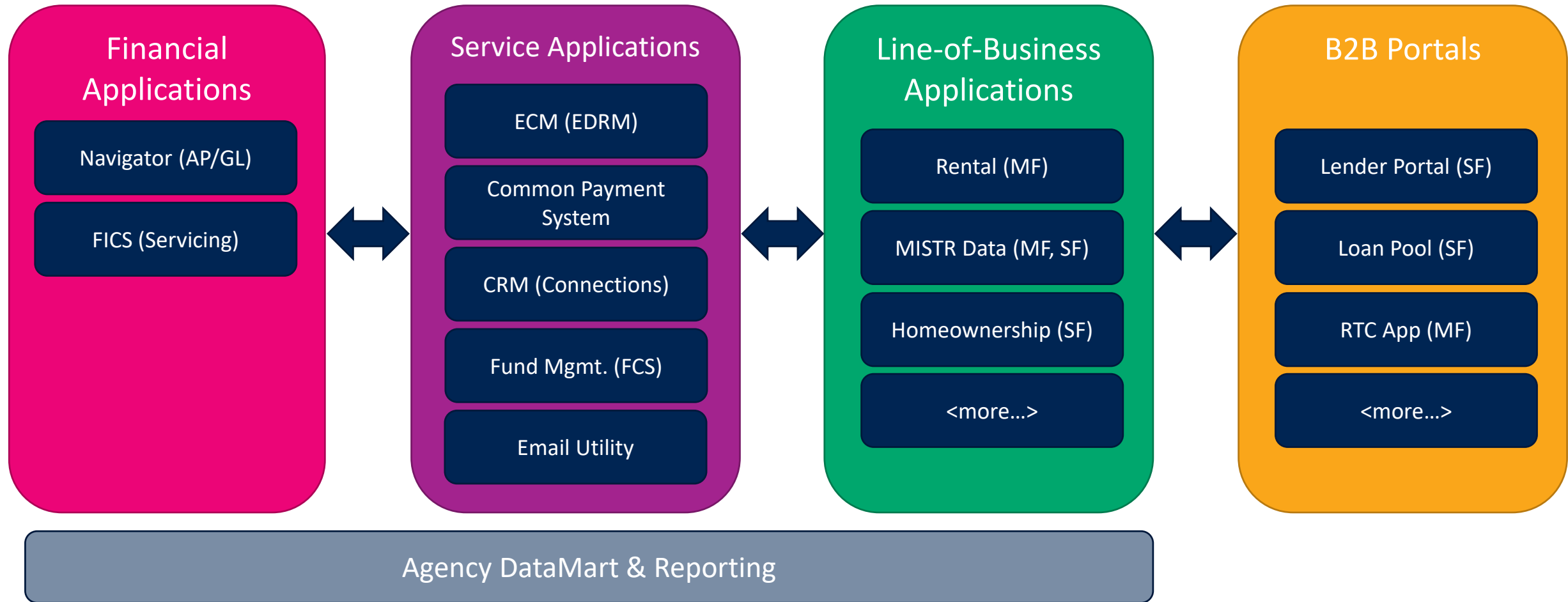
# IT As A Business Partner

- Early IT presence in all Agency initiatives:
  - Example: Hurricane Florence – new rent reimbursement program for rapid rehousing
- Provide business analysis, not just system analysis
- Provide project management
- Strong IT helpdesk that works closely with staff
- Open door policy – all staff ideas are welcomed
- Annual and ad-hoc meetings with Agency leadership to brainstorm technology needs, ideas, and innovation opportunities

# Always a Priority

- Enabling our staff
  - PC refreshes
  - Laptops for working remote
  - Upgraded phone system
  - Upgraded printing, copying, scanning, and faxing capabilities
  - Technology in conference rooms and common working areas

# Application Infrastructure Overview



# How do we innovate?

- Early adopters of Agile software development
  - Scrum, Kan Ban
- Staff training – budget commitment
- “Innovation Day”
- Research and Development (Exploration); Pilot projects
- DevOps
- SaaS

# Role of our Technology Officer

- Technical guru
- Works with all teams; consults
- Architect for all new software applications
- Architect and key decision maker for all software development environments (production, development, test, QA, etc.)
- Leads DevOps initiatives
- Mentors and coaches team members
- Stays current with technologies



# Success Factors

- IT is no longer seen as an impediment, but an enabler
- Continued investment (stable budget, slight increases)
  - Custom software application development
  - Instructure and security
- Customer Service – always a focus for IT

# Success Factors

- Trust of IT by business staff:
  - Solid relationships between IT and business staff
  - Example: security changes/implementations (transparency – why?)
  - IT Team Members wear many “hats”
- TechVision
- Decision Transparency!

# Thank you!

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- Scott Farmer, Executive Director
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