

Partnership Project transitions into Phase II: Enter Performance Measures

The Partnership Project began with a measurement of KDOT's overall performance. And now as KDOT enters into Phase II of the Partnership Project—it's only fitting that performance measures be a part of the process.

In the beginning....

More than 900 stakeholders were surveyed through the P2 process, and they gave high marks for the system, but indicated that delivery of the system could be improved.

To improve in this area, KDOT recognized it needed to be both responsible and responsive. This led to three initial goals mostly to improve responsiveness and in some degree responsibility: 1) make KDOT a more desirable place to work, 2) nurture relationships with locals, and 3) create policies/make changes so that we become a more modern/responsive organization to remain successful.

Since the adoption of the goals KDOT has made a great deal of progress, and now becomes the time to make sure the P2 model is put in place permanently.

Enter Performance Measures

While KDOT has always had some form of performance measures to evaluate how the system was doing, these performance measures are about evaluating how the system *and* the agency are performing. They are a more comprehensive, strategic set that allows KDOT to evaluate performance from both a responsible and responsive perspective. Six Strategic Focus Areas make up performance measures and all have been assigned goal owners.

Thus, the Partnership Project speaks to culture and approach— and performance measures are the quantifiable outcomes of that evolving culture.

With the adoption of Performance Measures, there are essentially four parts that now make up the Partnership Project.

1. Make KDOT a more desirable place to work: Goal Owners—Allen Humphrey and Alan Spicer
2. Nurture Relationships with Local Officials: Goal Owners—David Church and Mike Longshaw
3. Become a more modern/responsive organization: Goal Owners—Mike Crow and Julie Lorenz
4. Performance Measures: Technical Director—Freddie Simmons

Strategic Focus Area	Goal Owner(s)
Preservation/Maintenance	Lon Ingram and Roy Rissky
Safety	Pete Bodyk
Program/Project Delivery	Rosie Ingram and Jim Kowach
System Improvement/Modernization:	Terry Heidner
Economic Growth	Marci Ferrill
Workforce Priorities	Allen Humphrey

Tracking Current Progress

P2 Board Members met on December 19 to evaluate the progress being made. The following is an update on each priority.

Revise Promotions policy to allow a greater than 15% increase in pay based on exceptional qualifications. Allen Humphrey 90 percent complete.

Allen Humphrey recommended that KDOT's policy for promotional increases be raised from the 15% limit to 25%. The board agreed to approve the change if more flexibility would be

offered. Humphrey recommended KDOT analyze the cost impact to fully understand the implications of these changes.

Establish an inspection mentor/reviewer position in each district office. Lon Ingram 90 percent complete.

Lon Ingram stressed that the district offices continue to make progress and have really been staying involved in the process. Ingram reported that District 2 and District 4 currently have unfilled District Construction Inspection Mentor positions.

Train Area Engineers/PA Managers on KDOT programs. Mike Longshaw 80 percent.

Mike Longshaw said that Area Engineers, Public Affairs Managers, Community Affairs Managers and other KDOT employees took part in a training course on KDOT programs at the Area Engineer's meeting this September. In addition, a field guide, "Local Program Opportunities," that covers 20 different programs had been distributed out for staff to keep as a resource. The guide will be updated periodically, Longshaw said. Since, the training portion of the initiative has been completed, the board recommended refresher training as changes are made and providing that training to other field staff to help develop future Area Engineers.

Use on-going meetings to mentor young employees to develop a better understanding of KDOT business and the decision making process, David Comstock 90 percent complete.

Sometimes actions taken to instill change yield unexpected benefits. David Comstock mentioned that having the Bureau Chief meet regularly to discuss and work out important agency issues, was an unexpected nugget to come out of this committee.

Comstock said that training, mentoring and leadership development were currently all under way. Comstock outlined key areas of focus for involving younger employees, and also mentioned that these employees need to be informed of professional growth opportunities. The sub-team is now working on a report-back structure. The board recommended the development of a report-back structure for this priority and many others.

Philosophically shift KDOT's approach to allow more flexibility and input from city/county/district on speed, signals, access, etc. for city connecting links. David Church 70 percent.

David Church said that we are working closer with the Areas / Districts and cities on speed limits, signing, traffic signals and access on City Connecting Links (CCL) in order to allow more flexibility and input regarding decisions on these issues. He said a CCL Manual is being developed for KDOT and city use. The Final CCL Report should be distributed to cities this January (06). "Whenever I travel around the state I receive comments on the changed attitude among our staff and I really appreciate that," Sec. Miller said of this and other P2 initiatives.

Get KDOT field and local officials involved in the earliest stages of a project. Jim Kowach and Mike Crow 50 percent.

Progress is continually being made in this area, particularly with the expansion of the Local Consult Process, which held an internal staff meeting on January 18. When the Local Consult Process is fully implemented there is no doubt that KDOT field and local officials will be involved much earlier on.

Make it easier for locals to piggy back on KDOT contracts. Chriss McDiffitt 20 percent.

KDOT is now part of a break-through team with the Kansas Association of Counties focusing on improving efficiencies and costs through cooperative purchasing of transportation materials and equipment. What started as a P2 initiative is now a part of a broader effort known as the Kansas Collaborative.

Draft an expanded local consult process and seek external input on expanded process. Julie Lorenz, Terry Heidner, and Rosie Ingram 30 percent.

Julie Lorenz reported that the eight statewide meetings were held with more than 200 attendees participating. All districts, the KC/Wichita metro offices, and elected officials provided substantial input into the process. This January a broad internal meeting will be held to discuss phased implementation. A summary/action plan will be distributed publicly this spring.

Spirit of Public Service

As a result of the P2 efforts, a Spirit of Public Service Committee has been formed to look at ways elevate and further recognize the public service element of the jobs we do. The committee, chaired by Mike Crow, is comprised of employees from across the agency. To launch the group's efforts a "Spirit of Public Service" video was produced and shown at the Leadership Forum, and will be distributed throughout the districts and headquarters. In an effort to engage younger employees, the committee will be conducting a series of focus groups to discuss public service. Allen Humphrey and Sally Howard will facilitate the roundtable discussions held at headquarters, and Mike Crow will assist with the focus groups held in each of the districts. The group will also be looking at KDOT's existing recruiting materials to find ways to incorporate the message of public service to potential employees.

Performance Measures.

The Rollout meetings for Performance Measures have been completed, Julie Lorenz said. A total of nine meetings (6-linked conference calls, 3 at KDOT HQ) were held with more than 150 people participating. Lorenz said that the meetings yielded excellent feedback for how to improve the measures. There are six Strategic Focus Areas: Preservation/Maintenance, Program & Project Delivery, Safety, Economics, Improve & Expand the State Highway System, and Work Force Priorities. The measurement tools for Preservation/Maintenance and Safety have been generally established and thus these two phases will be launched first.

To begin the implementation phase, goal owners will pull together a core group, refine the measurement approach, recommend targets, gather additional data, develop report sheets and integrate the results into decision-making. Goal owners will report back quarterly to a Review Board composed of the Executive Staff. The first Review Board meeting is targeted for this April. Eventually, all Strategic Focus Areas along with other selected P2 initiatives will report quarterly with a focus on two each quarter.