







KING COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

NOVEMBER 26, 2019

Follow-up on Performance Audit of Lean in King County

King County has completed implementation of two of the remaining three recommendations we made in our 2016 audit. These recommendations focused on clarifying the purpose of Lean deployment and clearly communicating to the King County Council how Lean resources were prioritized. In July 2019, the Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) provided the King County Council a letter outlining its updated Lean deployment strategy. This letter detailed the evolution of Lean deployment and included some examples of results achieved via Lean around the County. Given this approach, and the progress that has been made in areas such as the development of a Lean maturity model, we are categorizing recommendations one and two as done. In addition, we are closing the remaining recommendation focused on documenting the alignment of Lean activities with the County's strategic plan. The new model of Lean deployment, which focuses on increasing Lean knowledge and support within departments as opposed to having the CIT conduct individual projects, eliminates the need to align activities based on strategic planning.

We made seven recommendations in our 2016 audit, "Lean in King County: Approach supports continuous improvement, but actions are needed to improve strategy and measurement." This report provides status updates on the three remaining recommendations and a breakdown of all seven recommendations by status.

	6 DONE		0 PROGRESS		0 OPEN		1 CLOSED
Fully implemented Auditor will no longer monitor.		Partially implemented Auditor will continue to monitor.		Remain unresolved Auditor will continue to monitor.		No longer applicable Auditor will no longer monitor.	

Please see below for details on the implementation status of these recommendations.



Recommendation 1

DONE



The County Executive should clearly document, and submit to the County Council for consideration, the purpose of Lean deployment in King County.

STATUS UPDATE: In July 2019, the Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) provided the King County Council a letter outlining the strategy of Lean deployment. This letter detailed the evolution of Lean deployment and included some examples of results achieved via Lean around the County. The CIT has focused most of its efforts on building knowledge and support for Lean among county departments. It is focusing on increasing the level of Lean maturity across the County and measures maturity using a model with 11 dimensions, such as performance measures, visual management, and customer engagement.

IMPACT: The July 2019 letter to the County Council provided clarity to policymakers about what Lean has accomplished in King County and provides a baseline measurement to assess how quickly King County's departments are increasing their ability to apply Lean techniques over time.

Recommendation 2

DONE



The County Executive should demonstrate how the purpose of Lean deployment noted in Recommendation 1 is used to prioritize Lean resources.

STATUS UPDATE: Based on the July 2019 letter, the County Executive in conjunction with the CIT is prioritizing Lean resources to increase the level of knowledge and support for Lean around King County. It is unclear whether Lean resources will be prioritized to support those areas in which there is the greatest need (as measured by low maturity scores) or where there is the potential for greatest impact. Instead, each department and division identified four dimensions to work on with the goal to improve its scores by at least one point on a one- to four-point scale.

IMPACT: By prioritizing resources to increase Lean maturity across the County, the CIT has provided decisionmakers an objective means to measure and evaluate progress. In the future, as knowledge and support for Lean grows across the County, it would be useful for the CIT to report on other metrics, such as time or cost savings achieved through Lean projects.

Recommendation 3

On July 10, 2017

DONE



Recommendation 4

On July 10, 2017

DONE



Recommendation 5

On July 10, 2017

DONE



Recommendation 6

On July 10, 2017

DONE



Recommendation 7

CLOSED



The County Executive should document the alignment of Lean activities with the strategic goals of the County and/or agencies.

STATUS UPDATE: Given the decision to prioritize Lean efforts and resources to increase the knowledge and support for Lean across departments, it is no longer necessary to document alignment of Lean activities with the strategic goals of King County or individual departments. After a baseline level of Lean maturity is achieved across the County, it may make sense to revisit this recommendation as a means to prioritize and measure how Lean activities align with strategic goals. However, it is unclear when and if this will occur and the Auditor will no longer follow-up on this recommendation.

Deputy County Auditor Ben Thompson conducted this review. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the King County Auditor's Office at KCAO@kingcounty.gov or 206-477-1033.