

Category: Infrastructure

State: California

Department: General Services

Lead category: Infrastructure

Category area: Construction

Project Title: Alternative Options for Data Issues in Government: The Division of the State Architect (DSA) Efforts to Increase Effectiveness and Transparency Through Use of Cloud Based Subscription Service Instead of Traditional Enterprise Systems.

Project Associates: Will Herald, Senior Architect; Delcy Thut, Staff Services Manager I; Jim Hackett, Principal Engineer

Project date: Various implementations from 2013 through 2015.

Executive summary: When Chet Widom was appointed as California's State Architect in 2012, DSA faced substantial challenges. Though state law requires all public school construction be overseen and approved by DSA, and sets standards for DSA certification, it also allows school districts to occupy uncertified facilities. As a result of this loophole, over 16,000 school facility projects were uncertified as of December 31, 2010. This issue resulted in scathing news articles and DSA was highly criticized in a report by California's State Auditor.

It was clear immediate action had to take place. However, a traditional information technology (IT) database enterprise solution would be both time and resource intensive. Instead, DSA took an innovative approach by using a cloud based subscription service solution.

Not only did use of this cloud based subscription service allow DSA to quickly and successfully address major pressing issues, it also resulted in taxpayer savings in the hundreds of thousands, potentially millions of dollars.

Project description: DSA developed various systems through use of a cloud based subscription service to improve communication, information collections, collaboration and the sharing of vital information to/with stakeholders and clients. Implemented in summer 2013, DSA continues to use these systems and explore other ways to effectively the service. Other programs and division within the California Department of General Services witnessed DSA's success and have used the same tools for use in their respective program areas.

Why initiated: Negative news stories about uncertified school buildings and a subsequent audit ordered by the California legislature created a need for immediate and viable solutions. DSA had to discover a way to assure citizens that all California public school buildings were safe.

During the exploration and development of solutions to remedy certification issues, DSA staff determined that a lack of documentation and communication problems were two primary reasons why school facility projects were not certified. DSA also needed a way to create transparency and inform the

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public on the certification status of existing school buildings.

DSA determined it would change its certification process by using an inspection card process, a process similarly used by virtually every building inspection department in the country. By switching to an inspection card process, DSA could achieve concurrent certification by prohibiting further construction of school facilities from advancing if a particular phase was not sufficiently completed.

At certain stages of construction, required documentation must be provided by various parties. In some instances under the old process, paper documents were lost and not all involved stakeholders were aware of document submittals.

Though DSA knew implementation of an automated document submittal system would be highly beneficial, the traditional information technology (IT) enterprise approach would most likely take a significant amount of time to implement and would likely have significant short and long term costs for development, maintenance and licensing. Because immediate solutions to the certification issue were necessary and available funds were limited, other options had to be found.

After determining that data and documentation necessary for certification was open and public data, DSA came up with an innovative approach: the use of a cloud based, subscription service to provide the ability to collaborate, communicate and share documentation. Using a cloud based subscription service, DSA staff developed DSABox, a solution that facilitates automated submittal of documents and also allows authorized project stakeholders to view all uploaded documents relevant to the specific project.

DSA determined that DSABox contained appropriate security protocols that highly restricted user access in addition to providing easily obtainable auditing reports on user activity.

DSA also had a need to better inform the public on the certification status of existing school buildings. There was a clear need for transparency to clearly show that DSA had done everything it could do ensure certification.

Faced with the costs and time development pressures of creating a traditional IT enterprise solution, DSA leveraged the cloud based subscription service to create "DSA CertificationBox". The solution allows the public to access information regarding all uncertified public school facilities in California via DSA's web site. CertificationBox allows users to identify uncertified school buildings and the precise reasons why those buildings are uncertified. Again, by leveraging the subscription service rather than a traditional database, DSA saved substantial funding and staff time in development, deployment, storage and maintenance.

Additionally, DSA used the same tools to create InspectorBox. This system allows school districts to review the performance and evaluations of construction project inspectors who are certified by DSA. California law requires school districts to hire DSA-certified project inspectors for oversight on school construction projects.

Results achieved: Implementation of the inspection card process and its use of DSABox component

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commenced on June 1, 2013. Since that time, the certification rate of California public School facilities has risen from 69 percent to over 90 percent, and the rate continues to climb each day.

DSABox is also used to help certify projects completed prior to implementation of the inspection card process, dating back to the 1980's. Use of DSACertificationbox to collect necessary documentation has resulted in the certification of over 40 percent of the older, "legacy" projects, those uncertified projects that existed before 2012.

Use of the subscription service costs the state approximately \$3,000 annually for licensing. Licenses are only required for administrators who are DSA staff. As of July 31, 2016, over 20,000, architects, engineers, contractors and other stakeholders are categorized as "collaborators" and do not require additional purchases of individual licenses. Additionally, there is no cost to the state for data storage or system maintenance. In fact, for the time being, there is no limit on the amount of data stored. The long-term costs of a traditional enterprise data system for development, maintenance and storage would most likely reach into the millions of dollars.

The Box service also allows the system to be used across multiple platforms. It can be used through a traditional workstation but can also be easily used by one out in the field with a tablet or other mobile device. This flexibility allows instantaneous uploading and viewing of documents and data, saving considerable amounts of time for both DSA and its stakeholders. Use of tablets in the field allows DSA field staff to spend more time on project sites and the ability to personally visit more construction projects, thus resulting in a higher rate of certified projects.

Project timeline: In late 2012, before commencement of the inspection card process, DSA successfully piloted use of DSABox on receiving and sharing documents through the existing certification process. After viewing the success of the pilot, mandatory DSABox use was drafted into the future inspection card process. The inspection card process started on June 1, 2013 and DSA CertificationBox was developed and operational in 2014. Implementation of InspectorBox commenced in 2015.

Significance to the improvement of the operation of government: DSA created a solution that highly improved DSA's core function, the certification of school facilities. Use of DSABox also provided an automated mechanism for document submittal from stakeholders instead of use of paper, thus eliminating the potential for lost documents.

DSA CertificationBox also increases transparency of government for the public by providing an easily accessible mechanism to provide information regarding uncertified school facilities.

DSA InspectorBox provides a critical tool for school districts to hire competent project inspectors to oversee school construction.

In addition to vastly improving the number of certified school buildings, DSA's new solution and processes result in faster and more efficient means of communication, cost savings (postage and personnel), as well as increase sustainability through decreased use of paper products.

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Benefits realized by citizens and/or state government: Both the state and the public have experienced:

- Significant cost and process efficiencies.
- Substantially increased performance (certified facilities).
- Increased transparency.
- Increased sustainability.
- A flexible system that can be used across multiple platforms that allows use in a variety of settings.

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State: Indiana

Department: Department of Administration

Lead category: Infrastructure

Category area: Facilities

Project Title: Parking Outsourcing

Project Associates: Jessica Robertson – IDOA Commissioner; Steve Harless – IDOA Deputy Commissioner; Matt Robinson – IDOA Project Manager

Project date: The parking vendor began transitioning into its new role during the spring of 2015 and took complete control of operations July 1, 2015.

Executive summary: IDOA has partnered with Republic Parking System Inc. and outsourced the operation of five (5) parking facilities (for a total of 7,322 number of parking spots) owned by the State of Indiana in downtown Indianapolis. By leveraging its private sector experience, Republic has brought a number of efficiencies to the State's parking operation, including a reduction in overall costs and an increased utilization of spacing for revenue generating activities.

Project description: Transition from an internal state operated model to the private management of the State parking facilities and lots located at the Indiana State Capitol. The vendor is responsible for providing all day to day maintenance, material, equipment, proposed staff, and expertise to perform the management of operations of the parking facilities.

Why initiated: Operating a parking garage is not a core function of State Government. It was determined a private operator with parking expertise could help bring industry best practices and leverage private sector experience and efficiencies. The goal is for parking to continue to be free for state employees and for revenue to increase for event parking.

Results achieved: State expenses were reduced by approximately 17% since the transition to a private operator.

The new operator has also increased revenue opportunities by utilizing the web to market our parking facilities for various events; something we didn't utilize when the garages were under State management. Also, all existing State employees were offered jobs with the private parking operator, and we were able to transfer wages and benefits to the private company thus eliminating substantial benefit and legacy cost.

Project timeline:

Sourcing and evaluation of potential parking operators - November 12, 2014

Vendor selection – May 7, 2015

Full Transition – July 1, 2015

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Significance to the improvement of the operation of government:

- Reduction in overall costs of parking operation.
- Increased utilization of spacing for revenue generating activities.
- Transferred the responsibility of parking operations to a private parking operator with years of expertise and experience. This allowed for parking operations to be more efficient as well as allows Department of Administration to focus on more core areas of our responsibilities.

Benefits realized by citizens and/or state government: Outsourcing parking allowed for the State to get out the business of operating parking facilities and have it managed by an experienced vendor. Implementation has shown that we have reduced operating costs, increased revenue opportunities, and relieved the State of employee benefit and legacy costs.

Category: Infrastructure

State: New Mexico

Department: General Services Department

Lead category: Infrastructure

Category area: Facilities

Project Title: Capital Asset Management & Planning System (CAMPS)

Project Associates: George Morgan, Director, Facilities Management Division; Vision and Courage to see it through; Marcus Gee, Project Manager, General Services Department Contractor; Mike Keelin, AssetWorks Lead Analyst; primary architect aligning FMD business processes to the AiM System; Marty Perrins-Dallman, Capital Projects Team Lead (Acting), design of the CP work flows; Flaviano Prosperini, Technical Lead, technical expertise and responsiveness; Suzanne StClair, Functional Administrator, for attention to detail and follow through; Rima Varela, Financial Manager, design of the payables processes; Annette Tafoya, Budget Manager, design of the capital project budgeting processes

Project date: 14-Feb-16

Executive summary: The purpose of Capital Asset Management & Planning System (CAMPS) is to enable the New Mexico General Services Department's (GSD) Facilities Management Division (FMD) to administer capital projects funding in compliance with the state code, manage Capital Projects efficiently to ensure state funds are spent effectively and efficiently and ensure that projects are managed and procured in a fair and reasonable manner to provide the best value to the state of New Mexico.

The underlying goals of the CAMPS Project included:

1. Standardizing the methods and procedures for:
 - a. assessing and planning capital projects,
 - b. carry out capital projects in accordance with scope, schedule and budget constraints, and
 - c. handing off capital projects to Operations and Maintenance business functions at project closeout.
2. Providing management and stakeholder visibility into capital project performance, in order to identify and achieve process improvements going forward; and
3. Providing transparency of state government operations within the capital projects arena.

Project description: CAMPS was initiated on July 1, 2014 and was put into production on February 14, 2016. FMD contracted with an outside vendor to oversee the implementation of the project. CAMPS has been successful in standardizing Capital Projects planning and performance for all 750 buildings under GSD/FMD jurisdiction.

Personal queries now exist on the desk tops of leadership, providing the management oversight of Capital Projects that served as a business driver of CAMPS. Leadership can today see at a glance the performance of projects at different levels (by county, by campus, by building, by Project Manager, etc.), and they can drill into individual projects for additional details as needed.

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CAMPS has increased transparency to state agencies, by allowing them to access the status of their projects through a secured website, which provides them with up-to-date information on their respective projects. The performance of capital projects is also broadcast to a public facing website, where New Mexico State taxpayers can see first-hand how and where their tax dollars are being invested.

CAMPS has automated the tracking of Capital Projects which includes the schedule, any risk, remaining budget amounts and current expenditures by project. This has eliminated the use of multiple spreadsheets to track Capital Projects.

CAMPS has also provided accurate and up-to-date facility condition assessment data which has assisted FMD's abilities to plan more efficiently for Capital Projects and reduce the cost of maintaining state properties.

Why initiated: The project was initiated to enable FMD to balance capital project priorities with fiscal constraints and track projects to the minutest detail. It was initiated also because of the need for GSD staff to provide faster service at the point of need while utilizing fewer tax payer dollars.

Results achieved: 97.4% of the Facilities Management Division capital projects were on schedule and within the approved budget.

Project timeline: July 1, 2014 - February 14, 2016

Significance to the improvement of the operation of government: CAMPS provides the data analytics and management capabilities needed for accurate budget projections and scheduling.

This allowed the FMD to keep 97.4% of their projects on schedule and within the allotted budget per project. CAMPS has provided access to shared data to state agencies and has reduced costs by staying within budget.

Benefits realized by citizens and/or state government: The benefits of CAMPS realized by citizens and state government are more transparency on capital projects for the state agencies allowing them to track the progress of their projects and timely completion of projects within budget.

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State: South Carolina

Department: South Carolina Department of Administration

Lead category: Infrastructure

Category area: Facilities

Project Title: State of South Carolina Real Estate Standard Chart of Accounts

Project Associates: South Carolina Department of Administration staff: Executive Director Marcia S. Adams; Chief of Staff Paul Koch; Real Property Services Director Ashlie Lancaster; Capital Asset Management Director Rick Harmon; Office of Administrative Services Director Steven Lake Chief Financial Officer Renee Rochester; South Carolina Enterprise Information System Program Manager III Bruce Burnett; South Carolina Enterprise Information System Assistant Director Ed Pearce; South Carolina Enterprise Information System Program Manager I Sherry Ervin; South Carolina Enterprise Information System Program Director of SCEIM John Taylor

Other State Agencies staff: S.C. Office of the Comptroller General Senior Assistant Comptroller General Anjali Griffin; S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director of Finance Yvette Sistare

Private Sector staff: CBRE Executive Vice President Michael McShea; CBRE First Vice President Lee Ann Korst; CBRE Senior Vice President Rolf Kemen; CBRE First Vice President Ben Brantley; CBRE Senior Vice President Martin Moore; Executive Consultant Carlos H. Vesga

Project date: November 12, 2014–June 30, 2016

Executive summary: The state of South Carolina implemented a Real Estate Standard Chart of Accounts to standardize the reporting of operations and maintenance costs and capital expenditures for all state real property. The standard chart of accounts has allowed the State to begin benchmarking operating and financial results with private sector real estate professional organizations to identify cost savings opportunities.

Based on the International Standards Organization's initiative outlined in norm ISO/CD 18480, the South Carolina Department of Administration (Admin) worked with the South Carolina Office of the Comptroller General, state agencies, CBRE and private sector consultants to establish uniform methods to code different real estate expenses under a defined set of expense categories.

Project description: Project Background:

Beginning in the fall of 2014, the State of South Carolina contracted with CBRE to develop a comprehensive statewide real estate strategic plan. The initiative validated the State's real property inventory for both land and buildings, and conducted 138 Operation and Maintenance (O&M) surveys, 150 facility condition assessments on buildings, and 222 space utilization site visits for leased and owned properties.

After analysis of the collected data, CBRE provided the State with the Comprehensive Real Property Evaluation, Strategic Planning and Implementation Report in October 2015. The report recommended South Carolina reduce its real estate footprint by selling properties in need of significant future capital

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investment and with high annual maintenance and operations costs. The report also recommended that the State move from a highly-decentralized management of its real property, to a more centralized system under the South Carolina Department of Administration.

On a high level, data obtained through the 138 O&M surveys (inclusive of nearly 5,000,000 SF) indicated that average O&M expenses on South Carolina's state owned buildings generally trend higher than comparable states with centralized portfolio management, representing a potential savings opportunity of \$35.3 million annually. (South Carolina's average O&M expense is \$13.16/SF. The similar state's average is \$6.03 /SF.)

The use of industry standards to capture O&M allows for identification of buildings and categories of expenses tracking above their benchmarks. Therefore, CBRE recommended that the state adopt a real estate standard chart of accounts with six major account areas. The six areas include administrative, cleaning, repair and maintenance, utilities, security, and roads and grounds. Additionally, there are 99 corresponding sub-accounts.

Project Implementation: In January 2016, Governor Nikki Haley issued Executive Order 2016-06 directing Admin to implement the recommended Real Estate Standard Chart of Accounts. Admin deployed a team to create and implement the Real Estate Standard Chart of Accounts. Team members represented Admin's Division of Real Property Services, Capital Asset Management, Administrative Services and the South Carolina Enterprise Information System, along with the South Carolina Office of the Comptroller General, the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and Executive Consultant Carlos Vesga.

The team established 105 new real estate general ledger account codes (GLAs) and 8,187 internal orders for all state owned buildings and commercial leases. Internal orders provide a defined numbering system, which when used in conjunction with the real estate GLAs, will allow for analyzing and benchmarking costs by expense category and by facility.

During May and June, Admin conducted training for 81 state agencies, with full implementation of the standard chart of accounts by June 30, 2016. The result of this successful implementation means in the future, the State is positioned to better determine areas for O&M strategic sourcing and contract consolidation across agencies, to identify buildings with high O&M costs to determine if they should be renovated or sold, and to compare costs of leasing in commercial buildings with both market rates and state building ownership. Over the coming year, Admin will audit the use of the real estate GLAs and internal orders to provide technical assistance to ensure data integrity.

Why initiated: The project was initiated to provide a standardized mechanism for tracking real estate expenses statewide, by facility, to determine areas for cost reduction and to benchmark costs. With a standardized mechanism in place, the ultimate goal is to continue to move the state of South Carolina toward more efficient management of state resources and improved stewardship of tax payer dollars.

Results achieved: The State created a real estate standard chart of accounts with 105 new general ledger account codes, which are specific to real estate and facilities management industry standards for

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capturing costs, and 8,187 internal orders to track costs by facility.

Project timeline: The project was completed between November 12, 2014 and June 30, 2016. Here is a breakdown of project milestones:

Project Background:

- October 2014: The State of South Carolina partnered with CBRE to develop a Comprehensive Statewide Real Estate Strategic Plan.
- October 2014–October 2015: The South Carolina Department of Administration (Admin) worked with CBRE to compile necessary data to complete a comprehensive real estate study and plan.
- December 2015: Governor Nikki Haley and Admin Executive Director Marcia Adams released the statewide real estate study, plan and recommendations.

Project Implementation:

- January 2016: Governor Nikki Haley issued Executive Order 2016-06 directing Admin to implement the recommended real estate standard chart of accounts.
- January–April 2016: Project team developed new real estate GLSs and internal orders.
- May–June 2016: Admin provided 81 state agencies with training on how to use general ledger codes associated with new the standard chart of accounts.
- June 2016: 81 state agencies fully implemented the new standard chart of accounts.

Significance to the improvement of the operation of government: Prior to implementation of the real estate standard chart of accounts, tracking South Carolina’s real estate management, costs and functions was highly decentralized. Admin manages many state owned buildings, but some agencies self-manage their facilities. Previously, expense tracking within the State’s accounting system provided only high-level data. For example, all contractual expenses were coded as such regardless of what type of contractual expenses they represented. Therefore, without significant analysis of agency specific invoices, it was difficult to determine if the expense was for a janitorial contract, office supplies or marketing expenses for a state-funded program. Development and implementation of a standardized real estate chart of accounts across state agencies allows for tracking, reporting and analyzing O&M expenses in a meaningful way. As such, the project’s significance to improving the operation of government is to provide a granular understanding of what the State pays by expense category, per square foot, and by building and agency. Ultimately, this enables the identification of cost savings opportunities. It also allows for more accurate budgeting by separating real estate expenses from other agency expenses.

Benefits realized by citizens and/or state government: The implemented Real Estate Standard Chart of Accounts has provided the state of South Carolina with a necessary tool for making real, highly-informed business decisions. Use of the chart has begun to produce data on what maintenance and operations areas and facilities should be targeted for greater efficiencies, with the potential for annual savings in excess of \$35 million. As data is collected over time, the chart will provide real estate spending transparency for stakeholders (other state agencies) and citizens.

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State: Utah

Department: Department of Administrative Services

Lead category: Infrastructure

Category area: Information Technology

Project Title: Utah Open Records Portal

Project Associates: -Patricia Smith-Mansfield, State Archivist; -Rosemary Cundiff, Government Records Ombudsman; Elizabeth Perkes, Archives Systems Administrator; -Renée Wilson, Open Records Portal Administrator; -Nova Dubovik, GRAMA Administrator; Glen Fairclough, Public

Project date: January 1, 2015: Portal available for state executive agencies; January 1, 2016: Portal available for county and municipal governments, as well as school districts / charter schools, and transit districts

Executive summary: The Open Records Portal provides a single point of access for submitting a records request, aka GRAMA (Government Records Access and Management Act) request, to any governmental entity at the following levels:

- state executive agencies
- counties
- municipalities
- school districts and charter schools
- transportation districts
- local and special districts (functionality to be added 1/1/2017)

The Portal also allows records officers to respond to requests, upload files, assign fees, and refer requesters to other agencies.

Project description: The Portal is a central point from which a person may submit a records request to a state or local governmental entity, and from which governmental entities may receive and respond to records requests.

The Open Records Portal was developed by the Utah State Archives, in conjunction with the Utah Transparency Board, in response to Senate Bill 70 (now Utah Code 63A-3-403(10)(11)) from the 2014 legislative session. This law requires the Transparency Board and the Department of Administrative Services (the Archives' parent department) to establish and maintain a website for the purpose of providing a central point of access for GRAMA (Government Records Access and Management Act) requests to governmental entities within the state of Utah.

The Portal went live January 1, 2015, as mandated by law, and has been operative since then. Continuous improvements are being made as needed. Requesters and government employees alike are encouraged to provide feedback on Portal operation and functionality; several upgrades have been planned and implemented in response to this feedback, such as notification improvements, increased file upload size, customizable form fields, and agency update capabilities.

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Why initiated: The Portal was implemented as part of a broader movement towards greater transparency in state government. It was initiated via the 2014 Senate Bill 70, with the specific purpose to provide a single point of access for records requests for all levels of state and local government throughout the state of Utah.

Results achieved: To achieve the successful implementation of the Open Records Portal, the Archives undertook multiple projects:

1. Data. As the Portal contains listings for state and local governmental entities, all listing information needed to be gathered and verified. The Archives contacted records officers from 557 state agencies, 340 municipal agencies, 63 county agencies, 162 charter schools / school districts, and 3 transit districts, in order to ensure that all agency and records officer information was complete and up-to-date. The Archives is also in the process of contacting the 500+ local and special districts which will come online on the Portal in 2017. It will be the Archives' responsibility to maintain this information in the future.
2. Design and User Testing. The Archives designed each detail of the Portal, and worked with the software developer APPX to build the site. Several records officers volunteered to participate in user testing. Their Portal sessions were recorded and analyzed to identify points of confusion and areas for improvement. Additional testing continues as more features are added.
3. Training. Spreading the word to all governmental entities within Utah has been challenging. The Archives provided training sessions for records officers at all levels of government, including webinars and live visits throughout the state of Utah. In 2016 alone, the Archives trained 199 records officers, representing 125 different governmental agencies. Video and text tutorials are accessible online via YouTube or the Archives website.
4. Publicity. All major newspapers throughout Utah announced the kickoff of the Open Records Portal.

Project timeline:

March 27, 2014 – Senate Bill 70 signed into law

July – December, 2014 – Portal designed and tested; the bulk of the work was done during this period

January 1, 2015 – Portal live for state executive agencies

January 1, 2016 – Portal live for co

Significance to the improvement of the operation of government: Before the Portal was implemented, most state agencies did not have an established method for receiving records requests. There is not a standardized GRAMA (Government Records Access and Management Act) request form, so state employees had to spend time creating their own form, as well as looking up state statute to ensure they were including everything necessary both in the form and in their reply.

The Portal streamlines the request process so that all records officers receive the relevant information they need with each request submitted. The Portal further helps state government by intuitively guiding records officers through the records request process. As records officers respond to a request, the system does the following:

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- shows all possible responses to a request,
- auto-populates contact and appeals information,
- automatically includes information which is legislatively mandated to be included in a denial, and
- sends notifications automatically to requesters.

These actions allow state government employees to spend more time actually responding to the request, because they can spend less time seeking clarification and answering questions about updates and progress, or looking up information about what a response should include.

The Portal provides a unified experience for requesters as well. They can easily locate the agencies and their respective records officers and do not have to search online to figure out how one agency's requirements differ from another's. This benefit, along with the ability to view the status of their request online at any time, fosters a positive, "user-first" atmosphere, which demonstrates more effective government.

The Portal contains additional tools to help with the efficiency of state and local governments:

- Records officers may send a blind courtesy copy (BCC) of request denials to their supervisor (required in some state agencies).
- Reporting tools allow records officers to export agency statistics for use in required reports.
- Requests may be assigned to other records officers within the same agency.

Benefits realized by citizens and/or state government: First and foremost, citizens benefit from having a single place on the internet where they may go to submit a request to state and local governmental agencies.

Citizens also benefit from the central location of agency and records officer contact information. Some governmental entities aren't otherwise represented online. The Portal displays agency address, agency phone numbers, agency website, and identifies records officer(s) names and email addresses. Hierarchy information for each agency is also displayed, so that both citizens and government may view how agencies are related to each other.

Citizens additionally benefit from the easy-to-use interface and convenient auto-fill of user contact information when creating a records request. Requesters can view requests online at any time, and upload files as needed, check the progress of the request, and contact the records officer, all via the Portal. Frequent requesters especially appreciate having a convenient method of tracking and viewing their requests in one place.

State government benefits from many of the same factors as the public: a central location for all records requests; a listing of state and local agencies and their contact information; and myriad tools to assist in the task of receiving, tracking, and responding to records requests.

The overall result of the Portal is a leap forward in open records requests for Utah: the Portal simplifies the records request process, making a potentially daunting task more approachable, while providing greater transparency and accountability to both citizens and state government.

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State: Washington

Department: Department of Enterprise Services

Lead category: Infrastructure

Category area: Facilities

Project Title: Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) “Employee-Driven Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project”

Project Associates: The following people, including their titles, all played a significant role in developing the DES Employee-Driven Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project:

Kevin Battin, DES Grounds Lead; Nathan Bren, DES Groundskeeper; Chris Brownell, DES Irrigation Technician; Brent Chapman, DES Horticulturist; Ken Connally, DES Grounds Lead; Jim Erskine, DES Communications Manager; Mary Harrison, DES Grounds Lead; Tim Hildebrand, DES Grounds Mechanic; Scott Hobbs, DES Groundskeeper; Jeff Hogan, DES Groundskeeper; Marygrace Jennings, DES Cultural Resource Manager; Nathaniel Jones, DES Asset Manager; Dan Kirschner, DES Groundskeeper; Thomas Lambert, DES Groundskeeper; Kailee Moulton, DES Groundskeeper; Steve Pond, DES Groundskeeper; Laurie Pyne, President, Olympia Beekeepers Association; James Skinner, DES Groundskeeper; Ash Venable, DES Groundskeeper; Jeff Whitehead, DES Maintenance and Operations Manager

Project date: With the encouragement of their managers, our DES groundskeepers began pooling their collective brainpower, launching the “Employee-Driven Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project” on the grounds of the state Capitol Campus in Olympia, Washington, in Mar

Executive summary: DES is responsible for the stewardship, preservation, operation and maintenance of the 486-acre state Capitol Campus which includes more than two dozen buildings, four parks and a 260-acre artificial lake. The Legislative Building and our capitol grounds are visited by hundreds of thousands of people annually and about 6,000 state employees work on the Campus.

There are 12 agency groundskeepers responsible for maintaining the Campus lawns, landscaped beds and trees. Because DES has adopted, nurtured and sustained a Lean culture where every leader is a coach and every employee a problem-solver, our grounds staff formed a team in March 2014 to investigate potential new landscape management practices. Their efforts received the full support of their managers. Too often, organizations waste the greatest resource of all: The human potential of their workers. But in this case, everyone involved was excited to tap into the brain power of all the staff, not just leaders.

Using Lean methodologies, our groundkeepers set an overarching goal to make the care of the capitol grounds a model of sustainability by using methods and materials that:

- Are safe for DES staff, other state employees and visitors.
- Are more environmentally friendly.
- Result in lower operating costs.

Since initiating the Employee-Driven Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project, our groundskeepers

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have systematically been moving away from conventional practices centered on watering non-native turfgrass and using chemical herbicides to suppress weeds.

Our managers – and the public – are applauding the innovative, more environmentally-friendly landscaping management methods now being deployed throughout the Campus. The staff-driven project has significantly reduced the use of chemical herbicides, mowing and watering. It has also empowered our groundskeepers to refocus their work on:

- Continuously improving the ways in which they do their daily work.
- Putting the best sustainable landscaping practices in place.
- Conducting trials of new landscaping approaches.
- Engaging subject matter experts.

The DES Employee-Driven Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project has also garnered regional and national media attention including coverage by the Olympian, the capital city's daily newspaper, the Seattle-based NBC affiliate, and Governing Magazine. DES is proud of our groundskeepers and the innovative, successful project they have put in place.

Project description: Starting in March 2014, DES grounds staff began implementing an array of innovative sustainable landscape management methods, including:

- Using cardboard to suppress weed growth in landscape beds.
- Using a flamer, a portable gas torch that produces intense heat, to kill weeds.
- Inoculating soils with recycled leaves from Campus trees and vegetation.
- Selecting more native plants to reduce water usage and attracting native pollinating insects.
- Reducing summer water irrigation to Campus lawns.
- Using wood chips left over from Campus tree removal and trimmings as mulch around other trees and shrubs to reduce costs and improve plant health.

Thanks to their innovative approaches using Lean methodologies, the state capitol grounds have become a place for ecological experimentation. In March 2016, DES grounds staff began an “ecolawn” pilot project involving eight plots in four different areas of the Campus. There are several types of ecolawns but the term generally refers to the use of slow-growing grasses, clover and low-growing perennials. Generally, the species of grasses grown in an ecolawn are different than those used in a conventional lawn. An ecolawn requires less mowing and irrigation and uses fewer fertilizers and pesticides than a typical lawn.

At some sites, DES grounds staff have allowed existing grasses to grow out. In other areas, groundskeepers removed existing vegetation, replanting the area with fescue grasses, white clover and a variety of annual and perennial flowers. DES is collecting public feedback about the trial through an online survey posted on the department's website. When the trial period ends in December 2016, DES staff will evaluate the results and feedback to help determine whether to continue the use of ecolawn on campus, extend its use to other areas of the campus, modify the approach, or try a different method next season.

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By not having to regularly mow the ecolawn areas, DES groundskeepers have saved about 100 hours annually. This has allowed them to redirect their labors to other high-priority landscape work, including landscape bed weeding and hand-watering new plantings.

Beginning in April 2016, DES groundkeepers started another innovative landscaping practice by installing honeybee hives and mason bee condominiums. The bees help pollinate vegetables being grown in garden plots on the Campus which are planted and maintained by the local Kiwanis club who donate the produce to the local food bank. The bees also pollinate other plants on the capitol grounds and in nearby neighborhoods.

Why initiated: DES groundkeepers initiated the Employee-Driven Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project to test the hypotheses that large-scale, public landscapes could be maintained in a manner that:

- Reduces environmental impacts.
- Saves labor and material resources.
- Creates a safe and attractive work place.
- Benefits pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies.

Results achieved: Beginning in 2014, DES groundskeepers conducted various small-scale trials on the Campus including using cardboard and wood chips to suppress weed growth for two years and suspending the broadcast application of herbicides to turf areas during the past four years. As a result, DES grounds staff have reduced synthetic herbicide use by 75 percent, saved state taxpayers \$1,700 and significantly reduced potential pollutant runoff from the Campus grounds to local surface and underground water sources.

In addition:

- Ecolawn trial areas will have reduced DES mowing hours by about 100 hours in 2016, allowing groundkeepers to reallocate their time to higher priority tasks such as landscape bed weeding and hand-watering new plantings.
- Ecolawn trial areas have reduced water used in these areas by 80 percent.
- The number and diversity of insect pollinators observed on Campus has increased since native plants were used in new plantings, ecolawn trial areas were established and honeybee hives and mason bee condominiums were installed.
- State employees and the public have increasingly asked DES how they can replicate sustainable landscape practices in their personal lawns and gardens.

Project timeline: The Employee-Driven Capitol Grounds Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project started in March 2014 and has continued through June 30, 2016.

Significance to the improvement of the operation of government: This project would not have happened without the innovation and determination of our DES groundskeepers and the support of their managers. The genesis of the project began in 2013, when several grounds staff started maintaining a section of the Campus as a pesticide free zone. Using Lean methodologies, they tried different non-chemical methods for controlling weeds, insect pests and plant diseases. While there

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were successes and failures, DES grounds staff continued learning along the way.

Thanks to our agency's Lean culture, DES groundskeepers were encouraged and supported by their managers. Our line staff are not afraid to experiment and work with innovative practices, even when the approaches don't always yield the results initially expected. Our groundskeepers have created new learning opportunities for themselves by harnessing their collective brain power. The waste of underutilizing their knowledge, imagination and experience is rapidly disappearing. DES grounds staff are continuously gathering knowledge and improving on their daily work as well as the next innovative project. Now, the state capitol grounds in Olympia have become a public living laboratory for trying new sustainable landscape management methods that work in harmony with the environment.

Benefits realized by citizens and/or state government: The DES Employee-Driven Eco-Friendly Landscape Management Project has resulted in an array of public benefits including:

- Demonstrating that state employees can be innovative in solving problems and saving money.
- Reducing the use of water, synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.
- Reallocating DES groundskeepers' time to higher priority tasks.
- Increasing the population and diversity of pollinating insect species on the Capitol Campus.
- Improving prepared surface soil, organically suppressing weeds and improving overall plant health.
- Developing demonstration areas on the Capitol Campus for best practices of how to manage large-scale public landscapes in an environmentally-friendly, sustainable manner.