Online Permitting and Future Enhancements Projects

Purpose

To enhance the core permitting functionality to increase customer satisfaction, access to shared information between departments, and revenue collections.

Approach

Once the SUPR project has delivered the core functionality, the team will add new functionality that delivers new benefits in response to customer requests. Anticipated future enhancements include online permitting, inspector access from the field, GIS capabilities, and cashiering. These enhancements are planned as a set of four separate sub-projects.

Goals

- Increase customer satisfaction by decreasing permit issuance time, increasing convenience and reducing cost
- Increase accuracy and timeliness of inspection results for customers
- Increase accuracy of site specific information for inspectors, developers and utilities
- Provide more convenient payment mechanisms for customers

Timeline

2005-2006

Budget

$984,000-1,961,000

Right-of-Way Manual Project

Purpose

To develop a ROW manual that identifies design criteria, guidelines and procedures for doing work within Seattle's ROW.

Approach

Develop a web-based ROW manual for City staff and City customers that includes current design criteria, street design guidelines and neighborhood specific streetscape plans, and procedures for doing work in the City's ROW including the variance process, permit applications, and templates and forms for preparing permit documents.

Timeline

2003-2005

Budget

$554,000-652,000

Goals

- Clear, simple format that is easy to use
- Provide a comprehensive resource for all procedures, standards and guidelines affecting physical changes in the public ROW
- Clearly articulate design standards and guidelines and, where necessary, describe the process to achieve flexibility when practical
- Consistent with city-wide regulatory documents such as the Seattle Municipal Code and City Standard Plans and Specifications, federal, state and regional regulatory requirements, and related City-wide plans
- Reflect the City commitment to sustainability including ensuring consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan, Environmental Management Program (EMP) and Municipal Code
- Adaptable resource that is easy to update and reflects current information

Right-of-Way Coordination Redesign Project

Purpose

To efficiently and cost effectively meet the Utility Cuts ordinance requirements within target timeframes and provide visibility of coordination opportunities across the City and public and private agencies.

Approach

Redesign utility coordination business process to improve efficiency then leverage existing City technology to improve efficiency, timelines and accuracy of project and coordination information. These changes are planned as two separate sub-projects.

Goals

- Maintain the free flow of traffic and pedestrians
- Enable coordinated advanced planning of future ROW work (including capital construction, maintenance and service work)
- Proactively condition permits based on permitted work and future ROW plans
- Preserve street life by reducing street cuts
- Enable proactive coordination of current work in the ROW

Timeline

2003-2006

Budget

$771,000-1,457,000

Right-of-Way Response & Education Project

Purpose

To provide a single citizen ROW response center in Street Use to respond to citizen queries about work in Seattle's ROW.

Approach

First refine the mission, vision, goals and requirements of the new response center. Based on that conceptual design, define the new response center processes then leverage existing City technologies.

Goals

- Provide answers to citizen inquiries about work in the ROW
- Dispatch corrective action in response to ROW disruptions
- Notify citizenry of disruptions
- Provide analysis of ROW work for decision making and problem tracking

Timeline

2005-2006

Budget

$837,000-1,667,000

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Right-of-Way Management Initiative

Executive Summary

August 29, 2003

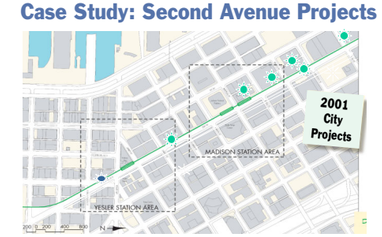
The Opportunity

The Street Use section in the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is responsible for permitting all work in Seattle's right-of-way (ROW) - the land above and below ground that encompasses the City's streets. The current disparate processes for permit authorization, long range ROW usage planning, maintenance work and public communications do not support overall integrated management of the ROW.

Based on the City's past experience with public projects, we know that the existing processes and toolset inhibit our ability to effectively manage work in the ROW. These constraints will be exacerbated once the currently planned public projects begin. The Monorail corridor and the Metro bus tunnel closure present the most immenent challenges.

As you can see from the diagrams at the right, in a typical year the volume of permitted projects is significant. If we consider the new public projects anticipated to occur in this same vicinity, the impacts to traffic needing to use these thoroughfares could be severe. It is clear that a significant change is needed in the way that the City plans, permits and coordinates work in the ROW.

Case Study: Second Avenue Projects



The Solution

Based on the team's analysis, it is apparent that SDOT must manage the right-of-way more comprehensively in the future. This requires new processes and tools that improve the City's ability to plan, authorize, coordinate, analyze and communicate use of the ROW.

Scope

The ROWM Initiative includes six projects focused on improvements to planning, coordinating, permitting, analyzing and communicating work in the City's ROW. In combination, these projects are designed to improve mobility while allowing for maintenance of the City's infrastructure.

This integrated approach enables SDOT to achieve:

Vision

Seattle's public ROW:

- Moves people and goods safely and easily throughout our City,
- Is maintained and upgraded regularly,
- Houses private and public utility infrastructure, and
- Promotes long-term access, economic growth and livability.

Goals

Goal 1: Enhance mobility

Goal 2: Coordinate City–wide capital planning

Goal 3: Provide efficient operations and maintenance of the City's street and utility infrastructure

Benefits

This initiative is designed to achieve the following benefits for the citizens of Seattle:

- Fewer delays travelling through construction corridors
- Shorter permit turnaround time
- Easy access to information about activities in the ROW
- Integrity of the public ROW

The Ave...Managing ROW projects

The Economics

During the team's alternatives analysis we evaluated over 18 different options before selecting the final set of projects that best meet the overall goals of this initiative. The economic analysis revealed an overall project cost of $5.8 million to $9.7 million over five years. Despite these times of slowed economic growth, we expect to achieve benefits for citizens, developers, private agencies and the City of at least $37 million over 16 years. Based on this initial economic analysis, the anticipated payback period for this initiative is 5½ to 7 years. Supporting revenue for this program will be generated by the permit holders for the use of the ROW.

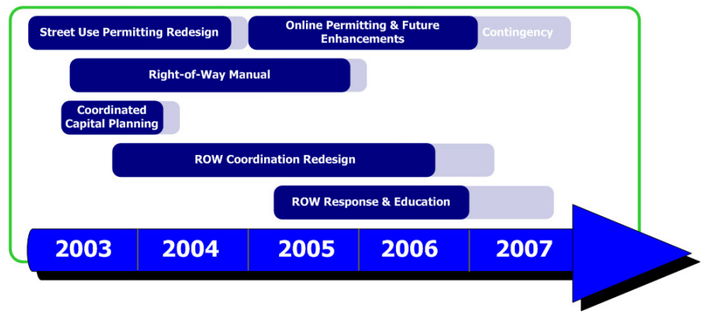
These initial cost and benefit estimates will be revised annually based on analysis and planning results in future stages of each project. These refined estimates and progress measures will be provided to the Executive and City Council annually.

The Approach

Over the next four years, we plan to make incremental improvements by implementing a set of six projects designed to deliver the components necessary to increase mobility throughout the city and comprehensively manage the ROW.

In order to control costs and manage change, the project team proposes to implement in a series of smaller projects. Significant components of the solution will be delivered annually in 2004 through 2007. We plan to conduct annual pilots that incorporate new functionality each year. Learnings from each pilot will be integrated into both future projects and ongoing City operations.

Right-of-Way Management Projects



The Program Management Office

Purpose

This initiative is overseen by a Program Management Office that provides program leadership, controls, shared resources and annual pilots of integrated program components.

Goals

- Increase the likelihood of successful project outcomes
- Provide leadership and direction for all projects so that overall ROWM goals are met
- Provide shared resources for continuity of controls & integrated solutions
- Provide support for pro-active scope, schedule and budget adherence

Approach

- Build the business case for change
- Create a repeatable economic analysis model with annual refinement and ongoing measurement
- Provide common, repeatable project methods for planning, controlling and executing
- Provide regular oversight, monitoring and coaching for project teams
- Plan and conduct annual pilots of integrated components in key construction corridors
- Provide comprehensive planning and organizational change management so that program components are fully operationalized in the Street Use section

Timeline

2003-2006

Budget

$1,122,000-$1,444,000

Current Stage

Coordinated Capital Planning Project

Purpose

To identify project coordination opportunities early in the planning cycle so that coordination begins before capital project budgets and schedules are finalized.

Approach

Define "as is" planning process for each department, create a coordinated planning process, then build an annual calendar of regular cross-departmental coordination meetings. Assess results then determine if additional improvements are needed.

Goals

- Maximize benefits of capital expenditures and increase leveraging opportunities
- To reduce the costs of coordination through early identification of opportunities

Timeline

2003

Budget

$5,000

Street Use Permitting Redesign Project

Purpose

To redesign the Street Use permitting business processes and provide core functionality to increase efficiency, cost effectiveness, and quality of information.

Approach

The new Street Use permitting processes and systems will be released incrementally building on recent accomplishments:

- DCLU and Traffic Hansen implementations
- Redesign of private development plan review process

This incremental release approach is designed to maximize early benefit, reduce project risk, and minimize annual cost. The first release includes the permitting business process redesign and implementation of the Hansen permitting system to deliver core functionality for all permit types.

Goals

- Enable integrated management of the ROW
- Ensure balancing the competing needs in the ROW
- Protect the ROW as a public asset
- Improve coordination of major transportation projects to reduce infrastructure costs and eliminate rework
- Create organizational flexibility to respond to changing business needs
- Improve coordination and management of limited underground ROW space

Timeline

2003-2004

Budget

$1,520,000-2,508,000