

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Milestones Project Lean Initiative Report



Project Summary

The Division of Transportation System Development oversees numerous active Mega Projects, Major Projects and Transportation Projects Commission Studies. These projects have been increasing not only in numbers but in complexity and reduced delivery timelines over the past years. These changes place increasing demands on the Division resources and supporting entities. The current process had potential for conflicting demands on resources limiting the ability to respond in a timely manner and increasing risk to the Department.

The goal of this project is to increase timeliness of meeting project milestones through improving the ability to do resource planning.

This project was completed on December 30, 2012.

Improvements

- Reduced time invested in providing milestone information to partners by 419 hours per year
- Eliminated ten process steps
- Partners report increased ability to do effective resource planning

MAPSS Core Goal Area

- Accountability

Statewide Goal Area

- Cost of government
- Customer satisfaction
- Employee work environment

Issue

All Division of Transportation System Development (DTSD) Mega Projects, Major Projects and Transportation Projects Commission (TPC) approved studies are supported by common partners, including DTSD Central Office, Federal Highways Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the State Historical Society. Currently, each regional office is responsible for tracking their projects on a project-by-project basis.

Several disadvantages were identified in the current process:

- Supporting partners do not have the ability to plan for potential conflicts in resource demands
- Resource demand conflicts result in DTSD not having the right information at the right time which increases risk and potential delays to the project

Lean Six Sigma Process

The team described the current process and identified which milestones are critical for resource planning. Analysis of the customer needs led the team to develop a new report which could provide a statewide picture of project status.

The team concluded that a proactive approach to providing this Milestones Report on a quarterly basis would allow partners to do better resource planning. The new report was developed and implemented.

Results

Cost of government: In the current state, a single inquiry related to milestones status resulted in over 114 hours of work, with 4 inquiries in the past year. The new process generates a quarterly report which is proactively provided to partners. This new process takes a little over 9 hours per quarter, or approximately 37 hours per year, saving 419 hours in labor per year through the elimination of 10 steps.

Increased customer satisfaction: This full implementation of this new report will provide partners with key information necessary for resource planning. This report has already helped FHWA, for instance, to articulate the need for additional resources to assist with the development of DTSD projects.

Employee work environment: This project allows staff to proactively plan, resulting in more efficient and consistent performance. Some tools developed as a result of the project include a project calendar, schedule of standing management meetings, performance milestones and project timeline templates.

The new quarterly milestone tracking report provides a baseline which did not previously exist. This baseline will allow DTSD to assess and identify areas for future process improvement.